

The MARA-VARA *Monitor*

APRIL 1997 -- Volume 97:04

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.

VARA President's Message

Thanks to all that came to the March VARA meeting. Just a reminder that the meetings are now held at Gavid's Family Grill on Greenville Avenue in south Staunton. Please keep this in mind, also the meeting are on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM, but we eat around 6:00 PM so come to the meetings and have supper with us.

April's meeting will be a show and tell, put on by Ray (KE4HVR) and Cowles (KB4CNI) this should be very interesting.

I would like to welcome the three new members to the club and they are: Cowles Andrus (KB4CNI) - Dan Beidler (KE4JSX) - John Morrison (KO4YK).

Well Bob (N4ICT) has some competition!!! Dick (WB8GIF) had only one container of ice cream, but it must have been three (3) quarts at one time. I'll bet June his wife (KC4PKJ) did not know this. "Good Show, Dick!"

We have been asked to help with two Walks coming soon one in Staunton and one in Waynesboro. The Waynesboro event is an M.S. Walk Sunday, April 13th. and Staunton is a March of Dimes Walk. May 3rd. We have been asked to have at least ten (10) Amateurs for each walk. So "PLEASE HELP" us give a good exposure to the PUBLIC in these walks. I will have a sign up sheet at the April Meeting, or call me at (540) 886-0347 for all the details on each walk.

A special thanks to Ken (KE4GKD) for making up a new and up-dated roster of the Club Members. A lot of work went into this so THANKS AGAIN Ken for a job well done. We will have a copy of the new roster of Club Members at our April Meeting for all that attend. So for now 73 and see you at the April meeting.

Until next month - 73
Pat Smiley - KD4WWF

MARA President's Message

Another monthly meeting has come and gone again! As at February's meeting, we had a very good turnout,

with some new faces mixed in with the regulars. Let's hope the trend continues!

Since the new Golden Corral restaurant may not be ready by the next meeting time, we decided to hold the April meeting at the Harrisonburg Fire Department's Emergency Operations Center on Rock street.

Of course, April is homebrew month; bring in your handmade projects or kits to show to everyone what you have been up to!

June is coming up, and everyone knows what happens in June: Field day! If you enjoy the outdoors, the fellowship of fellow hams, and operate ham radios in a competitive way (or any one of these!) then this is where you need to be! We set up in a clearing about 3 miles northeast of Reddish Knob and using generators and temporary antennas. We prepare and practice for emergencies and have fun at the same time. So check your calendars for June 28 and 29, and come on up.

David Tanks, AD4TJ
MARA President

MARA MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

The April meeting of the MARA club will be held at the Harrisonburg/Rockingham EOC building on Rock Street, two blocks east of Main Street. If you don't know the location, call on the 146.625 or 147.315 repeaters for talk-in. Please park around back to avoid congestion in front of the fire truck bays.

ARES NET CONTROL OPERATORS NEEDED

Norman, ARES Net Manager for the Rockingham County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) nets, is in dire need of volunteer operators to serve as net control for the Monday night nets. Serving as net control is excellent experience and preparation for service in an emergency setting. The net meets each Monday evening at 8:00 pm local time.

If you can volunteer to take the net for one or more Monday evenings in the next few months, call Norman, KA4EEN, at 540-289-5801.

N4RAG Autopatch Subscription Deadline Nears

Buck, N3RIQ, repeater administrator for the N4RAG 147.225 repeater system reports that a new listing of autopatch subscribers will be prepared as of the first week of April. If you have not renewed your membership for the N4RAG patch by that time, you might not be included in the new list. Renew today! The N4RAG system provides two-digit speed-dial autodialing to the number of your choice, along with general telephone interconnect access to the local Harrisonburg calling area.

Correction: Monitor Error Incorrectly Lists PL Tone for 147.225 Repeater

Correct Tone is 131.8 Hz

The February issue of the Monitor incorrectly listed the PL tone on the 147.225 N4RAG repeater as 103.1 Hz. The correct tone is 131.8 Hz.

Donnie and Buck want to remind all valley hams that the 147.225 machine is open and available for normal voice repeater use by all hams in the area, not just those who subscribe to the autopatch. As the synthesizer says, the 147.225 repeater is "one lean, mean, two-meter machine".

JUNE IS FIELD DAY MONTH!

The Joint MARA/VARA Field Day Committee started its planning sessions for the 1997 Field Day operation with a meeting at the Weyers Cave Volunteer Fire Department building on Tuesday evening, March 18. Many issues were discussed and some decisions were made.

It was determined that due to the past history of attendance, we would not try a 3A category this year, but instead would stay with 2A. This means two stations operating on emergency (non-commercial) power sources.

Many assignments from last year will be duplicated this year, but there are some changes coming down the pike that will be reported later, pending confirmation.

The dates for Field Day 1997 are June 28th and 29th. Please come out and enjoy the hobby and fellowship with those you may not see in person very often, or help yourself to a shift at one of the stations for some real excitement.

The committee members from MARA are: Colin N4ZFY, James KF4BFM, and Paul, WV3J. The members from VARA are: Jeff WB4PJW, Bob N4ICT, and Joe KD4FKT. Special thanks are due to Sandy KE4PZC, Pat KE4WWF, and Ken KE4GKD for showing interest in Field Day and coming to the meeting for support and to provide ideas and suggestions.

The next Field Day Committee Meeting is scheduled for April 22nd at 7:00 pm local time, again at the Weyers Cave Volunteer Fire Department building. All are Welcome!

To reach the building, take Interstate 81 to Exit 235 (Weyers Cave), State Road 256. Take 256 east to the first traffic light (downtown Weyers Cave), turn left at the light. The building is three blocks down on your right.

Sincerely,
Colin Hester, N4ZFY
Railroaded FD Chairman

MARA Treasurer's Report on the Christmas Banquet

Receipts

36 Registrations Paid in Advance -- \$540.00
1 Drop-In (partial meal) contribution -- \$5.00

TOTAL RECEIVED: \$545.00

Paid Out

To: Pano's 33 Dinners @\$12.50 -- \$412.50
For: Awards -- \$44.00

TOTAL PAID OUT -- \$456.50

NET INCOME FOR MARA -- \$88.50

*Submitted by
Richard Weaver, W3HXH
MARA Treasurer*

MARCH VARA TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance (January) -- \$934.57

Dues Paid In -- \$210.00
50/50 (January and February) -- \$39.50
Bike Virginia Donation -- \$100.00
N3JB Donated his 50/50 -- \$16.50
FCC Refund (finally!) -- \$30.00
Flower Fund Collection -- \$59.00

Subtotal -- \$1,389.57

Jordan Flowers -- \$26.13
Club tape recorder and tape -- \$47.00
Field Day Expenses to MARA -- \$31.01
FCC (another application) -- \$30.00

Expense Subtotal -- \$134.14

Ending Balance (March) -- \$1,255.43

We received a very generous donation from Bike Virginia for our efforts in providing communications for their event last year. Joe, W4XD, reports that none of our previously requested callsigns was available (again!) so we mailed another application (and another check) with a new request list. We also received our refund for the last time this happened, and should receive another refund check for this most recent go-round. Finally, balancing our expenses against theirs (see the attached joint field day expense reconciliation) we ended up paying MARA \$31.01 to cover our half of the field day expenses for the 1996 event. This made our

half of the total field day expenses \$87.99.

*Respectfully submitted,
Charles Garner, WA4ITY
VARA Treasurer*

Latest FCC Non-Vanity Callsigns

The latest FCC-issued callsigns (as of March 3) for the fourth call area are AF4BD, KU4DB, and KF4PMR. For the eighth call area: AA8ZJ, KI8BE, and KC8GGT.

This page held the MARA/VARA Joint Field Day Expense Summary prepared by Richard Weaver, W3HXX. Unfortunately, this page will not be in convertible format and cannot be included in the electronic versions of the monitor. Copies will be available at the club meetings.

Highlights:

Gas for Truck: \$13.01
Barrel Connectors: \$15.12
Field Day Toilet Rentals: \$62.70
Hospitality Snacks: \$28.18
MARA Banner: \$70.00 (not split)
Generator Rental: \$45.98
Generator Gas: \$11.00
Total: \$245.99

\$87.99 was each club's portion of the common expenses, after deducting the MARA banner cost.

HELP!

"I'm looking for a volunteer, someone to get out the word that there is an amateur radio club in the Harrisonburg area. As far as I know, we(the club) don't have a listing in the Harrisonburg paper in the meetings section, or any posting at the Radio Shacks, or Long's Electronics, or Moore's Electronics, etc. If someone would like to come up with some publicity and information about the club, and also include info on the VE test sessions, and put this on a little card or poster or sheet of paper to be posted at various places, this would help people know that we exist. If you feel like this is something that you would like to tackle, let me know, and I'll help you with the details. My E-mail address is: ad4tj@juno.com.

*David Tanks, AD4TJ
MARA President*

VARA HOMEPAGE NOW ON THE INTERNET!

The Valley Amateur Radio Association now has its own nifty web site! Thanks to Buck Mowbray, N3RIQ, the site is a real first-class URL, containing links to the hottest ham radio information available through your computer! The newsletter editor is trying to make arrangements to have the back issues of the Monitor available at this site. The site is open to all Internet surfers, free of charge, regardless of club membership. Point your browser to: <http://home1.gte.net/dmowbray/vara/>

HAM RADIO EXAMS: APRIL 12th

Ham Radio Examinations will be held on Saturday, April 12th, at the Massanutten Vo-Tech Center in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Walk-in registration is always available. Sign-in starts at 9:15 am. The exams start promptly at 10:00 am.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT

As you know the Monitor is now available electronically for those of you who have email addresses. You can receive the newsletter as an email attachment (which can be read by Word for Windows, WordPerfect, or any of the other full-featured Word-Processing programs capable of handling Word 7.0 files), or you can receive the newsletter as an ASCII e-mail message, whichever format you prefer. (Juno users are restricted to the ASCII version since Juno can not handle attachments yet.)

If your email provider can handle attachments but you don't have a WP program capable of handling Word 7.0 documents, please contact me. I have a nifty public-domain viewer program which will run on either Windows95 or Windows 3.1, which will enable you to view the attachment, and get the newsletter in all its glory: headings, italics, bold, pictures, etc.

We had hoped enough email users would sign up for the electronic distribution that we could reduce the amount of paper we send through the U.S. Mail. Unfortunately, only 12 members of the clubs have asked for the attachment version. (The members receiving the ASCII version still receive the paper copy too, since the ASCII version does not contain all the features (pictures, tables, etc.)

As of March 24, MARA's mailing list shows 64 paid members, and VARA's list shows 69 members, with an additional 16 complimentary copies required between the two clubs. Thus, even after deducting the 12 email users, we still must mail out sufficient copies to make Bulk Mail an attractive and economically-preferred alternative.

Therefore, until such time as more email members sign up for the "attachment" option, I will continue using Bulk Mail, meaning that we will mail 200 copies every month. (The extra copies go to randomly-selected hams in the valley.)

If you would like to receive the Monitor via email, please send me a message to that effect. My email address is: fordhadr@jmu.edu

David Fordham, KD9LA
Monitor Editor

Second AutoPatch for Valley: 147.315

Several months ago, a survey was conducted to see if the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area hams needed a second telephone interconnect (in addition to the 147.225 patch operated by N4RAG). At the time, a regional disaster-response organization was doing a survey of emergency communication facilities, and had hinted that financial support might be available for a contingency telephone interconnect.

Well, the organization has not yet offered (and probably will not offer) any support. But sufficient interest in a backup patch was expressed by local hams to warrant the installation of interconnect capability on a second 2-meter repeater. The trustees of the 147.315 Massanutten mountain repeater graciously offered their machine. The phone line has been installed and the patch is now operational, on a subscription basis.

Unlike the 147.225 patch (which offers autodial and many other features), the 147.315 patch offers only simple dial-tone access. However, this is sufficient for its purpose: a backup, subscription-basis autopatch for hams desiring mobile or emergency telephone interconnect service to the Rockingham County service area.

Initial arrangements were made by Jay Suter, W4QDC. David Fordham, KD9LA has volunteered to be the database administrator for the membership list.

Special note: As with the 147.225 N4RAG repeater the subscription is for autopatch privileges, not repeater usage. The use of the repeater is free and open to all hams.

The subscription fee for autopatch access is \$15 per calendar year, running January to January. If you are interested in autopatch access, or would like more information, contact David Fordham, KD9LA, at 540-568-3024 (daytime) or 540-234-0448 (evenings) or email fordhadr@jmu.edu, or via U.S. mail at 131 Wayside Drive, Weyers Cave, VA 24486.

VARA AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

"We, the undersigned members of the VARA Audit Committee, hereby certify that we have examined the financial records of our association as kept by our Treasurer, WA4ITY, for the calendar year 1996. We find them to be complete and accurate, that all expenditures were as authorized, that all income was properly recorded, and that the correct ending balance for the year ending Dec. 31, 1996, was \$933.51."

*Respectively Submitted,
VARA Audit Committee,
Joan Pitsenbarger and June Waldmuller*

MISCELLANEOUS BRIEFS...

- The FCC says that it will not be authorizing any more 1x1 Amateur Radio callsigns under Special Temporary Authority any time soon. This, according to David Horowitz who is the acting chief of the FCC's Private Wireless Division. Horowitz who is an attorney says that the FCC should not have issued any STA's for 1 by 1 callsigns while a rulemaking proceeding regarding formal rules for these

call signs is ongoing. FCC Docket WT 95-57 concerns itself with 1 by 1 call signs. It has been under review but action on it might not take place for several months.

(Amateur Radio Newsline)

- On the ham radio business front, word that the Advanced Electronic Applications name will live on even though the company is out of business. This is because company founder Mike Lamb, N7ML, has made good on his promise not to let the AEA name die. Word is that Lamb has inked two deals that will keep most of the AEA developed products in the marketplace. N7ML, says AEA's line of antennas, antenna analyzers and cable testing equipment was sold to Tempo Research of Vista, California. Tempo will continue the AEA name under a separate division and plans to produce the products in the antenna, antenna analyzer and cable testing line that AEA had been producing before it ceased operation late last year. And current owners of these AEA products will not be left out in the cold. This is because Tempo will also handle all technical support, warranty and after warranty service for these AEA products. Lamb also says he will assume a primary marketing position with the new AEA division of Tempo. Meantime, Timewave Technology of St Paul, Minnesota is buying the rights to all other AEA products, including its digital line. Timewave president Randy Gawtry, K0CBH, says a purchase agreement is in place. He says that he is in the process of making the product line transition from AEA to Timewave and hopes to be manufacturing products soon. Timewave will have the right to use the AEA name for one year.

(Amateur Radio Newsline)

- Remember, Shuttle Mission STS-83, scheduled for liftoff April 3rd, will last 16 full days, and will carry ham radio. Details were carried in last month's Monitor.)
- In DX, F5MNV, will be on from Reunion Island as FR F5MNV or TO5UFT to April 6th. Most of his activity will be on CW.

(Amateur Radio Newsline)

- Check out the following fun Bell Labs URL: <http://www.bell-labs.com/project/tts/voices.html> You can type in a message and then listen to your message after clicking on the following voice options: Select a voice: Man, Woman, Child, Gnat, Coffee Drinker, Big Man, Raspy, or Ridiculous. Have fun!

(AECM e-list)

- Here is a link on the internet I think a lot will like it is on the comet called Hale-Bopp. I have looked at this page it has a lot of information on it about the comet and more. Here is the link to the site.

<http://www.skypub.com/comets/hbguide.shtml>

(James Shoemaker. KF4BFM)

- The FCC is proposing to liberalize the use of spread spectrum modulation techniques in Amateur Radio. The FCC has proposed to drop rules restricting amateur stations to transmitting only frequency hopping and direct sequencing spreading techniques. As requested by the ARRL, the FCC also has proposed to require automatic power control for spread spectrum transmitters, to ensure use of the minimum power level needed to carry out communication. In spread spectrum the energy of the transmitted signal is distributed among several synchronized frequencies within a band and reassembled at the receiving end. This reduces power density and duration of a transmission on a particular frequency and lets spread spectrum almost invisibly share the same spectrum with users of other, narrowband modes. And that's exactly why some hams oppose the ARRL and the digital community in their quest for increased use of spreading modulation technology. The weak signal community in particular fears that widespread use of spread spectrum will raise the ambient noise floor of the various bands. They say that even a hundredth of a decibel increase in band noise is intolerable because it will bury already weak signals. But in releasing the proposed regulatory change

the said the rule amendments would increase spectrum efficiency and allow amateur operators to contribute to technological advancement. This makes it sound like a shoe in for prompt approval. Either way, comments on WT Docket 97-12 are due May 5th, with reply comments due no later than June 5th.

(VHF Reflector))

- The Greater Baltimore Hamboree and ComputerFest Host to the ARRL Maryland State Convention April 5th to the 6th at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, Maryland.
(Press release).)
- Do you use Kantronics TNCs? Do you also use MS Windows and have a fast computer? If so, you might be interested in a specialty software package designed for Kantronics users: KaWin - the performance enhancing software designed especially for Kantronics TNCs and MS Windows. The KaWin Home Page can be found on the web at <http://www.mutadv.com/kawin>. It will let you learn more and download the full KaWin system and try it on your own system. If you do not have web access, you can send an email message to stan@mutadv.com and request KaWin by email. You will receive the 1MB installation file as a MIME attachment. There is also a KaWin mailing list, see the home page for details.
*Stan Huntting, KF0IA
stan@mutadv.com)*
- It is time for Spring Cleaning. There is a set of free software to help you clean up your computer and do the routine file maintenance that so many of us overlook. This is a commercial shareware product and can be found at: <http://www.hotfiles.com/toolkits/spring/tlk0397b.html>
(ZD Net News))
- Tired of the limitations of Juno? Looking for a more saavy Internet mail program? A review of more than 80 e-mail, usenet and chat programs, categorized by price, platform and functionality, can be found at: http://www5.zdnet.com/zdwebcat/content/fullview/mail_all.html
(ZD Net News))
- Here's a free roundup of the best computing tips, bug alerts and tools to keep your PC healthy.
<http://205.181.112.101/hpc/content/week/week032197.html>)
- Want to download a copy of the Microsoft Word viewer so you can see the Monitor in "attachment" form? John Nelson reports that you can find the free shareware at:
<http://www.microsoft.com/word/internet/viewer/> This URL should get you to the page where you pick the Windows 95 version or the Windows 3.1 version of the viewer. The windows 95 version is named "wd95vw71.exe" and is about 2.2 MB. The Windows 3.1 version is named "wrd6view.exe" and is about 1.2 MB.
(John Nelson, WA4KQX))
- The same type of software is also available for free from:
<ftp://comport1.comport.com/pub/viewers/wrd6view.exe>, or you can contact James Shoemaker, KB4BFM (email: shoemake@cfw.com) for a copy. The newsletter editor also can provide a copy if you send in a blank, formatted disk.
(James Shoemaker, KB4BFM))
- It's the end of an era for The Radio Amateur Callbook. Publisher Bob Hughes announced March 17 in a letter to Callbook distributors that the company is phasing out its telephone-book-size paper North American and international editions in favor of its CD-ROM product. The 1997 Callbook--the 75th edition--will be the last hard-copy version available. The letter cited "rising costs and increasing

demand for electronic publishing" as the reasons for the company's decision to concentrate on the CD-ROM version, which includes worldwide listings. North American and international editions of the paper Callbook, a staple for years in many active ham shacks, sell for around \$40, while the CD-ROM sells for around \$50. The Callbook began publishing in 1920. The spring CD-ROM edition of the Callbook will be available at the Dayton Hamfest, Hughes told distributors. According to Hughes' letter, the company has "a limited supply of the printed edition" and anticipates that demand will be great once the word gets out. The last printed version will carry a label indicating "Last Edition of the Callbook." For early orders, call 800-278-8477.

(ARRL Letter)

- Eimac is out of the glass-tube business. The former Eimac glass-tube manufacturing facility, one of the most recognized names in ham radio circles, has been sold and relocated from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Easton, Pennsylvania. The new company, Triton, moved the former Eimac plant "lock, stock and barrel" from Utah to Pennsylvania, said Mark Hoffman, a senior scientist at Triton. In all, it took 16 tractor-trailer loads to move the plant's manufacturing equipment and inventories across the country. For now, Triton is manufacturing 46 different Eimac and Westinghouse tube types, including the popular 3-500Z, 4-400A and 4-400C. Right now, Triton does not make the 6146, 572B, 811A or 4-1000A, but Hoffman did not rule out the possibility that the company may tool up to manufacture those tubes in the future. Triton also makes glass tube chimneys and sockets. Hams interested in obtaining small quantities of Triton tubes should contact the company's distributor, Richardson Electronics, Lafox, Illinois; telephone 800-323-1770. (Eimac continues to make and rebuild ceramic external-anode tubes. It has been relocated to Palo Alto, California.)

(ARRL Letter)

- Sun watcher Tad Cook, KT7H, Seattle, Washington, reports: Look for improved worldwide conditions on HF bands as we head into spring. Otherwise, there has been no improvement in solar activity, with conditions last week showing no significant change over the previous week. Solar flux and sunspot numbers were only slightly higher, and on four days the solar flux was just slightly above the average of 75 for the previous 90 days. The outlook for the next few weeks has solar flux remaining in the mid-70s, with a rise in geomagnetic disturbances centered around March 26 and 27. The March 1997 issue of the magazine Scientific American has a remarkable article about the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO), which is held in the point where the Earth's and Sun's gravitational pulls are equal, some 1 million miles toward the Sun from Earth. There is an extensive gallery of images from the data transmitted from the satellite on the Web at <http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov>.

(ARRL Letter)

- NASA TV moves: On March 15, NASA Television (NTV) began broadcasting via a new satellite that will allow reception by a wider audience throughout the continental US, Alaska and Hawaii. NTV now is available on GE-2, transponder 9C at 85W, vertical polarization, at 3880 MHz, and audio at 6.8 MHz. NASA Television provides real-time coverage of agency activities and missions as well as resource video to the news media, and educational programming to teachers, students and the general public.

(AMSAT News Service)

- Looking for information on the Little LEO system? These are the commercial satellites whose developers are eyeing the ham bands as a possible frequency spot. Try the URL: <http://www.cnn.com/TECH/9703/16/world.internet.ap/index.html>

(James Bazley, KB0SCY)

- If you need a really good Wefax program, try:
<ftp://members.aol.com/hffax1/Software/INST222K.EXE> It is a Windows prg, and uses your

soundcard for the demodulation. At last, no more weird A/D converters to build, after all, your soundcard already includes all the A/D converter you need, so why not use it? I have already tried it with NOAA-14, and the results were watchable even though my scanner has a narrow filter.
(Vy, OZILRG via AmSat)

- Do you have email, but not a web browser? I just came across an excellent Internet guide to various resources (usenet, finger, FTP, WWW, etc.) via E-mail alone. Instead of posting the entire document here, I'm including the portion with the instructions for obtaining the guide. The interface is fairly crude since you're not interacting in real-time, but it does give you the opportunity to obtain information from the web pages such as those mentioned in AMSAT-BB postings and elsewhere. The title of the instructions is: "Accessing The Internet By E-Mail, Doctor Bob's Guide to Offline Internet Access, 6th Edition - March 1997". This document is now available from several automated mail servers. To get the latest edition, send e-mail to one of the addresses below.

mail-server@rtfm.mit.edu

and enter only this line in the BODY of the note:

send usenet/news.answers/internet-services/access-via-email

(Philip Chien KC4YER)

- New Mir ham radio Web site: To provide information on SAFEX, the Space Amateur Funk Experiment aboard the Russian space station Mir, the DLR Amateur Radio Group DF0VR at Oberpfaffenhofen, Germany, has installed a new Web site at <http://www.op.dlr.de/~df0vr/home.htm>
(Rudolf Appel, AMSAT-DL)
- The 2-meter packet station on Mir is designed to be used as a Personal Mail System for the crews working on the Russian Space Station Mir. The "PMS" as it is called, is not to be used as a Bulletin Board Service (BBS). The Chief of the Cosmonaut Amateur Radio Department, Sergej Samburov RV3DR (MAREX), is requesting users to stop sending CQ Mail messages and Third Party Traffic messages (messages between to Amateur Radio Stations on the same planet) via the Mir PMS. Traffic should be limited to mail to and from the Mir crew members. The Mir crews are very busy and do not have a lot of time to spend clearing out old third party messages. Also, the storage capacity of the Pac-Com Handi Packet TNC is limited to 15 Kb of RAM. There were several times last month when the PMS buffer overflowed, preventing the loading of important information which the Mir crew was expecting. Groundstations can still use the PMS to send short messages to the Mir crew, but please keep in mind the crews are very busy and you are not guaranteed a reply.
(Miles Mann WF1F)

Congress Set to Investigate the "Beavis and Butthead Effect"

(RAINS) In what could prove to be the biggest scandal to hit Washington since the Tobacco Investigations, Congress has announced that it will be calling present and past executives of Fox Television and MTV to testify about what they know (and when they knew it) on what is being called the "Beavis and Butthead Effect."

All of this developed after a lone National Institute of Health (NIH) researcher discovered what appears to be a link between certain radio frequencies and intelligence.

MTV and FOX executives are being called to explain why they had requested certain channels for distribution of their programs.

In the research done by Dr. [Expletive-Deleted] at the Bethesda Campus of the NIH, it has come to light that

certain radio and television frequencies seem to enhance intelligence while others seem to reduce intelligence.

A former FOX executive has come forward to confirm that FOX knew about the "effect" back when they were buying TV stations around the country, but chose to ignore the advice of their lawyers.

MTV is expected to claim that they don't believe there is any evidence that certain frequencies reduce intelligence but that people with reduced intelligence are simply attracted to certain frequencies. The as yet un-named NIH researcher claims this would be "equivalent to the tobacco companies claiming that people who just happen to have a higher risk of lung cancer just happen to choose to smoke."

For the ham radio community, this finding is not new. The "effect" has been observed on the ham bands for many years.

There appear to be certain frequencies on the 75 and 20 meter phone bands that exhibit the "effect." Some of the basic research also indicates that powers of 3 Megahertz (such as 3, 9, or 27 MHz) may cause problems for certain people.

While the negative side effects are being probed, researchers are still exploring the positive aspects of this "effect." FCC files are being processed to see if PBS and NPR executives may have known about these effects as long ago as the 1950's and did not report them to federal oversight groups.

The same unnamed NIH researcher is also investigating that certain types of news stories tend to appear on what seems to be a 365 or 366 day cycle that peaks about the first day of April. Other researchers have reported an even more pronounced peak on a four-year cycle ending around the first Tuesday of November.

Hams in the valley are advised to watch for this effect on local 2-meter frequencies.

*Submitted by
John Nelson, WA4KQX
Adapted from RAINS*

VARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

March 12, 1997 Meeting

The V.A.R.A. club meeting was held at Gavid's Steakhouse Restaurant in Staunton on March 12, 1997. The meeting was opened by the club president, Pat Smiley (KD4WWF), at 7:30 P.M. Present were 22 members and guests. Among the guests was Gary Pitsenbarger's (KF4PFR) wife, Vicky.

There were no A.R.E.S. or Skywarn reports.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP). The total amount was 26 dollars with half going to Nancy and half going to the club treasury.

The secretary's report was accepted as printed in last month's newsletter. Ken Harris (KE4GKD) made the motion to accept and Dick Waldmuller (WB8GIF) seconded.

Joan Pitsenbarger (KF4CWR) was head of the treasury's audit committee and reported that the treasurer's

records were current and accurate.

Waynesboro will be having a MS Walk on April 13, starting at 7:00 A.M. Ten Amateurs are needed to volunteer to help provide communications for the walk.

John Morrison (KO4YK), Dan Beidler (KE4JSX), and Cowles Andrus III (KB4CNI) were voted in as V.A.R.A members. Gary Pitsenbarger (KF4PFR) will be voted on at next month's club meeting.

Joe Meeks (KD4FKT) was in charge of finding out about obtaining a banner displaying the club's name and appropriate insignias. At this time there were some options for different sized signs and designs. A few examples of possible signs will be shown at next month's club meeting.

Ray Colvin (KE4HVR) gave a presentation on J-Pole Antennas.

There was some discussion on possibly getting a new callsign for the club. It was decided that a 1'3 call should be looked in to. Joe Moomaw (W4XD) is planning to check about getting the callsign for the club.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Buck Mowbray (N3RIQ). Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP) seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 P.M.

Submitted By:

Douglas S. Zirk (KE4RMD)

V.A.R.A. Secretary

MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

March 6, 1997 Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of MARA was called to order at the Golden Corral in Harrisonburg , VA at 7:35 p.m. by the president, David, AD4TJ. There were 27 amateur operators present.

Committees reported as follows:

ARES - Norman, KA4EEN, thanked those who have helped with the net and commented there had been a good response. He indicated he needed someone for 31 March and needed persons to take the net for April and beyond. He appreciated the new ones who had accepted this responsibility and thanked all others. Colin, N4ZFQ, reported that work was continuing on the books. Some mapping work needs to be done but the projected date for completion is 1 April.

PUBLIC SERVICE - Norman, KA4EEN, said that the March of Dimes Walk is planned for 26 April. He needs at least eight amateurs with handy talkies and/or mobile radios. It will begin again this year at Price Club at 9 a.m. Amateurs need to be there about 8 a.m.

FIELD DAY - The committee will meet Tuesday, 18 March at 7 p.m. at the Weyers Cave Fire Department.

Old Business was covered and John Jones, KF4OAA, whose application was read at the last meeting was elected into membership.

As New Business, Dale, KD4DAI, announced that an autopatch is being installed on the 147.315 repeater.

The phone line is in and Jay, W4QDC and others plan to put the equipment in place. Testing will take place and the autopatch will soon be operational. Those wishing to use same should contact Jay.

Also reported was that work will begin on 15 March to install the repeater, 145.130 on Great North Mountain. The tone 88.5 will be used.

Two prospective members applied for membership. They are Oscar Price, KB4GUA and Buck Raley, N3YFF. They will be voted on at the April meeting.

David, AD4TJ, gave a program on various cables and their signal carrying capacity. It was also demonstrated how to install PL-259 plugs on aluminum shielded rigid cables.

The treasurer, Dick, W3HXX, reported we had a balance of \$ 1,426.26 in the bank and some other funds to be deposited.

Since Golden Corral is moving to a new location and it is a bit uncertain whether they will be operational by our next meeting date, the April meeting will be held at the Rockingham County EOC Center on Rock Street in Harrisonburg. The date is 3 April.

Respectfully submitted
Wilton B. Thomas (KF4BFL),
Secretary

The deadline for the May issue of the Monitor is Friday, April 17th.

End of this month's issue.

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

THE VALLEY ARA

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

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