

The MARA/VARA Monitor

Published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., of Harrisonburg, Virginia for radio amateurs in the Shenandoah Valley.

GREENBANK DATE CHANGE

Joe Meek, KD4FKT, has advised that the date for the trip to Greenbank has been changed. The trip is now scheduled for Saturday, **May 30th**.

This trip is an annual or bi-annual event sponsored by the hams who work at the National Radio Observatory in Greenbank, West Virginia. The event is a free tour for hams and their friends and families. There is no charge. Hams find the equipment used at the observatory to be very intriguing. The site includes numerous radio dish antenna's, and the latest (and largest) dish of all is almost completed. Would you like to see a 330-foot diameter satellite dish up close? Imagine being able to play a professional league football game inside an antenna, with room to spare for the end-zones!!

We will meet the group from Charlottesville at the Staunton Holiday Inn at exit 225 (not exit 223 as printed in last months newsletter) around 8:00am and carpool from there. This exit is marked Woodrow Wilson Parkway, state route 275. The trip over takes about 1 1/2 hours and we will make a pit stop on the way. Talk-in to the meeting place will be on the 147.075 (+.600) repeater.

The cafeteria workers at the observatory always prepare a delicious lunch with an ample selection for all. The tour will be over about 2:00pm and we will be back in the valley about 4:00pm. The scenery is beautiful on the way over and Wild Wonderful West Virginia is always beautiful.

I extend an invitation to everyone to come along and have a very relaxing and educational day. There is no cost other than the meal and the car expense to go over. I hope we have our largest turnout ever.

Remember, this event is open to all hams, their families, and all other interested parties. See you on May 30th.

Joe Meek KD4FKT

SENATE BILL 480 PASSES!!!

After many months of extreme effort and intensive negotiations, Senate Bill 480 has been signed into law by Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore. The new law regulating Amateur Radio antenna structures in Virginia is believed to be the strongest "Amateur Radio Friendly" legislation in the United States. The bill, sponsored by Virginia Senator John S. Edwards of Roanoke, endured and survived an intensive struggle on its way to passage by both Houses of the General Assembly and finally endorsement by the Governor. Two of Virginia's most powerful lobbies, the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) adamantly opposed the bill, but the Assembly and Governor were apparently impressed by the public service offered by hams, and agreed that the law was needed to offer relief to amateur operators encountering local opposition from zoning boards, tower ordinances, and other hindrances.

The entire text of the law appears later in this issue of the *Monitor*.



FIELD DAY NEARING...

It is just around the corner. No news from the Field Day Committee just yet, but you can bet they are working on this year's plans! Remember, Field Day is always the last full weekend in June.

SPREAD SPECTRUM -- TOMORROW'S MODULATION TODAY!

You've heard of CW, AM and FM. And you've heard of SSB. But have you heard of Spread Spectrum?

It is another modulation technique which appears to be catching on fast. Its popularity is due to its ability to allow more people to talk on fewer frequencies simultaneously without interfering with each other. What an accomplishment!

Spread Spectrum is worth learning about. For anyone wishing to find out more information, SSS (Spread Spectrum Scene) offers a web site full of useful, enlightening, and up-to-date knowledge on this RF modulation technique. Set your browser to: <http://www.sss-mag.com/swindex.html>

The site also serves as repository for just about any kind of RF-related software you can imagine. This is a real treasure find for hams.

Jerry N9TU

<http://www.si-net.com/~jefray/homepage.htm>

QRZ? Don't I Know You?

Have you heard some familiar voices using different callsigns lately? By way of the FCC Vanity Callsign program, several local hams have chosen to obtain new calls. The following lists some of the new calls. However, there may be others of which I am not aware.

| HAM | NEW CALL | OLD CALL |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Loren Ristola | N4LDR | KE4JJU |
| Richard Seal | K4RTS | KD4UPF |
| Sandy Mullins | K4PZC | KE4PZC |
| Dick Weaver | W3HXH | W4JZC |
| Randy Smith | N3XA | ND4KB |
| Ray D. Ritchie | K4NRA | KD4OXU |
| Richard Wilkins | KR4V | |

*Information provided by
Ray Ritchie,
K4NRA, ex-KD4OXU*

HAMS IN 1954

Ginny Weaver, XYL of Richard Weaver, W3HXH, discovered a newspaper clipping from a 1954 issue (yes, that's right, 1954!) of the *Harrisonburg Daily News-Record*, carrying the title, "Hams to Track U.S. Satellites". The article told of the ham radio network set up to track the radio satellites launched as part of the International Geophysical Year. The satellites operated at "108 Megacycles", which today we would call 108 megahertz. Although 108 MHz today is the upper limit of the FM broadcast band, at the time (1954) it was an experimental band much as the Gigahertz bands are experimental for hams today.

KENWOOD MOD SITE

Here is an address for Kenwood Mods that I found today. Scroll down to the bottom and click on the Mod Index to find the radio you are looking for. Hope this will be helpful to those of you who own Kenwood Radios.

<http://ftp.kenwood.net/Amateur/ASBtxtformat/>

*Ray Colvin,
KE4HVR*

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Many hams in the MARA/VARA area have received new addresses as part of the 9-1-1 system. Remember, you are required to notify the FCC of any address change. If the FCC receives word that your address on their records is incorrect, your license is subject to cancellation. Notify the FCC promptly of your new address!

And while you are at it, notify your newsletter editor, too! When he has time to go back to using bulk mail, you will not get a Monitor copy once your post office converts to the new addresses (and your grace period expires!).

SYMPATHIES

The sympathy of the Valley Amateur Radio Club (and possibly the entire ham community) is offered to Karen Zirk, Vice-President of VARA, on the passing of her grandfather in early March.

OOPS ... A GOOF!

Your newsletter editor misinterpreted an email announcement, and erroneously attributed the new harmonic (announced in last month's issue of the *Monitor*) to W4XD. Several readers pointed out the error.

As Joe Moomaw put it, "W4XD had nothing to do with the reported Harmonic. Jean, the mother, is the daughter of Art Williams, W4TY and his XYL Ginnie. That makes the new baby the granddaughter of Art & Ginnie. Art, who is a Presbyterian preacher, married Ray KE4HVR and Nancy many years ago. How did Moomaw, W4XD get in that story? I didn't do it!"

Your editor apologizes for the misunderstanding.

ANOTHER HARMONIC

Speaking of new arrivals, here is another first harmonic: Joseph Aaron Harder, born 11:58 am on April 22, 1998, weighing in at 7 lbs, 8 ounces, and measuring 19 inches long. The proud parents are Phil (K4NE) and Wanda (KF4LRQ) Harder. Congratulations to Phil and Wanda.

MARCH OF DIMES WALKATHON -- HARRISONBURG

Attached is a photo I took at the net control sight for the March of Dimes Walkathon in Harrisonburg on 4/25/98. The following amateurs assisted in the public service event, Norman (KA4EEN), David (KF4SVR), Bob (KF4BFC), George (W2CID), Ken (KE4GKD), Enos (KF4BFF), Gerald (KF4FM) and myself, John (N3GLZ).

Shown in the photo from left to right is David (KF4SVR), Ken (KE4GKD), Norman at the net control position (KA4EEN), George (W2CID) and Enos (KF4BFF).

John, N3GLZ

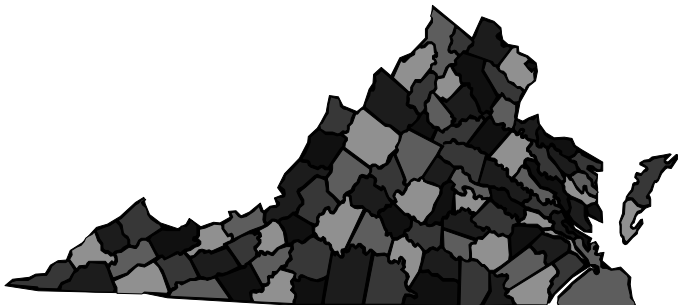


OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE

In addition to the March of Dimes Walk in Harrisonburg, hams have been active in several other public service events in the recent weeks. Rumor has it that hams provided portable and mobile communication for the Walk in Waynesboro (at Ridgeview Park) on April 19th, as well as the walk in Stuart's Draft at Ruritan Park on May 2nd. Thanks to all those community-minded hams who took time from their Saturday to support our community organizations. Hopefully, more on these activities will be reported in next month's issue of the *Monitor*.

TEXT OF SENATE BILL 480

15.2-2293.1. Placement of Amateur Radio Antennas. (Effective 7/1/1998) Any ordinance involving the placement, screening, or height of antennas shall reasonably accommodate amateur radio antennas and shall impose the minimum regulation necessary to accomplish the locality's legitimate purpose. In localities having a population density of 120 persons or less per square mile according to the 1990 United States census, no local ordinance shall (ia) restrict amateur radio antenna height to less than 200 feet above ground level as permitted by the Federal Communications Commission or (iia) restrict the number of support structures. In localities having a population density of more than 120 persons per square mile according to the 1990 United States census, no local ordinance shall (ib) restrict amateur radio antenna height to less than seventy-five feet above ground level or (iib) restrict the number of support structures. Reasonable and customary engineering practices shall be followed in the erection of amateur radio antennas. This section shall not preclude any locality, by ordinance, from regulating amateur radio antennas with regard to reasonable requirements relating to the use of screening, setback, placement, and health and safety requirements. For further information go to this link: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504?ses=981&typ=bil&val=sb480>



CW Abbreviations

As a Novice or Technician operator who is new to CW, you may have been bewildered when you listened to CW QSO's. They seem to be speaking a totally different language than English! Some of their words don't make sense. For example, the following:

"FB Bob on the Wx. Wx here is cldy es 40 Deg. Hr in Va we've bn waiting fer spring thaw. Bn ham 11 yrs. Hw? DE WIABC"

Some abbreviations are obvious, some not.

- **FB** means Fine Business, or solid copy.
- **Wx** means weather
- **Cldy** is cloudy
- **ES** is short for "and"
- **Deg** is short for Degrees(of course)
- **Hr** is "here"
- **Bn** is "been"
- **HW?** is short for "How do you copy?"

And if you've listened to a contest, some of the exchanges seem to be incomplete, or not right. Take the following:

" CQ TEST DE AD4TJ "

" W2HD 5NN VA "

" AD4TJ 5NN 1TT "

" W4XD 5NN A3T "

- **TEST** is short for Contest
- **5NN** is equal to 599
- **1TT** is 100(short for 100 watts, which is the DX stations` power output, required as part of the exchange in some contests)
- **A3T** is 130, or meaning that you are contact number 130 for him.

Some numbers are shortened, or "Cut", for simplicity.

- A 1 can be sent as an "A"
- A 9 can be sent as an "N"
- A 0 can be sent as a "T"

I hope this explains some of your puzzlement.

David AD4TJ

MARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, fellow hams! Another good meal, another good meeting, and a super turnout of items for Homebrew Night. With 28 hams present, the following hams presented various items:

George W2CID, showed us 2 computer interfaces for radio or radio/rotator control during satellite tracking and communication. --- Paul WV3J, presented: a 40 meter Ten-Tec transceiver, an L.D.C. automatic antenna tuner, a Nor-Cal 40 mtr transceiver, Nor-Cal paddles, and an itty-bitty 80 mtr direct-conversion transceiver built into the base of paddles(probably 1"x1"x3/4") produced by the Nite-Lites, a QRP equipment company. --- Al N3JB, showed his HF amplifier with 2 813 tubes for 1kw input, and an HF tuner. --- Jeff WB4PJW, made a circuit for allowing the parallel port on your computer to key your rig for CW(great for contests). --- Cowles KB4CNI, brought in 1/40th of his 432 moonbounce antenna system(8 25 foot yagis, consisting of 5 boom pieces per antenna, with a total system gain of about 28 Dbi), and a Direction Finder for 2 mtrs. --- Gerald KN4FM, made the 6 mtr transverter sold by Down East Microwave, and showed the interconnections necessary to use it with his RCI Ranger 10 mtr rig. --- And I brought in a 100 foot 2 mtr Quagi(made from rope, so it was in a nice little bundle) with about 20.5 Dbd gain, and an easy-to make headset mike for use with any headset.

As you can see, the cold winter months have really gotten the minds and hands active for these hams!

For the May meeting I have a video tape of last year's Field Day effort. Yes, the camcorder still worked, nobody was ugly enough to break it! Come to the meeting and see yourself on tape(if you were at Field Day, that is). Also, as you are reading this, it is only about 54 days to June 27-28. Have you made your plans to attend and help out? Are you prepared for a real emergency, if one should happen? Always think how you can be prepared to provide communications if a disaster happened in our area, or in our state. Field Day is a practice run for a big disaster; the HF radios will be able to keep us in touch with local, state-wide, nation-wide, and world-wide disaster nets or authorities, and the Vhf/Uhf gear for local and even regional coverage. There is a part for all in a real emergency.

Goodbye for now, and hope to see you at the meeting!

David Tanks, AD4TJ

VARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello again and I was glad to see everyone at the last Club Meeting and am looking forward to seeing more of you there. I would also like to say "thanks" to Jeff (WB4PJW) for giving a talk on Field Day covering events since the start of it all way back when! I think all were very interested in his talk and the pictures he had of some of the past events.

I would also like to welcome Vince (K2VJ) and Rusty (KF4QAV) into the Club as they were voted on and received into the club at the last meeting.

As you read this message we will have supported two (2) walks one in Waynesboro and the other in Stuarts Draft. I was sure glad to get enough help to handle these walks.

As we all know Bike Virginia is coming soon and I hope we can get amateurs involved with this event also and remember in the past years it has also brought funds into both the club's treasure.

The Field Day committee members have met once and looks like we have a good start this year for Field Day. Remember we need your help to pull this off, just as in the past. Anyone wishing to get involved, please do so. In fact, even if you don't want to get involved, please do so! We need help getting things up on the mountain, firewood, operators, loggers, help setting up and taking down, and just coming up and visiting with the gang. So lets all get in the spirit and have a good old time on the mountain top and play radio.

Well that's all for this month. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the next meeting on May 13th at Gavid's Family Grill in Staunton. So, until next time, take care and 73.

Ken Harris KE4GKD

V.A.R.A. SECRETARY'S REPORT

April 8, 1998 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association (V.A.R.A.) club meeting was held at Gavid's Restaurant in Staunton on April 8, 1998. The meeting was opened at 7:34 p.m. by the club president, Ken Harris (KE4GKD). A round of introductions was made. There were 23 members and guests present.

The total amount raised with the 50/50 raffle was \$23. Karen Zirk (KE4WIE) was the winner of \$11.50. The other half went to the club treasury. Karen donated her half back to the treasury as well. Last month, after the official close of the meeting, Rusty Roghgeb (KF4QAV) donated his winnings of \$13 back to the club treasury.

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

Jeff Rinehart (WB4PJW) handed out and went over a treasury status report.

A fund raising committee for the club was formed. June Waldmuller (KC4PKJ), Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP), Kay Cook (KF4CZL), and Karen Zirk (KE4WIE) volunteered for the task and will be meeting in the future to decide on some possible fund raising events.

Sam Pickering (KF4EKV) brought in a possible design for a club patch and the club voted to have Sam take the design and get details on getting a batch printed for the club members who want them. Joe Peehan (WD4LIG) volunteered to sew the patches onto the jackets.

Sam also brought to the floor, a possible fundraiser for the club. Through John Boy's Chicken, we could feasibly set up a barbecued chicken stand, provided that there would be club support for an event such as this. Reservations would have to be made for next year, which leaves considerable time for discussion of this possibility.

Pat Smiley thanked the club members that participated in helping Roy Silling (W4WRN). He was in need a while back for help to get his ice-damaged antennas down from his tower. Ray Colvin (KE4HVR), Cowles Andrus (KB4CNI), Ray Pitsenbarger (KE4NNV), Benny Cook (KF4CZK), Dick Waldmuller (WB8GIF), Ken Harris (KE4GKD), and Pat Smiley (KE4WWF) were all of the volunteers.

Joe Meek (KD4FKT) announced that there would be another trip to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Greenbank, West Virginia. The trip is scheduled for May 9 and anyone interested should contact Joe for details.

Vince Luciani (K2VJ) and Rusty Rothgeb (KF4QAV) were voted in as club members.

Ken Harris (KE4GKD) talked about the upcoming Field Day event on June 27 and 28. If anyone is interested in participating in Field Day in any way, please contact Ken for more details on what goes on and/or what needs to be done in order for this event to take place.

Jeff Rinehart (WB4PJW) gave a presentation; complete with photos, on the history of Field Day as it was when he and some others were just getting into it and how it has evolved into what it is today.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Valley Amateur Radio Association (V.A.R.A.). The motion was accepted and the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Submitted by:
Douglas S. Zirk (KE4RMD)
Valley Amateur Radio Association Secretary

MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

April 2, 1998 Meeting

The April meeting of the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc. was held on April 2, 1998 at Evers Restaurant in Mt. Crawford, Virginia. Those who chose to eat together assembled at 6:15 p.m. and enjoyed the usual buffet dinner. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the president, David (AD4TJ), with each person present introducing themselves with name, call sign, and location.

The following committee reports were given:

ARES: Norman (KA4EEN) announced he needed a net control for April 6th. Then he reminded all of the March of Dimes walk coming up on April 25th. A total of eight amateurs are needed. This year we are listed in the publicity as being a sponsor of the walk. The assembly point this year is the parking lot at K-Mart and the time will be 8 a.m.

FIELD DAY: Two of the three MARA committee members were present as well as a representative of the VARA club. After some discussion it was planned for a committee meeting to be held at Arby's in Mt. Crawford as 7 p.m. on April 7th. An invitation was extended to anyone who might have suggestions to join in the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Club members were asked to check the *Monitor* for last month and read the article about the planned trip to the Greenbank Observatory on May 9th. The assembly point for that will be at Exit 225 on I-81 and the time will be 8 a.m. Those going will car-pool from that point. (*Editor's note: the date has since been changed to May 30th -- see story on page 1! -- Ed.*)

A number of contests and hamfests were announced.

The 50/50 was won by George (W2CID).

It was decided that the Christmas dinner meeting would again be held at Pano's in Harrisonburg and it will be pay-as-you-go like last year.

There were twenty-seven members and one guest present.

The program was the annual "Show and Tell". Seven brave souls presented their projects. There was a 2 meter Quagi, a headset-mike, interface controls for a radio and rotator, various kits, a direction finder made from two rubber duckies, and several patch cords. A most interesting presentation.

Respectfully submitted
Wilton B. Thomas (KF4BFL)
Secretary

CALENDAR

May 2-3: ARI Intl'l DX Contest
May 3: Hagerstown (MD) Hamfest
May 9-10: CQ-M Int'l DX Contest
May 15-16: Dayton Hamfest
May 16: ARRL VHF 6m Spring Sprint
May 30-31: CQ WW WPX CW Contest
June 7: Manassas Hamfest
June 13-15: ARRL VHF QSO Party
June 27-28: ARRL Field Day

**The deadline for the June issue
of the Monitor
is Friday, May 22nd.**

You can e-mail articles to:
fordhadr @ jmu.edu

**If you are interested in receiving the *Monitor*
via email (in Word97, ASCII, or PDF format)
email the newsletter editor for details.**

MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: David Tanks, AD4TJ
Vice-President: Walt Lam, KF4BFB
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL
Board (exp 98): Sandy Mullins, KE4PZC
Board (exp 99): Bob Hughes, KF4BFC

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month at Ever's Restaurant on U.S. 11, south of Harrisonburg. Meal starts at 6:30 pm, Business Meeting starts at 7:30 pm
Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12/yr) should be mailed to the Treasurer,
Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, 5166 Mt Clinton Pike,
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

THE VALLEY ARA

President: Ken Harris, KE4GKD
Vice-President: Karen Zirk, KE4WIE
Secretary: Doug Zirk, KE4RMD
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, WB4PJW

VARA meets the second Wednesday of each month at Gavid's Restaurant on US Route 11 South in Staunton. The meal begins around 6:30 and the business meeting begins at 7:30.
Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$15/yr) should be mailed to the Treasurer,
Jeff Rinehart, 1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy, Churchville, VA 24421

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