

March
2011

THE MONITOR

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

March 1 – VARA Meeting: Tuesday, at Shoney's Restaurant in Staunton

The Valley Amateur Radio Association leads off again this month with their meeting at Shoneys Restaurant in Staunton (at I-81 and US Highway 250) on Tuesday, March 1, starting at 6:30 pm, followed by the business meeting at 7:00 pm. Afterward, a great program will be presented by Jeff Rinehart W4PJW.

March 3 – MARA Meeting : Thursday, at Wood Grill Restaurant in H'burg

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., will hold its March meeting at the Wood Grill on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg on Thursday, March 3, starting with dinner at 6:30 pm, followed by a business meeting at 7:00 pm. After dinner, Jeff Rinehart W4PJW will present a program.

March 4 – PVARC Club Meeting: Friday, at Browns Restaurant in Luray

The Page Valley Amateur Radio Club will hold its regular bi-monthly dinner meeting on Friday, March 4 starting at 6:00 p.m. at Browns Restaurant in Luray. All hams and their guests and families are invited.

Special Programs at VARA and MARA Meetings! See Page 2!

FrostFest Fun: See Page 9

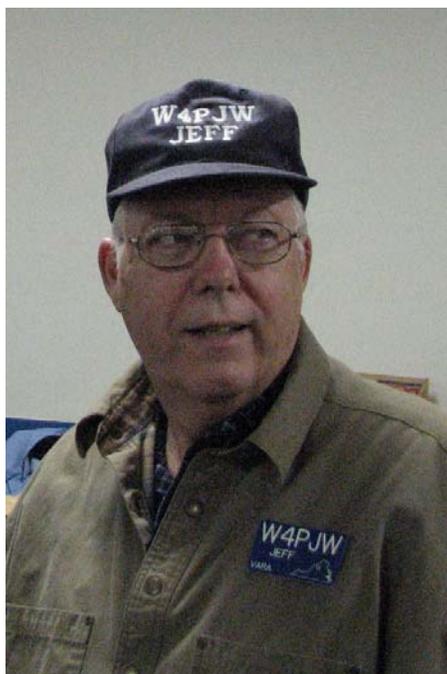
A healthy contingent of Shenandoah Valley hams attended the Richmond Frostfest, and brought back enough new gear, accessories, and general paraphernalia to keep most of us going until the Dayton Hamvention.

Sheryl Tonini, KJ4DOC, right, was one of the many who found a new Yaesu radio. David Fordham KD9LA also took home a nice collection of goodies. See Page 9 for more photos.



Special Program at VARA and MARA Meetings – Live Demo: Logger32

Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW, will present a program for both MARA and VARA for their March meetings. This will be about the logging program he currently uses for DXing and Awards gathering.



This program will be presented with an on-screen active demonstration of the various features of the FREE software package: Logger32. Jeff will be emphasizing how important it is for all hams - especially new hams - to keep good records of all their contacts.

This software supports all modes - Phone (SSB and FM), CW, RTTY and all of the popular sound card modes too. It includes a digital voice keyer, CW keyer, RTTY keying and also directly integrates such things as DX Atlas, Ham Cap propagation forecasts, Beacons, Grid Squares, Counties, IOTA, Satellites, DX Cluster and internet callsign search. All this and more - for FREE.

Below is an actual screen shot of the software in use, showing part of W4PJW's log. While this looks very overwhelming, Jeff will explain each section. He will then show you how easy it is to get this software to handle your station administration, and how to integrate this with your contesting, DX-chasing, and general operating.

Come to the MARA or VARA (or better yet, come to BOTH) meetings this month and see this impressive software.

BAND	SSB	CW	RTTY
6M			
10M	C		
12M			
15M			
17M			
20M	C		
30M			
40M			
60M			
80M			
160M			

DATE	TIME	CALL	NAME	BAND	FREQ	COMMENT	RST SENT	RST REC	PFX	MODE	CQZ	ITUZ	QSL SENT	QSL REC	QSL VIA	PWR	LOTW SENT	LOTW REC	QSO #
01 30 2011	13 34 23	N3DG		160M	1811.70		599	599	N3	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6395
01 30 2011	13 36 10	N4BCC		160M	1811.70		599	599	N4	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6396
01 30 2011	13 37 07	K2EN		160M	1811.70		599	599	K2	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6397
01 30 2011	13 38 50	N3ZA		160M	1811.70		599	599	N3	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6398
01 30 2011	13 39 27	K8MM		160M	1811.70		599	599	K8	CW	04	08	N	N			Y	N	6399
01 30 2011	13 42 35	N2AD		160M	1811.70		599	599	N2	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6400
01 30 2011	13 43 10	WT8C		160M	1811.70		599	599	WT8	CW	04	08	N	N			Y	N	6401
01 30 2011	13 43 27	KR4V		160M	1811.70		599	599	KR4	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6402
01 30 2011	13 43 56	K8ZT		160M	1811.70		599	599	K8	CW	04	08	N	N			Y	N	6403
01 30 2011	13 48 41	WA2JQK		160M	1811.70		599	599	WA2	CW	05	08	N	N			Y	N	6404
02 05 2011	01 46 21	VP8ORK		40M	7024.00	DXP S. Orkney	599	599	VP8	CW	13	73	N	N		500	N	N	6405
02 05 2011	02 04 27	VP8ORK		20M	14190.00	DXP S. Orkney	59	59	VP8	SSB	13	73	N	N		300	N	N	6406
02 08 2011	01 38 39	VP8ORK		30M	10103.90	DXP S. Orkney	599	599	VP8	CW	13	73	N	N		100	N	N	6407
02 11 2011	22 11 32	TJ9PF		20M	14088.46	DXPEDITION	599	599	TJ9	RTTY	36	47	N	N	F5OGL	400	N	N	6408
02 15 2011	16 14 42	TJ9PF		15M	21010.00	DXPEDITION	599	599	TJ9	CW	36	47	N	N	F5OGL	100	N	N	6409
02 15 2011	18 46 15	TJ9PF		20M	14024.00	DXPEDITION	599	599	TJ9	CW	36	47	N	N	F5OGL	100	N	N	6410

VARA President's Message

The start of March again is going to be off to a fast pace with the VARA meeting on the 1st, followed by the MARA meeting of the 3rd... At both meetings Jeff Rinehart W4PJW will be giving a presentation on a logging software program called "Logger32". Knowing Jeff it should be a great program for all amateurs.

Daylight Saving Time starts March 13th at 2:00 am. Don't forget to set the clocks ahead.

Last month both VARA and MARA members discussed needing volunteers for this year's Field Day Committee. VARA had 2 members volunteer, and we are in need of 1 more. MARA had 3 members come forward for this year. So if there is any VARA member who would like to help out it would be greatly appreciated and needed. We will meet for our first meeting on March 17th at the Mt. Crawford Burger King at 6:00p.m. New members consist of the following:

John Keller W4ZAO
 Matthew Huffman KD4UPL
 Herb Slade AA3BF
 Bob Steere N1QEQ
 James McDowell IV NN4JM

The committee meets once a month during March thru June to prepare and organize the events and equipment needed to make Field Day a great success. Last year was my first time on the committee and I learned a lot and was surprised by the dedication of all the volunteers that help make this event very successful. If you do not want to become a member of the committee you are still welcome to attend and voice your opinions and ideas. Remember: Thursday, March 17.

Spring kicks off on Sunday, March 20th; I will be looking forward to warmer days myself.

On a personal note I went to the Richmond Ham-Fest last weekend and had a great time visiting the different booths and gathered a lot of information along the way. For those who have never been, it is worth a visit. We had a nice group of amateurs from both VARA and MARA attending. I have made my reservations for the Dayton Hamfest in May, and can't wait to see how 25,000 hams do it over 3 days.

I hope everyone had a great February and I look forward to the start of spring and all the new adventures and contacts that lay ahead for all of us.

*John Keller W4ZAO
 President VARA*

VE Test Session Report – February 2010

We had five candidates for the exams on February 12 and all candidates passed at least one test. Two candidates passed the Technician class test, and one of them also passed the General class test. There was also one upgrade to General class and two upgrades to Amateur Extra class. Congratulations to each of them for a job well done.

I would like to thank the Volunteer Examiners who were there to help:

Below, from the left: **Mike Turner, K4MIC; Jim Lehman, W4POL; Bryan Daniels, K4RMY; Richard Haxton, KC3AN; Hugh Pettis, K3EC; Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG, and yours truly, Gerald Nauman, KN4FM**



April 30 – Charlottesville: Second Annual Virginia Ham Radio Cruise-In

Here's an idea for a great club outing! Organize a caravan of club members and drive to Charlottesville for a picnic in the park and participate in the Second Annual Virginia Ham Radio Cruise-In on Saturday, April 30. The Cruise-In is a glorious opportunity to compare notes on mobile installations of amateur radio equipment and promote good fellowship among your club members and other amateurs throughout Virginia. Those who participated last year cited, "A fantastic place for a picnic, visiting and enjoying great views of the mountains." This was such a grand new amateur radio activity that it was cited in QST with an offer of a 'How to do it kit' that has drawn responses from all across the country.

Amateurs have their hamfests and special event stations and now is the time to try a different activity that offers good fun and fellowship with nothing to sell and nothing to buy – just eating, visiting and swapping ideas of how to get mobile with your ham station. Put this date on your calendar now!

Virginia Statewide Tornado Drill: March 15

Don't forget the Statewide Tornado Drill on March 15. Details can be found in last month's Monitor and on the web at:

<http://www.vaemergency.com/threats/tornado/index.cfm>



Staunton to Host FREE Community Emergency Response Training (CERT)

Shenandoah Valley Project Impact will be offering Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). The course will be held on Thursdays, March 3 – April 28, from 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Office at 112 MacTanly Place in Staunton.

The CERT course, which was designed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), teaches basic skills in disaster preparedness, fire safety, first aid, terrorism awareness, disaster psychology, and search & rescue. The main goal of CERT is to teach people how to prepare themselves and their families because in a disaster, emergency service resources will be stretched and emergency personnel may not be able to help people immediately. The course is free and all materials are provided. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register for the course contact Rebecca Joyce, Shenandoah Valley Project Impact by telephone at 540-885-5174 or email at rebecca@cspdc.org.

Super Weather Map

Benny Cook N4BCC, provides a link to a really good national map which shows every airport having commercial operations. Hovering your mouse over the airport will bring a popup that shows the airport's location (lat/long/altitude), and the current weather conditions at that airport. The airport locations are color coded based on whether the weather at the airport is clear (VFR), or suffering from bad weather (IFR, VIFR, MVFR, etc.) The map also shows the coverage areas of the major air traffic control centers, including the off-shore lanes and military practice range areas. The map updates every 3 minutes. This is really cool.

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/zoa/mwmap3.php?map=usa>

Rockingham County ARES Net Continues Contingency Drills

Continuing through June, the Rockingham County ARES Net will make some random changes at least once a month to the operating frequency for the net. This is being done to familiarize those checking in to the net with the frequencies used by Rockingham Co. ARES during an emergency when the main repeater and/or backup repeaters may be off the air. These changes will NOT be announced. Please check these frequencies if the net is not on one of its regular frequencies. *In advance of the nets, program your radios accordingly.*



2-meter Repeaters in order of precedence are:

147.225 + 131.8 PL
(normal net repeater)

145.130 - 88.5 PL

146.625 - 131.8 PL

2meter Simplex frequencies
in order of precedence are:

146.55 (normal net simplex)

146.58

146.49

146.52 (National Calling Freq.)

Rockingham County ARES Net Control Stations – March through June 2011

March 7: K4LXG	May 2: KA4EEN
March 14: KA4EEN	May 9: K4RBZ
March 21: K4RMY	May 16: W3HXH
March 28: K4MIC	May 23: KN4FM
	May 30: K4MIC

April 4: K4NRA	June 6: KU4XN
April 11: KU4XN	June 13: K4NRA
April 18: KG4KUR	June 20: KG4KUR
April 25: NN4JM	June 27: NN4JM



Field Day Committee Meeting: Thursday, March 17

All hams are invited to participate in the Field Day planning. The first FD Committee meeting is scheduled for March 17 at 6:00 pm at the Burger King in Mount Crawford, corner of Route 257 and US 11.



2011 Field Day Committee L-R:

W4ZAO, KD4UPL, AA2BF,
N1QEQ, and NN4JM

Contesting! YES! On 160-meters, even! Top Hams on the Low Band!

Some of us like contesting! Especially CW contesting and it seems our favorite contests are the ones on 160 meters. We like the 160 tests because this is one band where everyone is forced to use some type of specialized - usually compromise - antenna. Specialized because the challenges on 160 are great. A normal half wave dipole for 160 is about 250 feet long and very few have the real estate for that. Therefore, most of us have to come up with some sort of compromise. A Yagi antenna is not practical because it would just be too large. A quarter wave vertical would be 125 feet high and few of us have "sky hooks" that tall.

And then there are the receive challenges. 160 meters is only useful at night when skywave propagation exists. 160 meters works best in the winter time when atmospheric noise is at its lowest at these longer wavelengths. Low noise and high gain antennas are a real challenge. Many schemes have been devised to build directional RX antennas - primarily for working Europe from here in the Eastern U.S.

One can compare 160 meter propagation characteristics to our AM Broadcast band (200 meters+). Locally, we can compare WBTX at Broadway on 1470 KHz. 1470 kHz equals 204 meters - about the same frequency as the 160 meter band we use. Just imagine trying to make WBTX heard in Europe! In fact, try to imagine making it heard lots of times and making a 2 way communication at that frequency. WBTX runs 5000 watts on AM and most of us run 100 watts - thus making it even more difficult! So you can see why we find it very rewarding to work Europe, South America, Alaska, Japan or Hawaii on 160 meters.

Another reason we like operating CW on 160 is because most folks are running at a comfortable 24 to 28 WPM. It's not like a lot of the CW contests where 35 to 40 WPM is the accepted "norm". I will be quick to point out that operating a contest on CW is nothing like carrying on a "rag-chew" on CW. In contesting it is much easier to go faster because you already know what is coming in the exchange. It's going to be a callsign followed by 599 and then a state or province abbreviation or a serial number. In a rag chew session, you best not anticipate what someone is going to say. Even those of us who may contest at 28 to 30 wpm will slow down real quick to 24 or 26 wpm, or even slower, during a rag chew exchange.

After the recent January CQ 160 CW contest, a compilation was made showing the scores, rigs and antennas of the locals who significantly participated. We shared this information with each other just because we were interested in seeing how we all did.

We share that information with you too so that you may be encouraged to give contesting, of some sort, a try. Now a contest is a contest - competition is expected. You will note however, that none of us were really trying to "win" anything. We were all just doing our own thing. It turns out that we all seemed to have similar goals. None of us spent a lot of time and none of us had scores that stood significantly above the rest. We were all competing with our individual selves. Al N3JB wasn't trying to outdo Jeff and Neal wasn't trying to "show off" his expertise - we were just having fun! Some observations were made among us about the scoring and antennas, power, etc. but it was all done in the spirit of camaraderie.

Those of us who enjoy CW also espouse the thrill of the contest regardless of mode. Contesting takes many forms. Some of us are playing around with RTTY contests and many have done VHF contests or SSB contests. There are even PSK contests. Whatever your passion is - put it to use.

Those of us who have shared our scores and antenna notes, etc. hope that some of you may catch the contesting spirit and enjoy it with us. These scores have been shared here with permission of each participant.

Jeff W4PJW

W4PJW



N4XU



N3JB



AD4TJ



KR4V



N4BCC



W2LYL



CQ 160meters CW JANUARY 29 2011

* all in no particular order

CALL	Qso's	Multipliers St/Pr/Cty	#DX Ctry	SCORE	MAX Pwr	LOG Pgm	EST Hrs	DX Clstr	ANTENNA DESCRIPTION
W2LYL	209	49	8	25,431	100	N3FJP	5.5	NO	Full Wave Loop @ 50' for XMT/RCV. Also for RX a 180' Center Fed Dipole @ 6' on the ends and CTR droops.
N3JB	325	68	16	54,654	500	N3FJP	15	NO	Inverted L XMT/RX - also a 4 Square as alternate RX
AD4TJ	448	55	11	68,706	500	CT	8	NO	Inverted L @ 30 feet
KR4V	371	66	20	67,450	100	N1MM	17	NO	43' Vertical matched at base with 52 radials
N4BCC	150		7	15,996	500	N3FJP	15	YES	Inverted L also a 204' G5RV-m at 55 feet
N4XU	472	68	17	81,872	150	N3FJP	16	NO	Off Center Fed (OCF) Window also a W9INN dipole @ 48 feet
W4PJW	331	48	14	49,352	100	N1MM	9	YES	250' Dipole fed with Ladder Line with the Center @ 85' and ends @ 30'

Misc. Notes: #DX is included in Multi/Sections

N4XU had the highest score but ran only 150 watts. **AD4TJ** had the lowest estimated hours on air with the least impressive antenna setup but had the second highest score.

W2LYL: Calling CQ I had 100 Qs per hour, but for short periods "cause I get too tired too quick! And QRT for R&R
DX: Aruba, Bahamas, Bonaire/Curacao, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canary Is., Mexico, Portugal and Slovak Rep.

N3JB: Couldn't last much past 2 AM both nites but I had fun, as usual. The band was quiet here, no "band noise" to mask weaker signals. I could hear DX on inverted L just as well as on my rcv'ing 4 sq.

DX: C6-FM--PJ2--P49--CR2--CS2--EF8--DR1--XE1--VP9--H18--CE1--KV4--V31--EE1--OK5
Locals worked: AD4TJ, N4BCC, W4PJW

AD4TJ: DX: Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Cuba, Portugal, Poland, Mexico, Bonaire/Curacao, Belize, Jamaica, Bermuda.
RIG: Icom 706MKIIG with 2 CW filters. Missed Idaho, South Dakota, and Alaska (never heard them).
Locals worked: N3JB, W4GRC, N4BCC, KR4V.

KR4V: I switched from CT to N1MM for the December 2010 contests and I really like N1MM. I only S&P because of my poor typing and the ESM works great for me.
Plans are in the works for K9AY loop system for receiving.

Locals worked: AD4TJ, N4BCC, W4PJW, N3JB

N4BCC: REMEMBER I CAN NOT HEAR THE CODE !!!!!!!!!!! BUT I TRY

N4XU: It's the best I've done in recent years. Might even take #1 Pennsylvania in the category - we'll see. Compared to last year, 150 more Q's, and about 25,000 more points.
DX: Aruba, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canary Is., Czech Rep., Dom Rep., England, Germany, Ireland, Kaliningrad, Martinique, Moldova, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Slovak Rep., Ukraine, Virgin Islands.

Locals worked: N3JB, N4BCC, KR4V

W4PJW: one time up to 3 a minute but that didn't last long - for 30 q's was up to 83 per hour. Tried ESM for a while - both running and S&P - that will take more practice.
DX: Bahamas, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Hungary, Bermuda, Curacao, Serbia, Dom. Rep., Aruba, US Vir. Is., Azores, Canary Is., Beliz, Luckily got HAWAII on 160.

RIG: Icom Pro3

Locals worked: N3JB, N4BCC, KR4V

Ken Miller, K8KMM, SK

Long-Time MARA Member Ken Miller, K8KMM, of Brandywine, West Virginia passed away January 27 after a courageous battle with cancer. Ken was born on Washington's birthday in 1930 in Annapolis, and was a U.S. Navy veteran. He retired in 1994 as facilities manager at the Sugar Grove Naval Base. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Rose Marie, a son, and four daughters, as well as 10 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. Until his illness, he was a regular visitor at the daily Harrisonburg "Burger-King" ham gatherings. He was very active in ham radio in the Franklin, West Virginia area, and was well-known by the community. He will be greatly missed.



Catherine (Kitty), XYL of Frank Forsyth, WD4LES

The wife of VARA life member Frank Forsyth, WD4LES, passed away on February 12. She was 94 years old, and married to Frank for 72 years. The Ham Community wishes to offer condolences to Frank on his loss.



SOTA: Summits on the Air – Club Project, Anyone?

First there was IOTA: islands on the Air. Now, there's SOTA: Summits on the Air. There is a movement to activate a ham radio operation from every major mountaintop in the world. So far, NONE of the mountains in the Rockingham/Augusta area have been activated for a special event for credit for SOTA. Might this be a fun project for a club for the spring or summer?

Here is a link to the summits in our area that need someone to activate:

<http://www.sotawatch.org/summits.php?region=634>

More information on the SOTA program can be found at:

<http://www.sota.org.uk/>

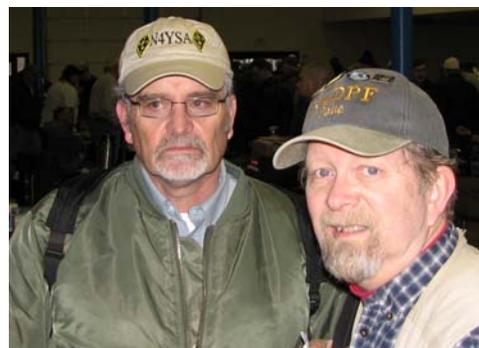
KJ4IND: Ham Radio to the Rescue

From his facebook account, Rick Adams KJ4IND reports on a recent real-life ham radio rescue:

"Sometimes old technology is better! Came upon a pretty serious auto accident a minute or so after it happened. A small pickup truck flipped over several times. Luckily the two people (who weren't wearing seat belts) were not thrown out, but they did have some minor (I think) injuries. Turns out, we were in a cell phone dead zone. My old tech HAM radio came in very handy this day."

Thanks, Rick, for helping the couple. When all else fails, "ham radio..."





Faces of Folks Finding the February FrostFest Fun

Say that three times really fast! As you can see from the smiling faces in these pictures, the Richmond Frostfest this year was a great one! Valley hams were in ample supply.

Starting in the upper left, we have Howard Zehr N9AHQ, Jeff Rinehart W4PJW, John Keller W4ZAO. Upper right is Mark Hensley N4YSA, and Dave Firestone K4DPF. Right: Al Bonck N3JB, Below Al is Sandy Mullins K4PZC (formerly of the valley, now of Heathsville Virginia). Below Sandy is Rodney Good K4DOD and to Rodney's right are Richard and Pam Wilkins KR4V and KC4HYT. In the bottom right corner is John Lasher N4GLZ and his XYL. To their left is Glenn Mingo KJ4VVP, and above Glenn is Herb Slade AA3BF. In the bottom left corner, left to right are

Richard Huttinger AA4RH, Al again, then Scott and Jim Newlen, KI4QQZ and KE4CAX. To the immediate left of this caption are Ray Colvin KE4HVR, Steve Davis KJ4CGI, and Gene Frazier KJ4HFO. Finally, Rick Adams KJ4IND is looking for more bargains.





Have you contacted Montana? Nebraska? QSO Parties are the Place!

There is an award for establishing a ham radio contact with one ham from each of the fifty states: The W.A.S. or the "Worked All States" award. Even if you're not interested in the award, it is fun to try to get all 50 states in your log. To help, each state holds its own "QSO Party" where hams from the state specifically try to get on the air to give out contacts for their states. Different state societies also give out special awards for contacting five, 10, 25 or more (depending on the state) stations in their state. Take a look at the calendar on the facing page and see how many state QSO parties are coming up! Tune around the HF bands and start racking up the states.

Another Caravan Planned for 2011 Dayton Hamvention

Jay Suter W4QDC, Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, John Keller W4ZAO, and a lot of others are already laying the groundwork for the annual valley ham trek to Dayton Ohio for the May 20-22 Hamvention. The caravan leaves Thursday morning after breakfast at 8:00 am (usually the Redwood Restaurant at I-64 and Route 11 in Lexington, right on the way), eats lunch at Bob Evans en route, and arrives at Dayton early Thursday afternoon. After spending Friday, Saturday, and possibly Sunday morning at the hamfest, the group drives back Sunday afternoon. Make plans now to join the group: the more the merrier!



Spring Public Service Season Beginning

After a nice hiatus for the winter weather, March and April open the Ham Radio Public Service Season. Big events are the April 16 March of Dimes Walk in Harrisonburg (an officially-sponsored activity of MARA), and the April 30 Waynesboro Riverfest (usually busy for VARA). These events provide a nice excuse to get out and spend the day using your radios.



Oodles and Oodles of Contests Coming Up!

Be honest! How long has it been since you took a weekend to have some fun racking up some new countries and QSL cards. We've got the ARRL DX Contest SSB weekend coming up March 5-6. Then there's the CQ-WW-WPX SSB contest on March 26-27. The ARRL Rookie Roundup is on April 17, and the CQ-M and ARI International contests are May 7-8. Make plans to spend the weekend in the shack!

Local Ham Calendar

March 1: VARA Club Meeting
 March 2: Highland County ARES Net
 March 3: MARA Club Meeting
 March 3: First Meeting of Staunton CERT Training
 March 4: PVARC Dinner Meeting
 March 5-6: ARRL International DX Contest SSB
 March 6: Page County ARES Net
 March 7: Rockingham County ARES Net simplex
 March 10: Augusta County ARES Net
 March 12: Charlotte NC Hamfest
 March 13: Daylight Savings Times starts at 2 a.m.
 March 13: Page County ARES Net
 March 14: Rockingham County ARES Net
 March 15: Virginia Statewide Tornado Emergency Drill
 March 16: Highland County ARES Net
 March 17: Field Day Committee Meeting
 March 19: Charleston WV Hamfest
 March 20: Page County ARES Net
 March 21: Rockingham County ARES Net
 March 26: Baltimore Hamboree Hamfest
 March 26-27: CQ WW WPX Contest SSB
 March 27: Page County ARES Net
 March 28: Rockingham County ARES Net

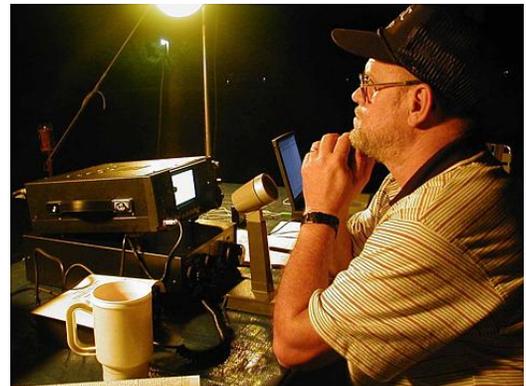
 April 1: PVARC Business Meeting
 April 2-3: Missouri QSO Party
 April 3: Page County ARES Net
 April 4: Rockingham County ARES Net simplex
 April 5: VARA Homebrew meeting
 April 7: MARA Homebrew meeting
 April 9: VE Exams—Dayton VA
 April 9-10: Montana QSO Party
 April 9-10: Georgia QSO Party
 April 10: Page County ARES Net
 April 11: Rockingham County ARES Net
 April 14: Augusta County ARES Net
 April 16: Harrisonburg March-of-Dimes Walk Public Service
 April 16-17: Michigan QSO Party
 April 16-17: Ontario QSO Party
 April 17: ARRL Rookie Roundup SSB
 April 17: Page County ARES Net
 April 18: Rockingham County ARES Net
 April 21: Field Day Committee Meeting
 April 23: Raleigh NC Hamfest
 April 23-24: Nebraska QSO Party
 April 30: Virginia Ham Radio Cruise-In (Charlottesville)
 April 30: Hagerstown Hamfest
 April 30: Augusta March of Dimes Walk
 April 30: Florida QSO Party
 April 30: Waynesboro Riverfest Public Service Event

May 3: VARA Club Meeting
 May 5: MARA Club Meeting
 May 6: PVARC Club Meeting
 May 7-8: CQ-M International DX Contest
 May 7-8: 7th Call Area Combined QSO Party
 May 7-8: Indiana QSO Party
 May 7-8: ARI International DX Contest
 May 7-8: New England Combined QSO Party
 May 20-22: Dayton OH Hamvention Hamfest
 May 28-29: CQ WW WPX Contest

June 11: VE Exams, Dayton VA
 June 11-13: ARRL June VHF QSO Party
 June 25-26: ARRL Field Day

August 7: Berryville (Winchester) Hamfest

October 1-2: Shenandoah 500 NVTRA motorbike ride



MARA Secretary's Report – February 3 Meeting

Meeting Called to Order at 7:32 PM

Attendance: 45 present - 32 Members and 13 Guests Bryan (K4RMY) conducted the meeting. Introductions made all around.

Reports:

New Members:

1st Reading: Trenton Good (AK4CV)

2nd Reading: John Hensley (WD4RXU); Ken Anderson (W4JQT); Robert Dixon (W8HGH) – all were unanimously approved as new members.

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

Treasurer Report: It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's report as printed in the Monitor. The balance as of January 27, 2011 was \$ 3,585.45.

Groups:

ARES/RACES: Bryan (K4RMY) mentioned they are having some issues with the 147.225 repeater. He also reminded everyone to be aware of the unannounced and random change to the operating frequency for the Rockingham County ARES net. Check the February Monitor for a complete list of the frequencies.

VEC-Session: The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, February 12, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton.

Public Service: None reported

Announcements: Mark your calendars and plan on attending the annual Richmond FrostFest Saturday, February 5th!

Reminder: The FCC requires that you keep your address up to date on the FCC database.

The deadline for the 2011 dues is tonight.

Also, remember that if you have a Virginia Amateur Radio license plate you are required to have a permanently mounted and working radio in your vehicle. A handheld does not count. You may be asked at any time by a police officer to verify your radio is indeed working.

Old Business: No update as to the status of the RMH radio equipment move. Chris (KI4BAQ) volunteered at our January meeting to re-search Sentara to see if we could determine their support of radio communication at other facilities.

New Business: Dave (KD9LA) – the MARA bylaws require an annual audit. Rick (KJ4IND) and Sheryl (KJ4DOC) volunteered to review the fiscal records for the previous year and will report back to the club.

VARA established their part of the Field Day committee at their last meeting. We are looking for three volunteers from MARA. It is VARA's turn to chair the committee. Herb (AA2BF), Bob (N1QEQ) and James (NN4JM) volunteered to serve. Last year, the committee met on the 2nd Tuesday at the Burger King in Mt. Crawford. John (W4ZAO), VARA President, announced we will need to find a tractor to mow the field. We also need to find a better way to manage the 30' tower as it is very heavy. We were reminded that this was actually discussed during our July 1, 2010 meeting and James (NN4JM) had offered a swap – he has a lighter tower he is willing to trade for the current tower.

It was also asked that the committee get volunteers to assist with the take down of all the equipment at the close of Field Day.

New Call or Upgrades: None reported

Motion to Adjourn: Made, seconded and approved.

50/50 Raffle: Total \$40.00. \$20.00 split won by Rick (KJ4AAE).

Program: We listened to a CD of the distress SOS telegraphy from the Titanic.

Submitted by
Sheryl M. Tonini
KJ4DOC



PVARC Secretary's Report – February 4 Meeting

The regular meeting of the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club was called to order by Vice President Dave Firestone/K4DPF at 1800 at Page Memorial Hospital in Luray. Members were asked to introduce themselves for the benefit of our visitor, subsequently introduced as Tim Ramey/AK4CJ. Tim was recognized as a visitor to the PVARC 2010 Field Day site in June. In the interim he has upgraded from Technician to Extra Class licensee!

The Secretary's Report/Minutes for the January 7th were approved as published in The Monitor. Sparky/KD4KL gave the Treasurer's Report, indicating that with dues received in the past three months the PVARC "strong-box" now totals \$394.00, more than enough to meet anticipated expenses – primarily in support of 2011 Field Day expenses. The motion was made/seconded and passed to approve the Treasurer's Report. Sparky gave a short run-down on his fruitless efforts to obtain a "no-cost" checking or saving account at local banks. Since most banks require a minimum daily balance of \$300 to \$500 we do not yet meet minimum qualifications. When the balance drops below the minimum, a monthly charge of \$6.00 would apply. Morgan/K4RHD, one of our PVARC Board Members volunteered to make inquiries and report back next month if successful. His help was gratefully accepted by the Secretary/Treasurer who stated that an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN), necessary for banking transactions, has been obtained which he will pass on to him.

Dave/K4DPF called for the following committee reports:

Membership Committee: Co-Chairman Geoffrey/WD4LYO discussed the consolidation of several data bases listing Page County radio amateurs. Once completed and purged of silent keys and inactive hams the new database program will be the basis for recruiting members for PVARC. This is an ongoing effort which he will report on from time to time over the next few months. The club secretary agreed to provide assistance in the endeavor.

Education/Training Committee: Chairman Morgan/K4RHD outlined some ideas under consideration. In conjunction with Bob/WO4MI, co-chair of the School Outreach Subcommittee, they propose to conduct a demonstration of amateur radio capabilities to a school in the county. Bob agreed to take the lead in making contact with one or more school principals and see if any interest is generated. Morgan also suggested that the club should follow-up with The Mountain Vista Governors School radio club and perhaps mentor them in their attempt to build their school radio station. He also thought it would be a good idea to invite these new hams to our 2011 Field Day site, or alternatively, to help them set up their own station for field day by providing technical assistance. These ideas were enthusiastically supported by the membership.

Emergency Preparedness Committee: Chairman Dave/K4DPF summarized several programs under his purview. He began by talking about recent changes made by IT Managers at Page Memorial Hospital that affect the operation of the associated Emergency Operation Center. Essentially, all the existing HF/VHF/UHF equipment can be operated without accessing Valley Health Information System EXCEPT in the digital modes. PVARC EoC operators are not allowed direct access to the hospitals' computer network. However, he has not experienced any difficulty in having an authorized PMH person log on so access to the internet is available using PACTOR based WinLink2000 or VHF pactor capability. More communicators are needed to adequately staff the EoC facility. Training will be provided. Bob/WO4MI, Morgan/K4RHD & Sparky/KD4KL agreed to take the training. It was generally agreed that PVARC needs to step up to the plate by regularly manning the EoC – perhaps beginning with calling the Sunday ARES Net as a means of exercising the station on a scheduled basis.

Field Day Subcommittee: Chairman Dave/K4DPF announced that ARRL has released the 2011 Field Day package which he will download in the next few days. He reminded everyone that it's not too soon to begin planning! He is proposing one change this year, in antennas, and is recommending the construction of a 50' high, 40/80m loop sky wire anchored at five points (launched with our new spud guns) and fed with coax through a tuner. Stay tuned! He will be looking for parts at FrostFest this weekend.

Topping of the committee reports, Geoffrey/WD4LYO reported that he hopes to re-convene the Website/dBase Working Group. He will be working with Carol/KA4LAF & Dave/K4DPF on web issues and the Secretary in developing a consolidate dBase of Page County amateurs.

There being no old business, VP Dave/K4DPF asked if there was any new business to discuss. Morgan/K4RHD suggested that PVARC adopt an ARES Net Plan for Page County, similar to that established and published by the Rockingham County ARES Net in the current issue of The Monitor. He thought we might expand on the Rockingham schedule by indicating not only the primary net control station, but also a secondary or "back-up" station to call the net in the event the primary is unable to do so. He also noted that pre-scheduling the dates and calling frequencies was a great way to keep everyone "on the same channel" and in the loop. If in doubt, check The Monitor! This topic generated many comments and will be further discussed.

VP Dave/K4DPF advised everyone that the next PVARC meeting would be held on Friday, March 4th, 2011, at Brown's Chinese Restaurant in Luray and he hoped that everyone would come and enjoy the ever popular "Eatin' Meetin" and eyeball QSO time together. This meeting was adjourned at 1900.

Submitted by: Sparky Terry/KD4KL, PVARC Secretary

VARA Secretary's Report – February 1 Meeting

The monthly meeting of the VARA was held at the Staunton Shoney's on February 1, 2011 at 7:00pm
22 were present including 2 visitors. 50/50 winner was Steven Grant W4IIV

David Tanks AD4TJ gave the ARES report: The local ARES net was not called - OOPS!
This month's net will be Feb 10th at 8pm - 147.075 report

Secretaries report was given by Steven Grant W4IIV and was accepted. Treasurers report was given by Doug Tippet
N8ESW and was accepted

Field day committee so far (tentative)

John Keller W4ZAO
Scott Newlen KI4QQZ

Should your name be on this list? This year we hope to find more people to operate radios.
Jeff Rinehart W4PJW commented that the VHF tower we use at FD can be very dangerous to put up. Any ideas? Buy a
winch?? Why don't more people attend FD? Location? Who will mow the site this year?

We donated 92 pounds of food at the Christmas party. It all has been donated to the Blue Ridge Food Bank.

New Business:

it was decided that the April meeting should be used to feature members gear and home brew equipment.
The VARA adjourned at 7:39 pm

The after meeting presentation was on the beverage antenna by Al Bonck N3JB

Steven Grant W4IIV



MARA Treasurer's Report – January 27, 2011 to February 25, 2011

Beginning Balance January 27, 2011 (last report)		\$ 3,585.45
Add:		
Memberships renewals (6 renewals)	\$ 72.00	
New Member Applications (3 members)	\$ 36.00	
February Meeting 50/50 club portion	<u>\$ 20.00</u>	
Total Receipts	\$ 128.00	
Less		
Bank Fees	\$ 12.00	
Reimbursement for January Speaker's Dinner	\$ 14.34	
Annual Corporation Filing—VA State Corp Commission	<u>\$ 25.00</u>	
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ -51.34</u>	
Ending Balance as of February 25, 2011		\$ 3,662.11

Submitted by David Fordham, KD9LA, MARA Treasurer

MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Bryan Daniels, K4RMY
 Vice President: Gerry Brunk, K4RBZ
 Secretary: Sheryl Tonini, KJ4DOC
 Treasurer: David Fordham, KD9LA
 Board (exp 2011): James McDowell IV, NN4JM
 Board (exp 2012): Mike Turner, K4MIC

<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: John Keller W4ZAO
 Vice President: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
 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 starts at 6:00 pm,
 the business meeting starts at 7:00 pm

Visitors are 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 under construction (?)

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.
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