

December  
2011

# THE MONITOR

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

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## **MARA Club Christmas Banquet, December 1 at Wood Grill**

MARA's annual Christmas Banquet will be held on Thursday, December 1, at the normal meeting location: the Wood Grill on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg. As usual, the dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. A very quick business meeting will be held after dinner, followed by a professional program given by Dennis Phillips, NS4K. See page 5 of this issue of the Monitor for more details.



## **PVARC Club Meeting: Friday, December 2 at Page Memorial Hospital**

The Page Valley Amateur Radio Club will hold its regular monthly business meeting at the Page Valley Hospital meeting room on Friday evening, December 2, at 6:00 p.m. Plans are to have a program on digital communications.



## **VARA Club Christmas Banquet, December 6, at Waynesboro Golden Corral**



VARA's annual Christmas Banquet will be held December 6 at the Golden Corral restaurant on Waynesboro. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. Unlike past Christmas banquets, the club decided not to have a gift exchange this year. Come out and enjoy the fellowship. Families and spouses are invited.

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## 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!

## Dee Almquist, W4PNT, SK

As this issue was going to press, we learned of the passing of Dee Almquist, W4PNT. Dee, aged 77, was a long-time resident of Crimora. He died Thursday, Nov. 24, 2011, at his residence. He was born April 10, 1934, in Oakland, Calif., son of the late Jean A. Mohny and John C. Almquist.

Dee was the trustee of the Waynesboro Repeater Association's 147.075 repeater, located on Bear Den Mountain just east of Waynesboro.

Dee was preceded in death by two sons, John K. and Stephen M. Almquist. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Patricia; three sons, Dee P. "Pete" of Afton, Timothy P. "Gus" of Littleton, Colo., and Jerome David Almquist of Raleigh, N.C.; two daughters, Tammy R. Ross of Waynesboro and Jawana J. Cox of Fairbanks, Alaska; one brother, Jay Gary Almquist of Citrus Heights, Calif.; 16 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be planned for a later date.



## Waynesboro Repeater Association Annual Meeting December 1 at the Augusta County Library

The Waynesboro Repeater Association, operator of the W4PNT repeater on 147.075, will hold its annual meeting on Thursday night, December 1, at 6:30 p.m. Members, visitors, and guests should note that this meeting will be held at a new location. Instead of the Waynesboro city library, this year's meeting will be held in the basement meeting room of the Augusta County public library in Fishersville.

## Field Day Location: What are YOUR Thoughts? ... Or Will You Be A Mushroom?

There is an old Indian fable about origins of mushrooms. The story begins with the Tribal Elders sitting around the campfire. The young braves come up and ask a series of questions about dinner: "What should we hunt?" "What do you want to eat?" "Do you prefer bison, turkey, or venison?" and so forth. The old elders don't say a word, they all just sit silently looking at the fire. After an hour of getting no response, the young braves finally give up and go out in their canoes and catch a mess of fish. They offer to share their catch with the elders, but the elders complain that they don't like fish. "Okay, what do you want?" offers the leader of the young braves. "Tell us what you want, and we'll go hunt it and fix it for you." The elders still don't answer, they just sit around silently looking at the fire. So the braves go ahead and eat their fish. Eventually, the elders turn into mushrooms, sitting silently, living off the dung of other animals and plants, simply because they didn't make their wishes known.

Don't run a risk of becoming a mushroom and having to sit in "you-know-what" by not providing input:

A "Super-Committee" is now trying to decide where to hold the 2012 Joint MARA/VARA Field Day Operation. They need to know what you want. And don't want.

So....Tell them!

Let your wishes be known. Do you favor moving the Field Day operation from the mountain? Do you favor holding Field Day at the Augusta County Fairgrounds? Do you favor holding Field Day at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds? Would a Weyers Cave Community Center location be a good compromise?: Do you know the pro's and con's of these various sites? Would you prefer yet a different site? Which site?



Right now, the committee doesn't have strong feelings one way or another, so if you want to see Field Day at a particular location — or if you prefer NOT to hold Field Day at a particular location — make your wants and wishes known! The window of opportunity is open for your comments.

Keep in mind that the decision will not be made by a majority of club members. **It will be made by a majority of those who make their opinions known.** So be sure yours is counted.

Don't end up as a mushroom.

## Volunteer Examiner (VE) Session Saturday December 10

As per the normal schedule, the next volunteer examination session will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2011, at the Woodmen of the World building on Highway 42 just north of Dayton Virginia.



## Richmond Frostfest: Saturday, February 4

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



## VARA Stealth Officers in 2012?

Although it is not reflected in the meeting minutes, rumor has it from reliable sources that the VARA club actually did elect officers for 2012 at their November 2011 meeting.

The Monitor is pleased to scoop the story and bring you live coverage not available through any other channel. Congratulations to John Keller W4ZAO, who was re-elected as President. Also congratulations to Vice-President Jeff Rinehart W4PJW, Secretary David Tanks AD4TJ, and Treasurer Doug Tippett N8ESW.

## For Sale: Icom IC-730 HF Transceiver: \$150

Joe Moshier has an Icom IC-730 HF rig available for sale. He is asking \$150. For more information, contact Joe at 540-435-8310.



## Dennis Phillips, NS4K, to perform Magic at MARA Christmas Banquet

Dennis Phillips will be our featured program at the MARA Christmas Banquet after dinner at the Wood Grill on Thursday evening, December 1.

Phillips moved to Harrisonburg with his wife Cindy two years ago from Orlando, Florida. They owned a theatrical supply business and Dennis was on the faculty of The University of Central Florida and Valencia Community College teaching theater technology.

Cindy was originally from Roanoke, Virginia and Dennis grew up in Norfolk and Washington, D.C. They met while Dennis was working in broadcasting in Roanoke. They spent 3 years in Charlotte, N.C. and the remaining time in Florida. They have three grown children.

Dennis' dad was a World War Two Navy radioman, so Dennis says that radio is in his genes. In addition to an Extra Class License, Phillips (NS4K) also holds a General Radiotelephone License with a Ship Radar Endorsement.

Magic and Illusions has also been a big part of his life since he was a youngster. He was a local TV Children's Show Host on an award winning show that he produced in the middle 1970s. In addition to broadcast work, he has extensively toured with his large illusion show.

Dennis is the local Secretary for Ring #320, "The Blue Ridge Magicians" of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. He holds the prestigious "Wizard" Title and the "Lee Noble Award" for professionalism. He is a cover story writer for Magic Magazine, the world's most read monthly magic periodical.



His illusion inventions have been seen in Las Vegas illusion shows and on "Dancing with the Stars" but his personal performing style is comedy magic with lots of audience interaction. Currently he works part time at WSVU, VerStandig Broadcasting and as a substitute teacher in public school. He also continues to perform magic and entertain.

*Left: Dennis Phillips (1958) with a homebrew "Regen" receiver in the tower array of WTAR (then 790 Khtz) which was just off the Military Highway in Norfolk, Virginia. The protective fence and "dog house" (houses the base meters) of one of the radio antennas can be seen in the background.*

## PVARC Secretary's Report – October 7 Meeting

PVARC Meeting Summary – October 7th, 2011

The meeting was held in the Day Room at Page Memorial Hospital in Luray. PVARC President Mark Hensley / N4YSA called the meeting to order at 1800. Following member self-introductions, our visitor, Shannon Freeze/KJ4VRZ recognized and welcomed.



The minutes of the September 2nd meeting were approved as submitted to The Monitor which will be printed in the combined September/October edition. Sparky/KD4KL, PVARC Secretary/Treasurer gave the following financial report as of September 30, 2011. PVARC has a balance of \$1,316.36 in their account at Pioneer Bank. Two checks, in the amount of \$50/each (to repeater associations) have not yet cleared. Once they are cashed, our balance will be \$1,216.36. No other expenditures were made and no bills are outstanding. The report was approved as submitted.

Mark/N4YSA asked if there were any Announcements before calling for Meeting Reports, first congratulating Dave Firestone/K4DPF on his appointment as the ARRL Emergency Coordinator for Page County and asking Dave if he would like to address the membership. Dave responded by thanking Ben Endicott/N4SFG, the past Page County EC for his years of service to the community, and continuing assistance in the transition period. Dave reported that he had downloaded the Emergency Coordinator Manual and was studying it diligently. While emphasizing that his activities with respect to emergency communications will center on ARES principles, he will be calling upon all Page County amateurs, not just PVARC members, to assist him in developing a strong and robust emergency response effort. To this end, he will be conducting an ARES "Re-organization Kick-off Meeting" tomorrow - Saturday, October 8th at 10:00 a.m. in the Page County EoC training room. Post Card invitations to an estimated 50 Page County amateurs have been mailed – including those here this evening at the PVARC meeting. He will be joined in his briefing by Mark/N4YSA (Assistant EC for Training) who will discuss the Proposed Training Program/Approaches; and, Morgan/K4RHD (ARES Net Manager) to discuss Page County ARES Nets. He concluded by announcing the establishment of a new (under construction) website for Page County ARES. Check it out at <http://www.pagecountyares.org>.

Membership Committee Chairman Geoffrey/WD4LYO reported that he is continuing to develop a database of hams in Page and nearby counties for recruitment/notification of PVARC activities. He hopes to design a post card format for consideration at the next business meeting.

Mark/N4YSA reported that the Technical Assistance Committee has two assists on its "to-do" list. To re-hang the end of Geoffrey's G5RV antenna; and, to install an HF antenna for Zory/KB3VQC at his mountain QTH.

Sparky/KD4KL, on behalf of the Widow's Assistance Committee reminded the members we still have three nice multi-band portable radios in excellent condition for sale. He will see if pictures and particulars can be sent to The Monitor as items for sale.

ARRL Field Day Chair Dave/K4DPF reported the December edition of QST will publish Field Day results. It will be interesting to see PVARC's standing this year!

New Business: The main topic of interest this month was training, with special emphasis on digital modes. Following a far ranging discussion, it was agreed that PVARC should attempt to find a speaker to give a technical presentation of the various digital modes in common use; i.e., PSK31, MFSK16, MT63, PACTOR, WinLink2000 for HF & Packet Radio, APRS, AX.25 Packet, D-Star and 802.11 on VHF/UHF. Obviously, any one of these modes will be difficult to discuss within a reasonable timeframe. If anyone is using one of these digital modes (and/or associated software), we need speakers and presenters – any volunteers?

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1900. The next meeting will be held at Brown's Chinese Restaurant on Main St. in Luray on Friday, November 4, 2011 @ 1800.

Submitted by  
Sparky Terry, KD4KL  
PVARC Secretary/Treasurer

## PVARC Secretary's Report – November 4 Meeting

In keeping with the “odd month” tradition, the November 4th PVARC meeting was held at Brown's Chinese Restaurant in Luray. Guests were: Mary Hand & Larry Hand; and, Letty Griffin invited by Zory/KB3VQC; Fern Roach (XYL) & Ann Ward (daughter) of Charlie/KG4ALT; and, Bianca Housden, grand-daughter of Morgan/K4RHD. Following the introduction of members and guests, PVARC President Mark Hensley/N4YSA a conducted short business meeting.

In accordance with our Constitution & By-Laws (Article 2 – Directors and Officers) a Board of Directors consisting of the principal officers plus two Members-At-Large was established. The terms for the two Members-At-Large were for two-years: “... staggered such that they do not expire at the same time.” Therefore, noting that the current term of Bob Forrest/WO4MI was ending and the seat was not contested, Mark/N4YSA called for a motion to re-elect Bob Forrest for a two-year term. The motion was made and seconded to re-elect, which passed unanimously.

Morgan/K4RHD reported on status of the Roanoke Division ARRL Service Award package he has been working on. Subject to a few last minute additions and further coordination the package is ready for submission. He has been in contact with Roanoke Division Director Dennis Bodson/W4PWF. The PVARC members were appreciative of his work and hope for a successful outcome.

Dave/K4DPF speaking as PVARC Field Day “maestro” reported PVARC standings for this year: Ranking in Virginia was 1<sup>st</sup> in A-1 Class, and nationwide – 620 of 2,632 entries. Summarizing:

In 2009 with 682 contacts we scored 2444 points.

In 2010 with 811 contacts we scored 3078 points.

In 2011 with 779 contacts we scored 2922 points.

Without further ado, the business meeting was adjourned and “Dinner was Served.” Table topics included: Echo Link contacts, propagation & sun-spots, antennas, stations worked, digital communications and ARES. Table talk continued well into the evening. Guests were encouraged to come again; and, members were reminded that our next meeting would be held at Page Memorial Hospital in Luray at 1800 on December 2<sup>nd</sup> when we hope to have a presentation on Digital Communications.

Submitted by  
Sparky Terry, KD4KL  
PVARC Secretary/Treasurer



**Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah! Happy New Year! Happy Holidays!**

## VARA Secretary's Report – November 1 Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Valley Amateur Radio Association met on Tuesday, November 1st 2011 at 7:00pm  
50-50 winner was Andrew Barbour AG4XN.

ARES Report

Thanks for helping all the public service events the ARES website is still down. the EC will have paper forms soon.

Remember to send David your man hours for ARES.

Secretary's report was read and accepted.

Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

PUBLIC SERVICE:

Thanks to all who helped out with the grindstone.

From the Fall Foilage Bike Fest: Thanks for all the help we got. The hams gave our bicyclists security, the routes were well marked. The Fall Foilage Bike Fest sent us a check for our help. Thanks for participating.

CHRISTMAS PARTY:

It was decided that our Christmas party will be held at The Golden Corral in Waynesboro Va on Tuesday December 6th.

The price per person will be 13.25 including tip.

Dave Fordham KD9LA, took care of dispersing the items of Robert T Niemeyer, W3MMC.

FD results say we took 2nd place in the state.

We are checking into the use of the Rockingham County Fairgrounds as a site for Field Day next year - keep posted

Meeting was adjourned at 7:47pm.

*Steven Grant W4IIV  
VARA Secretary*



## MARA Treasurer's Report – October 29, 2010 to November 28, 2010

Beginning Balance October 29, 2011 (last report)	\$ 2,443.21
Add: 1 new membership	\$ 12.00
Add: October meeting 50/50	\$ 12.00
Add: Donation from VARA re: Bike Festival participation	\$ 233.36
Less: no disbursements during the period	\$ <u>0</u>
Ending Balance as of November 28, 2010	\$ 2,700.57

*Submitted by David Fordham, KD9LA, MARA Treasurer*



## MARA Secretary's Report – November 10 Meeting

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:33 PM Attendance:** 32 present – 25 MARA Members and 7 Guests

Bryan (K4RMY) conducted the meeting. Introductions made all around.

**Reports:** New Members: None reported; 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: None; 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 not heard back from Jim Junkins regarding the new credentialing status.

**VEC-Session:** The next VE test session will be held at 9:00 am, Dec. 10, 2011 at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton.

### Public Service:

Camp Still Meadows: Ray (K4NRA) reported a successful event. MARA has supported this event for over twenty years altogether.

Grindstone 100: John (W4ZAO) also reported a successful event with no lost runners. The repeater worked well. Thanks were extended to all the MARA and VARA members who supported the event.

Fall Foliage Bike Festival: John (W4ZAO) received a letter from Barbara thanking MARA and VARA clubs for supporting the event. VARA received the check and the donation was allocated between the two clubs based on the split of volunteer support. David (KD9LA) reported he did receive the check from VARA for the event.

KTM 500: Bryan (K4RMY) reported that we have not received the check from the KTM500. He will follow up.

**Announcements:** Gerry (K4RBZ) reported on the Field Day results – MARA/VARA placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Roanoke Division.

The Field Day Location Committee has not met. John (W4ZAO) reported that VARA named two volunteers at the last meeting. They will work with the MARA contingency including Bryan (K4RMY), Mike (K4MIC) and Mike (KJ4TPA) to put together a written recommendation for distribution to the VARA and MARA membership.

Ken Heinz (KC4TJY) – reported he was able to obtain grant funds which he used to purchase curriculum materials including the ARRL Antenna Book, ARRL Operating Manual, ARRL Handbook and the ARRL Instructor's Manual. He has installed a small antenna on the roof of the school and they are on air using the 443.150 repeater as well as Ken's repeater on 444.40 (tone – 74.4 with positive offset). Ken would like to get a testing session going and is looking for volunteers. He can be contacted at [kenheinz@hotmail.com](mailto:kenheinz@hotmail.com).

Mark your calendars for the December 1<sup>st</sup> MARA Christmas party. The entertainment will include a professional magician.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**New Call or Upgrades:** None reported

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

**50/50 Raffle:** Total of \$24.00; \$12.00 split won by Rick (KJ4AAE).

**Program:** David Fordham (KD9LA) – Roberts Rules of Order: How to run a corporation and how to run meetings.



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

**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.

**The December 2011 meeting will be held at  
 the Golden Corral in Waynesboro.**

**Guests and Families are Invited.**

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

Doug Tippet  
 2348 Mosley St.  
 Waynesboro VA 22980

**PAGE VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

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

**Website to be announced**

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

The meeting begins at 6:00 pm

**Visitors are welcome.**

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

Sparky Terry  
 PO Box 649  
 Luray VA 22835-0649

The Monitor is published monthly by MARA, Inc.  
 for members of the three amateur radio clubs  
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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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Contact your respective club officers for more information.

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Copyright notices must be respected.

## 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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MARA  
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