

October 2019

# THE MONITOR

*Published Monthly for Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Operators — Members of MARA, VARA, and PVARC*



**The Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc.,**  
will hold its **Annual Corporate Meeting** on  
**Tuesday, October 1,**  
at the **Hometown Grill** in **Staunton, Virginia.**  
**The business meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.**

**The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc.**  
will hold its **Annual Corporate Meeting** on  
**Thursday, October 3,**  
at the **Wood Grill** in **Harrisonburg, Virginia.**  
**The business meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.**

**Both Corporations**  
**need a Quorum in attendance**  
**to elect officers for 2020.**

# OCTOBER CLUB MEETINGS

## Tuesday October 1 – VARA Annual Meeting: Hometown Grill and Buffet

The Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc., will hold its Corporate Annual Meeting on **Tuesday, October 1** at the **Hometown Grill and Buffet** just north of Highway 250, 1 block east of I-81's Exit 221 in Staunton. The meal begins at 6:00 pm, the business meeting starts at 7:00 pm. This is the annual election of officers, and a quorum must be present, so please attend.



## Thursday October 3 – MARA Annual Meeting: Wood Grill

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., will hold its Corporate Annual Meeting on **Thursday, October 3** at the normal location: the **Wood Grill** at **1711 Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg**. Dinner starts shortly before 6:30 p.m. The business meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. This is the annual election of officers, and a quorum must be present, so please attend.



## PVARC Meeting – Email Discussion will determine meeting night and time

As shown in the PVARC secretary's report on page 15, the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club decided at the september meeting that it might be nice to "mix it up a little" and change the night of the week and night of the month of the normal club meeting. An email discussion will be held with members. If you are a visitor, contact **Gary Fischer, K6OZ**, at [gary.k6oz@yahoo.com](mailto:gary.k6oz@yahoo.com) for information about when and where the meeting will be held.



# FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

## How to Identify a 1x1 Special Event Callsign

The FCC issues 1x1 callsigns (such as K1T, W4L, and N5R) for special event stations. Since those callsigns are re-used, they are not part of the normal FCC callsign database lookups.

But there is a website that keeps track of 1x1 calls, and maintains contact information so you can get your QSL card, even if you worked them many months ago.

The site is <http://www.1x1callsigns.org> .

Logical! Thanks to David Tanks AD4TJ for providing this information.

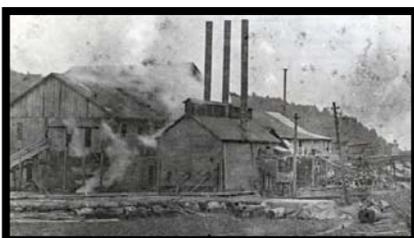
## History: Information Session on the June 17, 1949 Stokesville Flood

Gordon Batey WA4FJC's wife, Betty Jo Michael and other relatives were trapped on the second floor of her grandmother's home overnight. The home is still standing just south of the iron truss bridge near the Stokesville campground.

There is going to be a 70th anniversary meeting on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, starting at 6:00 pm in the Sangersville-Towers Ruritan Hall in Mt. Solon Virginia. Local residents are planning to bring in photos and other memorabilia to share with those attending. This is a great opportunity to see some of the devastation from 70 years ago. The meeting is free and open to the public.



Above and left:  
Scenes from  
Stokesville, Virginia,  
before the flood.



Right: After the  
flood



# MARTHA MOATS BAKER: 1880-1925



In August, local amateur radio operators were scouting out Little Bald Knob summit in the wilderness of the George Washington Forest. They were seeking a potential location for the repeater for the fall public service events. While heading out Forest Development Road 427, they came across a headstone, marking the nearby grave of Martha Moats Baker.

Curious about how this lady's grave ended up in the wilderness, on a mountain, many miles from the nearest traces of civilization, behind locked National Forest Service gates, your newsletter editor did some investigation. He found the following information about her tragic fate, compiled from various on-line sources, including an August 11, 1925 article in the Harrisonburg Daily News-Record.

Martha Moats was born in 1880 in Sugar Grove, West Virginia. A pretty and lively girl, she married a Stokesville laborer, John Baker. Although quite poor, they had a son Roy. Once or twice a year, she would try to visit her parents and siblings in West Virginia. Not wealthy enough to buy a train ticket or own a horse, let alone a car, she would walk the 20-mile one-way journey — an all-day trip on foot through high rugged mountains. She would spend a day or two with family, then walk home.

Martha would start on the footpath (part of which today is the Wild Oak Trail) from Stokesville, cross the North River, hike up Buck Mountain and on to Little Bald Knob. She would continue northerly, crossing Brushy Mountain, skirting Reddish Knob, finally descending to West Virginia. Today the route is traversed by Forest Roads 427, 85, 24, and 25.

On one of these trips in the fall of 1924, she was in the Sugar Grove General Store, and saw a pair of unusual out-of-season shoes on sale. A Forest Service ranger with the new George Washington National Forest, a man by the name of Arlie Smith, was in the store that day. He remembered seeing the lady and noticed her worn-out clothes. He saw her negotiating with the storekeeper and purchasing the distinctive shoes for the few cents she had in her purse. This observation would prove fortuitous.

At Christmas 1924, the winter weather prevented Martha from seeing her parents for the holiday. But January 8, 1925 dawned unseasonably warm, with a clear blue sky and bright sunshine. Eager to see family, she donned the only pair of shoes she owned and set out from her home in Stokesville, planning to walk over the mountains and arrive in Sugar Grove before nightfall. Her husband and son had to work, but she'd made the trip many times before, so no one thought twice about her going alone.

Alas, these were the days before weather forecasting. Late that morning, several hours after her departure but long before she could possibly have made it over the mountains, a vicious blizzard rolled in, blanketing the region in fog and dropping several feet of wet snow. The storm lasted three days. Even if she had been wearing warm shoes, warm clothing, and carrying food and water, the snow would have covered her landmarks and made it impossible to follow the trail. The deep snow slowed her down, and clouds and fog even prevented her from telling which direction she was walking.

In the days before telephones and radio, it was several days before anyone realized she was missing. A search was begun, but the snow had covered her tracks, and the weather and meager financial circumstances of the people greatly limited the search. The deep snow in the mountains did not melt until Spring that year

It wasn't until the following August, when forest rangers were surveying the area at the top of Brushy Mountain, four miles north of Little Bald Knob, that they happened upon a set of skeletal remains along what today is Forest Road 427. The site is almost exactly halfway between Stokesville and Sugar Grove, and is just under 4000 feet above sea level, a very cold location in the wintertime.

The forest crew that day included C.E. Howdershell, Samuel Howdershell, and amazingly, Arlie Smith, who had seen the lady buying the pair of shoes the previous fall. Smith instantly recognized the distinctive shoes which still encased her feet. There was no evidence of foul play. The remains were decomposed and a cause of death could not be determined. Her small grip (purse) was found next to her body and still contained the three pennies that her son verified she had when she left the house.

Tommy Collins, a present-day resident of Briery Branch, has researched her story, and says, "it is possible she could have been killed by a wild animal when she stopped to rest, but we really don't know exactly what happened to her." Given her threadbare gloves and hat and lack of a heavy coat, it is most likely she simply froze to death in the snow on the wet, windy mountain.

Her family did not have enough money to bury her closer to home, either in West Virginia or Stokesville, so she was interred where she was found. Local hunters Leon Huffer, Tommy Collins, and Norman Michael placed a grave marker at the site in the 1960s. The Virginia Happy Trails Running Club holds an annual 50k run named the Martha Moats Baker Memorial 50k each summer. The next one will be held on August 8, 2020. The course starts at the Wild Oak Trail Parking Area on Todd Lake Road, and the first half of the run follows Martha's route up past Little Bald Knob to Brushy Mountain, passing her gravesite about the midway point of the run. The run continues to Reddish Knob, but instead of continuing to West Virginia, takes other trails back down to Tilghman Road to the parking lot. The run website is: <http://www.vhtrc.org/news/mmb50> And now you know...



On their trips to Little Bald Knob, the hams (David Fordham, KD9LA, John Chevalaz KB2LOZ, Jeff Rinehart W4PJW, and Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, Nick Smaltino KC4YJO, Chris Barnes KN4IJF, and Bradley Boyd W4BVB), used their tools to do cursory brush maintenance around her marker to pay their respects.

# PUBLIC SERVICE EVENT REPORT

## Shenandoah 100 Bike Race – September 1

The Shenandoah 100 bicycle race begins at the Stokesville campground and runs for 100 miles on backcountry unimproved trails through the George Washington National Forest in western Augusta County and southwestern Rockingham County. **John Lasher N3GLZ**, was the communications coordinator, working with Chris Scott who heads up the race.

This year's race was complicated by two factors. First, Tilghman Road, which forms a major thoroughfare for the race, was closed due to construction on the Hearthstone Dam by the Army Corps of Engineers. It took a significant amount of coordination to ascertain the exact race course, and it wasn't until a few days before the race that arrangements were made to have the road opened temporarily for the event.

The second fly in the ointment was the tremendous downpour, a 2-hour gully-washer rainstorm with hail, which drenched the entire course the night before the race. This made the course muddy, slippery, and especially dangerous.

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association (MARA) made two of their repeaters available for temporary relocation to the forest for use in providing communications between all the aid stations, many of which were in deep ravines and hollows, shadowed from area repeaters. David Fordham, KD9LA, coordinated with Mary Yonce, District Ranger with the National Forest Service to gain access to normally-closed forest service roads to scout out locations for a repeater which might cover the course. David also worked with the National Radio Quiet Zone coordinator Paulette Woody (KD8NKC) to obtain permission to operate from Little Bald Knob, Brushy Mountain, and Reddish Knob.

Because the rainstorm essentially made the Little Bald Knob and Brushy Mountain sites inaccessible even to 4WD vehicles, the repeater equipment was set up on Reddish Knob. The location was socked in by clouds for the entire race, but fortunately radio waves penetrate fog fairly well at VHF frequencies.

John Lasher N3GLZ, Dave Beebe KN4UEK, and others successfully ran net control from the campground, and all went smoothly. There were a couple of calls for minor accidents, spills, and equipment breakdowns, but the most major injury was a possible broken collarbone.

Right: Bradley Boyd W4BVB and Chris Barnes, KN4IJF, assisted KD9LA in breakdown of the repeater operation after the race was over.



**A big THANK YOU** to the following hams who donated part of their weekend for this event.

Andy Jezioro, WA2ONG

Andrew Pearson, N4RCE

Bob Steere, N1QEQ

Bob Van Fossen, K4DJG

Bradley Boyd, W4BVB

Bryan Daniels, K4RMY

Colin Hester, N4ZDQ

Dave Beebe, KN4UEK

David Fordham, KD9LA

Fred Castello, KF4FC

Gordon Batey, WA4FJC

Glenn Mingo, KJ4VVP

Grant Russell, KB3EMT

Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

John Chevalaz, KB2LOZ

John Lasher, N3GLZ

Larry Burns, KM4TDC

Ray Albers, K2HYD

Ray Colvin, KE4HVR

Riley Chandler, KF4EMZ

Wayne Bowyer, N4EYZ

Chris Barnes, KN4IJF



The 147.315 MARA repeater was used for most of the race. As a backup, the MARA 444.600 repeater was re-programmed for 147.315 in case of failure of the primary equipment. Fortunately the primary repeater operated just fine in the damp environment. The backup repeater was placed in service as a test in the late afternoon.

These photos show the density of the fog blanketing the mountaintop at the Reddish Knob site. Normally, this location offers broad vistas of the surrounding mountains, but visibility on this day was limited to about 50 feet all day long.

The top photo also shows the condensation from the mist which coated any and all equipment, even under the shelter. The repeater was kept inside the vehicle, protecting it somewhat from the moisture.

Photos by David Fordham, KD9LA



# PUBLIC SERVICE EVENT REPORT

## Valley Veterans Ride for Heroes – September 7

This ride is sponsored by several veterans' organizations in the valley as a fund-raiser for Boulder Crest, a R&R center for injured military combat veterans. The event is a bicycle ride featuring three routes, the longest one 63 miles, the shorter ones truncated versions of the long one. All routes are on paved roads in Augusta & Rockingham Counties, from Hermitage to Bridgewater and back.

The ride communications coordinator was **Fred Castello, KF4FC, fredcastello@gmail.com**

The race began at Stable Craft Brewery in Hermitage. Hams covered the aid stations, relaying progress as the bikers progressed through the course, and standing at the ready in case of accident or injury requiring the summoning of rescue or medical assistance.

Hams also served as SAG Vehicles. To add a little spice to the event, Net Control had compiled a list of military trivia which kept many veterans at the aid stations entertained.

David KD9LA was stationed at the Bridgewater aid station and was surprised to discover "General Pershing" in full dress uniform. He had brought his authentic Maxim Repeating Rifle, MG08/15, invented by none other than Hiram Maxim, father of Hiram Percy Maxim, who founded the American Radio Relay League. Photos below and on following page by KD9LA.



A big **THANK YOU** to the following hams who donated their Saturday for this event.

Fred Castello, KF4FC

Erika Kancler, K4NOV

Norm Dallura, KN4YFI

Ray LaFalce, K2ULW

Andrew Pearson, N4RCE

Bradley Boyd, W4BVB

Glenn Mingo, KJ4VVP

David Fordham, KD9LA

Ray Albers, K2HYD

Bob Steere, N1QEQ

Gordon Batey, WA4FJC

Dave Beebe, KN4UEK

David Tanks, AD4TJ

Ian McGary, KN4PTH

Shane McGary, KR4TER

Greg Czerniak, W4GRC

Larry Burns, KM4TDC

Bobby Adams, W4RTA

Tom Benson, WA4ESI



# VOLUNTEER EXAMINATION REPORT

## Success at the Testing Session

Thanks to those who helped with the VE testing session on September 7. We had four persons for testing. Two earned their General Class license, and two earned their Technician class license. Those helping were:

**Bob Moore KN3Y**

**Jim Lehman W4POL**

**Mike Turner K4MIC**

**Gerald Nauman KN4FM**

**Pat Morgan AK4VQ**

**Ray Ritchie K4NRA**

**Bradley Boyd W4BVB**



Our next testing session will be December 7, 2019. There is plenty of time to study for an upgrade. Testing is held at the Woodmen Life Building, 3024 John Wayland Highway, Dayton, Virginia, starting promptly at 9:00 a.m. local time.

Gayle Shull, KU4XN

# UPCOMING SKYWARN CLASSES

## Fall Skywarn Class Schedule Published

The local scheduled of Skywarn classes is now online at <https://www.weather.gov/lwx/skywarn>

The closest class to the Shenandoah Valley is Wednesday, October 16, at the Frederick County (Virginia) Public Safety Building, 1080 Coverstone Drive, Winchester, Virginia, from 7 pm to 9 pm. For those who have completed a Basics course, there will be a Winter Weather Skywarn class in Culpeper at the County Office of Emergency Services, 14022 Public Safety Court, Culpeper, on Wednesday, November 6, from 6 pm to 8 pm. Both of these classes are FREE but you must register in advance. Follow the links found on the above webpage for the class in which you are interested.

## Free Transportation to Winchester Skywarn Classes

If you are planning to attend the free Winchester Skywarn class on October 16th, **Bob Hume W4TMV**, is offering a free ride. Bob is a professional bus driver, so you are in safe hands! He has room for up to four people, first-come first-served. The class is free, but as shown above, you must register. Email Bob if you want to take advantage of the free ride: [bob4863@comcast.net](mailto:bob4863@comcast.net)



# CQ 160m 2019 CONTEST RESULTS

It's OFFICIAL! The final numbers have been published!

**John Keller, W4ZAO**, has done it again! W4ZAO came in **1st place Virginia** in the SB Low Power category. 4th place in US and Canada, and 10th place world-wide with a score of 70,211 points, 490 Qs, 53 multipliers, and 8 DX. Super job!

**Jim Clymer WS6X** entered in the CW only, High Power category, and placed 4th Virginia, and 30th US and Canada, with a score of 247,100 points, 873 Qs, 56 multipliers, and 44 DX.

**David Tanks AD4TJ** also entered in the CW High Power category, and placed 10th Virginia, with a score of 38,584 points, 317 Qs, 46 multipliers, and 6 DX.

**Greg Czerniak W4GRC** entered as CW Low Power, and placed 6th in Virginia, with 20,832 points, 221 Qs, 39 Multipliers, and 3 DX.

**Jeff Rinehart W4PJW** also entered as CW Low Power, and placed 9th Virginia, with 9,690 points, 97 Qs, 35 Multipliers, and 3 DX.

**Fred Castello KF4FC** entered as SB Low Power and placed 9th Virginia, with 952 points, 28 Qs, 17 Multipliers, and 0 DX.

**John Chevalaz KB2LOZ** ventured onto 160 as SB Low Power, and made at least one contact. That's still more than most hams get on 160m!

**David Tanks AD4TJ** also played in the SB portion, as High Power, and placed 11th Virginia, with 756 points, 24 Qs, 14 Multipliers, and 0 DX.

The Shenandoah Valley Wireless contest club placed 88th out of 111 clubs world-wide, and 37th of 46 in the US.

Congratulations, all!

73, David AD4TJ,  
Manager for the Shenandoah Valley Wireless contest club



# UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

## October 4-6 (Friday to Sunday) – Grindstone 100 Footrace

**What:** A 100-mile footrace on wilderness trails in the George Washington National Forest of western Augusta and southwestern Rockingham Counties.



**Who:** Coordinator is **Gordon Batey, WA4FJC**, email [gpbatey@compuserve.com](mailto:gpbatey@compuserve.com)

**Where:** Race begins and ends at the Boy Scout Camp in Swoope, southwest of Churchville. The course goes up to the peaks of Elliott's Knob, down to Dowell's Draft at Dry Branch Gap, up to Lookout Mountain, down to North River Gap, up to Little Bald Knob, up to Reddish Knob, down to Briery Branch Gap, then reverses and retraces the route back to Swoope.

**When:** Race starts October 4, Friday night at 6 p.m and all runners must return or be pulled from the course by 8 a.m. Sunday morning, October 6. Ham duty hours are flexible, but most hams usually spend 3 to 6 hours on station, with a few intrepid individuals volunteering for up to 18 hours or more.

**Why:** Hams are positioned at aid stations and provide communications about the welfare and status of runners as they traverse this grueling and dangerous course, especially through hours of darkness. Cell phone coverage is non-existent almost everywhere on the course, so hams provide the only emergency communications to summon rescue. Every year sees numerous accidents, falls, and injuries, and dozens of participants drop out along the course.

**How:** Hams require a completely self-contained station with a 50-watt portable radio, programmed with local repeater and simplex frequencies, and a good gain antenna, preferably with a mast or other mount high above ground level. Dual-band radios are helpful. Portable cross-band repeater capability coupled with hand-held units are also useful.

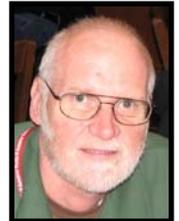
**Notes:** This is the most challenging, exciting and personally-rewarding public service opportunity of the year. It provides invaluable experience and lessons about survival and wilderness operation, self-contained radio stations, and radio propagation in mountainous areas. The 2-1/2 day nature of the event provides good opportunities for new hams to shadow and relieve Net Control, gaining exposure to all dimensions of a well organized large-scale public service event.



# UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

## October 5-6 (Saturday & Sunday) – Washington Area Trail Riders Bike Ride

**What:** A Motorcycle Ride, across two days, The recommended route includes paved roads, state highways, gravel and unimproved forest roads, and at least one all-terrain vehicle trail, in Augusta, Rockingham, and Pendleton (WV) Counties. (Many bikers deviate from the recommended route, but radio coverage is provided only on the official route.)



**Who:** Coordinated by **Bryan Daniels, K4RMY**, email [k4rmy@comcast.net](mailto:k4rmy@comcast.net) .

**Where:** Race begins and ends at Natural Chimneys Regional Park in Mt. Solon both days.

**When:** Saturday and Sunday, October 5 and 6. Ride start and end times are recommendations and are not adhered to by many riders. Ham duty hours are flexible.



**Why:** Hams man the lunch and repair stations, and also operate mobile along the route, relaying locations and information relating to emergencies, accidents, and breakdowns. Cell phone coverage is spotty and unreliable in many areas of the route.

**How:** Hams need a mobile outside antenna and a 25-watt (minimum) mobile radio. The event most likely will utilize 146.490 or 146.55 simplex, with a net control station on Reddish Knob.

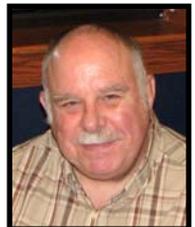


**Notes:** Most communication involves breakdowns or locating an overdue rider. Typically this event is low-stress, low-key, giving hams an excuse for a relaxing drive along low-traffic back-roads to enjoy the fall scenery.

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## October 6 (Sunday morning) – Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride Charity Event

**What:** A fund-raiser for a camp for disabled children, involving dozens of horseback riders along gravel and unimproved roads in the mountains west of Timberville.



**Who:** Coordinated by **Ray Ritchie K4NRA**, email [k4nraham@gmail.com](mailto:k4nraham@gmail.com) .

**Where:** Ride begins and ends at a farm west of Timberville.

**When:** Sunday October 6, starting around 8 am, ending by noon.

**Why:** Hams provide communication for accidents, and riders and horses in distress along the route. Cell phone coverage is spotty and less than reliable at some places along the route.

**How:** Hams operate either mobile or handheld, using a frequency designated by the coordinator.

**Notes:** A very low-stress event, seldom experiencing difficulties or emergencies, but hams are providing a safety net in case of accident.



# UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

## October 19-20 (Saturday & Sunday) – Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival

**What:** A huge event involving over 800 bicycle riders across eleven different courses, generally in Augusta County, with some excursions into southern Rockingham County.

**Who:** Lenny Vincent, N4XLP, is the coordinator, his email is [n4lxp001@gmail.com](mailto:n4lxp001@gmail.com) or [sffbf@n4lxp.com](mailto:sffbf@n4lxp.com)

**Where:** There are 11 different routes with various start points. For the most part, the routes are on back-country paved or gravel county roads in Augusta and Rockbridge Counties, with a couple of short jaunts on or across a busy state highway. On Saturday some routes start at St. Pauls Methodist Church in Staunton, Lunch is at Towers Ruritan Hall in Sangersville near Natural Chimneys Park, where the other routes begin and end. On Sunday, lunch and race headquarters is at the Middlebrook Ruritan Building, where most if not all of the routes begin and end.

**When:** Saturday October 19 and Sunday October 20, starting around 7:00 am both days, usually over by 5 pm. Ham duty hours and assignments are flexible.

**Why:** Hams provide SAG vehicle support, relay the status of rest stops to race headquarters, and provide communications for accidents and distressed riders and bicycles along the routes. Cell phone coverage is spotty and less than reliable at some places along the route.

**How:** This large event has many different operating opportunities, depending on your preferences and equipment. Most hams operate from their vehicle, either mobile or parked, using the 147.075 repeater Saturday, and 147.045 as the primary repeater Sunday. Backup repeater will be 147.290 both days.. A 45-watt (minimum) radio is needed, with an outside antenna. A few hams like to operate on foot, manning the aid stations, using a hand-held unit by operating through a cross-band repeater-located in their car.

**Notes:** This event has something for every ham. You can operate for an hour, two hours, or all day both days if you wish. There are positions and assignments where you can remain parked stationary for your entire shift, either at an aid station or at an intersection along the route. There are other assignments involving riding the route in your vehicle and enjoying the scenery. There are other positions where you provide SAG support with a pickup truck, shuttling riders and their bikes to the race headquarters. Given the two-day nature of the event, there is ample opportunity for new hams to provide relief for Net Control, gaining valuable experience and exposure to all dimensions of a well-organized public service event.



# PVARC MEETING MINUTES

## **PVARC Secretary's Report – September 12, 2019 Meeting**

Page Valley Amateur Radio Club September 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Will Baukhages N4WIL at 7:12 PM at Tactical Walls in Shenandoah. (Thanks to Tim KM4TGC and Carrie KM4WDX for the donation of the use of the facility!)

7 members were in attendance

The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were approved. The Treasurer noted that Amazon Smile is generating some modest returns.

Old Business:

The technical assistance committee assisted in raising antennas for Scot KJ4SIT and Paul KK4IRS

The club/ARES support to the Luray Triathlon was thoroughly discussed, including the details of the response to the serious bicycle/car accident. The first alert to the emergency vehicles came through the ham radio links. Some ideas that came out of the discussion:

We should have better maps with mile markers and 911 addresses near the posts

We need more visible rider numbers on the bicycles

We should be more conscientious and accurate reporting rider numbers and locations

Meeting attendance and next meeting

Suggestion was made to alter the day of the week for one time only to mix it up a little ... will be determined by email discussion ... Stay tuned.

Suggestion was made to create a monthly "how to" article on the website and possibly add video of trips to the repeater site and/or the triathlon

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted by Gary Fischer K6OZ, PVARC Secretary

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# MARA TREASURER'S REPORT

## Two-Month Report: July 21, 2019 to September 20, 2019

Opening Balance		<u>\$ 2,915.68</u>
<b>Income:</b>		
Dues	\$ 15.00	
August 50/50	\$ 35.00	
September 50/50	\$ 22.50	
<b>Total Income:</b>		<u>\$ 72.50</u>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Electric July	\$ 23.07	
Electric August	\$ 23.07	
Annual Liability Insurance	\$ 266.00	
KD9LA - Reimbursement for purchase of 145.13 club repeater	\$ 600.00	
PO Box Rent, annual	\$ 92.00	
<b>Total Expenses:</b>		<u>\$1,004.14</u>
<b>Balance September 20, 2018</b>		<u><b>\$ 1,984.04</b></u>



Submitted by Foster Farone WF40  
MARA Treasurer

## MARA MEETING MINUTES

### MARA Secretary's Report – September 5, 2019 Meeting

General Meeting called to order at Wood Grill, Harrisonburg, by Vice President Bob Steere (N1QEQ) at 7:30 P.M. There were 25 members and 5 guests present. Introductions were made all around.

New Member Vote: None.

New Member First Reading: Trever Lambert (No Call)

*(continued)*

## MARA Secretary's Report – September 5, 2019 Meeting (*continued*)

The Secretary's Minutes: approved as printed in the Monitor

The Treasurer's Report: approved as printed in the Monitor.

Committee Reports:

ARES: Bryan Daniels (K4RMY, in absentia): The Regional Hospital Ham group will meet at SRMH on Monday evening Sept. 9th to discuss the regional net procedures and frequencies.

Repeater Committee: Status of the Bergton/Criders area crossband repeater, per the Sept. Monitor: An additional solar panel has been installed along with a new charge controller. Additionally, a second battery has been added, giving additional up-time on cloudy days and at night. The 145.130 repeater is working very well.

VE Committee: Gayle Shull (KU4XN): The next regular test session will be at 9:00 A.M., September 7, at Woodmen Life, 3045 John Wayland Hwy (Rt 42) in Dayton.

Public Service Committee: The Triple Play (Grindstone 100, Shenandoah 500, and Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride) is Oct. 4, 5, and 6. Permission has been granted by the NRQZ quiet zone, to utilize the 147.315 repeater on Reddish Knob during that weekend. Ray Ritchie (K4NRA) announced that the Horse Ride volunteers and riders will enjoy a free breakfast and lunch.

Old Business: none

New Business:

By email, Foster Farone (KF4O) stated that his new job will entail working hours up to 10 p.m., precluding him from attending MARA meetings. He offered to continue handling the bookkeeping operations until a new Treasurer is elected.

The October meeting is the annual business meeting. Bob Moore (KN3Y) and Herb Slade (AA2BF) will be the Nominating Committee, to prepare a ballot for the officers for 2020. Nominations may also be made by members present at that meeting. A quorum of 20 members must be present to vote for the winning nominees.

Announcements: Next meeting 7:30 P.M. Oct. 3, 2019 at Wood Grill, 1711 Reservoir St., Harrisonburg, VA. Dinner at 6:00. Ed. Note: The Wood Grill manager told Herb that both meeting rooms have been reserved by other groups for the first Thursday in April, 2020. We agreed to hold our April 2020 meeting on the 2nd Thursday, April 9. (Make a Note of it!)

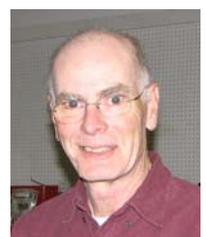
50/50 Drawing: \$22.50 was won by Danny Perry (KN4WD), with \$22.50 going to the MARA Treasury. Congrats, Danny!

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Program: The showing of the second of two videos on ft8 was postponed until the October meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Herb Slade (AA2BF), Secretary



# VARA MEETING MINUTES

## VARA Secretary's Report – September 3, 2019 Meeting

The meeting, which was held at the Hometown Grill and Buffet in Staunton, was brought to order at 7:02 pm by president David Fordham KD9LA. 35 members and visitors were present. The usual introductions were made. The 50/50 drawing was held, and won by Pat Smiley KD4WWF; he graciously donated his \$18.00 winnings back to the club. A 2nd chance drawing was held and won by Ray LaFalce K2ULW (he won a “ belly-button lint brush”!); a 3rd chance drawing was won by Fred Castello KF4FC (he won a siphon pump).

The first reading of the membership application of Dave Thomas WD30 was read. He will be voted on at the next meeting.

ARES® report: David Tanks AD4TJ, EC for Augusta County, noted that there is a hurricane off of the Florida coast, and that its path is not predicted to have an impact on us, but we know how inaccurate forecasts can be, so be prepared. He said the next net will be held the 2nd Thursday of the month, as usual, at 8 pm, and he asked for a volunteer to be Net Control. Kevin Numbers KC8MTV said he would do it; we will use his repeater for this one, 145.290, tone of 131.8. David reminded the club that there is a hospital coalition purchasing and setting up amateur radio equipment at Augusta Health and Western State Hospital (along with other area hospitals). He is taking names of volunteers. He is looking for 3 hams to be willing to man each location, so that one person does not have to stay there during the whole activation. He has, for Augusta Health: Fred KF4FC, and Kevin KC8MTV; Dave Beebe KN4UEK said he would like to cover it, also. Thanks gentlemen! Now for Western State, he has John Chavalaz KB2LOZ; 2 more are needed to fill those slots. There are practice nets the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm for the hospitals to try to communicate with each other; the last net attempt on 80 meters, 3.950 MHz, did not go well, as Net Control heard no one, and no one heard NC. A test net was held by Fred on Channel 1 of 60 meters; of the 3 or 4 check-ins from Virginia (using their home stations during this test), all stations were heard by NC and all stations heard NC. He even had a ham from Ohio check in! So, possibly, the next net will be held there. Stay tuned for updates.

John Lasher N3GLZ, reported on the Shenandoah 100 bike race, held September 1st in the western part of the county. David KD9LA set up a portable repeater for use during the event. There were about 500 riders; some minor injuries were noted, nothing serious. About 18 hams helped. Thanks, John, for heading up that event!

Fred KF4FC reported on the Valley Veterans Ride for Heroes to be held Sept. 7. Meet at the Stables Brewery in Hermitage at 7 am, with the ride starting around 8 am.

David KD9LA noted that if the hurricane is predicted to hit our area the grocery stores will be hit hard and many items will be sold out and impossible to get, so take steps now to be prepared.

Kevin mentioned that he received a Thank You card from a ham who appreciated the water caches put on the Appalachian Trail near Bear Den Mountain. He has also received thanks from non-hams who walk the trail.

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## **VARA Secretary's Report – September 3, 2019 Meeting (*continued*)**

Gordon Batey WA4FJC: Grindstone Race in October 4-6; starts Friday night 6 pm until Sunday morning sometime. He sent out a sign-up email link. David KD9LA needs someone to refill the generator that will be located at Reddish Knob during the night.

Old business: none.

New business: Nominating Committee for officers; at least 2, preferably 3, are needed to volunteer for it. Pat Morgan AK4VQ, Ellsworth Neff K4LXG, and Kevin KC8MTV stepped up. Thanks, guys!

Ray Colvin KE4HVR was thanked for his work on the club picnic.

Fall Foliage Bike Festival is October 19-20. Starts 8 am Saturday, goes until around 4 pm or so. Sunday starts at 8 am and ends shortly after noon or so. David mentioned that over time we are learning what repeaters work where we need coverage.

David KD9LA is less than a year from retirement.

He gave a short program on the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank, West Virginia; the National Science Foundation used to fund it, but not anymore; a donor stepped forward and contributed a lot of money (millions of dollars) to keep it operational, and hired most of the engineers there to work on his pet project known as SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence). They are using very sensitive receivers to listen for patterns of received signals that might indicate intelligent life. That is why the National Radio Quiet Zone was created many years ago, to control the amount of radio noise generated locally to prevent hindering the sensitive telescopes from hearing the weak signals. The telescopes at Sugar Grove are similar, listening for certain signals from space. They do have digital signal processing software to filter out/notch out our ham radio repeater frequencies. West Virginia adopted a law that does not allow, without prior permission, RF transmissions within 10 miles of Sugar Grove and Green Bank. If you notify the NRQZ interference officer Paulette Woody, or any of her staff, 3 to 6 weeks in advance, giving them the frequencies, dates and times, and type of emission anticipated to be used, they can program their software to avoid those (VHF). UHF is iffy, and microwave is definitely not allowed. HF operations at low power are not a problem, generally, but still needs approval.

The secretary's report was accepted as printed in the newsletter.

John gave the treasurer's report; it was accepted as read.

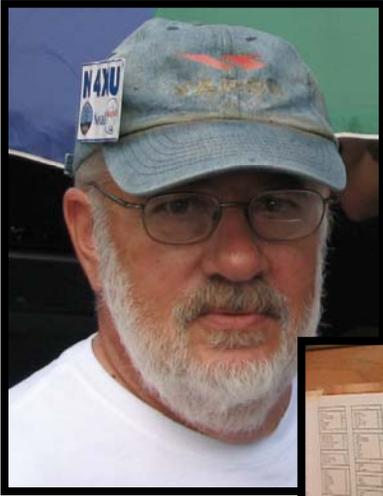
With no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Tanks, AD4TJ, Secretary

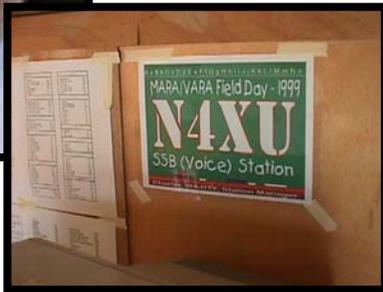


# MYSTERY HAMS: SILENT KEYS



**September  
Mystery Ham:**

**Neal Layman,  
N4XU, SK**



September's silent key honoree was Neal Layman, who passed away on January 31, 2015 at age 74 years. Neal had re-retired to Pottstown, Pennsylvania with his wife Connie after living in the Shenandoah Valley for many years. He was an active member of MARA and VARA for many years. He was a crackerjack CW operator, and was famous for running the night-shift at Field Day, impressing everyone with his high-speed CW. His call was used for several years as the callsign of the joint MARA/VARA Field Day operation near Reddish Knob. He "went out" the way most of us would want to go, that is, doing what he loved — he died of an apparent heart attack while sitting at his station operating position. His wife found him with a microphone in his hand. He was cremated and his ashes were scattered in a private ceremony at the old Field Day site in the George Washington National Forest, his favorite place on earth.



**October  
Mystery Ham:**

**Long-Time  
VARA Member,  
Pilot, Veteran,  
Electrician,  
Merchant  
Marine, CW Op**

Many VARA members remember our October Silent-Key Honoree. Born in Queens (NY) in September of 1928, he raised his family in New Jersey, and retired to the Valley, living in Fishersville and later in Staunton where his son Bruce still resides. He was a master electrician with Proctor and Gamble, and served two years in the U.S. Merchant Marine. He was a combat veteran with the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict. First licensed as a ham in 1947, he was also a licensed private pilot. An accomplished CW operator as well as being active on the phone bands, he missed his radios when he entered Hospice of the Shenandoah, where he passed away May 25, 2015.

## FOR SALE

### **BridgeCom 220 MHz HT**

Nearly new BridgeCom BCH-220 HT 5-watt handheld transceiver, including an extra battery, extra antenna (Nagoya NA-320A), original box, and charger. All for only \$75.00. This model is still current. Contact Howard Zehr, K4LXY, at [k4lxy.cw@gmail.com](mailto:k4lxy.cw@gmail.com).



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## OCTOBER 2019

- October 1:** VARA Annual Corporate Meeting and election of 2020 officers  
**October 2:** Information Session on 1949 Stokesville Flood (see page 3)  
**October 3:** MARA Annual Corporate Meeting and election of 2020 officers  
**October 4-6:** Grindstone 100 FootRace Public Service Event  
**October 5-6:** Northern Virginia Trail Riders Public Service Event  
**October 6:** Camp Still Meadows Public Service Event  
**October 6:** Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
**October 7:** Rockingham County ARES Net (146.55 simplex—First Monday)  
**October 10:** Tentative PVARC Monthly Meeting? See page 15  
**October 10:** Augusta County ARES Net (TBA)  
**October 13:** Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
**October 14:** Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)  
**October 16:** Free Skywarn Basics Class, free rides available (see page 10)  
**October 18-20:** Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Ride Public Service Event  
**October 20:** Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
**October 21:** Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)  
**October 21-25:** ARRL School Club Roundup Contest  
**October 26-27:** CW WW DX Contest SSB Weekend  
**October 27:** Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
**October 28:** Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)

## NOVEMBER 2019

- November 2-4:** ARRL Sweepstakes CW weekend  
 November 3: Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
 November 4: Rockingham County ARES Net (146.55 simplex)  
**November 5:** VARA Monthly Meeting  
**November 7:** MARA Monthly Meeting  
 November 10: Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
 November 11: Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)  
 November 14: Augusta County ARES Net (frequency TBA)  
 November 16-17: ARRL EME Contest  
**November 16-18:** ARRL Sweepstakes SSB weekend  
 November 17: Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
 November 18: Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)  
**November 23-24:** CQ WW DX Contest CW weekend  
 November 24: Page County ARES Net (146.625)  
 November 25: Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 repeater)  
 November 28: Thanksgiving

### MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Bryan Daniels, K4RMY  
Vice President: Bob Steere, N1QEQ  
Secretary: Herb Slade, AA2BF  
Treasurer: Foster Farone, WF4O  
Board (exp 2019): Rick Adams, KJ4IND  
Board (exp 2020): Andrew Pearson, N4RCE

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

MARA  
PO Box 1882  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

### VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: David Fordham, KD9LA  
Vice President: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW  
Secretary: David Tanks, AD4TJ  
Treasurer: John Chevalaz, KB2LOZ  
Board Member (exp 2019): Ray LaFalce, L2ULW  
Board Member (exp. 2020): Wayne Bowyer, N4EYZ

<http://w4xd.com>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Hometown Grill and Buffet off Richmond Road in Staunton, Virginia

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:

VARA  
PO Box 2103  
Staunton, VA 24402

### PAGE VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

President: Will Baukhages, N4WIL  
Vice President: Gene Frazier, KJ4HFO  
Secretary: Gary Fischer, K6OZ  
Treasurer: Carrie Matter, KM4WDX  
Board Member (exp 2019): B.H. Snellings, KM4CKD  
Board Member (exp 2020): Tim Matter, KM4TGC

<http://www.k4pmh.org>

PVARC usually meets the second Thursday of each month at Tactical Walls, 611 Williams Ave, Shenandoah, Virginia

The meeting begins at 7:00 pm

**Visitors are always welcome.**

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

PVARC  
PO Box 245  
Luray VA 22835-0245

The Monitor is published monthly 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.

Contact the president of your respective club for information on paper copies.

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