

# The MARA-VARA *Monitor*

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

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(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 again. Even though the weather didn't cooperate we had a good turnout for the Christmas banquet. Several awards were given out, recognizing the hard work and efforts of several hams in the club. A good time was had by all, and everyone got home safely( I got stuck in my own driveway for about 30 seconds!).

The program for January 9th will be presented by me on EME( Earth-Moon-Earth signal propagation, more commonly called "moonbounce"). This will be an informational talk only, as I have no experience making EME contacts. But this might give you the urge to try it!

Come and find out about EME for yourself. The meetings are a good place to meet the voices you hear on the air, and the programs are a good place to find out more about aspects of your hobby. See you soon!

*Dave Tanks, AD4TJ,  
MARA President*

PS: please fill out your survey from last month's newsletter, and mail it to me or bring to the meeting!

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## VARA President's Message

Hello to all. By the time you are reading this, the Holidays will be over. I hope you had a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year".

On December the 12th. we had our VARA Christmas Dinner. I sure had a "GOOD TIME" and I hope all that attended did also. We had 49 members and guest present and there were several nice prizes given by an anonymous person. Although they would not give their name, we sure do "THANK" that person for thinking of us during the Holidays. I was presented a letter opener at the dinner with my callsign and "VARA President 1994-1996" engraved in it. I would like to thank all for that very nice reminder of my function with the Club during the three years.

I especially want to remind everyone that on January 8th. 1997 we will be meeting in our new location. That meeting will be held at Gavid's Restaurant on Greenville Ave. in Staunton. We will have a private meeting room and I hope everyone will attend and enjoy the new location. We will still start getting there around 6

P.M. for the meal, and the formal business meeting will start at 7:30 P.M. The Restaurant is located on Greenville Ave. (Route 11 South) in Staunton. It is just south of our old meeting place of Kathy's on the right hand side of the road.

Pat Smiley (KD4WWF) is the new President for VARA in 1997. I am looking forward to a little break from the past three years. I (Ken KE4GKD) will be Vice President and Charlie Garner (WA4ITY) will remain as Treasurer, and Doug Zirk (KE4RMD) will remain as Secretary. I hope all will continue to support the Club in the coming year.

Remember that the Club Dues are now due and they have remained at \$10.00 for Full Membership and \$5.00 for Associate Membership. So send your dues in so you can continue to get the very fine newsletter.

In closing, I would like to say that I have really enjoyed working with everyone during the past three years. I am looking forward to the years to come. Once again, I would like to thank everyone who helped me out in all of the events we have undertaken and hope that all will continue to do so in the coming years. I am already looking forward to Field Day 1997 and working with everyone in making it a special and even bigger and better event and remember "It Never Rains on Field Day". [Ha-Ha]

*Ken Harris, KE4GKD*  
*VARA President*

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## **VARA and MARA Meeting Changes!**

MARA members are reminded that, due to the New Year Holiday, the January MARA Meeting will be held on the second Thursday, January 9th, this month only, at the Golden Corral.

VARA members are reminded that all 1997 meetings will be held at Gavid's Restaurant on US 11, just south of the old meeting place.

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## **A Touch of Class!**

The Albemarle Amateur Radio Club (AARC) will be sponsoring both Novice/Tech and General license classes. The classes will begin on January 29th and will be held in Charlottesville every Wednesday night from 6:30 - 9:00 pm at the Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center on Rio Road. For more information call Bill Bearden - KC4TQF - at 540-337-5179. If he is not home, please leave a message, or you may send a packet message to KC4TQF at either the KC4MZN or WA4TFZ BBS.

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## **Local VE Team Does It Again! Five New Licenses in Valley!**

The local cadre of Volunteer Examiners did their thing again on Saturday morning, December 14th. Thirteen people were served, and when the smoke cleared, we have three new Technicians in the valley, one new advanced class ham, and, lo and behold, a new Extra class ham! Special thanks go to the hams who helped administer this VE session:

- Randy Smith, KN4KB
  - Phil Harder, K4NE
  - Dave Fordham, KD9LA
  - Hardie Forman, AD4IZ
  - Brown Snyder, N4ZHV
  - Joe Moomaw, W4XD
  - Richard Wilkins, K4UHH
  - Glen Heatwole, N4ALS
  - Ken Harris, KE4GKD
  - Doug Zirk, KE4RMD
  - Buck Mobray, N3RIQ
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## **Attention All Local Volunteer Examiners (VE's) -- Special Business Meeting January 11th!**

There will be a special meeting of all Volunteer Examiners held at the Golden Corral on Saturday, January 11th, at 11:00 am.

If you are an accredited volunteer examiner with the ARRL Volunteer Examining Coordinating body, you are urged to be at this meeting. Some very important business and announcements will be conveyed.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer examiner, you are invited to attend also. You are eligible to apply for VE accreditation if you hold a General Class license or above, and we sure could use your help.

*Info from Brown Snyder, N4ZKH  
Shenandoah Valley VE Coordinator*

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## **The Helpful Amateur**

*(Editor's Note: The following poem was received in the mail, anonymously, with a note asking it be included in the newsletter "with thanks", signed by "The Phantom Pen and Pencil".)*

To our amateur radio operators,  
We would like to express our gratitude  
For all the use of your generators,  
And all the good you do!

We know you have a family waiting at home for you  
Who need your abilities, love and support,  
But they gave you a kiss and sent you out in the storm  
To try to help us build some kind of a fort!

First you risk your life for your fellow man  
As you roamed the dark of night  
In the storm we called Fran,  
To assist others in escaping their helpless plight.

Though tired and weary and worried about your own,  
Through the wind, rain, and waters you kept going.  
Of your valuable time you gave us a loan  
As the high waters kept on swirling.

At the break of day, with the sun shining bright,  
As we gave a relieved sign that all would again be well,  
You continued going with all your might,  
Never once understanding the meaning of "fail".

When others gave up, and went back to their own lives,  
You the ham hung in with your communication skills  
As you said, "I love you," to your wives,  
and tried to enter the valleys and climb the hills.

Now all is over and the job has been completed.  
The amateur has volunteered himself, equipment and time,  
Never once did this special person feel cheated,  
Or charge so much as a dime.

To all the Amateur Radio guys and gals,  
We want to say "Thank You," from our heart.  
Although you will not receive any flowers,  
We know you've done more than your part.

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## **"Old Reliable" -- Just Keeps Going and Going and Going...**

Bill Bearden reports that the WA4TFZ BBS is back on 145.610 MHz, and can be accessed via the BLDLAN node if you cannot hit it direct. This BBS can also be reached via MACHO on 145.030 MHz.

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## **Upcoming SKYWARN Classes**

Class sizes are limited. We ask that you please register for the class you wish to take ahead of time. If you cannot attend, please cancel your registration so that others may attend in your place. There are no fees or special equipment required, other than your ability to visually see storms, the damage they do, and to be able to telephone or radio these reports to the National Weather Service.

To register for a class, call the phone number listed below, and leave your name, Skywarn ID if you have one, your county and state that you wish to serve, and a daytime telephone number at which you can be reached in case the class must be cancelled. Classes will be cancelled if less than ten (10) people sign up, so you might want to round up some friends for your favorite session. Classes are usually limited to about forty (40) people.

- BASICS I

This class is the introductory session for becoming a Skyward spotter. It is a three-hour class that covers the basics of how Skywarn and the National Weather Service operate, what you need to report,

how to report, and some elementary training on how to spot and classify severe weather. --Tuesday, January 14th, from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm at the Weather Service Forecast Office in Sterling, Virginia. Call 703-260-0107 to register.

- **BASICS II**

This class is an optional sequel to the Basics I class. It is 2-1/2 hours long. It is good for spotters who would like a refresher, or feel they want additional information and training. It also covers information about the new Doppler radar systems. -- Saturday, February 1st, from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm at the NWS Sterling. Call 703-260-0107 to register.

- **WINTER STORMS**

This is an optional 2-1/2 hour class that is offered each fall and early winter, Its focus is on the mid-atlantic snowstorms and blizzards. It looks at the history of storms, how they form, and difficulties in forecasting them, how to measure snow and ice, and how Skywarn operates during a winter storm event. The last class for this season has already been held, but be on the lookout for this class next fall.

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## **Going Somewhere? (How to Travel During a Winter Storm)**

If at all possible, you should not attempt to travel during a winter storm. If you absolutely must, however, follow these tips from the National Weather Service:

- Always have Emergency Supplies in the trunk of your car (see below).
- Keep your car's gas tank FULL.
- Always let someone know your destination, your route, any alternate routes you may take, and when you expect to arrive. If you don't check in at the expected time, they can send help along your routes.
- In addition to your mobile radio in the car, take along a hand-held for backup.
- As you drive, make mental notes of your progress, so if you become stuck you can report your exact location.

If you do get stuck,

- Stay with your car. No matter how tempting, do not, repeat, do not try to walk to safety during a winter storm.
- Radio your location and appraise the listener of your location and status. Ask the listener to check back with you on a set schedule. Run the engine while you are transmitting to avoid draining the battery.
- Start the car, and use the heater for about ten minutes every hour or so. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow so that fumes don't back up into the car. Keep a window (on the opposite side of the car from which the wind is blowing) open a crack for fresh air. If you started with a full tank, you should have enough fuel to do this for at least 48-72 hours, long enough for rescuers to arrive.
- Leave the parking lights on while the engine is running so that you can be seen.
- As you sit, move your arms and legs to keep the blood circulating.

Always Keep an Emergency Kit in the Trunk of your Car. Make sure each car you drive has a disaster supplies kit containing:

- Blankets
- An Extra Set of dry Clothing wrapped in a plastic bag
- A shovel
- A supply of sand (water-softener salt is cheap and comes in bags) for weight and use as a traction enhancer.
- Jumper Cables
- Flares
- First Aid Kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- A small non-perishable food supply (candy bars, pop-top cans of Vienna sausage, crackers, or other non-perishables not affected by cold).
- A Brightly-Colored cloth to tie to the antenna if you get stuck.

*From the NWS Skywarn Brochure*

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## **NON-PACKET PACKET -- Direct Digital Dialing**

WAYBBS, the BBS serving Waynesboro, sponsored by KC4MZN, has a 24-hour, dedicated telephone modem port for those of you with telephone modems. Dial (540)-942-5511. The modem supports all speeds between 300 and 33,600 baud, and uses the standard 8-N-1 ANSI protocol. Use of the modem port allows quicker and more reliable downloads, and can be used for lengthy (>30kb) transfers of information rather than tying up the local digital frequencies.

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## **Contest Calendar**

- January 4-5: ARRL RTTY Roundup
  - January 4-5: North American CW QSO Party
  - January 11-12: North American SSB QSO Party
  - January 18-19: ARRL VHF Sweepstakes
  - January 24-26: CQ WW 160m CW Contest
  - February 15-16: ARRL CW DX Contest
  - February 21-23: CQ WW 160m SSB Contest
  - March 1-2 ARRL SSB DX Contest
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## **Hamfest Reminders:**

- January 19th is the Richmond Virginia Hamfest.
  - March 8-9 is the Charlotte, NC Hamfest.
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## Survey: Do We Need A Second AutoPatch in the Valley?

As you may know, Buck (N3RIQ) and Donnie Mobray (N4RAG) sponsor a first-class repeater on Laird's Knob (147.225). This machine features autopatch to the Harrisonburg local calling area for those hams who subscribe to the service. Patch subscription is open to all local radio amateurs for only \$15 per year.

Recent emergencies (including last January's floods, Hurricane Fran, and highway situations) have highlighted the importance of interconnecting VHF amateur radio operations with the local landline telephone service. The local ham community is appreciative of all the effort taken by Buck and Donnie to maintain this valuable interconnect.

In the aftermath of the recent emergencies, David Fordham (KD9LA) of Weyers Cave, Dan Biedler (KE4JSX) of Waynesboro, and a couple of hams from Charlottesville and Franklin (WV) have been asked by a local emergency relief organization to prepare an assessment of primary and backup amateur radio communications capabilities in an area bordered by Charlottesville, Lexington, Broadway, and Franklin, West Virginia. Included in this assessment is telephone interconnect ability on VHF.

Due to the sometimes-critical nature of having interconnects available when needed, the agency was wondering there is a need for a backup patch in case the 147.225 machine goes down during an emergency. Due to the physical difficulty in reaching mountaintop repeaters, instant repair and maintenance during severe weather is not always possible on any machine in such a locations. Thus, having a backup channel available may one day prove a lifesaver.

Concomitantly, Jay Suter (W4QDC) has contacted the telephone company to ascertain the rates to be charged for a ham radio autopatch used in the amateur communications service. The sponsors of the 147.315 repeater have indicated a willingness to use their machine (which has good coverage of most of the Central Valley, similar to the 147.225 machine) for the backup patch, if one is deemed necessary.

However, the cost to support such an autopatch would need to be borne by subscribers to the service, and not the repeater sponsors.

While some cost might possibly be covered by the emergency relief organization, Jay and David would like to see whether or not there is sufficient interest in having a second autopatch in the area. The new patch would most definitely not be in "competition" with the 147.225 machine. It would be intended to complement, not replace, the N4RAG patch. The two patches would together comprise a more robust interconnect than either one by itself.

Bottom Line: Is there a need for a second autopatch in the Rockingham County area? If the subscription to the new machine were \$15 per year, would you subscribe to the service? If you already subscribe to the 147.225 machine, would you also subscribe to the backup machine if you could do so for an additional \$10 per year?

It is premature to be thinking about writing checks. However, we would appreciate your taking the time to let us know what you think about this proposal, as well as any other proposal related to communications support in the valley. If there is little support for a backup machine, we will drop the proposal. But if there is sufficient support, we will try to obtain whatever funding is possible, and using subscription income to pay the remainder of the operational costs. Thank you for your input. Please call:

Jay Suter, W4QDC  
Phone 434-7750  
W4QDC @ WA4TFZ

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## **GREEN EGGS AND HAM**

### **What if Dr. Seuss Was a Packet Operator?**

If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a port,  
And the Sysop disconnects you as a very last resort,  
And the callsign of the cluster makes your local node abort,  
Then that latest "Reject" packet has an error to report!

If your cursor finds a menu item followed by a dash,  
And the double-clicking icons put your window in the trash,  
And your data is corrupted 'cause the index doesn't hash,  
Then your situation's hopeless, and your system's gonna crash!

If the label on the cable on the gable at your house,  
Says your Ringo is connected to the button on your mouse,  
But your packets want to tunnel to another protocol,  
That always seems to cause your scrolling screen to stall,

And your monitor's distorted by the side effects of gauss,  
So your icons in the window are as wavy as a souse,  
Then you may as well reboot, and go out with a Bang,  
'Cause as sure as I'm a poet, the sucker's gonna hang!

When the little LEDs on your all-mode's panel front,  
Are flickering on and off, on a digipeater hunt,  
And you cannot find the frequency of your local BBS,  
You just "brapped" the voice repeater, so you might as well confess!

Your mike connector's wiggly and your deviation's bad.  
Your speaker's intermittent, and your XYL is mad!  
Your power cable's sparking so you yank it with a slam!  
It's all to be expected, after all, you're a Ham!

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### **Recent Contest Accomplishments**

Congratulations are due to some of the Shenandoah Valley hams who have received national recognition in major world-wide contests during the past few months. This information is obtained from QST and CQ magazines. (The editor apologizes if your name is left out. If you let us know, we'll recognize you, too!)

Richard, KD4UPF, seems to get his name in the magazines almost every other month or so. He placed first in the state of Virginia in the 1996 ARRL June VHF QSO Party, with 50,085 points. During the contest, he worked 295 contacts, racked up 135 multipliers, and all this on four bands: 50, 144, 222, and 432 MHz.

Richard also placed fifth in the Southeast Region in the 1996 ARRL September VHF QSO Party. Scoring 29,637 points, he placed second in the state of Virginia, working 238 contacts, with 89 multipliers, again working 50, 144, 222, and 432 MHz.

Dave Tanks, AD4TJ, also did very well in the VHF contests. Working only two bands (the 50 and 144 MHz bands), Dave scored 3,174 points in the June VHF QSO party, accumulating 69 contacts, and 46 multipliers. In the September QSO Party, he scored 1,062 points, with 59 contacts and 18 multipliers, again working only

two bands.

Dave Gordon, KB8LCI, worked the June VHF QSO Party, and scored 208 points, working 16 contacts, but having 13 multipliers. Dave also worked only the 6 meter and 2 meter bands.

On the HF bands (specifically, the "gentlemen's band"), the Central Virginia Contest Club, using callsign W4XD, scored 72,471 points in the CQ WW 160-Meter Contest. And they ran up this score in spite of adversity: their comments in CQ -- "Lost both antennas Saturday morning, repaired the G5RV to finish the contest!"

And although not yet reported in the national magazines, the Valley was well-represented in the December ARRL 10-Meter contest. For a related article on the unofficial results of this fun time, see page 9 of this issue of the Monitor!

Congratulations again to all of the above hams!

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## **ARES AND RACES -- A Standard 12V DC Connector**

What kind of DC power connection is on your radio? If you are called to help out in an emergency, will you be able to connect your radio to the power supply already at the emergency shelter, even if it was provided by another ham? If the radio in your car suddenly goes out, and another ham makes his radio available, will you be able to quickly make the power connection?

The American Radio Relay League established a recommended standard DC connector as early as 1989. Unfortunately, several of the major ham radio equipment manufacturers have decided to ignore the standard and go their own way. Kenwood, Icom, Radio Shack, and Yaesu use different proprietary connectors which are not even standardized between product lines within manufacturer! (Most Alinco and Azden radios use the standardized connector.)

The source of voltage (battery, power supply, etc.) connects to the wires coming from the left connector. The positive voltage is connected to the pin on the top in this illustration (pointed side of connector) and the ground connects to the bottom pin (flat side of connector). The load (radio, amp, lights, etc.) is attached to the wires coming from the connector on the right. Even though the connector on the left fits INTO the one on the right, the one of the left is still called the "receptacle" because its contacts are recessed. The connector on the right is called the "plug". Be certain to use proper fusing in all your power supply cables.

To make matters even worse, the manufacturers are very protective of the specs on their connectors and do not divulge information which might enable you to obtain "their" connectors from some other source, thus depriving them of additional "parts" income! Kenwood especially has been very energetic in making sure none of their service personnel divulge a source for alternative connectors, instead instructing their personnel to sell "only full DC Power cables" for \$16.00 each. I spent several hours on the phone trying to get the connector, or even the specs, to no avail. Apparently I am not alone. A world-wide listserv notice on the Internet resulted in 27 responses from hams who likewise wanted the information but had been unable to extract it from the major equipment manufacturers.

In the August, 1993 issue of QST, page 50, the ARRL published an article titled, "A Standard 12-volt Connector." This article described the recommended standard. This connector is a simple Molex polarized connector capable of carrying 12 amps of current. (Be careful about the Radio Shack version of this connector! Radio Shack technical engineers in Fort Worth have verified that their connectors use lighter-weight contacts, and are capable of carrying only 8-amps of current, less current than required by most

modern VHF rigs!)

Of course, the standard is entirely voluntary. However, to allow interchangeability of equipment during emergencies, it is strongly recommended that if you do not re-connector your equipment, you at the very least have on hand some adapter cables consisting of your connector on one end, and the standard connector on the other. You need both male (load) and female (supply) versions of the adapter cables.

If you do decide to re-connector your equipment, you can obtain the recommended connectors from several sources very cheaply. The Molex connector uses crimp-on pins. If you don't have the proper crimping tool, you can solder the pins to the cable. Once you set up, you can install 30 of these cute little connectors in about 2 hours. (However, they are fairly difficult to install in the field where you don't have crimping tools or soldering irons!)

The set standard of connectors carries Molex number 1545. The individual part numbers of the pieces are: 03-09-2022 for the plug, 03-09-1021 for the receptacle, 02-09-2103 for the male pin (fits 14-20 gauge wire), and 02-09-1103 for the female pin. You can buy these parts in bulk from most major electronic supply houses. I recently purchased a set of 100 of each part (making 100 male and 100 female connectors) at a total cost of less than \$50, including shipping!

You can obtain a single set from Radio Shack for \$0.99, but beware! RS Part number 274-222 is advertised in the 1997 catalog (page 171) as being rated at 12 amps. However, the package states plainly that the RS connector can only handle 8 amps, a fact verified by Radio Shack technical support. Thus, if you use the Radio Shack connector, you probably should fuse your equipment (and supply wires!) for 8 amps.

Be sure to observe proper polarity when installing the pins in the plastic housing. The positive lead goes next to the pointed end of the housing, with the negative lead next to the flat side (see illustration).

Another place for caution is in the terminology of "plug" and "receptacle". The receptacle has female pins, and is used on the supply side (battery, generator, power supply) of the connection. The female pins, when properly installed, are located inside a solid plastic housing where it is difficult for them to make accidental contact with fingers and other unintentional conductors. The proper term for this housing containing the female pins is "receptacle".

By contrast, the male pins are located in the open plastic housing. It is a common mistake to refer to the male pin housing as a receptacle, since the supply housing slides into the load housing. Don't make that mistake. The term "receptacle" is properly used for the supply side connector, containing the female pins. The load connector containing the male pins is properly called the "plug".

Be sure to label all your supply wires and load cables with the amp rating. This helps users (even you!) avoid overloads in the field.

In addition to cables for your power supply and radio, make up a cable with a receptacle on one end and medium-sized alligator clips on the other. This may come in handy, since many trucks and vans used for emergency transport don't have extra cigarette lighter sockets or other convenient points to obtain power. Always place a fuse in the power leads, and have spare fuses on hand. You should always fuse both sides (positive and negative) of cables used to connect directly to vehicle batteries. This prevents the starter and ignition current from flowing through your radio if the connection between the battery and the vehicle's chassis opens.

If you are making adapter cables with a non-Molex connector at one end, be sure to label the polarity of that connector, and indicate the device for which the cable was made. Red nail polish works nicely for labeling the positive side of connectors.

Don't violate the standard by creating cables using the Molex connector with reversed polarity. Someone may get ahold of it during an emergency and think its a standard cable. (Won't he be in for a surprise!). If you must use a non-standard cable (for use with a Heathkit HW-9, for instance, which requires a Molex connector with the opposite polarity!), make sure it is marked in a VERY obvious manner!

By adhering to the standard, equipment and power sources can be completely interchangeable. Operations at field day can be simplified. A ham from New York, for example, could easily participate in an emergency with hams from Virginia. The won't have to worry about special wiring cables or fooling around with soldering irons or crimping pins. They simply plug in and go!

The Albemarle Amateur Radio Club re-printed the standardized connector in their October, 1996 newsletter, with RACES and ARES members in the Albemarle area adopting the standard. How about you? A universal connector can be worth its weight in gold during an emergency. Remember, the time to prepare is before the emergency strikes!

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## **February Deadline: Jan. 20th!**

The deadline for the February issue of the Monitor is Monday, January 20th. Please get your material to the newsletter editor so it arrives on or before January 20th . 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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## **DON'T DELAY! -- RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**

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The DX crossword puzzle which appeared here in the paper issue will not reproduce properly and has been omitted from the electronic edition of the Monitor.

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## **November VARA Treasurer's Report**

### **Beginning Balance (Oct) -- \$991.61**

Dues 00 \$70.00

50/50 Drawing Contribution -- \$13.00

Christmas Dinner Paym'nts -- 333.19

FCC Refund -- \$30.00

**Collection Subtotal -- \$1,437.80**

November Newsletter Exp -- \$83.01

PO Box Rental -- \$58.00

**Expense Subtotal -- \$141.01**

**Ending Balance -- \$1,296.79**

The November newsletter expense included the VARA portion of the annual bulk mailing permit renewal, as well as labels for the next six months.

We received our refund from the FCC for the duplicate payment reported in the October Monitor. We are still waiting for our new club callsign. Please do not be misled by the balance shown above. Over \$400.00 of the balance is Christmas Dinner reservation money that will be paid out shortly.

I understand I was elected to another term as your Treasurer, so I guess you will have to put up with another year of my intermittent reports and meeting attendance! Don't forget to get your dues to the club PO box ASAP to continue receiving the great club newsletter and other membership benefits!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Charlie Garner, WA4ITY*

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## **December 10 Meter Contest**

On December the 14th and 15th a number of us gathered at the QTH of Dale, KD4DAI for the annual 10 meter contest as well as fine food and fellowship. Those that came by to visit, eat, and fellowship were:

- Dale, KD4DAI
- Ray, KD4OXU;
- Walt, KF4BFB;
- Rusty, N4YET; and
- Marshall, N4ZKH.M.

On Saturday the band opened up down into South America. This opening lasted most of the afternoon. It died out around five o'clock Saturday evening, as did most of the rest of the 10 meter band, but not before some fantastic points were scored.

Saturday evening, while watching the DX cluster for spots and visiting, we found a spot on 20 meters direct to the South Pole! Using Rusty's call, he was able to get through the pile up and make a contact on 100 watts of power. He talked with a ham by the name of Les whose call was KC3AAA.

On Sunday after getting home from church, I discovered that the band was open again down into South America, out to the west coast, and up into British Columbia, Canada. Marshall came over for a while and we had more fun working those openings, as well as eating more chili.

Over all we made 65 contacts, consisting of 14 states and 6 countries, for a total score of over 2600 points. As you can see we didn't contest real hard, a couple of hours each day, but we had a lot of good food and fellowship while playing radio. If you have never contested before, or if its been a while, why not join us the next time and give it a try.

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## **Check Your Label!**

Check your mailing label. If it says "Nonmember", then you need to join the club of your choice to continue receiving the Monitor each month. If you have joined one of the clubs, the club name will appear on your label, or, if you joined both clubs, you will see the word "BOTH". You need to renew for 1997 to continue

receiving the Monitor. Use the handy application form enclosed.

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There were no December business meetings of either club. Hence, no minutes to report.

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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: Pat Smiley, KD4WWF  
Vice-President: Kenny Harris, KE4GKD  
Secretary: Doug Zirk, KE4RMD  
Treasurer: Charlie Garner, WA4ITY

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