

January  
2012

# THE MONITOR

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

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## **VARA Club Meeting Tuesday January 3**

The radio clubs are back to their normal meeting schedule for the new year. The Valley Amateur Radio Association will hold its January meeting on Tuesday, January 3, at Shoney's. The restaurant is located at 30 Sangers Lane, at the north corner of US Highway 250, 1 block east of I-81's Exit 222, Staunton, Virginia. Dinner begins at 6:00 pm, the business meeting begins at 7:00 pm.

## **MARA Club Meeting Thursday January 5**

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., holds its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, January 5, at the Wood Grill Buffet, 1711 Reservoir Street, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m., with the business meeting starting at 7:30 p.m.

## **PVARC Business Meeting: Friday, January 6 at Page Valley Hospital**

PVARC's bi-monthly eating meeting will be held at the Brown's Restaurant in Luray, Virginia, starting at 6:00 pm.

## **Page Valley Amateur Radio Club's New Website Will Be Up Soon**

Check out the URL: <http://www.k4pmh.org> Although under construction, this will be the new PVARC website.

## **Time to Renew your Club Membership**

Membership in PVARC, MARA, and VARA is on a calendar-year basis. Dues should be renewed by January of each calendar year. Use the handy renewal form inside the back cover of this issue of the Monitor.

Don't delay! Renew today!

**Pay Dues Now**



## VARA President's Message

Happy New Year! On behalf of my wife, Ann and I, we want to wish everyone a very healthy and prosperous New Year. 2011 was a very busy and exciting year and I look forward to even more exciting new adventures and goals for the coming year.



I would like to take a moment to thank all of the members for their hard work and dedication to our hobby and the service they have provided to the community this past year. I feel very privileged to work with a fine group of men and woman who are willing to drop their daily chores and help a fellow HAM or help in an event or emergency with just a phone call, for that I thank each and every one of you personally and hope to work with each of you again this year.

The 2011 Christmas party at the Golden Corral was a great time for all and I want to thank Dan Hale (KC8TEN) for taking his time to put it all together. We had around 45 participants and I know for a fact that no one went home hungry.

With the New Year comes new challenges and the first will be the decision where to have the 2012 Field Day event. I hope all of you will take a few moments and write to the committee what you think, good or bad, so they can use the information to help in their decision making.

So in closing lets all work together to make 2012 an even more exciting and rewarding experience by participating in an event, helping a fellow HAM, neighbor or teaching a newcomer the world of Amateur radio.... Because that's what you all have done for me in 2011.

John Keller W4ZAO  
President, VARA

## W3MMC Estate Bequest

The daughters of Bob Niemeyer, W3MMC, SK, have made a donation to the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association in his memory. The accompanying card was read at the December club meeting. The club expresses its appreciation not only for the gift, but also for Bob's service to the local ham community.

## Ed Berry KA5NOJ SK

Some of the old-timers may remember Ed Berry, KA5NOJ, who relocated to Mississippi some years ago. We have received word that Ed became a silent key December 18.

## Ray KE4NNV Recuperating at Home

We are glad to hear that Ray Pitsenbarger KE4NNV is back home recuperating after suffering from congestive heart failure which required hospitalization. Get Well Soon, Ray!



## MARA President's Message: Field Day Site Decision to be Reached Soon!

The single greatest ham radio event in this valley is the joint MARA/VARA Field Day operation.

While the number of licensed hams has risen dramatically over the past few years (Kudos to our VE teams!), participation in Field Day has paradoxically dropped off just as dramatically. Why?

There are over 1000 licensed amateurs in the two-and-a-half-county area. There are over 200 active ham radio members between the two clubs. Why is attendance at Field Day dropping below the two-dozen mark? Why?

This past Spring, when non-participating hams were asked what we can do to bring them back to Field Day, the answer was almost unanimous: "hold the event in a place where we don't waste several hours of time simply getting to and from the FD site."

Is this really the reason?

I would like to think that if personality clashes were the reason, at least some hams would be forthcoming and honest about it: "I don't get along well with so-and-so and that's why I'm not there." Is this the reason some hams don't come to FD?

Or maybe it's just so intimidating to see the expert proficiency of some high-speed code operators and veteran DX chasers.

Or perhaps the non-participating hams feel (very incorrectly, but still very sincerely) that they might be in the way, or that their inexperience might slow down the contact rate and hurt our score.

Or maybe some people just don't like the idea of going into the woods, putting up with rain, wind, bugs, and campfire smoke.

If these are the real reasons hams aren't coming to Field Day, why don't they say so?

Could it be that, maybe, just maybe, these hams are being honest with us? Are they sincerely trying to tell us the truth? It is possible that if we hold the event in a more accessible location, we might actually get more participation?

We'll never know unless we decide to move.

Of course, a change like this carries significant risk. If we move, we might win. Or we might lose. What do you think?

The point I'm trying to make is this: No decision has been made, but unless you let the committee know your thoughts and ideas, other hams will be making the decision without your input. And your input is valuable. By receiving your input, the group will make a better decision.

So don't delay. Get on the phone, get on the radio, get on the nets, send an email, drop a postcard or snail-mail letter. Talk to them at lunch, at church, Or come to the meetings in January and participate in the discussion. BE HEARD! Provide your input to the committee members shown on Page 8 of this issue of the Monitor.

This is YOUR Field Day, and your feelings are very important. Let the committee know what you'd like to do.

Some die-hards will be going to the mountain, no matter what. And some hams will not go to the mountain, no matter what. And some hams will not come to Field Day no matter WHERE it's held. What we are trying to do, however, is make Field Day the best experience possible for the largest number of valley hams possible.

Field Day is FUN. The more, the merrier. So let us know what you want.

We need to make a decision at the January meetings so what we can start making arrangements for Field Day 2012. Whether it turns out that we will reserve the Flagpole/Reddish Knob area again, or the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, or the Augusta County Fairgrounds, or the Weyers Cave Community Center, or maybe even somebody's lower-forty pasture — let's find out where we want to go, so we can GO THERE and have fun next June.

See you at the January club meetings.

David Fordham, KD9LA  
MARA President

**REMEMBER: DUES ARE DUE**

## Field Day Site Possibility 1: Weyers Cave Community Center

Information was provided for Monitor publication about the Weyers Cave Community Center for Field Day 2012.

**Location:** On Highway 256 one mile east of I-81 Exit 235, 1 block east of the 256 intersection with Keezletown Road (downtown Weyers Cave), 3 miles west of the airport.

**Advantages:** This site is presently available for FD weekend. This site is centrally located between VARA and MARA, being almost on the Augusta and Rockingham County border. This location is easy to get to, easy to give directions to, is right off the Interstate, gives good public visibility, and has ample outdoor space for antennas, campers, trailers, etc. The facility features a huge indoor contingency area, including air conditioning, and has clean restrooms as well as a fully-furnished industrial-type kitchen facility. It also features outdoor barbecue pits, an outdoor pavilion with picnic tables, and plenty of convenient parking that is well separated from, but convenient to, the grassy operational areas. The grass will be cut for us the day before we arrive at no cost. The facility has commercial electrical main power available. The site is located at a relatively high altitude for the valley, and has no significant geographical obstructions for miles in any direction. A huge 20-acre grassy areas is available, and we would be allowed to use the grassy fields for our own trailers and facilities. Generators are allowed 24-hours per day, and there are no neighbors to complain about noise or traffic. A food store, drug store, Dollar-General store, and similar facilities are less than a mile away, and the fire station is also close by. Pets are allowed. The area is well-lit at night and safety should not be an issue.

**Disadvantages:** The site has not yet been completely checked out for RF noise across a 24-hour period on all bands, although brief inspection periods detected no noticeable EMI or electrical noise. There is one industrial plant within 1 mile of the site, but this plant does not operate on weekends. The community center site itself has several sodium-vapor light fixtures, and an electrical substation close by. The site cost \$100 per day, and if we arrive Friday afternoon and run through Sunday afternoon, the site rental would be \$250. (This would, however, include the use of ALL facilities, including the kitchen, but we would have to clean the kitchen after use, and there is no discount for NOT using all the facilities.) Camping the entire week prior to Field Day would be very problematic as well as expensive (\$100 per day for the facility.). The site is in the open sunshine, there are no trees or other antenna supports, we would have to provide our own antenna support facilities.

**Other considerations:** Sunday, a Bingo game will be going on in an adjacent facility in late afternoon, but this is not expected to affect our operations. This site would not be able to take advantage of Rockingham County Emergency Communications Center's offer to provide equipment, personnel, and other support for our Field Day Operations since that equipment cannot leave Rockingham County except during a real emergency.

## Field Day Site Possibility 2: Augusta County Fairgrounds

The newsletter editor was provided with no information on this location. If investigation was made, no report was submitted for publication. This site has been used for radio operations in the past, has high public visibility, but is near several industrial operations and is virtually underneath a regional high-voltage transmission line. It is not known whether this site is even available for Field Day weekend. No info was provided.

## Field Day Site Possibility 3: Frontier Culture Museum

The newsletter editor was provided with no information on this location. If investigation was made, no report was submitted for publication. This site has been used for radio operations in the past, has medium public visibility, It is not known whether this site is even available for Field Day weekend. No info was provided.

## Field Day Site Possibility 4: Rockingham County Fairgrounds

A report was submitted for publication on the inquiry about using the Rockingham County Fairgrounds for Field Day 2012.

**Location:** US 11 South of Harrisonburg, approximately equidistant between Mount Crawford (Highway 257 at Interstate 81 exit 240), and the South US 11 I-81 Exit 243. This is just over one mile south of the new Harrisonburg Post Office.

**Advantages:** This site is presently available for FD weekend. It is not as centrally located between VARA and MARA, but it is located in the southern part of Rockingham County.. This location is easy to get to, easy to give directions to, gives excellent public visibility, and has more traffic than the Weyers Cave site. This site also has ample outdoor space for antennas, campers, trailers, etc. The facility features restrooms, outdoor pavilions, and plenty of parking. The facility has commercial electrical main power available. The site is not as high an altitude as Weyers Cave, but is still relatively high for the valley floor, and has good take-off angles in most directions. Generators are allowed 24-hours per day, and there are no neighbors to complain about noise or traffic. Jim Junkins, Rockingham Emergency Communications Center Director has agreed to provide a cache trailer with 20kVA generator to us at no cost, and additionally will provide hydraulic lift towers to support antennas, and will also provide personnel for this equipment for the entire Field Day period, providing valuable interface with EOC staff. Jim will also provide assistance with press releases, as his office has direct contact with local media outlets. This site might also provide additional training and mobilization drill potential – see the additional considerations listed below.

**Disadvantages:** The site has not yet been completely checked out for RF noise across a 24-hour period on all bands, although brief inspection periods detected no noticeable EMI or electrical noise. There are at least two major industrial plants within a mile which operate 24-hours per day including weekends, including massive refrigeration equipment and other heavy electrical usage. The fairground site itself has several mercury and sodium-vapor light fixtures, and numerous transformers and transmission lines close by. Camping the entire week prior to Field Day would probably not be possible. This site is more formal about public safety precautions than the Weyers Cave site: The operational area would be in what is normally a parking area, and we would need to provide a full-time person assigned as safety officer to be responsible for overseeing public safety during the entire operational period, including traffic cone acquisition and placement to separate actual parking areas from operational areas, public information on safety, etc.. The parking lot can be dusty if there is significant traffic. Additionally, Rockingham County EOC participation is contingent upon there not being a formal call-out or dispatch situation; it is possible (but not likely) that the entire county support equipment (trailers, generators, etc.) might be called out in which case their facilities would be dismantled and taken away in under 2 hours notice, thus ending the Field Day operation prematurely unless backup were provided. See the additional consideration listed below.

**Other considerations:** Jim Junkins would welcome the opportunity to work more closely with the ham community and is offering his support including equipment, personnel, staff, and other assistance free of charge in return for the training potential. But all of the county equipment is subject to official deployment in a real emergency. It is highly unlikely, but possible, that an emergency might arise during the FD operation. In this event, the county equipment would disappear. This might provide valuable drill experience for amateurs, who could practice the “quick” deployment of true emergency response stations, power, etc. on such short notice.

Jim Junkins emphasized that his equipment cannot be deployed outside Rockingham County except during an actual emergency, and thus he cannot provide support for Weyers Cave site, or other locations outside of Harrisonburg/Rockingham County.

## Field Day Site Possibility 5: Various Other Locations, including the Mountain

The newsletter editor was provided with no information on any other locations. Other sites have been mentioned, including various city and county (and regional) parks such as Gypsy Hill, Natural Chimneys or Grand Caverns, school grounds such as Blue Ridge Community College, Fort Defiance High School, Harrisonburg High School, Woodrow Wilson Center grounds, the Augusta County Office Complex in Verona, etc., but no information was provided to the newsletter editor on any of these sites.

**And of course, remember, the good old MOUNTAINTOP SITE is still an available option if the membership so desires!**

## Raising a Dream .... By VARA President John Keller W4ZA0

Long ago in Jacksonville Florida lived a young man who enjoyed motorcycles and CB radios and his desire was to combine both, as he enjoyed traveling the states.

So one day he mounted his radio to his handle bars and built a bracket on his sissy bar to secure his antenna — for no one had thought of doing that back then. He had to keep the volume full blast to hear any sounds from channel 19 as he rode the highways. The young man fully enjoyed his accomplishment and traveled the states for many years, until...



One day, this young man found himself in Anchorage Alaska. A new radio experience was presented to him as he listened to a Bearcat scanner, hearing the police, fire and other radio operators chatter about this and that.

He set off to purchase his own Radio Shack Pro 2006 scanner, the best at that time and a costly \$400.00, along with his first discone antenna and again find a way to mount it on his apartment deck without damaging it.



Again, for years, he listened and enjoyed his new found hobby, along with his motorcycle and CB radio.

He became an air traffic controller. This made the scanner experience even more exciting — listening to aircraft, trains and ships and learning so much more. He read books about new frequencies, antennas and radios. He was thoroughly engrossed into his hobby.

Then it happened. A co-worker showed him a shortwave radio. Being able to listen to broadcast stations from all over the world caught his interest. Another new hobby was on the horizon.

He bought a Radio Shack short wave radio receiver and put up a long wire antenna to receive his new sounds from around the world. He strung the antenna across his bedroom wall, as he was determined to listen to as many stations as he could. Between the scanner, the CB, and short wave radio, his bedroom was slowly turning into a shack full of wires and radios.

After many years his desire to listen started to wane. New adventures were calling — adventures like kayaking, hiking — and family. Active adventures. Actually doing something besides just listening.

Later, after fulfilling an adventure many only dream of — that of hiking the entire Appalachian Trail — he finally settled in Verona, Virginia with his new found wife and a beautiful home on the Middle River. They floated the river, fished and traveled and enjoyed life.



Til one day, while visiting his father, he was told to take his grandfather's old Amateur Radio Callsign Stand back with him to put in his radio room in Virginia. For you see, he still listened to the short wave, CB and scanners after all these years — at least on and off occasionally. But still those radios were still there. And so were the old interesting things found on the airwaves. His new wife put up with his hobby, so chock full of radio's, and wires strung across the room and yard.

He knew his grandfather had been a ham. He remembered seeing the old man's radio room while visiting as a very young boy. His father also had been in the Navy, flying planes around the world as a radio operator.

The young man in our story decided to venture into the world of Amateur radio. Not knowing exactly how to get started, he ordered the first test book directly from ARRL and studied for 2 months. Now the hard part, he thought, "Can I pass the tech test? And where do I take it? "

He reached out to Gail Shull (KU4XN) who told him where to meet and what to expect in taking his first real radio test. And so he did. And so this much older — and hopefully wiser — man arrived at the testing session, and, with a friendly greeting, sat down and proceeded to answer the questions. After it was all over, he was presented with a hearty "Congratulations! You are a ham!" He had passed his test!

"Now what?" he thought, for he really didn't know anything about Amateur radio. Yes he passed the test and he was going to get a call sign, but this was a whole different ballgame from knowing about regulations, transmitter power, bands and so much more.

With some trepidation, he ventured into his first local Amateur radio meeting. At MARA in Harrisonburg, sitting alone, he was greeted by David Fordham KD9LA, at that time president of MARA,. The new ham was presented with his first copy of the Monitor and a club membership application.

After talking with others in the club, the new ham learns that there is another club just down a ways from his house and decides he will attend that one as well. On the second club meeting night he arrives and is greeted again believe it or not by the President of VARA Jeff Rinehart W4PJW. After the meeting Jeff takes the new ham aside and tells him that he would be glad to help in teaching him all he knows about the hobby, all he had to do was just ask, no matter how trivial the question was. The now more than ever excited new ham was exploring all the new adventures of Amateur radio, satellites, contests, HF, RTTY, and .... Well, so where to start?

After many months of studying, passing his Extra test, and buying his first 2 meter radio — and of course another antenna — he is on the air ... with the help of so many local hams. But something is still missing.

He has the desire to want to talk with others from around the world and begins the slow process of learning the world of HF radio and all that's needed to get started in this part of the hobby. He buys his first HF radio from his Elmer (Jeff W4PJW) and he is told he has to build his first antenna. He thinks "I can't buy it!?" After much consideration and guidance from W4PJW, K4DJG, KD9LA, N4BCC and so many others he decides to build his first Extended Zepp antenna and after a few hours of soldering, hanging and attaching it to the radio, he is on the air.

The new ham is chatting up a storm with fellow hams in the states, and all around the world. He continues to ask questions, read and improve on his understanding of this new exciting hobby. As the months go by he sets out to complete his dream project, a tower with a beam antenna. For you see, he now has caught the fever!



He lets the members in both clubs know his desire. A very well experienced ham Al (N3JB) steps forward and tells him he has just what he wants: a 50' tower, complete with a 6 element beam antenna with rotor and all the extra things needed to put it together. Wow! Now if he can just get his wife to go along with another larger than ever before antenna and a 50' tower in the yard...

But to his surprise she says he can have it, — with a couple of husbandly duties that must be completed first. So after several weeks of chores and honey-do's, and a few more weeks preparing the foundation for the base of the tower, he is ready to see his dream come together.

He calls on Jeff W4PJW, Bob K4DJG, Bob N1QEQ and Antonio his next door neighbor, to help him raise the tower sections and the hazy over 2 week-ends.

Then comes the building and assembly of the 6 element antenna followed by the raising of this monster, the largest he has ever touched.

After 3 weekends of straining, bruises and a few choice words mixed in for the neighborhood to hear, his dream has been realized. With the tower and beam standing tall and hooked to the radio he makes his first contact on 10 meters at 4:30pm Monday December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011. But this isn't just your ordinary "first contact"!,. No. As he turns the beam north and with a turn of

the radio knob hears a Amateur radio operator in, of all places — Anchorage , Alaska! — his home of 26 years and where his hobby of radios first took off. A fitting place and contact to begin a new chapter of his adventures in radio.....

*To Be Continued!*

## Shenandoah Valley Ham Radio Now Has a Facebook Page



On-line Social Networks are catching on!

First it was Fred Evans N4KYM and his Google-Groups, Valley-Hams. Fred's Valley Hams is open to any local ham who has email. It operates like a moderated E-Mail reflector.

Now, Mike Turner, K4MIC, has opened up a Facebook page for us! Mike's social network is for hams who are on Facebook.

All hams in the valley are welcome and invited to join BOTH groups! That's right. You are invited to join BOTH.

If you have a facebook account, simply log in to your facebook, then go to [www.facebook.com/groups/shenvalleyhams](http://www.facebook.com/groups/shenvalleyhams) and request to "join" the group. That's all there is to it.

Both of these groups are great ways to 'connect' with other hams.

And remember: You can always turn on your radio and give a call on the air, too! Nets are a great way to connect!

If you want more information before joining, contact Mike Turner at [www.facebook.com/k4mic](http://www.facebook.com/k4mic)

Mike's email is [k4mic@comcast.net](mailto:k4mic@comcast.net)

## New Rockingham Memorial Hospital Ham Station Is Nearing Completion

Bob Steere, N1QEQ, reports that Bob McCracken and the staff at Rockingham Memorial Hospital have relocated the ham radio emergency backup station to the new building. Bob reports that the antenna installation and cable runs, as well as the radio installation itself have been professionally engineered and constructed, and are very impressive. While the station is no longer immediately adjacent to the hospital's emergency command post, there will be communication links between the hams and the hospital commander, allowing the ham equipment to be closer to the antennas on the roof. Bob Steere will have a report on the progress of this station at the January MARA meeting. Thanks to Bob McCracken, N4JGO, for his assistance, expertise, influence, time, and effort on making the preparations for ham radio communications at this important facility.



## Volunteer Examiner (VE) Session Report

No candidates showed up for the December 2011 testing session. However, we still need to thank the dedicated volunteer examiners who showed up for service. Thanks to:

GERALD NAUMAN	KN4FM
GLEN THOMPSON	W4GWT
ELLSWORTH NEFF	K4LXG
MICHAEL McKAY	W4AZR
RAY RICHIE	K4NRA
DON LANDES	WX4C
ROBERT VANFOSSEN	K4DJG
JAMES LEHMAN	W4POL

## FD Site Selection Contact Information

Mike Turner, K4MIC: [k4mic@arrl.net](mailto:k4mic@arrl.net)  
home phone 540-896-5290

Mike Turner, KJ4TPA, [rednbabygurl@aol.com](mailto:rednbabygurl@aol.com)  
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Bob Steere, N1QEQ, [n1qeq@aol.com](mailto:n1qeq@aol.com)  
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Bryan Daniels, K4RMY, [k4rmy@arrl.net](mailto:k4rmy@arrl.net)  
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Greg Czerniak, W4GRC, [grcljc@comcast.net](mailto:grcljc@comcast.net)  
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John Keller, W4ZAO, [eaglehiker@hotmail.com](mailto:eaglehiker@hotmail.com),  
home phone 540-248-3619

## PVARC Emergency and Digital Training Session: Page County EOC



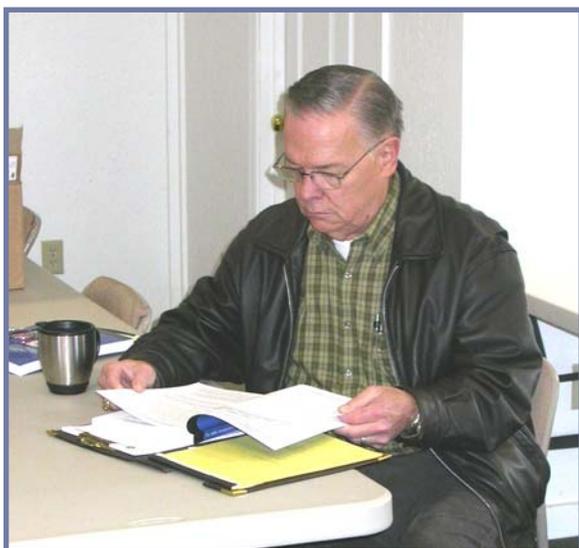
Above: Dave Firestone, K4DPF newly appointed ARRL EC for Page County addressing local hams at the Page County EOC regarding plans to reorganize ARES within the county.



Above: Dave/K4DPF (center) introducing Morgan Phoenix/K4RHD appointed Assistant EC for ARES Net Control (left) and Mark Hensley/N4YSA appointed Assistant EC for ARES Training (right).



Above and Left: PVARC members listen attentively to K4DPF's presentation on Digital Communications modes.



Above: Bob Forrest/WO4MI appointed Assistant EC responsible for the Page Memorial Hospital EOC.

Right: PVARC President Mark Hensley (left) presenting a copy of ARES Training Booklet, purchased in quantity by the club for training purposes, with funds donated by Ikey Rosazza, K4DIW (right) on behalf of Pioneer Bank.



## Richmond Frostfest: Saturday, February 4

The Richmond Frostfest is scheduled for Saturday, February 4, at the Richmond Raceway Complex.



### 2012 Ham Radio Testing Sessions

Contacts: Gayle Shull 540-828-2132  
Gerald Nauman 540-434-0859

Location:	February 11
Woodmen of the World	April 14
3045 John Wayland Hwy	June 9
Dayton VA 22821	August 11
	October 13
	December 8

### Upcoming Events

January 3: VARA Club Meeting  
January 5: MARA Club Meeting  
January 6: PVARC Eating Meeting  
January 7-8: ARRL RTTY Roundup  
January 8: ARRL Kid's Day  
January 21-23: ARRL VHF Sweepstakes

February 2: MARA Club Meeting  
February 3: PVARC Club Meeting  
February 4: Richmond Frostfest  
February 7: VARA Club Meeting  
February 11: VE Exams in Dayton VA  
February 13-17: School Club Roundup  
February 18-19: ARRL DX Contest CW  
February 26: Vienna Annandale Winterfest

March 3-4: ARRL DX Contest Phone  
March 31: Baltimore Hamboree

### 2012 Rockingham County ARES Net Control Stations

Net Control Coordinator:  
Gerald Nauman 540-434-0859

January 2: KA4EEN  
January 9: W3HXH  
January 16: K4RMY  
January 23: K4LXG  
January 30: KN4FM

February 6: K4NRA  
February 13: K4MIC  
February 20: K4RBZ  
February 27: KN4FM

March 5: K4RMY  
March 12: KA4EEN  
March 19: W3HXH  
March 26: K4LXG

April 2: K4NRA  
April 9: K4RBZ  
April 16: K4MIC  
April 23: KA4EEN  
April 30: KU4XN

May 7: K4LXG  
May 14: KG4KUR  
May 21: K4RMY  
May 28: K4MIC

June 4: K4NRA  
June 11: KU4XN  
June 18: K4RBZ  
June 25: KG4KUR

**REMEMBER: DUES ARE DUE**

## PVARC Secretary's Report – December 2 Meeting

The meeting was held in the Day Room at Page Memorial Hospital in Luray. Absent the President, the meeting was called to order at 1800 by VP Dave Firestone/K4DPF. There were no visitors.

The minutes of the meetings held on October 7th and November 4th were approved as printed in The Monitor, December edition. The Treasurer reported a current balance of \$1,281.36 in the Pioneer Bank account as given on the 30 October 2011 statement. One check (for repeater support) in the amount of \$50 has not yet cleared. 2012 dues received at this meeting amount to \$84.00. The Treasurers Report was approved as presented.



Dave/K4DPF announced that an ARES Training Session will be conducted this coming Saturday, December 10th at 10:00 a.m. in the Page County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training room.

An on-line demonstration of the PVARC Website was given by Geoffrey/WD4LYO. Noting that the site is "under construction" and subject to change, he scrolled through the various pages currently installed. A lively discussion followed, including (but not limited to) comments on: adding pictures of officers & club activities; security issues and use of SQL database with password protection of member specific data; helpful links to related amateur activities and organizations; and, special pages for members only. He thanked his fellow workers - including Carol/KA4LAF, Dave/K4DPF and newest member Shannon/KJ4VRZ for their input. He asked everyone to consider what they would like to see added and talk to one of the committee members about it. He concluded by encouraging feedback to ensure the website meets PVARC member needs. You can follow their efforts on: [www.k4pmh.org](http://www.k4pmh.org).

Putting on his "other hat" as Emergency Preparedness Committee/EOC Training Subcommittee chairman, Dave/K4DPF reported the MOU with Page County is pending, noting that he was working with Wes Shifflett to finalize. The equipment cabinet for the EOC will be delivered on Dec 10th. The VHF/UHF base station antennas will be installed shortly, using county inmate labor. An HF antenna is to follow, noting that a grant proposal is being written. Bob/WO4MI asked why it was necessary to obtain a grant for equipment when, in his opinion, local hams already have equipment available to transport to the EOC in an emergency. He feels further expenditure of public funds when viable alternatives exist is both wasteful and unnecessary. While admitting that some folks might agree or disagree, Dave indicated it is not really a PVARC issue – suggesting that he get together with Bob at a later date and discuss his concerns "off-line."

Technical Assistance Subcommittee had no report, but Zory/KB3VQC rose to thank Bob/WO4MI for his assistance in putting up a 246 foot long antenna between 4 large trees on his mountain home. It took many shots using Bob's "spud-gun" antenna launcher to get the job done – but it was definitely worth the effort! Many thanks!!

Reporting on the Widow's Assistance Committee, Sparky/KD4KL will be joining with Mark/N4YSA and visiting with Patricia Pickett, widow of Mark/KN4CB (SK) to assist her in selling a large amount of his equipment. Hopefully, a list should be available at the January meeting, and perhaps sooner on our website.

Putting on yet another of his "hats" Dave/K4DPF reported as ARRL Field Day Subcommittee Chairman, indicating that it is not too soon to be thinking of 2012 Field Day, elicited a plethora of suggestions including: a change in venue – perhaps to the Luray Greenway to enhance public awareness (WO4MI), putting up a GOTA station and operating as 2-A drew many comments, i.e., are there enough new or inactive hams locally to support the endeavor, and is PVARC capable of manning 3 stations for the duration of the event? Not too soon to plan for sure if PVARC is to undertake any of the above initiatives. This discussion will be continued over the next few months and further suggestions are welcome.

New Business: Morgan//K4RHD said he had ordered 10 ARRL Introduction to Emergency Communications Course training manuals for use in the upcoming ARES Training Course on December 10th at the EOC. He made the purchase on his own initiative to encourage and enhance the ARES training program and had obtained a reduction in price by buying in quantity. A discussion followed regarding whether it might be possible to reimburse him using available PVARC funds. Tim/AK4CJ inquired if this was appropriate given the separation between PVARC (the club) and the ARES, both functionally and organizationally. Sparky/KD4KL, PVARC Secretary/Treasurer was of the opinion that this would fall within the Constitution and By-Laws – particularly the notion that membership is open to ..."licensed amateurs interested in: Amateur Radio communications & experimen-

## PVARC Secretary's Report – continued

tation; the establishment of Amateur Radio networks to provide electronic communications in the event of disasters and/or other emergencies; or, the furthering of education in the field of Amateur Radio communications." It was also noted that funds are available due to the recent gift from Pioneer Bank through Ikey/K4DIW. A motion was made (WO4MI) and seconded (KB3VQC) to reimburse Morgan. Following additional discussion, the motion was amended to: 1) reimburse Morgan for his "out of pocket expense;" 2) to pass on the savings made possible by the bulk buy, selling the book for actual cost to those who wish to purchase one; and, 3) retain a few (if possible) for use at future training sessions. It was also understood that trainees would be encouraged to purchase a copy for their own reference - although not required. The motion passed, with Morgan/K4RHD & Dave/K4DPF abstaining.

This concluded the business portion of the meeting @ 1855. Following the business meeting a presentation entitled "An Introduction to Digital Modes in Amateur Radio" was given by Dave/K4DPF. Utilizing power-point and access to the internet, he not only explained the advantages of various digital modes, but also accessed the sounds of those modes when transmitted over the air. Everything from packet to PSK31, Oliver to RTTY (among many others) were listened to attentively by everyone. Now we know what those strange signals are all about. The program was enthusiastically received – and Dave agreed to follow-up with more details in future presentations. Another great meeting!

Submitted by:  
Sparky Terry/KD4KL,  
PVARC Secretary

## VARA Secretary's Report – December 6 Meeting

The VARA Secretary's Report for the December 6 meeting was not received. This might be because the December 6 meeting was a banquet at which no business was conducted, but it would have been kinda nice if someone had informed the newsletter editor.



## MARA Treasurer's Report – November 28, 2011 to December 29, 2011

Beginning Balance November 28, 2011 (last report)		\$ 2,700.57
Add: Membership Renewals (32 renewals)	\$ 384.00	
Donation from W3MMC estate	\$ <u>100.00</u>	
Total Deposits		\$ 484.00
Less: Bank Fees (August through November)	\$ -8.00	
Reimbursement of December Program performer and guest	\$ <u>-28.43</u>	
Total Disbursements		\$ <u>-36.43</u>
Ending Balance as of December 29, 2011		\$ 3,148.14

Submitted by David Fordham, KD9LA, MARA Treasurer

## MARA Secretary's Report – December 1 Meeting

### Meeting Called to Order at 7:33 PM

**Attendance:** 47 present – 28 MARA Members and 19 Guests, Bryan (K4RMY) conducted the meeting.

**Introductions** made all around.

### Reports:

**New Members:** 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Mike Swinson (KI4TOI) 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: None

**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 report as printed in the Monitor.

### Groups:

**ARES/RACES:** Bryan (K4RMY) reported that he has five KTM shirts left to distribute.

It was also reported that the new Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center credentialing process is on-going. They expect to schedule time for the photo IDs early next year.

**VEC-Session:** The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, December 10, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton. Gayle (KU4XN) encouraged members to upgrade their license.

**Public Service:** N/A

**Announcements:** The family of Bob Niemeyer (W3MMC) extended their thanks to everyone who participated in the auction/estate sale of their father's radio equipment. They also sent a donation in the amount of \$100.00.

The Field Day Location Committee is hoping to meet soon. To quote our famous newsletter editor – "Don't run the risk of becoming a mushroom". Be sure to send in your comments and let the committee know your opinions on the matter.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**New Call or Upgrades:** None reported

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

**50/50 Raffle:** Cancelled for this month.

**Program:** Dennis Phillips (NS4K) entertained us with his magic and illusion show.

Submitted by  
Sheryl M. Tonini  
KJ4DOC



*NS4K restoring a destroyed paper to like-new condition.*

**REMEMBER: DUES ARE DUE**

**MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

President: David Fordham, KD9LA  
 Vice President: Gerry Brunk, K4RBZ  
 Secretary: John Keller, W4ZAO  
 Treasurer: Sheryl Tonini, KJ4DOC  
 Board (exp 2012): Mike Turner, K4MIC  
 Board (exp 2013): Bob Van Fossen, K4DJG

<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: David Tanks, AD4TJ  
 Treasurer: Doug Tippett, N8ESW  
 Program Manager: Al Bonck N3JB

<http://w4xd.com>

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

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

**Visitors are always welcome.**

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

Doug Tippett  
 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

<http://www.k4pmh.org>

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

The meeting begins at 6:00 pm

**Visitors are welcome.**

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

Sparky Terry  
 PO Box 649  
 Luray VA 22835-0649

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

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

Clubs differ in their policies regarding paper copies.  
 Contact the president of your respective club  
 for information on paper copies.

Back issues are freely available on the MARA website  
 starting a few months after publication.

Since the clubs derive their revenue from memberships,  
 the Monitor is not to be made regularly available on a  
 timely basis to individuals who are not club members.

Occasional complimentary current copies are  
 provided to prospective members free of charge.

Clubs may also formally decide to provide complimentary copies  
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## Membership Renewal Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE (If you want it in club records for emergency purposes, not the roster!): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: (print legibly!!) \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ARRL (Y/N) \_\_\_\_ REGISTERED VA ARES (Y/N)\_\_\_\_ SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you available for Workday Daytime Emergency Call up? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

**MARA** members mail with \$12 to: MARA, PO Box 1882, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

**VARA** members mail with \$15 to: VARA, Doug Tippett, 2348 Mosley St, Waynesboro, VA 22980

**PVARC** members mail with \$12 to: Sparky Terry, PO Box 649, Luray, VA 22835

The club newsletter, the Monitor, is provided free of charge monthly to all members of all three clubs via email distribution, in PDF format. However, it is the individual club members' responsibility to notify the newsletter editor directly of all changes in email address. Electronic back issues will be provided free to members on request. Elderly, disabled, or special-needs members may make special arrangements with their respective club officers to receive a hardcopy of the Monitor via U.S. mail in lieu of the electronic PDF version. However, the hardcopy requires additional production and delivery time and is not guaranteed to arrive before the scheduled monthly club meeting dates. Members not receiving the electronic Monitor in a timely fashion (e.g., before their monthly club meeting) should notify the newsletter editor promptly to investigate and resolve the problem with distribution. Members who are using the latest update version of Adobe Reader and experience trouble opening the Monitor email attachment can contact the newsletter editor for assistance.

**Members not renewing will be dropped from the active mailing list, and may experience significant delays in being restored to the list once dues have been paid.**

## MARA/VARA/PVARC

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

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**Return Service Requested**

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**REMINDER:  
DUES ARE DUE**



MARA  
VARA  
PVARC

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