

**Remember to Renew
Your OVH Membership
for the new year 2010**

The OVH ARC Newsletter
"OLE VIRGINIA HAMS" AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1255, Manassas, Va. 20108
FM Repeaters - W4OVH - 146.970- & 224.660- & 442.200+
D-STAR Repeater - W4OVH - 442.5125+
OVH Packet - Port 1: 145.730 Mhz, Port 3: 223.540 MHz - Sysop: Bill/N4SV
<http://www.w4ovh.net>

OLE VIRGINIA TIMES

January 2010

Next Meeting: Monday, January 18, 2010

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

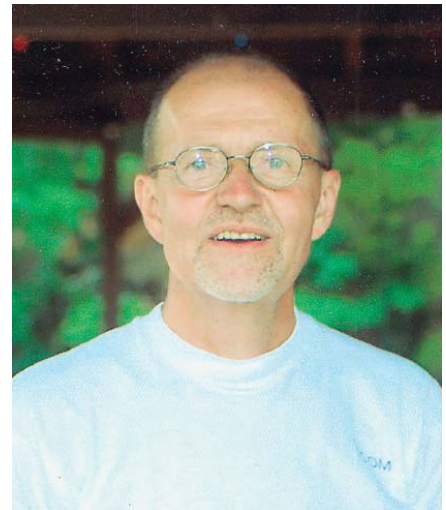
Greetings, I was happy to see a good turnout at the last OVH meeting which tested out the newly available meeting place at the new (temporary) Prince William Red Cross Chapter House location.

For those that missed it, the location is well equipped for meetings and media presentations. My personal thank you to the Red Cross and Gary Gilham / WG4ARC for allowing the OVH to use this facility.

Our upcoming meeting is important and will be back at NOVEC Technical Center in Gainesville. We'll be voting on the monthly OVH meeting location(s) [a suggestion was been made that we meet on "odd" months at NOVEC and on "even" month as the temporary Red Cross location), taking nominations for OVH officers for the upcoming year to be voted on at the February elections, and voting on possible expansion of the OVH's D-Star capability to 2-Meters, including allocating funds for that expansion, if approved.

As most of you know, our Repeater Trustee - in anticipation of future developments - applied to TMARC for a D-Star 2-Meter frequency allocation for the OVH some time ago at a time when no 2 Meter D-Star frequencies were available in this area and none were expected for a considerable time in future (absent some 2-Meter subband changes); the thinking was simply that the OVH needed to get itself in line early and that the OVH membership would all have considerable exposure to and experience with D-Star based upon the OVH's 440 D-Star capability then being implemented by the time any 2-Meter D-Star frequency allocations might become available; however, TMARC moved faster than expected because of a crush of other (later) applicants now also seeking 2-Meter D-Star frequencies in this area. Because we have recently learned that (favorable) word on an allocation for OVH is likely to be received shortly from TMARC, the OVH is now in somewhat difficult position: the OVH either

Cont'd on Page 3



Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Post Office Box 1255
Manassas, Virginia 20108

OFFICERS

President:	George Tarnovsky	K4GVT	791-5956
Vice Pres:	Wayne Kline	AG4ZZ	791-2100
Secretary:	Wayne Phillips	N7QLK	393-8447
Treasurer:	currently vacant		

DIRECTORS

Don (Butch) Blasdell	W4HJL	369-2877
Art Whittum	W1CRO	791-4330
Charlie Dale	WA4YGI	361-3091

WEEKLY NETS

Thursdays - 8:00 PM	JOHN H	257-3566
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HAMFEST 2010

Chris	KI4POT	361-3257
Bruce	AB8CI	361-8873

FIELD DAY 2010

John	KG4NXT /	257-3556
Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3556
Wayne	N7QLK	393-8447

CLUB ROSTER

Blaine	KB4RKL	369-2877
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EDUCATION

Mark	WA4KFZ	818-8033
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CLUB EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Meola	KI4AZX	393-6681
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ARES AREA EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Lane	KG4GIY	361-3042
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F.A.R. REPS.

Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234
Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877

FINANCE

Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877
Joe	KI4OHR	369-2639
Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234

GENERATORS

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
Keith	KM4AA	909-1512
Al	KB4BHB	368-4794

HISTORIAN

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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WEBMASTER — W4OVH.NET

Bill	N4SV	590-9562
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EMAIL REFLECTOR — w4ovh@googlegroups.com

David Lane	KG4GIY	361-3042
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JOTA

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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LEGAL

Pete	KB4RME	369-2436
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Bruce	AB8CI	361-8873
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NEWSLETTER

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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NEWSLINE

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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PACKET

Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N4SV	590-9562

PROGRAMS

TBA

PUBLICITY

Trisha Wells	KI4PCM	335-1096
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QUARTERMASTER

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
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REPEATER CONTROLLERS

Keith	KM4AA	909-1512
Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
David	KG4GIY	361-3042
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844

W4OVH / W4PVA — TRUSTEE

Keith	KM4AA	909-1512
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SCHOLARSHIP

Jim	W4JTP	392-0150
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SUNSHINE

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3556
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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

George	K4GVT	791-5956
Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N4SV	590-9562
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Karl	W4KRL	802-1527
David	KG4GIY	361-3042
Bob	K4HJF	335-1939

All telephone numbers listed above are for Area Code 703 unless otherwise noted.

The OVH Times newsletter is the official monthly publication of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc., a §501(c)(3) organization, dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Amateur Radio. This edition of the OVH Times is Copyright © 2009 by the Ole Virginia Hams.

The OVH ARC regular monthly meeting is at 7:30 p.m. every third Monday of the month at the NOVEC Tech Center, 5399 Wellington Branch Road, Gainesville, Virginia. Members, prospective members and all other interested persons are invited to attend. Local information can also always be obtained through the OVH's FM repeaters on 146.97 & 224.660 Mhz. Up to date information about OVH activities and meetings is also available on the OVH web site at <http://www.w4ovh.net>.

Articles and quotations in the OVH Times newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the OVH ARC and any other noted source. Proposed materials for publication including pictures, articles, letters to the editor, classified ads, notes about specific errors, complaints or the like are solicited from all readers. Forward such items to the OVH Times Newsletter Editor: PAUL@W4ZB.COM as soon as available at any time, but the cutoff deadline for the OVH Times each month (usually the second Monday of the month) may preclude publication/correction until the following month.

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must accept the 2-Meter D-Star frequency allocation expected to be offered with an agreement that the OVH will lose that allocation if the it does not implement a 2-Meter D-Star repeater within about 6 months thereafter, or else - if the OVH were to later decide it wanted a 2-Meter D-Star allocation - it would need to go to the end of the line and reapply to TMARC for a future 2-Meter D-Star allocation should one become available later. Because of the many other applicants seeking 2-Meter D-Star frequency allocations and the very limited number of frequencies available, the prospect is almost negligible that the OVH will have another chance to get a 2-Meter D-Star allocation if it doesn't grab the one expected to be offered to it shortly. Unfortunately, because TMARC moved much faster than expected in response to the overwhelming demand for allocations, many of the OVH club members generally (as distinct from the subgroup of members who are now active D-Star users on the OVH's now implemented 440 MHz D-Star system) do not yet have as much exposure and experience with D-Star and its capabilities as had been expected at this point.

This is a very important topic affecting the long term future and future capabilities of the OVH to be further discussed and voted on at the upcoming meeting. I hope you'll take the time to attend so that your voice be heard. Regardless of the vote on this, the existing OVH FM repeaters will continue to be fully operational and supported by the OVH.

For those of you that haven't operated the OVH D-Star repeater on 440, I can tell you there are benefits over analog in regular communications mode, and far exceed FM when considering the gateway operations. Keith (KM4AA) said he would be happy to give his very informative D-Star presentation again. This gives everyone a great overview of the benefits that D-Star offers.

Update on D-Star DV Board building project: I have at last received all but one crucial part for that building project. The A/D converter chip is on backorder until some time in February. If the supplier sends a partial order, I'll begin the build sessions on a first come first service basis.

Please make the time to attend the very important January OVH meeting. Also, be sure to renew you OVH membership (and pay your \$10 annual dues) for 2010 either by mail [see p. 8 below for a form] or at the upcoming meeting. Hope to see you all on Monday January 18th 7:30PM at NOVEC.

73 George K4GVT

Sunshine Corner:

Well I think it's safe to say 2009 went out with a bang! Hope everybody made it thru the Holidays and the weather ok!

BIRTHDAY'S – Starting off the New Year with another candle Dan / K9POO, Elizabeth / KG4NXV, Charles / W4XP, Milt / N4SN, Woody / N4MQ, Alan / WA2GTT and Harold / K4OPS, hope you all have a great year!

Thanks for all the good wishes for Mary Lu / KB4EFP, she was able to get home before the end of the year!

Elections will be in February, nominations will be accepted at the January meeting. Also you can pay your dues at the meeting!

Wayne / N7QLK, John / KG4NXT and Theresa / KG4TVM are co-chairing Field Day 2010, a planning meeting was held already, more details at the meeting, any suggestions and/or requests – send me an email kg4tvm@hotmail.com.

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Stay warm, I'm looking forward to Spring! Please send your news for next month via email to kg4tvm@hotmail.com or telephone me at 703-257-3566.

73 Theresa KG4TVM

Minutes of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club Meeting December 15, 2009:

George / K4GVT called meeting to order at 1930 Eastern Time. Meeting was held at the Red Cross offices at 9934 Liberia Avenue, Manassas, Virginia.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, all present stated their names and call signs. There were 16 OVH members.

BUSINESS MEETING

The minutes of the November 2009 meeting- were approved.

Treasury report (temporarily taken on by Art / W1CRO): No corrections. Report approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership: Bruce / AB8CI: no activity.

ARES: Steve / N4OGR: No report.

FM Repeaters: George / K4GVT: all is working-exception possibly PL tone on the 2-Meters.

D-Star: George / K4GVT: Working as expected.

Training: Mark / WA4KFZ: No report.

Scholarships: No report.

Hamfest: Bruce / AB8CI: Discussed redesigning flyer, and raising entry fee by \$1.00. Discussed smaller kit prizes (winners will need to be present to win), more often during the day. Food vendor Corbin will support with "Porky Tator". KJI plans to attend.

Field Day: More info in January. John / KG4NXT, Theresa / KG4TVM, and Wayne / N7QLK will chair for this event. meeting to be held in January.

Winter Field Day: Joe / KI4OHR is chairing the Winter Field Day, January 30/31st; looking for a grassy site. Gary / WG4ARC (Red Cross) volunteered use of a tent. Gary / WG4ARC and Wayne / AG4ZZ have volunteered to assist. The 'rougher' the conditions, the greater the point count; those interested in participating please contact Joe.

Sunshine: Theresa / KG4TVM: No report.

OVH Webpage: Bill / N4SV: webpage functioning.

Packet: No report.

PROGRAM - No program.

OLD BUSINESS - None.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve / N4OGR: someone got into the storage shed, and it is a mess, clean it up!!

Reminder: Vienna Wireless Winterfest, 28 February, 2010. Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale.

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Discussion of possible expansion of OVH D-Star Repeater capabilities:

KM4AA: OVH is now third in line in this area for a frequency allocation for a 2-Meter D-Star repeater; are we interested? A rough cost estimate sheet was passed around for discussion. A 2-Meter D-Star frequency allocation will probably not be available if OVH doesn't take the one which will become available shortly due to high demand and very limited frequencies available on 2-Meters. 2-Meter D-Star vs 1.2 GHz D-Star is also a possibility? Frequency allocation is a much lesser issue on 1.2 GHz.

John / KG4NXT (an acknowledged D-Star user and advocate): the OVH club needs to think hard about committing the money for a 2-Meter equipment purchase. Might not be wise to use "reserve funds" for something (D-Star) that probably will not take off like SSB did to replace AM. Data capability: our current D-star repeater is capable of (low speed) data transmission, thus, we don't have to go to the 1.2GHz system although the 1.2 GHz D-Star offers a much higher data transmission speed.

Butch / W4HJL noted that OVH had funds available, but suggested caution and careful consideration before committing large amounts of funds which the OVH club has accumulated over many years.

Art / W1CRO pointed out that this was not a life-cycle replacement.

An informal vote was taken to see interest in acquiring a 2-Meter D-Star system: 10 out of 16 indicated favorable interest.

Keith / KM4AA suggested going with a 1.2 GHz system in lieu of a 2-Meter system; but Butch / W4HJL explained that this would require members to obtain additional equipment because 2-Meter and 440 D-Star radio equipment did not include 1.2 GHz capability.

Mark / WA4KFZ asked if the club had any plans for replacing the current 2m/440 FM repeaters. The answer (from several individuals) is no. The OVH has enough spares for both 2-meter and 440 MHz FM repeaters to last for many years. The existing repeaters also will likely function as is for a long time. The area where the OVH could incur cost is to replace the controller or the 220 MHz FM repeater. The current repeater set up is also factored into the yearly budget.

Chris / KI4POT asked if there was a documented plan for replacing the current equipment in an emergency. Answers (from several individuals): the Tech committee gets up there and finds out what is wrong; if necessary we get the spare two meter and 440 repeater(s) at Butch's QTH rushed up to the site, hooked up, tuned up and back on air quickly. Anything beyond that likely takes a more extended period to repair - e.g., duplexers. There are no specific plans for action that would be taken in the event of an emergency. OVH is not considered an "up-operation" with equipment held in reserve that could be placed into service on a moment's notice. The OVH has spare equipment but would take action based on the assessment of conditions and needs of the event.

The 2 meter and the 440 MHz FM gear is insured, but insurance does not cover normal equipment failure or loss due to wear and tear from normal operations.

Art / W1CRO highlighted the hardship of the Coast Guard going to narrower bands, and the prohibitive cost (\$M) to convert massive amounts of equipment. Should the FCC require 2-Meter or 440 MHz FM equipment go to a narrower bandwidth (e.g. 7.5 KHz), that would require wholesale equipment replacement which would obsolete much existing equipment and cost OVH easily \$10 to 20k depending on total equipment required - at least new repeaters and duplexers. The Coast Guard back in 1968 - 1969 could not successfully modify its old wide band FM equipment in the Coast Guard and had to replace that old equipment at a very large capital cost

- just as the OVH would likely have to do if a shift to narrower bandwidths were to be required. It was pointed out that we could expect at least 2 years to react to any band narrowing requirements.

The discussion ended with the comment that we need a larger club membership attendance in January, 2010 to continue discussion on these important matters and voting on them. Gary / WG4ARD pointed that money might be generated from hamfest. Discussions of hamfest to generate scholarship money; declined over the years.

50/50 drawing for \$12 total received: Winner was Art / W1CRO who donated all back to the club.

No Mystery Box drawing.

Meeting adjourned at 20:54.

Reminders about some upcoming events / calendar dates:

HAMFESTS:

February 6, 2010 (Saturday) - Virginia State Convention (Richmond Hamfest): Richmond Telecommunicatins Society, Richmond Raceway Complex, 600 E Laburnum Avenue. More information, including directions: <http://www.frostfest.com>.

February 28, 2010 (Sunday) - VWS Winterfest: Vienna Wireless Association. Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, Virginia. More information, including directions: <http://www.viennawireless.org/winterfest.php>

OPERATING EVENTS AND CONTESTS

January 29 - 31, 2010 - CQ 160 Meter CW Contest. SSB Contest is a month later. More info at <http://cq160.com>. If you've never operated on the 160 meter band, check these out and see how that band can really light up with activity.

January 29th and 30th, 2010. Winter Field Day. Check with OVH member Joe / KI4OHR for more information.

There a many operating contests almost all of the time! The excellent web site maintained by WA7BNM lists most of them! See <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>

PUBLIC SERVICE / TRAINING / ARES EVENTS

Check the online Calendar by David / KG4GIY at <http://www.pwcares.org> for latest updates. David maintains a comprehensive calendar for upcoming events at that web site.

Some Web Browser Developments To Be Watched

We all know web browsers are now "old hat." Are they really? Although we use web browser almost every day, and, indeed, almost take them for granted, the innovators are intensively at work in the background, and major enhancements and improvements are in the offing. A few recent developments to be watched:

1. The latest Opera browser (Ver. 10.10, downloadable from opera.com) provides a built in, "free" facility known as Opera Unite which allows an ordinary web user to set up a secure private (or public) system for sharing files or accessing remote files over the Internet. This is a first and its simplicity is astonishing - much easier (and quicker) to set up and use than a web site, an FTP server or a VPN system to accomplish these same objectives.

2. The open source Google Chrome web browser (stable release now at Ver. 3.0.195.38) should be tried out; it has a minimalist interface which takes some getting used to but is noticeably "faster" than all other web browsers; it also can run on all (major) operating systems; the current beta version supports an extremely sophisticated and well thought out "browser extension" system to be released shortly. Watch out - Microsoft, Firefox, Apple and Opera.

Editor's comments about possible D-Star Repeater Expansion to 2-Meters for the OVH

The extended, spontaneous discussion during the December 2009 OVH regular meeting about possible expansion of the OVH's D-Star capability to include 2-Meters was enlightening, with strong opinions and passions expressed on all sides. This is not unusual among hams generally: heated discussions have occurred many times on many issues affecting aspects of this hobby in the past: AM vs. SSB, CW (Morse Code) proficiency requirements, who "owns" a particular frequency, incentive licensing and even CW vs. Spark. Different opinions and disagreements are certain for a club like the OVH with a diverse membership with varying perspectives, backgrounds, interests and participation levels in the hobby and in the club. Fortunately, disagreements and strong differences of opinion which are expressed spontaneously - without much opportunity for forethought or reflection - should not mean that the membership cannot continue to function in a collegial and respectful manner to figure out what is ultimately the best course of action for the OVH as a Club.

The most important point favoring action by OVH to expand D-Star to 2-Meters which your editor heard at the meeting was the need for OVH to secure a coordinated frequency allocation for that from TMARC right now, *if at all*. Essentially, the need to decide right now is being forced upon us due to the limited 2-Meter D-Star frequencies available and the now fierce demand for them, *i.e.*, it won't be possible to get an allocation later. On this point, the membership should be thankful for its leadership's foresight to apply for a TMARC allocation some time ago; but for that action we would not even be able to consider this question because OVH would not be near the front of the line to get a 2-Meter D-Star frequency and this entire matter would be moot. Personally, I think it is critical that OVH stay in line and obtain a 2-meter D-Star allocation when one becomes available even if assured funding to use by the Club still remain in some doubt.

Regardless of personal opinion, however, it is essential that funding questions be considered carefully for the Club. Although the OVH is fortunate to have much more than adequate funds available to fund a D-Star expansion to 2-Meters, the answers are not so easy. Most of the funds now in the Club's treasury have been accumulated over many years in the past, and they are regarded as reserves; there are always future contingencies which the Club may have to confront which could require use of those reserves; the Club's funds on hand have not increased significantly in recent years - which is troubling: on the positive side, the Club's fiscal management has been good and its use of its resources has been conservative, on the negative side, the financial results from the annual Hamfest in recent years have been disappointing compared to past years, although we think future improvements are likely.

To stimulate thought and reflection, I provide below what I hope will be seen as a fairly balanced statement of the Pro's and Con's - of various factual and opinion considerations which are pertinent.

Pro's - Considerations favoring OVH action for D-Star Repeater expansion to 2-Meters

- Obtain a frequency allocation for a 2-Meter D-Star Repeater now while it is still possible for the OVH to do so – get it now or never is applicable here because of the very limited frequencies and the demand.
- Adding 2-Meter D-Star at this point is "low risk" and will increase the OVH's capabilities and communications infrastructure in the local community for all users: casual users, public service users and emergency users.
- Would allow multiple D-Star operations at the same time, *i.e.* 2-Meter and 440 MHz can be used at the same time, and would provide means for those without 440 MHz RF capability to access the D-Star system.
- Provide OVH members with ready access to D-Star based repeaters and systems: training and experience in networking of radios, an essential part of the future, and opportunities to make technical innovations.
- The D-Star platform offers numerous possibilities for technical innovation and enhancements. OVH's technically inclined members should be encouraged to participate. See, <http://dstarinfo.com/applications/applications.htm>.
- The digital capabilities inherent in D-Star have been and will be further enhanced for written (printed) communications – especially useful for emergency traffic as well as other uses.
- D-Star's basic capabilities will be expanded / improved to permit interoperability with analog FM Repeater systems (using DTMF signaling) at least for a limited subset of D-Star features.
- The OVH Club has more than adequate reserve funds available for this (worthwhile) investment in the future, and also expects to have improved finances in the future.

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Con's - Considerations disfavoring OVH action for D-Star Repeater expansion to 2-Meters

- Analog FM repeaters represent a proven, well established technology; analog FM only users will be forced to purchase expensive new equipment if they wish to use D-Star, which offers few, if any, advantages for them.
- Analog FM only users will be unable to directly access or use any part of the D-Star system – unless or until - this is very iffy - interoperability is created between analog FM systems and D-Star systems.
- D-Star has much more complex and complicated modes; thus it is more prone not to work or to fail than simple analog FM radio equipment when needed, including in a real emergency. In a real emergency, straight analog FM systems are simpler and easier to use, and to maintain and repair.
- D-Star fails to offer great advantages like SSB over AM or CW over Spark; it will be replaced before long by another, less proprietary digital system with even better capabilities. When that happens, the existing D-Star infrastructure, and all the effort and investment that went into creating it, will be abandoned / lost.
- The D-Star system is essentially “proprietary” because only one manufacturer [ICOM} presently makes “out of the box” radio equipment for it. What happens if ICOM leaves the D-Star market?
- Implementation of 2-Meter D-Star at the Mt. Pone site may require elimination or restrict the use of 2-Meter packet radio services at that site; those services should be maintained even though there are only a few users.
- Initial equipment / installation costs for D-Star are relatively high and for OVH to fund them requires dipping into accumulated financial reserves which should be conserved for future contingencies; maintenance and replacement costs for D-Star are difficult to predict and the existing analog FM repeater systems must be maintained. It is incautious for OVH to count on its financial picture improving.

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**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION
“OLE VIRGINIA HAMS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB”
2010**

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

CALL SIGN: _____
TELEPHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____
BIRTHDAY: _____

ARE YOU PRESENTLY AN ARRL MEMBER? (YES/NO)
ARE YOU A VOLUNTEER EXAMINER? (YES/NO)
DO YOU WANT YOUR PHONE NO. LISTED IN THE OVH ROSTER? (YES/NO)
WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT LICENSE CLASS? _____

Dues are now **\$10.00** per year and payable on January 1, 2010
Dues for additional family members **living at the same mailing address** are **\$5.00**

NAME AND CALL OF FAMILY MEMBERS: AMOUNT ENCLOSING: _____
Name: _____ Call: _____
Name: _____ Call: _____

Return to: Treasurer, OVH
P.O. Box 1255
Manassas, VA 20108