

The MARA-*VARA* Monitor

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This is the web page version of the *MARA/VARA Monitor*.

The *Monitor* is published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc.,
(a non-profit organization under the IRS regulations),
for radio amateurs in the central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Combined MARA/VARA Christmas Banquet is a "Resounding" Success!

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, along with the Valley Amateur Radio Association, held their annual combined Christmas Banquet on December 7th, 1995, at Pano's Restaurant in Harrisonburg. The banquet was in lieu of the December meeting for both clubs. The meal was fantastic, the fellowship was great, and the entertainment was fabulous. The Retreads, a vocal group from Staunton, performed Christmas favorites. In the famous words of KE4GKD, "a good time was had by all".

MARA Awards Recognize Service by Local Hams

The Massanutten ARA issued their annual awards at the Christmas Banquet, recognizing those hams who have contributed materially to the furtherance of amateur radio in the northern part of the Shenandoah Valley.

Kenny Harris, KE4GKD, received a Certificate of Appreciation for building fellowship between the MARA and VARA organizations, bringing the members of the two clubs together to build friendship and cooperation.

Norman Benner, KA4EEN, and Ray Ritchie, KD4OXU, received Certificates of Appreciation for their past service as secretaries of the MARA club.

Winnie Cooper was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of Marshall Cooper, KC4YAR (SK), for his past service as Vice-President of the club.

Tim Taylor, K4SAD, was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for his service as Treasurer of the club since its founding in 1988.

Ray Ritchie, KD4OXU, received a Certificate of Award for his outstanding service in bringing ham radio into the public schools and inspiring young people to enter the hobby.

Bob Niemeyer, W3MMC, and Richard Weaver, W4JZC, received Certificates of Appreciation for their service with the local SkyWarn organization.

The awards were presented by Dale Showalter, KD4DAI, president of the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

Valley ARA Taps 1996 Officers

The Valley Amateur Radio Association has announced the new officers for 1996. Based on elections held at the November 8th club meeting, Ken Harris, KE4GKD, was re-elected as president. Mike Dillon, KO4EA, will be the new vice-president, Doug Zirk, KE4RMD, will be the new secretary, and Charlie Garner, WA4ITY, will be the new treasurer.

VARA would like to thank Jeff Rinehart, WB4PJW (outgoing vice-president), June Waldmuller, KC4PKJ (outgoing secretary), and Christy Osterloh, KC4PKK (outgoing treasurer) for their magnificent service during the past year.

Massanutten ARA Has a New Home

Beginning with the January meeting, the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association will hold its monthly meeting at the Golden Corral restaurant on South Main Street in Harrisonburg. The meal is optional and begins at 6:30 pm. The business meeting will begin at 7:30 pm. Visitors are welcome.

Renewal Time!

It is time to renew your club membership. Both MARA and VARA run their membership on a calendar year basis, which means that regardless of when you paid last year, your membership expires on December 31. (Generally an exception is made for members joining in November or December.)

To remain on the Monitor mailing list, be sure to renew your membership. Use the handy renewal form included in this issue

ARES Lives!

Just when you thought the program was in hibernation... somebody wakes it up! Net control, Check-ins, Traffic, Training, Special Events, Bike Rides, Fox Hunting, Walks! All are issues everyone is talking about!

Some issues lately have involved weekly versus monthly nets. Considering the conversations over the repeaters, talking with hams at luncheons, and an on-the-air forum held after the December 18th ARES net, the decision has been made to continue the nets in their weekly format. I would like to thank all of those who gave their input on this delicate topic, and I can assure you that all of the ideas and comments were taken seriously.

I hope everyone will continue to support ARES and I also encourage all new hams to explore what ARES has to offer you.

Stay Tuned and Stay Ready!

*Colin Hester, N4ZFQ,
EC, Rockingham County*

Increase in Phone Rates Responsible for N4RAG Autopatch Subscription Cost

Buck, N3RIQ, reports that, due to the unexpected and rather large increase in telephone rates paid by the N4RAG repeater group, the cost for autopatch privileges will be \$15 per year, beginning in January, 1995. This cost includes the issue of 1 personal autodial number, along with general telephone access to the local Harrisonburg dialing area.

N4RAG reserves the right of approval of all subscription requests. All users are reminded of the FCC rules governing third-party traffic and interconnects to the telephone system. Users are asked to identify their call at the beginning and the end of all patch attempts.

If you are already an approved user, make your check payable to Donnie Mowbray, N4RAG, Rt 1 Box 242-B, Penn Laird, VA 22846.

If you are interested in subscribing to the autopatch for the first time, contact Don or Buck, N3RIQ, at the above address for more information.

K4RBZ: More Power!

Gerry Brunk, K4RBZ, is still looking for a home for his genuine Dentron Clipperton-L 2kw Linear Amplifier. Included in the deal is a complete set of replacement finals (572Bs), which are by themselves valued at over \$200 retail. All of this can be yours for the amazingly low price of only \$450. If you are interested, call Gerry at 540-434-0440, or leave a message for him on the KB4OLM cluster.

They Rhyme: Otter, Blotter, Spotter, Hotter, Solder

Here is a copy of SOLDERING GUIDELINES provided the technicians at one of the repair shops we deal with at Wagner Hearing Aid Centers. These guidelines should help all of us do a better job at soldering small components.

10 RULES FOR BETTER SOLDERING

1. Keep tip tinned - this will keep it clean.
2. Solder at a temperature of 650 degrees. Excess heat can cause internal damage to components. Tin at a temperature between 700-800 degrees.
3. Use only Rosin Flux. Acid Flux will eat away plating and circuitry. Very little flux is needed.
4. Use only distilled water to dampen sponge. Tap water will cause contaminated solder.
5. Be quick when applying solder. Cold solder joints occur when too much heat is applied resulting in a weak and dull finishing joint. When solder is left on your iron too long, it results in what is referred to as contaminated solder.
6. Apply only enough solder to cover the leads so you can still see the contour. Excessive solder results in bridging and hollow joints.
7. Hold the soldered lead still while solder is drying and while clipping the joint. This will prevent cracking of solder.
8. Tin circuit pads. Always feed solder to the pad and joint, not the iron.
9. Clean all joints of flux with an acid brush and 50/50 mixture of ammonia and water and dry off with air.
10. Use a gold braided solder wick to remove solder. (sounds expensive to me).

TIPS FOR TIP TINNING

Keep soldering tip properly tinned. A well-tinned tip will be bright all over when hot, with no dull or discolored spots. Tin tip when iron is first turned on and after tip sits for more than 15 minutes without use.

To tin tip, proceed as follows:

1. Turn on power and let iron get to soldering temperature of 700-800 degrees.
2. Apply a liberal amount of solder to tip and let stand one minute.
3. Apply more solder to tip letting it sit one more minute and then lightly wipe off excess solder on sponge.
4. Do NOT file tip.
5. Change tip when it turns black or has poor heat transfer.

Submitted by WB4PJW

Roster Information Needed

A new roster is being prepared listing the hams in the Shenandoah valley. It has been suggested that we include home and work telephone numbers of the active hams, and also the home bulletin board (BBS) addresses of those on packet. This information is especially important for those hams interested in volunteering during emergencies or other special situations.

The current MARA and VARA database includes many, but not all, of these phone numbers, but it does not have the home BBS listing. If you would like for your phone numbers and home BBS to appear, please contact Dave, KD9LA, using one of the methods listed below. Conversely, if you do not want your phone numbers to appear, you should also advise Dave of your preference.

To contact Dave, you can (1) telephone him at 540-568-3024 and leave a recorded message with your name, call, home and work phone numbers and home BBS, or (2) catch him on the 146.625 repeater most mornings around 8:30 am, or (3), write a note and mail to him at the address on the back of the Monitor, or (4) leave a short message addressed to KD9LA on the KB4OLM cluster, or (5) leave a message on any of the local valley BBS boards. NOTE: If you take option 5, you should also leave a message for him on the KB4OLM cluster advising him where to look for your information. Please notify Dave no later than January 20th. Thanks.

Upcoming Contests

- January 6-7: RTTY Roundup
- January 20-22: VHF Sweepstakes
- January 26-28: CQ WW 160m DX CW
- February 17-18: International DX CW
- March 1-3: International DX Phone

This Month's Monitor Inserts

This month's Monitor contains several pages of information which should be part of every station's reference

collection. The SkyWarn Severe Weather record has been provided courtesy of Dick, W4JZC. The ARRL radiogram number chart was provided by Colin, N4ZFQ.

Also included this month are the instructions for SkyWarn severe weather reporting, and an application for adding your name to the ARES roster. Completed ARES membership applications (no charge!) should be sent to Colin Hester (for Rockingham County) at Rt 1 Box 687 Grottoes, VA 24441, or to Mike Dillon (for Augusta County) at 542 Cooper Drive, Stuarts Draft, VA 24477, or to Paul Ininger (for Page County) at 1032 Romona Avenue, Shenandoah, VA 22849

ARRL Bulletin Summaries

- ARRL Bulletin 105, November 29, announced that Beth Harris, a 15-year-old Extra Class ham from Wyoming, had won the 1995 Hiram Percy Maxim award.
- ARRL Bulletin 106, November 30, reported that the state legislature of Massachusetts had adopted a new law codifying the PRB-1 language into state law. The language re-affirms the right of amateur radio operators to erect reasonable antennas and prohibits the enforcement of any local law or ordinance which unreasonably restricts the installation of ham radio antennas.
- ARRL Bulletin 107, December 6, indicates that nominations are now open for the 1996 Hiram Percy Maxim award. The award recognizes hams under 21 years of age who have contributed materially to leadership in the amateur radio service.
- ARRL Bulletin 108, December 6, announces that the FCC's new book in RFI interference is available free on the Internet. The web page address of the document is: <http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Compliance/www/tvibook.html>.
- ARRL Bulletin 109, December 8, reports that the new vanity callsign application form 610-V is now available. However, the FCC is not yet accepting completed forms. Blank forms can be obtained from the ARRL for a SASE, or from the FCC forms distribution center (1-800-418-3676). The ARRL ships forms immediately. The distribution center is expected to take about a month.

AREA HAMFEST ROUNDUP

Richmond VA: January 21

Vienna VA: February 25

Charlotte NC: March 9-10

Baltimore MD: March 30-31

Virginia Beach VA: April 6

Hagerstown MD: May 5

Dayton OH: May 17-18

CW Forever

You must have, at time, thought into the past,
Where some things go out, while others last.
What comes to mind is the Old Morse Code,

That has weathered the storms from many an abode.

To talk with one's fingers is surely an art,
Of any information you care to impart.
In most conditions the signals get through,
While the same about phone is not always true.

Those dits and those dahs can cut through the trash,
Of QRM noise or lightning's crash,
To the sensitive ears of the ham receiver,
Who copies the data with an ardent fever.

He knows he's doing something unique,
(And in poor conditions, that's quite a feat!)
To roger the message that came off the air,
Those brass pounders sure do have that flair.

They say Morse ops are a dying breed,
But don't despair. There's truly that need.
When conditions make it rough on the new automation,
Rest assured, they'll come crying for a CW station.

CW is dying? Believe it never!
This mode will be around forever and ever.
But one thing is sure, what we really need
Is to relay our knowledge to the younger breed.

To carry the torch long after we're gone,
To send Morse Code through the air like a song.
When at last Silent Keys pull that last lever,
We can rest in Peace... it's CW forever!

*(authored by Jim Heatherley, WAITBY,
submitted by Joe Moomaw, W4XD.)*

Check Your Label...

To meet the minimum 200 pieces we need in order to qualify for Bulk Mail, we are sending occasional complimentary copies of the Monitor to hams in the valley who may not be members of either club.

Check the label on this newsletter. MARA and VARA members will have their club designations listed on the label. (Those who are members of both clubs will have the word BOTH on the label.) Members of the club who renew their membership for 1996 by the end of January will continue to receive the Monitor uninterrupted.

However, if you do not have MARA, VARA, or BOTH on your label, this is a complimentary copy, and may be the only issue of the Monitor you receive for a while. We invite you to become a member of one or both clubs!

If you are interested in joining one or both of the local clubs, please use the form below to apply for membership.

VARA members come primarily from Augusta County, Waynesboro, Staunton and southern Rockingham County. MARA members generally come from Northern Augusta County, Rockingham County, Harrisonburg, and Page and Shenandoah Counties. However, you are welcome, and encouraged, to join the club of your choice. Or better yet, join both clubs! The fun and fellowship outlasts the monthly meetings. And you will receive monthly issues of the Monitor, too!

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP --- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Appeared here.

The minutes of the meetings did not appear in this issue, since both clubs held a Christmas party in lieu of a monthly meeting in December.

End of this month's issue.

MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: Dale Showalter, KD4DAI
Vice-President: Vic Alger, KE4LKQ
Secretary: David Tanks, AD4TJ
Treasurer: Richard Weaver, W4JZC
Board (exp 96): John Nelson, WA4KQX
Board (exp 97): Bill Edmundson, W4IMS

THE VALLEY ARA

President: Kenny Harris, KE4GKD
Vice-President: Jeff Rinehart, WB4PJW
Secretary: June Waldmuller, KC4PKJ
Treasurer: Christy Osterloh, KC4PKK

The Monitor is published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., a non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Service regulations. The Monitor is distributed to all full current members of the MARA and the Valley Amateur Radio Association under reciprocal agreements of the two clubs. All articles, comments, and material for the Monitor should be sent to the Editor, David R. Fordham, KD9LA, Route 1 Box 615, Weyers Cave, VA 24486.

*This web page was prepared from
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by David R. Fordham, KD9LA*

*It does not necessarily contain all information
which appeared in the paper copy.*