

July-August-September  
2011

# THE MONITOR

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

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## Three Month's of the Monitor for the Price of One!

Dave, KD9LA, The Monitor editor has been out of town for almost three straight months, sleeping in his own bed only six nights since mid-May. But now he's back, and here is all the latest news from the Shenandoah Ham Scene.

### **COMBINED MARA-VARA MEETING**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**

### **WOOD GRILL IN HARRISONBURG**

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association will team up with the Valley Amateur Radio Association for a combined, joint, monthly meeting. The special meeting uses VARA's Meeting *Date*, and MARA's Meeting *Location*!

The program will be a special one on E-QSL'ing.

The dinner will start at 6:00 p.m. at the Wood Grill on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg, Virginia, across from the Harrisonburg Rescue Squad, behind Sheetz Gas Station at Reservoir and University Blvd.

Each club will have an abbreviated business meeting, VARA at 7:00 pm and MARA at 7:30 pm. A major topic of discussion will be the location of the annual joint Field Day event in the future. Finally, a special program will begin at 8:00 pm and last approximately 20 minutes: a video presentation on E-QSL's.

## **Friday, September 2: PVARC Dinner Meeting at Brown's Restaurant**

The normal bi-monthly dinner meeting of the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club will be held at Brown's Chinese Restaurant on Main Street in Luray on Friday evening September 2 starting at 6 pm. Guests are welcome.

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## VARA President's Message

I want to thank Alby and Gordon for teaching our Tech class for the Staunton Recreation Department this summer; they had 6 students and hopefully some new members to VARA.. Please say thank you to Alby and Gordon for taking their time every Monday night to teach the classes.

Welcome back everyone from your vacations and home improvement projects. Another summer is behind us and time to get ready for Hurricane Irene and several community projects and hopefully back on the radio for contests, rag chewing and dx'ing.

I want to take a moment and thank everyone who sent cards and emails to me and my YL (Ann) when my dad passed away on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Your thoughts and prayers were very much appreciated. If it hadn't been for him giving me his father's call sign W4ZAO stand, I may not have gotten into being a HAM! He will be missed, but every time I enter my shack I know he's right there, cheering me on.

Now on to all the activities that are on the calendar for the next couple of months and I do hope you all will take part in all or some of the events.

Hurricane Irene is heading our way and David Tanks (Ad4TJ) has been doing a great job in keeping all of us informed on preparing for her. Please make sure your home and family are ready for this event and also check all your emergency gear and keep in touch with David, so if we need you we can get in touch with you.

September 6<sup>th</sup> – We are trying to arrange a special program for September. First the meeting will be at the Woods Grill in Harrisonburg and NOT at Shoney's this month because we are combining both clubs that night for this program. The meeting will start at 7:00pm, dinner at 6:00pm, program at 8:00pm. Both clubs will have a quick monthly meeting and then we will watch the video from Dave Morris N5UP, founder and webmaster for eQSL.. And while we have both clubs together, it's an ideal time to discuss the possibility of a more convenient location for our joint annual Field Day operation, perhaps one that will be more publicly visible, easier to access, and yet still allow us to have the fun and fellowship we're used to.

September 10<sup>th</sup> – The VARA picnic at Gypsy Hill Park, starts at 12:00, we will be located on the hill by the armory and of course you could come a little early and help set up, (just a thought). We will have hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks provided, PLEASE bring a side dish and your folding chair. It was a great time had by all last year and I for one will be there again this year. Of course bring the YL and kids, grandkids etc. Hope to see you there!

In Early October we have 4 races that we have always volunteered our services and hope you will help out with 1 or more of them this year. I have volunteered to be the coordinator of the Grindstone 100 this year and will be looking for volunteers to man this 100 mile course.

We are off to a fast pace September and October so catch up on your sleep, get your house and emergency gear ready and let's show the community how we are ready for ANY event that comes our way!

*John Keller W4ZAO  
President, VARA*

## VARA Family Picnic: September 10 Gypsy Hill Park

Yes, it's still on! Arrive any time after 10:30 a.m., and we'll eat at noon. Bring a covered dish, bring the whole family, and have some fun!

## PVARC President's Message

PVARC once again had a wonderful Field Day with a larger turnout than previous years. We also had more operators, we had some modes we had not used at Field Days past, and we had the typical good food prepared by Morgan Phenix-K4RHD, chef extraordinaire.

The PVARC artillery Unit (Gene Frazier-KJ4HFO's spud gun) had no trouble at all hanging antennas. And on that note, we switched this year to a Horizontal loop built by Dave Firestone-K4DPF which worked very well.

Our solar station was provided by Morgan Phenix which garnered a lot of interest and worked exceptionally well.

We had numerous new operators who operated as if they had been doing it for years. And the graveyard shift had fun, but had to make a McDonald's run in the middle of the night.

I would like to thank each and every one who had any part in Field Day and made it a success.

*Mark Hensley-N4YSA. PVARC President*

## New Weather Station: N4JKX

Carol Landes, N4JKX has installed a new Peet Brothers 2100 WX Station. The photos show Carol on July 21 (the day the outside temperature was 97 degrees!). Don, WX4C, served as ground crew for the installation.



## Alan Nicol, KJ4DOB, SK

MARA member Alan Nicol, KJ4DOB, of Broadway, passed away August 24, losing a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 68 years old, and had been a ham for over two years. He was former manager of the local Swift Poultry Plant, and later founded and operated The Printing Express on South Main St in Harrisonburg for 18 years. He also briefly operated the Dollar Tree store on East Market Street for a while after retirement. A former Eagle Scout, he served as Scoutmaster, and counted Bryan KG4JOE among the scouts in his troop. He was active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and got his ham ticket to participate in the Church's disaster preparedness and relief team, the Mercury Amateur Radio Association. He is survived by his wife of over 45 years, Vivian, as well as their nine (9) children, and 30 grandchildren.

## PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTS

### PVARC Members Provide Communication for the Page Valley Road Race

Ham radio communication once again proved to save the day this summer in Page County, Virginia. For years, Page Valley Cycling has operated a championship bicycle race in central Page County, drawing top amateur athletes from throughout the region. But the unique challenge of the hilly course also offered a logistical challenge – cell phones and portable walkie-talkies proved inadequate to communicate over some of the bigger hills. Thus, road guards – charged with stopping motorists so the bike racers can pass through safely and unimpeded – were sometime caught unaware as large groups of cyclists passed through the course.



So, this year, Page Valley Cycling approached the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club for assistance. Members of the club communicated with road guards on either side of the major climbs in the course; while others communicated through blind corners, allowing for a smoother and safer operation of the race.

“We couldn’t have done it without the kind assistance of the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club,” said promoter Christopher Gould. Club members also assisted with actual road guard duties, which are authorized to perform their functions through a special permit with V-DOT and with assistance from local law enforcement officials.

The photo shows the actual race, at one of the turns where having ham radio coverage is critical. All it takes is for one biker to lose traction on one of these turns, and a fun time turns into a disaster. Communication support is vital.

In all, 334 racers participated in the Page Valley Road Race on August 6th, a part of the entire weekend of racing, dubbed the Tour of Page County, in which a total of 533 racers participated. The weekend before, members of the radio club also assisted in Page Valley Cycling’s Shenandoah Time Trial in the south part of the county, in which nearly 200 racers competed for the fastest time in individual heats against the clock.

With their assistance, the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club not only assured a safe and fun event, they also contributed to the economic vitality of the area’s tourist economy, not to mention the fact that the official charity for this year’s road race was the all-volunteer Kibler Library in Stanley. While the full range of data from the 2011 events are not yet fully tabulated, with the expanded events from last year, Gould anticipates the this year surpassed last year’s estimate of between \$55 and \$77 thousand that bike racers spent in Page County on race weekend.

Gould has even bigger plans for 2012, including a possible multi-day stage race, the championship road race, and the Shenandoah Time Trial. With communication challenges up the hollows and over hilly roads, there is no doubt the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club will be vital to the success of these future events!

## PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTS

### Bridgewater Lawn Party Public Service Event Report

Thanks to those who helped with the Friday and Saturday Parades at the Bridgewater Lawn Party: All hands did a great job, There were many expressions of appreciation from the police department and town citizens. This is a great public project to showcase the ham radio community to the public. Again, thanks to those who helped:



Ray Ritchie, K4NRA  
 Nancy Ritchie KG4JAZ  
 Chris Shirkey, KI4BAQ  
 Bryan Daniels K4RMY  
 Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG  
 Andrew Pearson N4RCE  
 E.C. Showalter, KG4KUR  
 Gerald Nauman, KN4FM  
 Gordon Batey, WA4FJC, and  
 James Franklin, W4SIU

### ARES Drill with the HRECC Cache Team

On the very hot morning of Saturday July 23, Rockingham Co. ARES conducted a drill with the Harrisonburg Rockingham Emergency Communications Center Cache Team. HRECC is one of a number of emergency communication caches in the Virginia. The team has two trailers, one just for an 80 foot pneumatic tower with storage and another with a smaller tower with room for a communications setup and lots of storage for lots of communications equipment.

*Continued on next page*



## PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTS

### ARES Drill with the HRECC Cache Team (*continued*)

The premise of the drill was that the JMU Convocation Center, which it is designated as an evacuation shelter for Virginia, was activated as such. ARES members would be tasked with setting up both a local communications link and HF to communicate to the Richmond Emergency Operations Center. As part of the drill, an VHF station was setup in the smaller trailer using the pneumatic mast to mount a VHF/UHF antenna using ARES equipment. There was no real need to raise the mast for VHF. The larger trailer was used to mount a multiband dipole. This mast was raised and lowered several times as you will see below.

An HF command post was setup in the Convo center with a run of approximately 125 feet of cable from the command center thru a garage door and out to the tower trailer. Glenn KJ4VVP supplied the HF rig. Once everything was setup VDEM was called on 75m. It seems they were able to hear us but we were unable to hear them due to the extremely high noise floor encountered in the Convo. We tried several bands and frequencies to no avail. We tried raising and lower the antenna and no luck. Finally John N3GLZ established a connection with VDEM using a dual band cross repeat rig in his vehicle and an HT in the command center. VDEM then turned their 2m beam toward the .075 repeater and communications were finally established.

After things were dismantled, the ARES and HRECC folks had a very enjoyable and cool lunch at the CSAT dining hall at JMU.

ARES participants were:

Chris KI4BAQ, Gayle KU4XN, Bryan K4RMY, Ray K4NRA,  
Gerald KN4FM, John N3GLZ, Herb AA2BF, Don WX4C, and  
Glenn KJ4VVP, Ray K4NRA, Anne KA1LSK.

HRECC participants with ham licenses were:

Jim W4JLJ (Director of the HRECC),  
Ray KJ4MWQ and  
Paul N4VWJ

*Right: hams taking part in the ARES Drill in Harrisonburg (see facing page), Left to Right: Glenn KJ4VVP, Don WX4C, Gayle KU4XN, Ray K4NRA, Chris KI4BAQ, and Herb AA4BF*



## VE TEST SESSION REPORTS

### VE June Session Report

We have three people show up for testing at our June session, and all three earned something. We have one new Technician, and two new General class hams. Thanks to those who gave up a Saturday morning of their time to help with this important service:

**Jim Lehman, W4POL**  
**Gerald Nauman KN4FM**  
**Bob VanFossen K4DJG**  
**Ellsworth Neff K4LXG**  
**Michael McKay W4AZR**  
**Bryan Daniels K4RMY**  
**E. C. Showalter KG4KUR**

Our next testing session will be Saturday, October 8 at the Woodmen of the World Building south of Harrisonburg.

*Gayle Shull, KU4XN*



### VE August Session Report

We have five people show up for testing at our August session, and all five earned an upgrade or a ham license. Thanks to those who gave up a Saturday morning of their time to help with this important service:

**Don Landes WX4C**  
**Gerald Nauman KN4FM**  
**Bob VanFossen K4DJG**  
**Glen Thompson W4GWT**  
**Richard Haxton KC3AN**  
**Michael McKay W4AZR**  
**Bryan Daniels K4RMY**  
**Mike Turner K4MIC**

Our next testing session will be Saturday, October 8 at the Woodmen of the World Building south of Harrisonburg.

*Gayle Shull, KU4XN*

## PUBLIC SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### The Non-Triple Play Public Service Event: October 1-2, and October 7-9

This year — due to the October calendar — the Triple Play will be a double play. Two of the events this year will be held on Oct 1-2 along with a single play on Oct 7-9 rounding out the third.

On October 1 and 2 the KTM 500 motorcycle ride will take place in Augusta and Rockingham Counties and the George Washington National Forest. As of the writing of this, no one has stepped forward to organize the Valley Hams for this event. If you would be willing to head this up please contact Bryan K4RMY (k4rmy@arrl.net) for additional information. There will be a very large number of riders leaving from Natural Chimneys both mornings and traveling to various locations in VA and WVA. Both days we need around 10 volunteers to man communications at the various check points along the route. As of this time there will be a simplex net control setup at Flagpole Knob. If you would be interested in helping out please contact Bryan K4RMY and he will put you in touch with the coordinator for this event.



On Sunday Oct 2 there will be a horse ride for Camp Still Meadows that will need a number of volunteers for communications. The event begins after a wonderful breakfast at around 0900 and will last into the afternoon. For additional information please contact Ray K4NRA (k4nra@verizon.net).

The Grindstone 100 will take place on Oct. 7-9 starting from Camp Shenandoah Boy Scout Camp in Swope. This is a grueling 101 mile out and back FOOT race in GW National Forest over the course of 2 days. There will be repeater setup on Reddish Knob this year that will be used for communications. If you are interested in helping please contact John Keller W4ZAO either by phone, at a club meeting, or email to eaglehiker@hotmail.com. Our role in this event this year is still unknown as of press time, but it would be great to have some hams geared up and ready to go in case we are called upon to man some of the aid stations.



(As a quick side note Richard KI4RIT from Lynchburg is looking for volunteers to help with communications for the Shenandoah Mt. 100 Bike race on Sept. 3 also in the GW National Forest. Contact Richard at ki4rit@gmail.com.)

### Fall Foliage Festival Bike Ride: October 21-23

The Fall Foliage Bike Ride this year is scheduled for October 21-23, about a week later than normal. More information will be forthcoming in the September and October VARA and MARA club meetings.

The Editor has received no

## INDIVIDUAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### Staunton to Offer FREE Community Emergency Response Team Classes

The Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and Augusta County will be offering Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training to those who live or work in Augusta County, Staunton, or Waynesboro this fall. CERT training will be held on Thursday evenings, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., September 15 – November 10, at the CSPDC office in Staunton. The training is free and all materials will be provided. The attached flyer provides additional information.

If you would like to register for the training, please either email or call me with your mailing address and a daytime phone number. If you have any questions about the training, I'll be happy to answer them. Instead of worrying about severe weather and emergencies, why not learn what to do to protect yourself – taking CERT training is a great opportunity!

Rebecca Leigh Joyce  
Senior Planner  
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place; Staunton, Virginia 24401  
Phone: 540-885-5174 e-mail: rebecca@cspdc.org



### Free SkyWarn Classes: Upper Tract, WV on September 27

SkyWarn is an organization of volunteers who are trained to spot and report severe weather situations. SkyWarn volunteers help the National Weather Service (NOAA) extend their eyes and ears into remote areas, including the western Virginia and eastern West Virginia areas. There are over 100 SkyWarn volunteers in the Shenandoah Valley area. Most Skywarn Volunteers are ham radio operators.

SkyWarn volunteers are provided with a special 1-800 phone number to report events such as hail, wall clouds (precursors to tornadoes), high winds, circular cloud motion, heavy rain, severe thunderstorms, and also to give accurate snowfall measurements during winter storms. Additionally, the ham radio SkyWarn net is activated during expected severe weather to speed up the reporting process.

SkyWarn volunteers must undergo a 3-hour training session so that their reports will be consistent and accurate. These training sessions are completely free of charge, and volunteers are provided with information, literature, and reference materials at no cost.

The next SkyWarn class in this area will be held at the Upper Tract (WV) volunteer Fire Department Training Center. If you are interested in becoming a SkyWarn volunteer, contact Sue Sites, at 304-358-3889.



## CONTESTS, AWARDS AND HONORS

### Local Hams Collect Awards in the 2011 VA QSO Party

Here is a copy of the certificate earned by long-time MARA member **Neal Layman N4XU** for winning the statewide top score for Pennsylvania in the low power category in the 2011 Virginia QSO Party, racking up 16,360 points. Way to go, Neal!

VARA President **John Keller W4ZAO** won the highest score in Augusta County in the low power category, with 11,600 points.

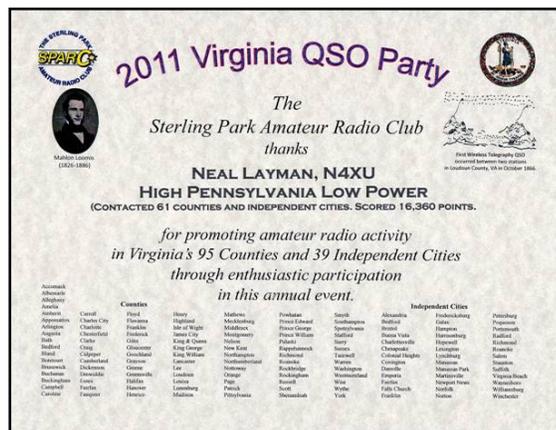
VARA Vice-President **Jeff Rinehart W4PJW** earned the high score for Augusta County in the Mixed Low Power category with 43,021 points.

**James Stoneback, K4ZXF** of Grottoes won the high score in Rockingham County in the CW QRP category with 13,538 points. MARA Member **Gene Sullivan WA4NUF** won the high score in Rockingham County in the Phone low power category with 34,420 points.

PVARC Vice-President **Dave Firestone K4DPF**, won the Page County Mixed low power category with 58,019 points.

VARA Member **Gordon Batey WA4FJC**, scored 1,988 points in the low power category.

**Wayne Shifflett KI4ORU** of Weyers Cave scored 5,792 points. James Alpine, K8SJP, of Harrisonburg, scored 15,053 in the low power CW category. MARA member **Paul Wyse W4PFM**, scored 48,290 in the low power mixed category. VARA member Benny Cook N4BCC scored 11, 747 points in the low power phone category.



### Official Results show Local Hams Doing Well in 160m Contest

Some local hams participated in the ARRL 2010 160 Meter CW contest this past December, and the results are now in. In Eastern Pennsylvania, **Neal N4XU** came in second in the Low-Power( no more than 150 watts ) category, with 47,679 points. In Virginia, the following hams scored: In the Low-Power category, **Richard Wilkins KR4V** came in 4th with 46,512 points. **David Tanks AD4TJ** came in 7th with 29,755 points. In the High-Power category, **Al Bonck N3JB** came in 7th with 61,803 points. In the Multi-Op category, **Benny Cook N4BCC** (with **James McDowell NN4JM** guest operating) came in 7th with 139,018 points. In the same category, **Jeff Rinehart W4PJW** came in 12th with a score of 78,736 points. Congratulations to these hams!

### John Keller W4ZAO Finishes W.A.S.

VARA President **John Keller W4ZAO** has worked all 50 states. Delaware and South Carolina were among his last ones worked, and John snagged number 50, the elusive Hawaii, the last weekend in August during the Hawaii QSO party. Now all he has to do is wait on the last few confirmations and presto, a WAS Certificate will be his!

# FIELD DAY REPORT

Thanks to Sandy Mullins, K4PZC, for providing the following official VARA/MARA Joint Field Day Report.

Call Used: W4XD GOTA Station Call: K4MRA ARRL/RAC Section: VA Class: 2A

Participants: 66 Club/Group Name: Massanutten and Valley A.R.A.

Power Source(s): Generator, Battery, Solar

Power Multiplier: 2X

Bonus Points:

100% Emergency power	200
Media Publicity	100
Set-up in Public Place	100
Information Booth	100
NTS message to ARRL SM/SEC	100
W1AW Field Day Message	100
Formal NTS messages handled - No.=10	100
Natural power QSOs completed	100
Site Visit by invited elected official	100
Site Visit by invited served agency official	100
Youth participation	80
Youth operators 4	
Youth participants 4	
GOTA Bonus	160
Submitted via the Web	50
Educational activity	100

Total Bonus Points 1,490

Contact Score Summary:

	CW	Digital	Phone	Total
Total QSOs	825	23	1625	
Total Points	1650	46	1625	3321

Claimed Score = 6,642



# FIELD DAY 2011 PHOTOS



**JOINT  
MARA/VARA**



**PVARC**



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Local Ham Calendar

Net Schedules can be found at: <http://mara.ws>

September 2: PVARC Dinner Meeting at Browns in Luray  
 September 4: Shenandoah 100 Bike Race ???  
 September 6: Joint VARA-MARA meeting at Wood Grill Hburg  
 September 10: VARA Annual Family Picnic in Staunton  
 September 10-12: ARRL VHF QSO Party  
 September 15: CERT Classes begin in Staunton  
 September 17: Bike Shenandoah Bike Ride  
 September 17: Virginia Beach Hamfest

October 1-2: Shenandoah 500 NVTRA Motorbike ride  
 October 2: Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride  
 October 4: VARA Club Meeting: Shoneys in Staunton  
 October 6: MARA Club Meeting: Wood Grill in Harrisonburg  
 October 7: PVARC Business Meeting at Hospital in Luray  
 October 7-9: Grindstone 100 mountain Footrace  
 October 8: VE Exams, Dayton VA  
 October 14-16: Jamboree on the Air Scouting Special Event  
 October 17-21: ARRL School Club Roundup Special Event  
 October 21-23: Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival

November 1: VARA Meeting  
 November 4: PVARC Meeting  
 November 5-7: ARRL November DX Sweepstakes CW  
**November 10: MARA Meeting – NOTE DATE CHANGE!**  
 November 19-21: ARRL DX Sweepstakes Phone

## Rockingham County ARES Net Control Stations

Sep 1: KU4XN	Nov 7 K4NRA
Sep 12 K4LXG	Nov 14 K4LXG
Sep 19 K4RBZ	Nov 21 KG4KUR
Sep 26 K4RMY	Nov 28 KU4XN
Oct 3 K4NRA	Dec 5 K4RMY
Oct 10 KA4EEN	Dec 12 K4RBZ
Oct 16 W3HXX	Dec 19 W3HXX
Oct 24 K4MIC	Dec 26 K4MIC
Oct 31 KN4FM	

## Virginia Beach Hamfest: September 17

The Virginia Beach Hamfest is at the Convention Center again this year. They have 50% more vendors than previous years, and will be holding drawings every hour startizng at the early-bird opening time of 8:00 a.m. A special feature this year is having solar specialist Frank Donovan W3LPL speaking on Solar Cycle 24. The convention center is at 1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach. Talk-in is on the 146.97 repeater. The website for ordering advance tickets and other information is: <http://www.vbhamfest.com>

## SunSpot Activity Stalled: Another “Maunder Minimum” Coming?

Check out the website: <http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=33826>

This Space Reference site cites three independent solar research projects, all three of which are predicting that Sunspot Cycle 24 is already pretty-much over, and there may not be a Cycle 25, or even 26! The researchers all used completely different criteria, including the sun’s inner pulsations, magnetic flux trends, “jet” stream, temperature trends, and most important, the measures of the internal structure of what’s going on inside the sun. Not only is Cycle 24 dormant, but the early indicators they expected to find of Cycle 25 are completely missing! “This is highly unusual, and completely unexpected,” Dr. Frank Hill of the National Solar Observatory said, “But the fact that all three views of the sun point in the same direction is a powerful indicator that the whole Sunspot Cycle activity may be going into hibernation ... perhaps for several decades.” The sun was completely spotless for 70 years between 1645 and 1715. Could this be the beginning of another Maunder Minimum?

# VARA

## VARA Secretary's Report – June 7 Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Valley Amateur Radio Association was held at the Staunton Shoneys on 6-7-2011 at 7:00pm 22 people attended. 17 members. 5 visitors. The winner of the 50/50 was W4IIV Steven Grant.

David Tanks AD4TJ gave the ARES report:

Remember that its hurricane, and tornado seasons. Make sure that all your equipment is working, and your batteries are charged. We still need volunteers for the ARES net held on the 2nd Thursday of every month usually on 146.850mhz at 8pm.

The secretary's report given by Steven Grant W4IIV was read and accepted by the members.

The treasurer's report given by Doug Tippett N8ESW was read and accepted by the members.

Dayton Hamvention Report: There was a good turnout by us at the Dayton hamfest this year. New antennas were featured, no freebies this year though. If you never have went to the Dayton hamfest, you need to go

Field Day Report: We need someone to work the satellite station this year - its worth 100 points for a satellite QSO.

Also, we will need someone to bring down the cherry picker after field day, its on a trailer.

The HF digital station will share the trailer and equipment with the CW station.

Boy Scout Camporee Special Event Report: A couple of kids showed interest in amateur radio, 4 amateurs participated and we let the kids talk.

Ham Radio Classes Report: 6 students showed up (7 were expected). Come if you want to help. The classes are held at the Nelson Street Teen Center.

New Member Application: Glen Thompson W4GWT had his application's 1st reading.

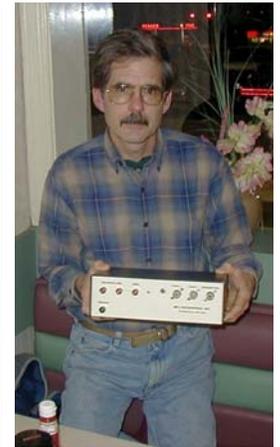
VE Testing: Dont forget the VE testing sessions held in Dayton Va.

New Business: It was passed that the VARA will meet during the summer

EQSL founder David L. Morris N5UP is scheduled to be with us in September to give a program on EQSL.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

STEVEN GRANT W4IIV



# VARA

## VARA Secretary's Report – July 5 Meeting

The July VARA meeting was held Tuesday July 5th 2011, 7:00pm at the Staunton Shoney's. Vice President Jeff Rinehart W4PJW Presided. 17 people showed up, 3 werzzze visitors. No 50/50 was drawn

ARES report: For updates, and other local ARES announcements you need to be a member of the "valley hams" groups on Google. Remember we are always looking for volunteers for the ARES net.

Secretary's Report was given and approved. Treasurer's Report was given and approved.

The classes this week had 7 students, The classes were moved to the conference room at Montgomery Hall Park Conference room. The classes are usually held on Monday at 6pm.

Field Day Report: Phone did 1133 QSOs. CW did about 900 QSOs - did have many CW operators. 6 meters did over 400 QSOs. We had 2 kids work the GOTA station with 20 QSOs each. We had others work the GOTA station also. We tried the digital modes, but the transmitter was interfering with the computer's sound card. There were lots of PSK sigs. We switched to RTTY and the setup worked a lot better. We did try satellite mode - heard ARISS but did not work it. Satellites are hard to do!

The cherry picker we rented worked out very well, tear down was fast.

If you need to be reimbursed for FD expenses, submit the receipts to Doug.

Location was discussed - why do we hold field day on the mountain?? Could there be a better location?? Nothing was decided.

Ever try to Google VARA? Do we need a new name?? Any Ideas?

Glen Thompson W4GWT was accepted as a member of the VARA.

Looked over the old times with the "Happy birthday USA" celebrations.

How can we get the public more interested in Ham Radio? Nothing decided.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02

Steve Grant, W4IIV  
MARA Secretary



# VARA

## VARA Secretary's Report – August 2 Meeting

The August VARA meeting was held Tuesday August 2nd 2011, 7:00pm at the Staunton Shoney's. We had 19 show up, 2 were visitors. 50/50 winner was Gordon Batey WA4FJC

ARES report: The ARES website is still having issues, we cannot register anyone. Remember it is hurricane season, be ready.

Please also remember that we need net control stations for the ARES net.

The secretary's was read and agreed to. The treasurer's report was read and agreed to.

Radio Classes: We had 7 students total with great participation. We had: 4 men, 1 lady, 2 kids

Discussion:

Move the field day site? Reasons why: Gas is \$3.50 a gallon. The present site is not easy to get to. The present site is too far away. There are points for public exposure, the present site is kinda hidden away. Field day is a great opportunity to recruit new hams if they can see us.

How does the MARA feel about this? We have always done field day together.

The September meeting of the VARA will be a joint meeting with the MARA at the Wood Grill Buffet september 6th at 7:00pm in Harrisonburg. The president of EQSL will be there to explain the service, and sign people up.

Remember our picnic will be on September the 10th. 10:30am setup, 12:00 noon eating, bring a covered dish

Our president John Keller W4ZAO wishes to thank everyone for the cards and well wishes on his dad's passing.

Meeting was adjourned at 8 pm

Steve Grant, W4IIV  
VARA Secretary



# PVARC

## PVARC Secretary's Report – June 3 Business Meeting

The Page Valley Amateur Radio Club met on Friday, June 3rd in the Day Room at Page Memorial Hospital in Luray. Mark/N4YSA called the business meeting to order at 1800.

Following a round of member self-introductions guests were recognized: Bob Forrest/WO4I introduced Gene Haimes who is interested in amateur radio and looking for help in selecting repeater frequencies commonly used in the valley to program into his scanner. James Franklin/W4SIU introduced himself; and, returning visitors Larry & Ester Miller (KB6UAA & KK6AO) were welcomed once again to our meeting.

The Minutes of the May 6th meeting as compiled by Dave/K4DPF and subsequently edited and forwarded to The Monitor by the absent Secretary – were approved as submitted.

The Treasurer reported for the April/May time period was called for, \$12.00 received for dues. An expenditure of \$60.00 to reserve the Field Day operating site at Lake Arrowhead was noted. The current balance as of April 29, 2011 is \$343.36, with \$24.00 cash from dues paid last month but not yet deposited. He indicated the May statement had not yet been received. Balance available: \$367.36. Sparky/KD4KL recommended that \$75.00 should be paid from the account to offset expected Field Day food expenses - later in the meeting. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership Committee Chair Geoffrey/WD4LYO discussed various issues associated with the development of a localized database of ham operators using inputs from: FCC/ULS records, QRZ, older listings of hams in Page, Warren, Rockingham, Shenandoah Counties and ARRL member possibly available from the League in Zip Code order. It was suggested that post card/QSL card inquiries might be made to those on the final listing as to their interest in PVARC activities. One major issue is scanning the listing for known silent key operators prior to mailings. This program is ongoing.

ARRL Field Day Committee Chair Dave/K4DPF is out of town, but has been in contact with various PVARC officers. He is still trying to get a volunteer to give a presentation on a Ham Radio/Emergency Communications subject. Following a far ranging discussion led by Mark/N4YSA it was determined that a presentation and demonstrated setup as proposed by Morgan/K4RHD using a solar powered emergency radio might qualify as an emergency communications briefing. It was noted that the evenings Attendee List showed ten members signing up to assist in Field Day setup, operation and/or teardown. Morgan/K4RHD provided a printed copy of his ARRL 2011 Field Day Menu featuring an evening meal of Beef Burgundy (beef, potatoes, carrots, onions, mushrooms, burgundy wine) as the main course; and Sunday breakfast of sausage biscuits, donuts, juice and coffee. The usual hot dogs and burgers, buns, chips, condiments and cold drinks will also be available. Sparky will attempt to ascertain the number of meals to be consumed via e-mail to assist in planning. Finally, it was generally agreed that those individuals that operated last year will operate in the same time slots again this year. Mark will bring his AC generators; and, Geoffrey will make nametags and set up the public display table.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Bob Forrest/WO4I proposed that PVARC set up a ham station in the Luray Farmers Market/Greenway area as a club project. He has had preliminary discussions with Steve Painter who is involved in these matters and has received a favorable response. Following a discussion of bands (HF/VHF), antennas, tent/awning covers, etc., he was encouraged to continue his investigation and report back after Field Day. This item was tabled subject to recall.

It was moved and seconded to provide Morgan/K4RHD \$75.00 to offset some of his expenses incurred in the purchase and preparation of food over the Field Day weekend. This motion passed unanimously. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1925. All members were reminded that the next meeting would be held at Brown's Chinese Restaurant on the Friday following Field Day weekend – July 1, 2011.

Submitted by:  
Sparky Terry/KD4KL, PVARC Secretary

# PVARC

## PVARC Secretary's Report – July 1 Dinner Meeting

PVARC held its monthly "eatin' meetin'" at Brown's Restaurant. David Firestone, K4DPF, made some notes which he submitted as follows:

As requested I made a treasury report of \$48 in dues received for a total on hand of \$316.36. I also reported that we currently have 20 paid members.

I gave a quick preliminary report on Field Day stating our 779 contacts and that it was good that 14 hams signed the log sheet. I believe we had the most operators actually get on the air to date.

I asked for suggestions for improvements and received the following input (some had previously been discussed)

1. Snacks for overnight crew
2. Double checking newspaper deadlines for public announcement
3. In addition to our PVARC banner, another sign/banner indicating "Visitors Welcome"
4. Place a sign closer to the main road. Perhaps a "Turn here for PVARC Field Day"
5. Select a pavilion closer to the road. (Some discussion on this one...the issue was antennas)
6. Connecting with the Chamber of Commerce to get on the yearly calendar.
7. Check out the possibility of sign etc sponsorship from manufacturers, ICOM, Yaesu, Kenwood, etc.
8. Use the Solar Powered stations as a GOTA station as well.

73, Dave/K4DPF

## PVARC Secretary's Report – August 8 Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Day Room, Page Memorial Hospital (Luray), by President Mark Hensley N4YSA. There were no visitors. The minutes of the July meeting were deferred until published in the August/September edition of The Monitor. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as submitted, the balance remaining at \$316.36 with no expenditures in the past month.

Since there were no Committee Reports the President asked if there was any new business to come before the club. Zory/KB3VQC brought up the topic of Narrowband FM and digital communications issues discussed in a recent Emergency Management magazine article with possible implications for statewide interoperability. The topic generated considerable discussion, ranging from APCO-25 compatibility and NBFM using 12.5/6.25 kHz channel spacing and associated digital vs. analog issues. It was generally agreed that this would be a good topic for a future PVARC program.

Zory also mentioned that he had ordered some new equipment (Icom 7000) and had been informed that a significant backlog exists due to problems in Japan caused by the recent earthquake/tsunami. Inventories are being quickly depleted here in the U.S.

Morgan/K4RHD brought up the Page Valley Road Race beginning tomorrow (August 6th) at 8AM. The bicycle race is an 11-mile loop along secondary state routes and includes 10 locations where marshals will be located. Anyone interested in assisting should let him know ASAP – he still has two blind spots to cover.

Following the business meeting Bob/KI4VFP displayed his home brew, portable 2 meter dipole antenna and reported on some of the mechanical and technical problems he had to overcome. It looks (and works) great! Sparky/KD4KL brought a recently acquired "break-out" box - while not home brewed, will facilitate the interconnection of most rigs to/from front or rear panel din plugs to computer sound cards for digital modes. All interconnecting din plug cable assemblies are pre-wired. (Remember how difficult it is to solder those 7, 9 or 13 pin din plugs?) Great for experimenters!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The next PVARC meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on September 2, 2011 at Brown's Chinese Restaurant on Main Street, in Luray.

Submitted by: Sparky/KD4KL, PVARC Secretary

# MARA

## MARA Secretary's Report – June 2 Meeting

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 PM**

**Attendance:** 29 present - 23 Members and 4 Guests. Introductions made all around.

**Reports:**

New Members:

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: James Franklin (W4SIU) -

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: non

**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.

**Groups:**

**ARES/RACES:** Meeting/Training Session Scheduled for 7/23/2011. Different this year - going to use Va Cache Equipment Trailer, including large antennas will be used . Location: JMU Convo Center will/is emergency Site, Fairgrounds will be for animals.

Like to Have 15 hams minimum participating. Committee will meet at Trailers to see what is needed. Will also set up Communications with Convo Center from Trailers, Va. Cache Teams will come together here for quarterly meetings. We are still looking for participants. Please contact Bryan (K4RMY) if you would like to participate.

**VEC:** The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, June 11, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton.

**Public Service:** Field Day - Elsworth reported he has equipment to mow the area. There was also a call for pictures for Field Day news article

Bridgewater Lawn Party will be 7/16-16

Shenandoah 100 - No news or commitment as yet

Shenandoah Bike Race - They would like to have us to the Radio Communications again.

Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride will be held the first Sunday in October. Ray is heading this up?

Bike Shenandoah was mentioned, but no one was identified as in charge.

**Announcements:** A ham requested the use of a tent for his daughter's wedding. General agreement that this was ok.

Gayle KU4XN reported that he has new manuals for the current license exams.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** The club agreed to support the Bridgewater Lawn Party again this year..

**New Call or Upgrades:** None reported

**Motion to Adjourn:** Made, seconded and approved.

**50/50 Raffle:** Total of \$32.00 (\$13.00 split) won by Connie Lehman.

**Program:** No formal program, but Dave N4WDC talked a bit about Special Service Clubs and his role with the ARRL.

**Submitted by** Rick Adams, KJ4IND, Acting Secretary for Sheryl, KJ4DOC

# MARA

## MARA Secretary's Report – July 7 Meeting

### Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 PM

**Attendance:** 31 present - 23 Members and 8 Guests. Gerry (K4RBZ) conducted the meeting. Introductions made all around.

### Reports:

New Members:

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Nelson M. Seese (W4BHD)

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: James Franklin (W4SIU) - was unanimously approved as a new member.

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

**Treasurer Report:** The MARA Treasurer's Report was not submitted for June.

### Groups:

**ARES/RACES:** Gerry (K4RBZ) discussed plans for the next drill/training session with the Harrisonburg/Rockingham ECC scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup>. The planning committee is in place and they will be using the two Harrisonburg trailers and the Rockingham County communications bus. The scenario will simulate a natural disaster which has knocked out the Elkton area towers. Communications will be set up using the two trailers and bus to relay information back to the ECC. The participants will use their own radios in combination with the 80' and 40' towers that are part of the trailers.

They are still looking for participants. Please contact Bryan (K4RMY) if you would like to participate.

**VEC-Session:** The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, August 13, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton.

**Public Service:** Gayle (KU4XN) – the Bridgewater Parade is this Friday and Saturday (July 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>). They need 6 – 8 people to work both evenings. Plan to meet at the Police station on Green St. Friday at 6:00 pm and Saturday at 5:00 pm.

**Announcements:** None reported

**Old Business:** Field Day – Herb (AA2BF) reported that he has information to submit to ARRL. The Go To Station had 90+ contacts. The use of the 35' boom to put up the antennas was deemed a success.

**New Business:** Gerry (K4RBZ) – Bryan (K4RMY), President of MARA and John (W4ZAO), President of VARA are planning a joint meeting of the MARA and VARA clubs September 6<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday). David Morris (N5UP) will be speaking on eQSL. The location is to be determined. We will need to notify the Wood Grill Buffet of the change.

**New Call or Upgrades:** None reported

**Motion to Adjourn:** Made, seconded and approved.

**50/50 Raffle:** Total of \$36.00 (\$18.00 split) won by Norman (KA4EEN).

**Program:** Jim Lehman (W4POL) presented a program on the electronics of four range radio navigation.

Submitted by  
Sheryl M. Tonini, KJ4DOC  
MARA Secretary

# MARA

## MARA Secretary's Report – August 4 Meeting

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:39 PM** Attendance: 23 present - 21 Members and 2 Guests. Bryan(K4RMY) conducted the meeting. Introductions made all around.

**Reports:** New Members: 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: *none*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Nelson M. Seese (W4BHD) - was unanimously approved as a new member.

**Secretary Minutes:** It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the minutes as distributed to the members at the meeting.

**Treasurer Report:** The MARA Treasurer's Report was not submitted for July.

### Groups:

**ARES/RACES:** Bryan (K4RMY) reported on the drill/training session with the Harrisonburg/Rockingham ECC held on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. The drill was shortened to a half day due to the heat. The two Harrisonburg trailers and the Rockingham County communications bus were used. The scenario simulated a natural disaster which had knocked out the Elkton area towers. Communications were set up using the two trailers and bus with a communications center located in the JMU Convocation Center. The participants used their own radios in combination with the towers that are part of the trailers.

RFI Noise in the building created some problems with communications between the VA EOC located in Richmond and the Convocation Center. After several attempts, a workable solution was finally found. Bryan reported that the drill was well covered as we had ten volunteers participating.

The Convocation Center was used as the test site as it is the first major evacuation center west of the Blue Ridge mountains and can hold up to 1,000 people. The Rockingham County Fairgrounds have been designated as the mass evacuation site for animals.

**VEC-Session:** The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, August 13, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton. Gayle (KU4XN) reported that they are expecting a larger than normal attendance thanks to the training class that was held in Staunton.

**Public Service:** Gayle (KU4XN) – the Bridgewater Parade (July 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>) was well covered and uneventful. — — Bryan (K4RMY) reviewed the status of planned events the first two weekends in October. What has traditionally been a single weekend with three major events will cover two weekends this year. The Camp Still Meadows ride and the KTM 500 will be held on the first weekend and the Grindstone 100 will be held the second weekend. It was reported that 5-6 KTM riders are hoping to have their license before the event and will ride with HT's. Bryan is looking for someone to volunteer as the coordinator for the KTM ride.

We do not have any information regarding the Grindstone 100 event.

**Announcements:** The hurricane forecast has been revised to 6 – 7 named hurricanes for this season.

**Old Business:** John (W4ZAO) – plans have been finalized for the joint meeting of the MARA and VARA clubs September 6<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday) at the Wood Grill Buffet. David Morris (N5UP) will be speaking on eQSL. Dinner at 6:00 pm and the joint business meeting at 7:00 pm.

**New Business:** Bob (N1QEQ) – the Harrisonburg Band Boosters have asked for permission to borrow the club tent again this year. Motion was made in support of this request was seconded and approved.

Gayle (KU4XN) – MARA has received a \$300 donation from the Bridgewater Lawn Party. In years past, MARA has donated monies to support the local repeaters. A motion was made to donate \$100 to each of the 7 repeaters in the area. It was also suggested that VARA match the MARA donation. The motion was seconded and approved. The list of repeaters to receive the donation is as follows: 146.625, 147.225, 146.850, 147.075, 147.045, 145.130, 443.150.

John (W4ZAO) – reported that the VARA club discussed the feasibility of moving Field Day to a more accessible location at last meeting. One of the issues discussed is the logistics of putting on the Field Day (mowing, moving equipment, etc). Some possible locations included the Frontier Culture Museum, Expo Land and the Weyers Cave Community Center in Augusta County and the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. Jim Junkins is amenable to bringing in some ECC equipment to help ramp up awareness.

**New Call or Upgrades:** None reported

**Motion to Adjourn:** Made, seconded and approved. **50/50 Raffle:** Total of \$28.00 (\$14.00 split) won by Bob (W8HGH). **No Program**

Submitted by Sheryl M. Tonini, KJ4DOC, MARA Secretary

# MARA

When the treasurer performed the monthly checking account reconciliation, he discovered something that apparently got by the entire MARA membership: the Treasurer's Report in the June issue of the Monitor had an addition error in its total.

Specifically, the Total Receipts figures had been *subtracted* from the total, rather than *added*. Receipts are additions to the club treasury. The corrected report is shown below. The two affected figures are now **correct** and are indicated by the (\*).

## Corrected MARA Treasurer's Report – March 31, 2011 to May 27, 2011

Beginning Balance May 27, 2011 (last report)		\$ 3,696.02
Add:		
Membership renewals (2 members)	\$ 24.00	
Membership renewal for 2 years (1 member)	\$ 24.00	
New Member Applications (1 member)	<u>\$ 12.00</u>	
Total Receipts		\$ 60.00
Less		
Reimbursement for Field Day Pins	\$-100.00	
Reimbursement for Equipment Storage Locker (1 year)	<u>\$-360.00</u>	
Total Disbursements		<u>\$-460.00</u>
Ending Bank Balance as of May 27, 2011		\$ 3,296.02 (*)
Plus May Meeting 50/50 not yet tendered to treasurer:	\$ 16.00	
Club Total Balance as of May 27, 2011		\$ 3,312.02 (*)

Submitted by David Fordham, KD9LA, MARA Treasurer

## MARA Treasurer's Report – May 27, 2011 to August 31, 2011

Club Total Balance as of May 27, 2011 (last report, as corrected above)		\$ 3,312.02
Add:		
Membership renewals in June (1 member)	\$ 12.00	
June Meeting 50/50	\$ 13.00	
Membership renewals in July (1 member)	\$ 12.00	
New Membership Application in July (1 member)	\$ 12.00	
July Meeting 50/50	\$ 18.00	
August Meeting 50/50	\$ 14.00	
Donation from Town of Bridgewater	<u>\$300.00</u>	
Total Receipts		\$ 381.00
Less		
Reimbursement for Field Day Rental of Lift Genie	\$-201.40	
Printing and Mailing of MARA Monitor copies, Feb-Jun)	\$ 182.76	
Post office box rental (1 year)	<u>\$ 46.00</u>	
Total Disbursements		<u>\$-430.16</u>
Ending Balance as of August 31, 2011		\$ 3,262.86

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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## MARA/VARA/PVARC

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

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**Return Service Requested**

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**COMBINED MARA-VARA MEETING  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6  
WOOD GRILL IN HARRISONBURG**

**MARA  
VARA  
PVARC**

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