

The M.A.R.A./V.A.R.A. Monitor

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

MARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It was good to have a nice turnout for our Christmas Banquet! Fifty two (52) hams, wives, and guests attended, and enjoyed a very tasty and filling meal. And, fortunately, the weather allowed us to travel without worrying! In lieu of a speaker, the Board decided on prizes. The youngest ham there was Steve Tennyson KF4ZWK, who had just received his license about 2 weeks before that night. He received a Repeater Directory. Another directory was intended for the shortest-licensed ham, but since Steve had already won, the next shortest licensed won one: Kevin KF4WWM, who has been licensed since January. Next, we asked for the oldest ham: Dick Weaver W3HXX, took that prize of a Radio Shack gift certificate: he's 79 years young! The longest-licensed also turned out to be Dick, at 61 years, so the next longest-licensed, Bill W4IMS, took the other Radio Shack gift certificate, being licensed 42 years ago. For the non-hams in attendance, a drawing took place for a Cracker Barrel gift certificate. Helen Thomas, Wilton's (KF4BFL) wife, was the lucky one. We also had a regular 50/50 for hams, and Edwina Willis KB4IDP, won that one. Congratulations to all!

To the outgoing officers of the club went handsome Certificates of Appreciation: Walt Lam KF4BFB, for service as Vice President for 1998, and Sandy Mullins K4PZC for serving on the Board of Directors 1997-98. Thanks guys. And a well-deserved gift of appreciation for Dave Fordham KD9LA, for his outstanding work on the newsletter for the past 4 years: at Red Lobster gift certificate, large enough to take the wife with him and have a nice feast! Thanks, Dave, for your continuing super effort.

Christmas is past! It's now 1999! A whole new year of opportunities for Public Service, Emergency Communications, Field Day, Contests, etc. Are you ready? How is your station setup? Is it up to snuff for what you want to do this year? Now is the time to get the inside stuff done while the weather keeps us in. It's also a

good time to study for an upgrade. I'm still offering a Code Practice session on-the-air, right after the Rockingham County ARES net on Monday nights.

Speaking of Field Day, congratulations again to all who made our 15th-in-the-nation out of 606 entries operation possible! Wow! Let's see if we can duplicate or even improve on it this year. I think we are going to have a digital station this year, so we'll be in the 3A category instead of the 2A; we'll have 250 fewer stations to compete against in that category, and if we can get just a few more ops there in June to man the stations we'll have a good shot at moving up in the standings (if the storms allow us to operate!). I'd love to see the CW total go over 1000 QSO's, the Phone station work 1200, Novice/Tech guys do 600, VHF/UHF go hog-wild and do 250, and the Oscar men 75. Oh, yeah, the digital station could easily do 300 to 400 if everything works out right. That's a total of 3425 or so. That would put us in 5th place 3A. Let's do it! Make plans to attend June 26-27. It will take as many warm bodies as we can muster to do it.

Hey, if you have something that you think the club members may be interested in learning about, contact me for a date when you can present a program on it at a club meeting. I'm always looking for new ideas. ad4tj@juno.com, or 248-1207 after 4:30 pm. See you January 7th!

*David Tanks AD4TJ
MARA President*

HAMS UNDER THE WEATHER:

Joe Moomaw W4XD is recuperating from a broken leg.

Sam Pickering, KF4EKV, is recuperating from swollen arteries in his cranium.

LIVE SSTV TRANSMITTED FROM MIR

For the first time, live SSTV images have been transmitted from the Russian Mir space station. SSTV equipment was transported to the spacecraft earlier this fall and put on the air December 11. Several amateurs reported copying the images from space on 2 meters FM, but plans call for the SSTV transmissions to move to a 70-cm frequency that's coordinated for that purpose.

The SSTV system was turned off for several passes after December 14, and the Mir packet system was back on 145.985 MHz, but as of December 16, ROMIR was transmitting SSTV on some passes and packet on others. Meanwhile, APRS developer Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, had announced a four-day APRS school experiment via Mir through December 18.

Neither of the cosmonauts aboard Mir during the current tour of duty is a licensed amateur. The SSTV equipment aboard the spacecraft was supplied to the Russians by Miles Mann, WF1F. He says the system operates in automatic mode and can display a new image every two minutes.

Mann coordinated a 70-cm frequency, 437.975 MHz, for the SSTV project with AMSAT Frequency Coordinator Graham Ratcliff, VK5AGR. The 2-meter 145.985 MHz frequency has been coordinated for FM voice and packet use, however. While the SSTV system is operating, the Mir packet system and the SAFEX repeater are off the air. Mann said December 16 that he's seeking to keep the SSTV system operating on 2 meters for a while longer, but added that it would likely go to 70 cm on or before January 1.

For details on how to receive SSTV using your PC, see <http://www.ultranet.com/~sstv>.



... AND RECEIVED HERE IN THE VALLEY!

Vic, KE4LKQ, furnished the pictures below, which he copied off the air from the MIR spacecraft as it passed over the Shenandoah Valley. Below is Vic's message:

Dave, here are some slow scan pics I copied on three separate passes yesterday, 12-13-98. Mir is transmitting at 5 watts, 145.985 FM and using the Robot 36 mode. Anyone with a sound card in the computer and using ChromaPix, Win95sstv, WinpixPro, downloadable from the Internet as demo or limited time versions can copy the signals. Some people have reported good copy using a scanner.

I understand that they are using a Kenwood radio, laptop computer, and a Larsen magmout dualband antenna. I have not seen anyone report what kind of camera they are using. Just as soon as some filtering problems are worked out with ground control, they will switch to 437.975 and return the 145.985 freq. to the PMS.

This is supposed to last from 30 days to a year, depending on issues above and beyond amateur needs.

73, Vic KE4LKQ



ATTENTION YOUNG HAMS! FREE MONEY!

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HAMS

The nonprofit Foundation for Amateur Radio Inc--an ARRL-affiliated federation of more than 75 Amateur Radio clubs in the Washington, DC, area--plans to administer 66 scholarships for the 1999-2000 academic year to help licensed radio amateurs with their post-secondary education. Ten of the scholarships are fully funded with income from grants and the foundation's annual hamfest. FAR administers the remaining 56 scholarships without cost to the donors.

Licensed amateurs are eligible to compete for these awards if they plan to pursue a full-time course of study beyond high school and are enrolled in or have been accepted at an accredited university, college, or technical school. Awards range from \$500 to \$2500. In some cases, preference goes to those pursuing certain courses of study or to residents of specific geographical areas. FAR encourages all clubs, especially those in Delaware, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin, to spread the word on the availability of these scholarships.

Application forms and additional information are available by letter or QSL postmarked prior to April 30, 1999, from FAR Scholarships, PO Box 831, Riverdale, MD 20738. Contributions to FAR are tax-deductible.

DARA scholarships: The Dayton Amateur Radio Association is accepting applications for its annual scholarship awards. The DARA Scholarship Program is open initially to any Amateur Radio operator graduating from high school in 1999. There are no restrictions on course of study, nor does the student need to be pursuing a four-year baccalaureate degree, but schools selected must be accredited. Awards are made on a nondiscriminatory basis. Selection criteria include financial need, scholastic achievement, contributions to Amateur Radio, and community involvement. Decisions of the DARA Scholarship Committee are final. Maximum individual awards are \$2000. For an application and full details, send an SASE to DARA Scholarships, 45 Cinnamon Ct, Springboro, OH 45066. Application deadline is June 15, 1999.--*Stan Kuck, NY8F*

INVERSE CALLSIGN SERVER

Hams needing extra help in picking out an available vanity callsign should visit the Sunnyvale California VEC website. Gordon Girton, W6NW, who runs both the VEC operation and the website reports that he now lists assigned calls. This works just the opposite of most callsign servers that have only available callsigns. This way Sunnyvale server gives an applicant the option of looking for callsigns that are not on the list as potential choices. The page also lists all assigned club station callsigns, has an FCC Amateur Radio database query screen, and other neat features. Its cyberspace address is:

www.amateur-radio.org/vanity.htm

(Sunnyvale VEC ARC)

Space – The Final Frontier

FOUR NEW HAM SATELLITES!

Amateur Radio's newest satellites, are now officially named and numbered. All four of these birds have been launched and turned over to amateur use in the last few months.

TMSAT-1 is now officially named TMSAT OSCAR-31 or **TO-31**. Israeli built Gurwin TechSat-1B is now Gurwin OSCAR-32 or **GO-32**. SEDSAT-1 now is SEDSAT OSCAR-33 or **SO-33**. PANSAT is PANSAT OSCAR-34 or **PO-34**

The assignment of consecutive OSCAR numbers to new ham radio satellites dates from the launch of OSCAR-1. To qualify for an OSCAR number, the satellite must successfully achieve orbit and one or more transmitters must be successfully activated in the Amateur Radio bands.--AMSAT News Service

(AMSAT)

FCC ISSUES UNIVERSAL LICENSING SYSTEM RULES

The FCC has issued its long-awaited Report and Order on the Universal Licensing System, which affects all Wireless Telecommunications Bureau licensees. Among other things, the ULS will result in replacing Amateur Radio's familiar FCC Form 610 series with a new Form 605. The new rules become official 60 days after publication in The Federal Register--sometime around the end of the year. The FCC said it expects to have the ULS fully operational by next April. Using the ULS, applicants and licensees will be able to file, modify, and renew electronically. Access to the ULS is via <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/>.

The FCC's action consolidates approximately 40 existing forms into four ULS applications, including the new Form 605. Electronic filing in the ULS will not yet be mandatory for individual amateurs. Hams will have the option of filing electronically or on paper. However, electronic filing via the ULS will be required for Volunteer Examiner Coordinators in the Amateur Service.

Under the ULS, amateurs will use Form 605, the Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Services for all purposes. Applicants may continue to use the old forms for six months after the new rules go into effect, however.

Both text and formatted versions of the complete Report and Order, WT Dockets 98-20 and 96-188, are available on the FCC Web site, <http://www.fcc.gov>.

Did You Know?

Perfect International Communication Coming...

The European Commission on the European Unification (EU) just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phase-in plan that would be known as "EuroEnglish." In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c." Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favor of the "k." This kould klear up konfuzion and keyboards kan have less letters. There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with the "f." This will make words like "fotograf" 20% shorter. In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of the silent "e"s in the language is disgrasful, and they should be dropd. By the 4th year, peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v." During ze fif year, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinazuns of leters. After ze fifz yer, ve vil hav a veri sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu unerstan ech ozer.

*Preston, Madaline H
prestomh@jmu.edu*

DAYTON DATES SET: MAY 14, 15 & 16

Mark your calendars! Dayton's Hamvention this year is scheduled for May 14-16, 1999. The URL is:

<http://www.erinet.com/hamvention/>

1999 VE TEST FEE: \$6.45

The 1999 ARRL/VEC Test Fee will be \$6.45. Remember that at any ARRL/VEC-coordinated examination, Elements 1A or 2 are always free. A fee is charged for any retest of a failed element (an element other than 1A or 2 that is). And, a fee is charged to persons who submit a Morse exemption Form 610 but take no tests. Exams are given on the third Saturday of every Even Numbered Month at Massanutten Vo-Tech center.

Your Shadow and More!

GROUNDHOG PARTY COMES EARLY THIS YEAR!

Greetings friends. You are invited to our Ground Hog's Day Party which will be held the Saturday before Ground Hog's Day. That's 30 January 1999, in our Tenth Legion location.

If we have water we will go creeking Saturday and/or Sunday. We have unlimited camping (and much inside crashing) space in this big old house. (Birthplace of John Sevier for you history buffs.)

Amateur radio station available to licensed operators.

Cider and stout will be provided. Please bring a dish to share unless you are coming from afar, in which case no problem...just come. Bring whitewater videos and musical instruments if you have them.

Paul, WV3J

REPEATER NEWS

146.850 Tuned Up! "Len, Durwood, Ken, Jimmy, Bud and I did some tree trimming and tied up some of the guy wire ends that could touch other guy wires at the .850 site this morning. Hopefully this will help with some of the noise on the repeater. NOTE: While moving a locust limb I got a thorn in my finger that didn't want to stop bleeding, Ken said he would get me a band-aid so off he went to his truck and brought a band-aid back. GUESS WHAT IT HAD ON IT??? SNOOPY. Ask him about this next time you talk with him!!!!"

73 Ray Colvin

146.625 Back! Bob, W3MMC, reports that the Big Mountain repeater is now back on the air. Problems with the receiver sensitivity, and the CW id'er are expected to be cleared up by the time you read this.

FROSTFEST REMINDER

In case you had forgotten the date, the Richmond Frostfest is on Sunday, January 17! Talk-in will be on the 146.880 repeater, no PL tone required.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Use this handy renewal form for your 1999 Club Dues!

VARA – The VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Mail with \$15 to: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW, 1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy, Churchville, VA 24421

NAME: _____ CALL _____

EMAIL: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

ARRL: Yes No ARES: Yes No SKYWARN ID: _____

Are you interested in receiving the *Monitor* electronically in Adobe PDF format? Yes No

If your address on the mailing label is correct, no further info is needed; otherwise complete the following:

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP+4 _____

WORK PHONE (optional): _____

MARA – The MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Mail with \$12 to: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, 5166 Mt Clinton Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

NAME: _____ CALL _____

EMAIL: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

ARRL: Yes No ARES: Yes No SKYWARN ID: _____

Are you interested in receiving the *Monitor* electronically in Adobe PDF format? Yes No

If your address on the mailing label is correct, no further info is needed; otherwise complete the following:

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MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: David Tanks, AD4TJ
Vice-President: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL
Board (exp 99): Bob Hughes, KF4BFC
Board (exp 00): Walt Lam, KF4BFB

<http://cob.jmu.edu/fordhadr/MARA/>

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, W4PJW

<http://www.shenval.org/W4MUS/>

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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Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
c/o David R. Fordham
131 Wayside Drive
Weyers Cave, VA 24486-2421

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