

# The MARA-VARA *Monitor*

DECEMBER, 1996 -- Volume 96:12

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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.

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## MARA President's Message

Hello, fellow club members and amateur radio operators! I'm honored to be your president for the coming year. We have a great club, due to its members! With your help and input, we can make it even better. I want to thank Dale, on behalf of the club, for his leadership the past two years, and all of the other officers for their willingness to serve. I'd also like to thank David, KD9LA, and his family for their hard (and excellent!) work on the newsletter, and Roy, KE4UFN, for volunteering the past year (or 18 months?) to print the newsletter for free as often as his busy schedule permitted.

The survey in the last issue of the *Monitor* is there for your benefit. I am looking to identify people with areas of interest to present programs at club meetings. Attendance is averaging about 22 people each month, and I would like to see this increase during the coming year. One way to encourage meeting attendance is through interesting programs, such as the one Dave, KD9LA gave at November's meeting.

Dave's program was on emergency preparedness. One of ham radio's purposes is to provide emergency communications, but if we are not prepared, what service can we be? Dave showed us his "go-kit", "jump-kit", or whatever you'd like to call it. The program was very informative and showed the amount and kinds of equipment that he has put into his container. If you weren't there, you missed a good meeting.

So let's get interested in coming out to the club meetings, and enjoy the fellowship of your fellow radio friends.

73,  
Dave, AD4TJ,  
MARA President

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## VARA President's Message

Hello to all. The time of the year is rolling around to the Christmas Season and I am looking forward to the holidays, and hope everyone else is also.

It was good to see everyone at the Club Meeting. We got a lot accomplished as to the new officers for 1997, just about finished with the new Club By-Laws and Christmas Party on December 12th. I would like to thank

all involved for the time and effort that was put into all of the above. As you will read in the Secretary's Report we have elected officers for the coming year. I want to say that the past three years as President have been fun, enjoyable, and yes, trying at times and this year the new President has already started to giving me orders. (Ha-Ha)

In the Newsletter you will see an application and or renewal form for membership and I hope everyone will fill out the needed information and get them back to Charlie (WA4ITY) the club Treasurer or to me Ken (KE4GKE) as soon as possible. I will then wait until after the March Meeting and compile a new club roster for the 1997 calendar year, and forward it to David (KD9LA) so everyone will continue to get their newsletter. If for any reason you need another form please contact me and I will get one to you. This makes the job of keeping the records a lot easier for me and all involved.

Since the Christmas Party is going to take place of the December club meeting I would like to note now that we will be having our January club meeting at a new location in Staunton. It will be at Gavid's Restaurant on Greenhouse Ave. (Rt. #11 South Business) just south of Kathy's Restaurant on the right side of the road. I think we will enjoy a private meeting room. I am looking forward to see everyone there.

If you need any additional information as to the location or etc: please feel free to contact me, Ken (KE4GKD) at 540-885-1818 or Pat (KD4WWF) at 540-886-0347. The meeting will still be on the second Wednesday of the month and we will still get together around 6 P.M. and have a buffet meal and rag-chew and then we will get the meeting started at 7:30 P.M. if all goes well. As for the Friday Lunch Bunch we will still be at Kathy's as always. Remember, all are welcome to the lunch and the meeting.

I am starting to turn my attention to "FIELD DAY 1997" and hope we can get together as in the past and have fun. Remember, "it never rains at Field Day!". Well that's enough for now and looking forward to a relaxing year in 1997 and a very happy new year to all.

*73 to all  
Ken, KE4GKD  
VARA President*

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## **MARA Address Correction**

Due to error on the part of the newsletter publisher, the address for the MARA Treasurer, Dick Weaver, W3HXH, was printed incorrectly in the last two issues of the Monitor.

Dick's correct address is Route 5 and not Route 1. The complete correct address is:

Richard Weaver  
Route 5, Box 125  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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## **Letter from the Multiple Sclerosis Society**

Mr. Norman Benner  
(and the Amateur Radio Community)  
c/o RR 1 Box 375

McGaheysville, VA 22840

Dear Norman (and fellow hams):

From the bottom of the hearts of the MS Society Board, the staff and the 1500 clients in the Blue Ridge Chapter, "Thank You"!

The 1996 MS Walk, "Walkin' In Harrisonburg", held on October 12th was an outstanding success. Around 200 people walked, those walkers pledged over \$15,000, and the weather was perfect.

We know that you've heard it over and over, but it's true: We couldn't have done it without you!

You can take credit for a huge part of the success of the MS Walk. Walkers count on pampering from you at registration, rest stops, and the finish line to guarantee they have a fun and save time.

And a good time as much as the good cause keeps MS WALKers coming back to our walk again and again.

Thanks again for your participation in the fight against Multiple Sclerosis. You can be proud of the personal contribution in helping over 1500 people in the 51 counties our chapter serves.

PS: You guys were great! Thanks for Everything!

Sincerely,

*Bill Liddle,  
MS WALK Chair,  
and  
Courtney Reddington,  
Development Coordinator*

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## **Recognition of MS Walk Hams**

There were nine (9) hams who helped in the walk.

- Paul KD4DDI (with his XYL)
- Edwin, KS4RS
- Donna, N3UHJ
- Brandy, KE4UDS
- Enos, KF4BFF
- Bob, KF4BFC
- Walt, KF4BFB
- Stin, KE4SSF
- Norman, KA4EEN

We all had a good time, and the pizza and subs at the end were great! Thanks to all who helped and those who gave encouragement!

*Norman Benner,  
KE4EEN*

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## What If They Made Toasters?

If IBM made a toaster, it would be big and blue. There would be only one model to choose from, and it would cost so much only restaurants could afford it.

If Microsoft made toasters, you would have to buy a new toaster every time you bought a loaf of bread. (The new toasters would be called "upgrades" and you'd have to spend 3 hours each time learning how to get the bread to go down and come up.) The new Toaster 95 would be overpriced, and would take up all of the counter space in your kitchen. When you turned it on the first time, it would query all your other appliances to find out who made them, and then would falsely claim that the only way you could operate them would be to use the controls on the toaster. The advertising would lead you to believe that the Toaster 95 was the first toaster ever made that lets you control the darkness of toast. Additionally, once you got a Toaster 95, it would be impossible to get rid of.

If Radio Shack made toasters, their sales associates would try to sell you six of them, but they wouldn't be able to tell you what a toaster really does or how it works. The instructions would be written in broken English. You could also buy the toaster in pieces that come in little plastic bags (most of which had been opened by previous customers), for assembly at home. But you'd have to go to at least six Radio Shack stores to get all the parts for one toaster.

If the ARRL made toasters, well, ... they wouldn't make a toaster, but would run a series of articles over six months telling you how you could make one. The article would be so complicated and impractical that only the author would ever think of putting one together. And you could only get the heating element and timer from some obscure company that went out of business three months before the last installment was published.

If the FCC made toasters, the manual would tell you that it only takes six seconds to toast a piece of bread. But when you put one in, it takes six months before the heat comes on. And anyway, commercial interests are buying up all the bread at the auctions, so why bother?

If Kenwood made toasters, they would be made of plastic, even the heating element. Two weeks after you got it home, the lights would burn out and you couldn't tell if it was toasting or not except by sticking your fingers in the slots.

If TenTec made toasters, they would be the best toasters ever made, the toast would come out perfect every time, even buttered and jellied, but only true toast gourmets would be caught dead owning one of them.

If MFJ made a toaster, it would only cost \$2, and when it stopped working, you'd have to throw it away and buy a new one because no one would want to work on it, and MFJ wouldn't sell parts.

If AMSAT made toasters, only twenty people in the whole world would ever eat toast, but they'd be asking for money to build a fancy toaster that everyone could use. To make toast, you'd first either have to use a bazillion dollars worth of breadmaking equipment, or else grow your own wheat, grind it into flour, raise chickens for the eggs, and .. well, you get the idea.

*Adapted from the Jax (FL) Range Squelch Tale*

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## Johnny Appleseed: Horses and Hams

The Johnny Appleseed Trail Ride held to support the Center for Therapeutic Riding was a huge success this year. There were over 100 participants in the two-day even held at the Chick Wine Farm in Timberville. Hams, as usual, provided the necessary communications for the ride by manning checkpoints and keeping the farm in touch with locations and conditions of the riders.

The weatherman cooperated this year by keeping the predicted rains away long enough to complete the rides. The hosts kept the amateurs well supplied with donuts, barbecue-beef sandwiches, apple cider, and other goodies to eat and drink. They also threw in a free T-shirt for every ham who helped.

To quote Marshall, N4ZKH, this was a "laid back" affair. The amateurs were able to enjoy the horses and Little North Mountain scenery in full fall coloration. Glen, N4ALS, was seen at his checkpoint stretched out in a lawn chair, decked out in his straw hat and reading the latest edition of ... a flying magazine! (Why not QST?) Other hams had fun bounding along the roads washed out by the recent flooding.

Walt, KF4BFB, figured out the best way to count the horses passing the checkpoint was to count the legs and divide by four. Wilton, KF4BFL, finally got his Fisher-Price radio mastered, and on the correct frequency of 145.13, plus or minus something (the rest of us never figured out what Wilton's 'something' was!).

There were no major incidents to mar the event this year. Riders and organizers expressed thanks to the amateur community for providing manpower to help with this public service event. I would like to thank the following amateurs for helping one or both days with the Johnny Appleseed Ride:

- Glen, N4ALS
- Bob #7, KF4BFC
- Walt, KF4BFB
- Wilton, KF4BFL
- Marshall, N4ZKH
- Tommy, KE4GMJ
- Norman, KE4EEN
- Chip, KF4LGT
- Sandy, KE4PZC
- Ray, KD4OXU

Till we meet again next year at the farm, 73's from...

*Ray Ritchie,  
KD4OXU*

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## MARA ARRL Members:

Don't forget! Before you renew your membership with the ARRL, please contact MARA Treasurer Dick Weaver, W3HXH, to obtain a form which will credit the club with \$2.00! If you are not yet an ARRL member but are thinking of joining, do so now so as to get in before the 1997 dues increase. The club gets \$5.00 credit for each new ARRL member!

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## Digital Frequencies in the Valley

Frequency ID		Comment
144.970	DXENOB	Access to DXCluster
145.030	N3UHI: ELKBBS	Elkton BBS
145.030	WA4TFZ	Charlottesville BBS
145.030	HBG1	Node to ELKBBS
145.030	MACHO	Node to C'ville
145.070	GNOB	Gobbler's Knob Node
145.070	N8YIB: YIBBBS	Dan's Mountain
145.570	N3UHI: ELKBBS	For Long Downloads
145.610	KC4MZN: WAYBBS	Waynesboro BBS
145.610	BLDLAN	Node to WAYBBS
145.610	TNOB	Turkey Knob Node
145.670	DXAFTN	Access to DXCluster
145.750	DXHBG	Access to DXCluster
145.770	MADVA	SEDAN Access

### NOTES:

- The DX Cluster can be accessed via DXENOB, DXAFTN, or DXHBG, by connecting first to one of those three nodes, then connecting to KB4OLM.
  - Users of ELKBBS may find that long downloads work better on 145.570. That port has an omni antenna, and you may not need to go through a node. And 145.57 is less congested than 145.030.
  - If you use one board most of the time, you might want to register with the other boards. When you register with the other boards, be sure to set your "home" board equal to the callsign of the board where you want to get your mail. That way, the other boards will forward any mail to your home board, saving you the trouble of logging into four boards to check for new mail.
  - The DX Cluster can handle mail messages to cluster users, but does not forward mail to the other boards.
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## **Neighbors to the North Number Nicely**

The North Shenandoah DX Association placed very nicely in the 1996 ARRL International DX Contest this year. Using the N4MM call, they racked up 309,441 points, ranking them tenth in the nation in the local club category. Congratulations!

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## **QST Reviews 2-meter Mobiles**

The November, 1996 issue of the ARRL journal QST has an informative article reviewing the features of the seven most popular 2-meter mobile transceivers, and puts them to the test. Read all about it!

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## **Field Day Results Now Official:**

### **6,964 Points for MARA/VARA**

According to page 102 of the November QST, the combined Field Day effort of the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, and the Valley Amateur Radio Association, together scored 6,964 points, making 2027 contacts, in the two-transmitter emergency-powered category.

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## **W3HMB Estate Sale**

As reported in the October issue of the Monitor, our good friend Tom Jones, W3HMB recently became a silent key. A number of hams served as honorary pallbearers at his funeral. He will be greatly missed.

Tom's son, Bob Jones, KD4DCX, is offering the following equipment from Tom's station:

- Astron 20-amp power supply, \$65
- Icom IC-25AT HandiTalkie, \$200
- Kenwood TM25AT HandiTalkie, \$150
- Kenwood TM221-A 2-meter mobile, \$175
- Kenwood TM321-A 220 MHz mobile transceiver, \$175
- Kenwood TM-731A Dual-band \$400
- Radio Shack CB, \$25
- Yaesu FT-470 HandiTalkie, \$225
- Yaesu FT-101E SSB Transceiver, along with MFJ antenna tuner, \$500
- CB Antenna, \$15
- Mobile 2m-440 Dual Bander Antenna, \$20
- Isopole 220 MHz antenna, \$35
- Diamond dual-band antenna, \$85

If you are interested in any of the above equipment, please call Bob at 540-434-2870 (Harrisonburg).

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## **W4CND Estate Sale**

Also, Vernon Schmidt's (W4CND) estate is selling his Alinco DJF1, Miniature Hand-Held. It comes with carry strap, charger, and damaged but functioning rubber duck antenna. -- \$150. Call 574-4639.

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## **Free Back Issues of QST**

Free for the taking, pick up only, no delivery. Several years of QST magazines, if no one takes them, they'll go to the dump. Contact Judy Ipock, 249-5601.

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## **Not Busy Enough?**

### **160-Meter Contest - December 6-8**

### **Ten-Meter Contest -- December 14-15**

The annual ARRL 10-Meter Contest is scheduled for December 14-15 this year. Although the sunspot numbers are probably lower this year than they will be for the next ten years, the 28-29 MHz band offers some great opportunities for DX and long-range work on those occasions when it is open.

At the other end of the HF spectrum, the ARRL 160-meter Contest is scheduled for December 6-8. The "gentleman's band" also offers some interesting contest activity. Straight-key night is December 31, for those of you not participating in the First Night activities this year.

And, although not a real contest, the annual Santa tracking net is probably going to be held on the usual series of repeaters on Christmas Eve. Stay tuned to the local Sunday and Monday night 2-meter nets for details.

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## **REMINDER**

The Christmas Banquets of the MARA and VARA clubs will take the place of the normal December club meetings.

The MARA Banquet will be held on Thursday, December 5, at PANO's restaurant on South Main Street in Harrisonburg, starting at 6:30 pm.

The VARA Banquet will be held on Thursday, December 12, at the School House restaurant in Stuart's Draft, starting at 6:30 pm.

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## **KD9LA Back On Packet!**

The deadline for the January issue of the Monitor is the day after Christmas, Thursday, December 26th. Please get your material to the newsletter editor so it arrives before December 26th. You can mail it to Route

1 Box 615, Weyers Cave, VA, 24486, telephone it to 540-234-0448, e-mail it on the Internet to fordhadr@jmu.edu, send a packet message to KD9LA on the DX Cluster, send a packet BBS message to KD9LA @ WAYBBS, or catch Dave on the 146.625 repeater in the mornings.

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## **BRIEFS**

- The January MARA meeting will be held on the SECOND Thursday, January 9th, not the normal first.
  - The January VARA meeting will be held at Gavid's Restaurant, not Kathy's.
  - Volunteer Exams will be held at Massanutten Vo-Tech Center on Saturday, December 14th at 9:00 am.
  - Dues are now DUE. Keep your newsletter coming. Renew your Membership Today!
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The crossword puzzle which appeared here in the paper edition will not reproduce properly and has been omitted from the electronic version of the Monitor.

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## **VARA SECRETARY'S REPORT**

### **November 13, 1996 Meeting**

The V.A.R.A. club meeting was held at Kathy's Restaurant in Staunton on November 13, 1996. The meeting was opened by the club president, Ken Harris (KE4GKD), at 7:55 P.M. Present were 24 members. There were two guests. Elaine Archambeault and one Amateur, Ken Indart (WA4RPH).

The 50/50 amount this month was \$26. Half of the amount went to the raffle's winner, June Waldmuller (KC4PKJ). The remaining amount went to the clubs' treasury.

Ken Harris (KE4GKD) reminded everyone of their club dues for the upcoming year of 1997. Also there will be an Application for Membership to fill out in this month's newsletter. If you do not have this form please contact Ken. For members, the dues are \$10. Associate members pay \$5. Make out the check to V.A.R.A. for the appropriate amount and send it to Charlie Garner, WA4ITY, c/o PO Box 666, Staunton, VA 24402. Ken Harris (KE4GKD) can also accept your membership dues and then forward them to Charlie.

Ken reminded everyone of the Christmas party. This will be held at the Schoolhouse Restaurant in Stuarts Draft on December 12. The buffet will be opened at 7:00 P.M.

The treasurer's report was accepted as printed in last month's newsletter. Dick Waldmuller (WB8GIF) made the motion and Alby McCutcheon (AD4KZ) seconded.

Ken Harris (KE4GKD) reported on Bike Virginia. There were approximately 1200 to 1300 bikers at the event. Everything went well except for a few accidents, one being a fairly bad one. A special thanks to Richard Arehart (KE4YEX) and Stuarts Draft Rescue for their tremendous help with the situations. All of the other volunteers, whose help was also monumental, were also congratulated.

In the past, Bike Virginia has donated money to the clubs for their help. During this event there incurred some unexpected event related expenses that were paid out of pocket by some individuals. Both M.A.R.A. and V.A.R.A. voted to have these individuals reimbursed with the anticipated donation. The remaining portion will then be split between the clubs. This motion was made by Joe Archambeault (N4TRH) and seconded by Pat Smiley (KD4WWF).

Due to technical difficulties with recorders, last month's minutes did not make it in time to be printed in the newsletter. Karen Zirk (KE4WIE) read the reconstructed and abbreviated minutes. The secretary report was accepted as read. Terry Henderson (KT4UO) made the motion to accept and Brown Snyder (N4ZHV) seconded.

New Business: Pat Smiley (KD4WWF) made a suggestion to move V.A.R.A.'s meeting place from Kathy's Restaurant to a restaurant with a private meeting room. He talked with the owners of Gavids and they approved the clubs move to their restaurant. The meal would be a buffet style and the meeting day and time would remain the same. The motion to move the meeting to Gavids was made by Dick Waldmuller (WB8GIF) and seconded by Bill Bearden (KC4TQF). A majority vote with the members approved the move to Gavids.

Old Business: Bill Bearden (KC4TQF) read the new by-laws. There were some minor clarifications made to them. The By-Laws of the Valley Amateur Radio Association were amended as read by majority vote.

The "hat" was passed for the flower fund.

Bill Jordan (KE4LKS), the spokesman for the officers committee presented the slate of suggested officers for 1997. The nominees were as follows: President - Pat Smiley (KD4WWF), Vice-President - Ken Harris (KE4GKD), Treasurer - Charlie Garner (WA4ITY), and Secretary - Doug Zirk (KE4RMD). A motion was made by Joan Pitsenbarger (KF4CWR) to accept the officers as read. Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP) seconded and a vote was taken. The majority ruled to elect the slate of officers in for a term of one year, 1997.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Dick Waldmuller (WB8GIF). The motion was seconded by June Waldmuller (KC4PKJ) and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Doug Zirk,  
VARA Secretary*

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## **MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT**

### **November 7, 1996 Meeting**

The regular monthly meeting of MARA was held at the Golden Corral in Harrisonburg, Va. November 7, 1996 with 29 amateur operators present. This being the first meeting with newly elected officers, David, AD4TJ, the incoming president, called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Vice President, Walt, KF4BFB, was absent due to the new amateur radio class beginning at the Broadway Rescue Squad. Sixteen have signed up for the class. Dick, W3HXX, the treasurer, was also absent but sent a report that we had a balance in the treasury of \$ 1,104.91 as of November first.

Ray, KD4OXU, thanked James, KF4BFM, Walt, KF4BFB, and Bob, W3MMC, for demonstrating amateur radio to his students at Wilbur Pence Middle School. They even demonstrated Packet Radio. There were

about 110 students exposed to amateur radio during the day.

Jeff, WB4PJW, reported on the Bike Virginia activity held during October with about 1,156 bike riders participating. He thanked all those who participated. Expenses involved with the activity were discussed and it was moved and seconded that when the Bike Virginia donation was received that all expenses were to be deducted and then the remainder split 50/50 between MARA and VARA. This motion prevailed.

David, KD9LA, reported that plans had been completed for the annual Christmas banquet. It will be held at Pano's restaurant on December 5th. It will be a three-meat buffet and the total cost will be \$ 15 per person, all inclusive. The deadline for sending your check to the treasurer is November 25th.

The source of printing for the newsletter is no longer available. Therefore, future newsletters will be printed commercially.

Donna, N3UHH, was present and indicated that she is upgrading her Bulletin Board and adding an H F port.

Since the January 1997 regular meeting falls so near New Years Day, it was moved by Bob 9, WB4WRC, and duly seconded that the January meeting be moved to January 9, 1997. This motion was passed.

The 50/50 drawing was held, announcement was made of two computers for sale, and the meeting was adjourned.

David, KD9LA, presented a most informative program on the need and organization of emergency survival kits, both personal and family.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Wilton B. Thomas, KF4BFL  
MARA Secretary*

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**End of this month's issue.**

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**MASSANUTTEN ARA**

President: David Tanks, AD4TJ  
Vice-President: Walt Lam, KF4BFB  
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL  
Treasurer: Richard Weaver, W3HXX  
Board (exp 97): Bill Edmundson, W4IMS  
Board (exp 98): Sandy Mullins, KE4PZC

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**THE VALLEY ARA**

President: Kenny Harris, KE4GKD  
Vice-President: Mike Dillon, KO4EA  
Secretary: Doug Zirk, KE4RMD  
Treasurer: Charlie Garner, WA4ITY

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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, 131 Wayside Drive, Weyers Cave, VA 24486.

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*This web page was prepared from  
an ASCII version of the Monitor,  
by David R. Fordham, KD9LA*

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

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