

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

Well, it does not seem possible, but we are quickly approaching the end of another year. With only the Christmas banquet left, I hope those that have not made it to many meetings this year can make it to this one. I must confess that the board has not been successful in obtaining a program that the non-ham guest would enjoy. It seems that Thursday is not a good night. Come anyway, there will be some good food and you won't find better company anywhere.

I would like to thank Claude, N4QLV, and John, WA4KQX, for the presentation on the VDEN/ARES packet system that is up and running on the EMU campus. For those who were not there, the only handout you missed was the web address for the user's manual. Look for it at www.user.shentel.net/jnelson/userman.zip. I must confess that I have been procrastinating and do not have my packet system up and running, but one of these days I'll check in and see what is there.

The big thing this year end is Y2K and what will happen to all those computer controlled things we have come to depend on. I'm not going to get involved in the doom and gloom that we have all heard. Each of us should, however, be ready to help where we can with any disruption that may occur. Prepare for this event the same as you would for several days of bad weather.

In closing, I would like to wish each of you a **Merry Christmas** and a **Happy New Year**. Don't forget: Ever's Restaurant at 6:30 pm on December 2. See you next month, unless the Y2K bug eats my computer...

Gerald Nauman KN4FM

CHRISTMAS BANQUETS
(take the place of normal meetings!)

MARA: December 2 at Evers
VARA: December 9 at Buckhorn Inn

VARA President's Message

Happy Holidays!! This will probably (hopefully) be my last message as the holder of the prestigious title of President. I'd like to thank all those that came out to our last meeting. You'll definitely want to read the Secretary's Report to see all that transpired at this historic meeting. If I say more than that, I'll give it away!

I want to especially thank Jeff - W4PJW and Clint - KB4OLM for their great presentation/demonstration of digital communications. Clint set up a portable packet station in GAVID'S and ran it through a node that Jeff set up in his vehicle. I'm only sorry that they didn't have as much time as they wanted/needed to share all of the information they have. Of course, not that many seemed to mind as evidenced by all who stayed to see the demonstration.

Congratulations to Adam - KG4EWG, for being voted on as our newest club member. We're glad to have you join our ranks!

I'd like to thank our almost-complete slate of officers for next year: Vice President : Richard - KF4QZG, Secretary : Pat - KD4WWF, and Treasurer: Jeff - W4PJW. There was some discussion on the office of President which will be finalized in January.

I appreciate all of the talk about how the President should be supported and what we can do as a club to grow our membership. I'm also glad we settled the meeting night which will begin in January. If you want the details, see the Secretary's Report.

Remember to contact Jeff - W4PJW if you plan to come to the Christmas Dinner. He needs to know by the 27th of November so he can contact the Buckhorn Inn. This dinner is for ALL hams and their significant other. You do not have to be a member of our club. You just need to have a hearty appetite (as evidenced by our club members!! hi hi)

I hope all of you have a safe and happy holiday. I'm grateful for the support that I received in attempting to fill the office of president of the VARA club. I am encouraged after this last meeting and hope that the club will continue to grow in enthusiasm. 73 to all.

Dan Beidler - KE4JSX

Men Who Use Hi-Tech Are the New Sex Symbols

Adapted from an article by Scott Adams

Scott Adams, creator of the Dilbert comic strip, gets about 100 e-mail messages a day from women who write to say they think Dilbert is sexy. Some say they've already married a Dilbert and couldn't be happier. What gives?

If you're not familiar with Dilbert, he's an electrical engineer who spends most of his time with his computer and his other hi-tech toys. He's a nice guy, but not exactly Kevin Costner.

Okay, I'll admit, Dilbert is polite, honest, employed and educated. And he stays home. These are all very good traits, traits that are well-known to be valued highly by women.

But they don't exactly explain the incredible sex appeal that seems to be enjoyed by Dilbert, and to be honest, by most of today's techno-geeks. So what exactly is the attraction?

Scott Adams thinks it's a Darwinian thing. Think about it. We're attracted to the people who have the ability to survive and thrive. In the old days it was important to be able to run down an antelope and kill it with a single blow to the forehead. But today that skill is becoming less important every year. Now all that matters is if you can install your own Ethernet card without having to call tech support and confess your inadequacies to a stranger whose best career option is to work in tech support.

It is obvious that the world has three distinct classes of people, each with its own evolutionary destiny:

Class One are the Knowledgeable Hi-Tech Users – these are those who actually know how to program a macro in an Excel spreadsheet. They can load their ham radio memories without the manual, and actually know what all the buttons on the front of their HF rig do. These people will evolve into godlike non-corporeal beings who will ultimately rule the universe (except for those few who work in tech support).

Class Two are Technology Owners – these are they who try to pass as knowledgeable in the ways of electronics, but secretly they use hand calculators to add totals to their Excel spreadsheets. They get their kids to program their VCRs. They need the manual to understand all the buttons and knobs and LED's on the *microphone* of their ham radios, and have no hope of ever figuring out the controls on the radio itself. They spend 20 minutes trying to figure out how to set the PL tone on their HT. But if someone else can “set it up” for them, they'll use the stuff, just to make it look like they are real techno users. This group will gravitate toward jobs as high school principals, mid-level county administrators, and owners of bicycle emporiums. Eventually they will become extinct.

Class Three is the Non-Hi-Tech people – These are those who consider it too much bother to upgrade. The only controls they use on their radios are the volume, squelch, and channel selector. These are they who will grow tails, sit in zoos and fling dung at tourists.

Obviously, if you're a woman and you're trying to decide which evolutionary track you want your offspring to take, you don't want to put them on the road to the dung- flinging Olympics. You want a *real* man. You want a knowledgeable hi-tech user with evolutionary potential.

And women prefer men who listen. Technology users are excellent listeners because they can look at you for long periods of time without saying anything. Watch a ham operator tuning around an HF rig when the band is dead. Hours and hours. Or watch a good C programmer at work. Hours and hours. Or a packet operator browsing a BBS at 1200 bps on the VHF band. Hours and hours and hours.

Granted, early in a relationship it's better if the guy actually talks. But men use up all the stories they'll ever have after six months. If a woman marries a guy who's in, let's say, retail sales, she'll get repeat stories starting in the seventh month and lasting forever. But marry an engineer and she gets a great listener for the next 70 years.

Plus, with the ozone layer evaporating, it's a good strategy to mate with somebody who has an indoor hobby. Outdoorsy men are applying suntan lotion with SPF 10,000 and yet by the age of 40 they still look like dried chili peppers in pants. Compare that with the healthy glow of a man who spends 14 hours a day in front of a video screen.

It's also well established that technology users are better lovers. If you doubt this, consider their hair. All true techno-geeks tend to have either (1) male pattern baldness -- the sign of elevated testosterone -- or (2) unkempt jungle hair -- the kind you see only on people who just finished a frenzied bout of lovemaking. If this were a trial think we could reach a verdict on the strong circumstantial evidence alone.

In less enlightened times, the best way to impress women was to own a hot car. But women wised up and realized it was better to buy their *own* hot cars so they wouldn't have to ride around with jerks. Technology replaced hot cars as the new symbol of robust manhood. Men know that unless they get a digital line to the Internet, no woman is going to look at them twice.

Finally, there's the issue of mood lighting. Nothing looks sexier than a man in boxer shorts illuminated only by a 15-inch SVGA monitor. Well, okay, maybe a guy in boxer shorts illuminated by the glow of 400 LED's on the front of an HF rig. If we agree that this is every woman's dream scenario, then I think we can also agree that it's best if the guy knows how to actually use the toy he's sitting in front of. Otherwise, he'll just look like a loser sitting in front of a toy in his underwear.

Report on Bike Virginia Fall Foliage Bike Festival (October 30 & 31, 1999)



Both VARA and MARA clubs supported the annual Bike Virginia Fall Foliage Bike Festival again this year. Supporting the Festival is a major undertaking for the clubs but it is an important service to the local communities. It is also an important service to the cyclists who depend on us to provide much-needed communications for the event. I think it is accurate to say that participation in the Bike Festival would not be as high as it is if the participants did not feel safe, especially the less experienced riders and families. Excellent organization by Bike Virginia and conscientious patrolling by our club members helps to give all cyclists the confidence to take part in this large event (1100 cyclists this year).

Of course this is not a one-way street; the two clubs and their participating members benefit from the Bike Festival as well. First, we get to practice emergency and portable communications, which is one of the main reasons for the existence of amateur radio. Also, our high visibility during this event helps educate the public as to the value of amateur radio. Second, Bike Virginia gives each club a generous donation which certainly helps the treasuries. And last, we get to drive around and play radio in some beautiful fall weather!

Participants on Saturday included:

Jeff	W4PJW	
Joe M.	KD4FKT	
Ray C.	KE4HVR	
Pat	KD4WWF	
Adam	KG4EWG	
Ken	KE4GKD	
Gayle & Ms	KU4XN	
Richard	KF4QZG	Bike mobile #1
Bill	KE4LKS	
Stin	KE4SSF	Bike mobile #2
Greg	W4GRC	
Norman	KA4EEN	
David	AD4TJ	
Clint	KB4OLM	Net control
Dan	KE4JSX	Net control

Participants on Sunday included:

Jeff	W4PJW	
Joe M.	KD4FKT	
Ray C.	KE4HVR	
Pat & Diane	KD4WWF	
Adam	KG4EWG	
Ken	KE4GKD	Net Control
Gayle & Ms.	KU4XN	
Richard	KF4QZG	
Bill	KE4LKS	
Stin	KE4SSF	Bike mobile
Doug	KE4YGO	
Colin	N4Zfq	
Ray P.	KE4NNV	
Dave & Son	KE4ZLD	
Cowles	KB4CNI	
Gary	KF4PFR	

Special thanks are in order to Donnie (N4RAG) for the use of the 147.225 repeater on Saturday and Scott (KE4CKJ) for the use of the 147.045 repeater on Sunday. Also, thanks to Clint (KB4OLM) for the use of his trailer for net control on Saturday and Ken (KE4GKD) for the use of his trailer for net control on Sunday.

As a relative newcomer to the VARA club I'd like to add that I'm very impressed by how well both clubs supported this event. Despite an all-volunteer crew the results were very professional. You guys set a high standard.

*Richard L. Huttinger
KF4QZG,
VARA Vice President*

Varsity Cross Country Foot Race September 11, 1999

The 26th Annual Varsity Cross Country Foot Race was held at Eastern Mennonite High School. This is a race in which the area high school students compete.

The weather was just perfect for such a race. It is interesting to see how young people enjoy themselves in a wholesome event. There was a good turnout of runners in all three race groups: boys, girls, and the juniors (boys and girls) varsity.

Local ham radio operators provide communications between the various stations and managers of the event.

There was a little excitement here and there, as two runners needed first aid attention. One was girl who developed a headache, and the other was boy who overheated by the time he reached the finish line. The boy ended up being transported to the hospital.

Other than this, all went well. Christy Neff, head of the event, said the race is going much smoother and better because of the help from the ham operators. There were a good number of people who stopped and expressed their appreciation for our help and presence at the race. Various staff members thanked us profusely, and are looking forward to our support next year.

Those helping with the radio communications were:

KD4UPL (Matthew)
N4VZC (Phyllis)
KC4AN (Dick)
KN4FM (Gerald)
KF4SVR (Dave)
K4NRA (Ray)
KG4CHL (Bob)
and Net Control, KA4EEN (Norman)



Harrisonburg MS Walk October 16, 1999

The front steps of Duke Hall on the campus of James Madison University once again hosted the headquarters of the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society's annual fund-raising walk.

As in years past, local ham radio operators provided communications between headquarters and the various checkpoints and safety stations along the route.

The walkers were entertained by music prior to the start of the walk, music which interfered greatly with the operations of the Net Control station until the walkers finally received the start signal and got underway. Walkers represented all ages, both young and old. There were about 175 walking participants this year.

Amateur operators providing help this year included:

KF4YGO (Doug)
KF4DFH (Gary)
KN4FM (Gerald)
KF4BFF (Enos)
KF4BFC (Bob)
and Net Control KA4EEN

Luck held out this year, and there were no injuries reported. But it is always comforting to the walkers and the event management to know that ham operators are on the scene and provide instant communication of problems in the event someone should need help or an unusual situation should develop.

Again, this even was a fun one and all enjoyed it. The hams especially enjoyed the free pizza, coffee, hoagies, bagels, and wing-dings – Oh, So Good!

The staff expressed their appreciation for our help, and asked us to support the walk next year.

Johnny Appleseed Ride Saturday Report October 2, 1999

Saturday morning, four amateurs met at the Chic Wine farm northwest of Timberville for the annual Seven Stars Trail Ride, better known as the Johnny Appleseed Commemorative Ride.

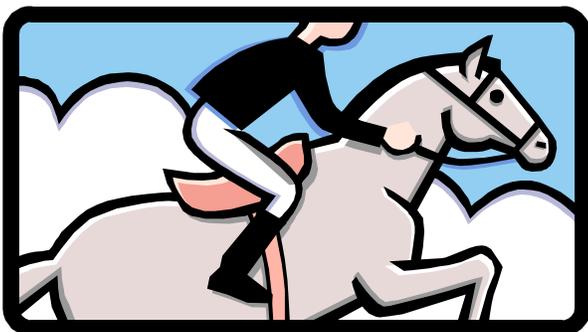
With only four radio amateurs, we felt fortunate that the number of riders showing up for the Saturday portion of the event was much less than normal. However, we felt sorry for the Johnny Appleseed staff, as only 23 riders participated in what was hoped to be a much bigger turnout.

Only one rider took the 10-mile ride on Saturday, while the rest took the 20-mile ride. Two girls and their steeds had extra energy, so when they finished the 20-mile track, they took the 10-mile one, too, making a total of 30 miles in one day.

With KF4DFH (Gary) as net control, stationed at the barn, the other operators staged at the checkpoints. With only three mobile operators, each ham had to man two or more checkpoints during the course of the event, and perform more safety sweeps than normal, we all still had fun.

In addition to Gary, the Saturday operators included KF4BFL (Wilton), KF4BFC (Bob), and KA4EEN (Norman). Norman also had help from three young boys from his church that call him "Grandpa": Sheldon and Glendon Kin, and Keith Sommers.

Report by Norman, KA4EEN



Johnny Appleseed Ride Sunday Report October 3, 1999

N4ZFQ (Colin) and his son Spud and his friend Brad ran net control from the farm of Chic Wine, the starting point for the Seven Stars Trail Ride.

Checkpoints were manned by hams to assure that the riders had a high level of coverage due to the great risks inherent in this event. Ten- and twenty-mile rides gave the riders a variety of fall scenery to enjoy. The 20-mile loop provided a lunch stop on a high ridge with a beautiful view to the east towards the Massanutten mountains.

This event was blessed with excellent weather, a welcome change from the prior history of past years' events. As usual, Chic fixed his wonderful Beef BBQ sandwiches for lunch, and I'm not sure why, but there weren't many radio transmissions during that time! Must have been finger-lickin' good!

Scott Hake, Director of the riding center, was pleased with our involvement and support, and hopes to have us back year after year. Scott hinted that next year's ride would be a LARGE event, maybe to include a celebrity visitor. Come on, Reba!

Many thanks go to those who spent time with us on that Sunday. They include:

**N4ZKH (Marshall Cooper)
N4DAI (Dale Showalter)
K4TMH (Todd Harrison)
KF4SVR (David Hughes)
WA4ZQW (Leon Rosenberger)
WA4ODD (Helen Rosenberger)
K4PZC (Sandy Mullins)
Sandy's XYL, and
N4ZFQ (Colin) Net Control**

All day long with nothing to do and suddenly, at the end of the day, we had a horse with no shoes had a hoof become sore. David and Todd came to the rescue as the "Duct Tape Patrol". A few rounds of this stuff, and they ride off to the finish line without a worry.

Report by Colin, N4ZFQ

MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

November 4, 1999 Meeting

The November meeting of the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association was held on November 4 at Ever's Restaurant, Mt. Crawford, Virginia. The meeting was called to order by the president and introductions were made. There were 26 members and guest present.

Ray, K4NRA, reported on the amateur radio event held at Wilbur Pence Middle School. He was assisted by Bob, W3MMC, and Gayle, KU4XN. They made HF contacts with France, Italy, Germany, England and Belgium. John, N3GLZ, loaned them a video which featured among others Barry Goldwater and King Hussein of Jordan, who are both now silent keys.

Kenny, KE4GKD, Dave, AD4TJ, and Jeff, W4PJW, reported on the Bike Virginia event. They had 14 hams on Saturday and 18 on Sunday. There were three medical incidents where the hams made a significant contribution to the welfare of the participants.

Dale, N4DAI, reported on the emergency drill involving area hospitals. He also reported that an attempt may be made to repeal or weaken the amateur radio tower law enacted during the last session of the General Assembly.

An announcement was made for the Christmas Banquet on December 2 at Ever's Restaurant.

Rusty, N4YET, won the 50/50 drawing and donated his share to the club. Thank you Rusty.

The program was presented by Claude, N4QLV, and John, WA4KQX. The subject was the VDEN/ARES packet system and the node and BBS that is being activated on the EMU campus.

*Submitted by Gerald Nauman,
KN4FM,
President.*

VARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

November 10, 1999 Meeting

The November meeting of the VARA club on 10 Nov 99 was called to order at 7:30 p.m. There were 13 members in attendance with 3 visitors.

Jeff - W4PJW gave an ARES report on the hospital exercise. He also suggested making available \$100 to the EC of Augusta County, as the EC has no operational budget to speak of. These funds would come from the Bike VA donation. After a brief discussion period, Jeff made the motion and it was seconded by Bill - W2ZVM followed by an unanimous vote to accept the motion.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Nancy - KE4PHP

The treasurer's report was passed around by Jeff - W4PJW to all attending. Motion was made by Kenny - KE4GKD and seconded by Benny - KE4CZK to accept the report as presented. Unanimous vote to accept.

Nancy - KE4PHP, mentioned the Christmas dinner at the Buckhorn Inn needed to be paid for by 27 NOV. Any who wish to attend need to contact Jeff - W4PJW by then so the club can pay for it. Be sure to reimburse the club if you call Jeff. The cost is \$10.90 per person.

A new member was voted in - Adam Burgh - KG4EWG. Pat - KD4WWF made the motion to accept Adam in and was seconded by Nancy - KE4PHP. Unanimous vote in favor.

Discussion was made about possibly starting a class for potential hams. If not a class, then maybe some review of radio theory or "how things work" discussion/demos could be held after the meetings. There was also some talk of the club possibly starting a "library" of videos, cassettes & books to help hams advance in the hobby. No motions were made.

Discussion was brought up about moving the meeting night. It seems some members have a conflict on Wednesday night. GAVID's was approached and didn't mind a change to any Tuesday night. After further discussion, it was proposed to move the club meeting night to the FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH. Ken - KE4GKD made the motion and it was 2nd 'ed by Jeff - W4PJW. Unanimous vote followed.

The slate of officers was brought up for next year. After much discussion about club support of the officers, it was suggested to table to nomination/vote on the office of president. It was determined that Richard - KF4QZG would remain as Vice President and Jeff - W4PJW would stay on as Treasurer. Pat - KD4WWF volunteered to become Secretary and was so voted in.

The meeting was brought to a close at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted - Dan Beidler - KE4JSX

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:

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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

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MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: Gerald Nauman, KN4FM
Vice-President: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL
Board (exp 00): Walt Lam, KF4BFB
Board (exp 01): David Hughes KF4SVR

<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 22802

THE VALLEY ARA

President: vacant
Vice-President: Richard Huttinger, KF4QZG
Secretary: Pat Smiley, KD4WWF
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

<http://www.hamsnet.net/w4mus/>

VARA meets the first Tuesday 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

The *Monitor* is published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., a non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Service regulations. The *Monitor* is distributed to all full current members of the Massanutten and the Valley Amateur Radio Associations under reciprocal agreements of the two clubs. Sample copies are sometimes sent to other hams in the Shenandoah Valley to invite them to join the club of their choice. All change of address, articles, comments, and other material for the *Monitor* should be sent to the newsletter editor, David R. Fordham, KD9LA, 131 Wayside Drive, Weyers Cave, VA 24486-2421, phone 540-234-0448, email: fordhadr@jmu.edu.

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