

**The Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 372 Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050**

April, 2018



**Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm
at the Knox County Chapter of the American Red Cross Annex
300 North Mulberry Street Mount Vernon, OH 43050**



**K8EEN Repeater: 146.790. MHz (600KHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)
K8EEN-R Echolink Node: 809800
K8EEN Repeater: 444.600 MHz (+5 MHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's View	1-2
Radio Raffle, Contesting for Fun	2
March Meeting Minutes	3-4
Radio Activity	4-5-6
ARRL: How can we help?	7-8
April / May Calendar	9



President's View

Well it's April 2, 2018 and there is snow on the ground! Some of you are unhappy at this sight, but not me. I don't really have anywhere to go today and hopefully this puts off the mowing season a little longer. Besides it is a lot prettier than the dead splotchy grass I have to look at out my window.

Looking ahead we have a couple of events coming up this month; first the Rookie Round Up, then NVIS. Rookie Round Up is on April 15 from 1-6pm I think, this is a Sunday afternoon. We will be opening up the Training Center and there will be more details to come at the meeting on the 9th. Next, is NVIS on April 28 from 10am-6pm maybe 4pm, but we usually have our fill earlier than that). It is a fun day to test out your creation to see if you can contact other stations with in the state of Ohio. So, look up NVIS antennas and find one you would like to try out. We will be glad to help you get it set up and see how it works, fun for all. Oh by the way, I know it is the end of April, but we have not participated in one of these that it was not wet and or cold. Not to worry as we will be at the Centerburg Conservation Club and they have the perfect building (small wind tunnel) to keep us dry. I hope to see you at one of these events or both in April.

President's View continues on page 2

As I mentioned earlier, our meeting is on the 9th at 7pm in the American Red Cross Training Center please plan to attend. Last month Louie, KE8HNF brought in his new **uBitx** radio to show off (it was brand new still in pieces, hopefully when it is assembled he will bring it back to show off). I bring this up as you might be working on something and we would love to see it. Does not matter what it is, home brewing, building kits are what a lot of us like to do. It doesn't have to work, just the attempt and who knows someone at the meeting might have a suggestion as to how to get it up and running. I look forward to seeing you on the 9th.

73,

Frank, KC8EVS

By The Way, we are looking for a new 2nd Saturday of the month Breakfast Venue. Anyone have favorites? Please bring your suggestions to the meeting on Monday.

Radio Raffle

The Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club, raffled off a Yaesu FT-70DR handheld. This is a nice C4FM Fusion digital radio, dual band, so you can make use of the digital repeater soon to be on top of the hospital. It also has analog, so you will be able to work both repeaters. The winner's name will be drawn at the April 9th meeting.

Contesting for Fun

**by Barry Butz, N8PPF
April 2018**



This month MVARC will be joining an event that we haven't tried before. It is the ARRL Rookie Roundup. The goal is to introduce new operators to the HF experience and the "Joy of Contesting." Rookies are considered any ham that was licensed in 2016, 2017, 2018 or have never entered an SSB contest. We will meet at the club station at the Red Cross on April 15. Contest hours are 2pm to 8pm. We will enter as a multi-operator station K8EEN. We have several members who fit the rookie category, I'm hoping many will join the fun. Of course old-timers are also welcome but only rookies can operate. Old-timers who can't come in person are encouraged to get on the air and talk to rookies around the nation.

See <http://www.arrrl.org/rookie-roundup>

April brings lots of state QSO parties, nine by my count, and State Parks on the Air in Florida and Texas. See the QST's Contest Corral.

April 7, at 8pm to midnight has the North American SSB Sprint. This is a short and exciting contest with special rules about frequency usage. It's not possible to "run a frequency". It sounds daunting, but I found it not so bad and made 26 contacts in 1 1/2 hours in last November's event.

See <https://ssbsprint.com/rules/>

By the way, Sunspots are back. April Fool !

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**March Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2018**

Frank, KC8EVS called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

February Meeting Minutes accepted: Motion by Greg, W8DOH and seconded by Bill, KD8WHQ.

Treasurers Report presented by Terry, KI8N. Motion to accept by Greg, W8DOH and Seconded by Bill, KD8WHQ. Motion passed to accept Treasurers Report. Reported that Club's 990-N IRS Non-profit tax form was submitted and accepted. For club finance specifics please contact Terry.



Repeaters:

Don, W8PEN, reported the 146.79 repeater is working. Some noise has been detected and Don will be monitoring for recurring instances.

The 444.6 repeater was reinstalled at the Knox County Hospital and is also working.

Mesh:

Don, W8PEN reported Mesh network is working. Don has nodes and equipment available to loan if installed and operational 24 hours a day. Contact Don for more information.

Old Business:

Frank, KC8EVS discussed upcoming 2018 club events and the need for coordinators to assist. These events are the normal activities the club participates in:

March 29: Skywarn Class being held at COTC building.

April 7: ARES Conference at Marion OSU Campus.

April 15: ARRL: Rookie Roundup SSB – Work from Red Cross Training Center on Sunday.

April 22: Earth Day Challenge – CANCELLED no marathon this year.

April 28: Ohio NVIS Day – to be held at the Centerburg Conservation Club. Bring an antenna to try using club radio.

June 24 – 25: Field Day – Still need an event coordinator. Plan to operate from Apple Valley. Don will coordinate radio stations with possible 2 SSB, 1 CW, and 1 Digital.

August: Dan Emmitt Special Event Station – Terry, KI8N to coordinate. Working on operating schedule, QST submittal and QRZ page update.

August 25: Ohio State QSO Party

September 8: Ohio State Parks on the Air – Plan to operate from Mohican State Park at the Gorge.

December 9: MVARC Christmas Dinner

New Business:

Noted that all Club Members that have not paid their 2018 dues will be dropped from the membership roster at the end of March.

Received a letter from the ARRL advising the club's K8EEN call sign will need to be renewed in June. Don, W8PEN is the call sign trustee and will handle renewing the call sign.

A motion was made to make a \$150.00 donation to the Red Cross for allowing us to use their facility. Motion by Barry, N8PPF and seconded by Bill, KC8BB. Motion passed. Also discussed doing a facility project to show our appreciation and building usage, such as cleaning the gutters.

Boy Scout freeze in at Faith Baptist Church took place March 9 and 10th. We saw 160 participants including adults so it was a great success. Making 2 meter contacts and the CW station were great hits this year as usual. We had the go boxes set up plus a digital station and a table with CW keys and plenty of noise. Thanks to all that help!

Emery, W8TW mentioned having a raffle to raise funds for the club. The club will purchase a new Yaesu FT70 HT and raffle it. There are 30 tickets available with a \$10.00 donation per ticket.

Don, W8PEN presented a proposal to swap the club's Yaesu FT-847 for his Kenwood TS-570D and a Yaesu FTM-100DR. Motion to accept by Tom, KD8HSA and seconded by Scott, K8AEC. Motion passed 9+

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Greg, W8DOH and seconded by Terry, KI8N. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.

Terry Windsor, KI8N
MVARC Secretary/Treasurer

4/01/2018

Radio Activity

By Don Russell, W8PEN



Just about every year after the completion of our Technician Class course, I am hit with questions about the Echolink system on the K8EEN repeater. This is natural and it is always nice to review the Echolink features. This year has been no different, so lets give a little history and an update on how one can use the Echolink system on the repeater.

The first Echolink system was put into service by Ruben Clark, KB2SAI. This system featured an old Radio Shack handheld and the software which ran the Echolink system. I think the hand held was merely placed by a window and was tuned to the repeater frequencies of 146.790 MHz and 146.190 MHz just as you would any radio to be used on this repeater.

The system ran rather well and was in operation from about 1997 to 2010 or so. This could be plus or minus several years, but you get the picture. I took over the Echolink system around 2010 plus or minus a few years as indicated.

The present Echolink is located at my home in much the same fashion as Ruben ran his. I use an outside antenna for a bit better signal to and from the repeater, but the same idea.

Before this, I had run my own Echolink system on 444.125 MHz mostly for my own pleasure when walking my dogs. Then later, Arlin KD8EVR, ask me to put the Echolink on his repeater, which I did. It was fun talking around the world while walking around the block, or on a 2 mile hike. When a new Echolink System was needed for the 2 meter repeater, I simply changed the frequency to the 2 meter repeater. By then, Arlin's repeater had been linked to many other repeaters and the Echolink had become more of a hindrance than an asset.

Radio Activity, continues on page 5

By Don Russell, W8PEN

Through all these years, I feel that the Echolink System ran by Ruben and myself has proved to be enjoyable for all. It has allowed some Technician Class operators to taste a bit of DX and perhaps encouraged them to obtain their General or Extra class license. It has also provided a much needed boost in activity at times when things were slow.

Most of the Echolink operations on the 2 meter repeater are from stations checking into the repeater from the internet. This is either through their own computer, or sometime through another repeater that also has Echolink set up.

This is the simplest way to use Echolink on the repeater. Merely answer a call from a station that accessed our repeater via Echolink. It is just like talking to anyone else on the repeater. However, did you know that you can actually use the Echolink on the K8EEN repeater to make random calls, or even call a particular station? Most of you do not, thus the purpose of this article.

As stated above, when one answers a call of a station on Echolink, it is pretty much a normal QSO. The station on Echolink is responsible for disconnecting when the contact is finished. When using the repeater to access the Echolink, then this changes. The person on the repeater is responsible for controlling the Echolink. Mostly, this means connecting to Echolink nodes and disconnecting from them when finished.

Control of the Echolink is established by using the transceivers keypad, be it a base, mobile, or handheld. Certain keying sequences relates to what action the Echolink will take. For example, the keypad sequence of #01 (pound-zero-one) will connect on to a random link. This could be another repeater with Echolink, a computer user, or a ham running their own Echolink on a simplex channel. This link could also be anywhere in the world. It is fun and you never know who you will end up talking to.

Another command that one needs to know is simply # (the pound key). This disconnects one from the link that was connected to in the above paragraph. The ## (pound-pound in sequence) disconnects all users that are connected to the repeaters Echolink system. I have accidentally used the double pound key before. The pound key is also useful if it seems like an Echolink station has "hung" the repeater up and the user does not realize that he is connected. Does not happen often, but I have used the pound key to disconnect the user in this situation.

I control the repeaters Echolink by local control at home, or via the internet if I am away from home.

Here is a list of commands that can be used via the radios keypad:

#00	(pound-zero-zero)	Connect to a random node (most common)
#01	(pound-zero-one)	Connect to a random link
#03	(pound-zero-three)	Connect to a random user
#08	(pound-zero-eight)	Echolink Status
#09	(pound-zero-nine)	Reconnect to last node
#*xxxx	(pound-star-node number)	Connect to xxxx node
#	(pound)	Disconnect current node from Echolink
##	(pound-pound)	Disconnect all from Echolink

By Don Russell, W8PEN

There are also a few shortcut keys that allow you to connect to a particular Echolink node without bothering with all the above. We have three shortcuts and could add more if anyone has a favorite or interesting node they feel they will use:

#80	(pound-eight-zero)	K4OBX-L	Hatteras Island, N.C. repeater
#84	(pound-eight-four)	W8DF-R	Battle Creek, Mi repeater
#86	(pound-eight-six)	KE8ANU-L	Link to the Marysville Repeater

Hatteras Island is where Barry Butz, N8PPF, vacations. The Battle Creek Michigan repeater is a repeater that I often connect to. It has a pretty neat identification and a real friendly group. The Marysville repeater link is provided by Ed Liddle, KE8ANU, one of our club members.

The procedure for using this information is pretty easy, but we should go through it so everyone understands. Say you wanted to connect to a random node, which is my favorite thing to do when demonstrating the Echolink to new hams.

1. As from above, key in #00 (pound-zero-zero).
2. Echolink will pick a random node and reply: "Connecting to W8DF repeater"
3. Since this is an example, W8DF repeater could be any repeater or user in the world.
4. Wait until Echolink says "Connected". Then wait and see if there is an identification.
5. After the ID or waiting for ten seconds or so, simply give a call out:
6. "This is W8PEN (substitute your call) listening via Echolink" or something to that nature.
7. Wait for someone to reply. If no replies you can give another call or disconnect and try again.
8. Lets say you got no replies. Then disconnect using the # (pound) key. Try again starting at 1.
9. Once you make a contact, just chat on the repeater as usual.
10. When finished with the contact, Disconnect from the Echolink:
11. "This is W8PEN disconnecting" (Once again, using your own call)

One thing to watch for is that when connected to another repeater you have to give a little extra time for all the timers to reset. I find it easier to just wait until our repeater drops before starting my transmission.

From here one can either try another random node or quit. Once you are disconnected from Echolink it is ready for the next contact or user.

Our Sunday Night ARES net seems to draw a lot of Echolink users. This is okay. I have increased the user limit from five to eight. In other words, there can be eight users connected to the K8EEN-R Echolink simultaneously.

Feel free to try your hand at making random Echolink contacts. Remember, if you run into problems, just hit the pound key and start over. One of the problems with connecting to a random node is that sometimes you end up with a node that speaks a language other than English. Simply disconnect and try another node.

Hope this article takes some of the mystery out of our Echolink system. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. In the meantime enjoy, and see you at the April meeting.

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



Recently, I received this email from a reader:

“Hi Dan,

“Hope you’re doing well. I have a couple of questions about the ARRL. I’ve been reading your blog and other sources, and it’s clear that the ARRL is in a little trouble. I have to say though, that as soon as the current administration in D.C. notices that some of their friends can make money off of amateur radio bandwidth, the whole amateur radio service is in very serious jeopardy. The only way I can think of to counter that would be an organization like the ARRL, and I think there’s really only one organization like the ARRL. Is that not true? If it is, how can we help?”

I replied that it is true that there’s only one organization like the ARRL. In the past, there have been groups that have tried to compete with the ARRL, but they’ve never really taken off. It’s an incredible amount of work to set up an organization like the ARRL and none of the alternates have been able to get to critical mass.

The second question—How can we help?—is the big question. Here are a few thoughts:

Join the ARRL. If you’re not currently a member, join. You’ll have little or no influence, if you are not a member.

If you are a member, but your friends are not, encourage them to join. The more members the ARRL has, the more influence it will have. This is common sense, but the ARRL doesn’t really seem to care about this. In the past, I’ve encouraged the ARRL to set a membership goal of 25% of licensed radio amateurs.

Link #1: <http://www.kb6nu.com/arrl-membership-is-25-asking-too-much/>

Link #2: <http://www.kb6nu.com/no-wonder-arrl-membership-falling/>

I honestly don’t think this is asking too much, and I’ve never heard a good argument for them, not to do this. They continue to ignore me, and the percentage of licensed radio amateurs that are ARRL members continues to decline.

Take an interest in ARRL matters and let your director and vice director know your views. Get your friends to do likewise. Get on the mailing lists for the board meeting agendas and minutes. To do this, log into the ARRL website, click on “Edit your profile,” then “Edit email subscriptions.”

[ARRL: How can we help? continues on page 8](#)

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Invite your ARRL elected officials—your division director, vice director, and section manager—to talk at your club meetings. Be prepared to grill them on issues that you think are important.

Run for office yourself. I ran for Great Lakes Division vice director twice. Unfortunately, I lost both times, but even running is a way to have an impact. I'd like to see the "loyal opposition" get organized and challenge the status quo, especially in divisions where I think the current director is making bad decisions.

Having said all that, there are ways to make an impact besides playing ARRL politics:

Get on the air. It's easier to lose bands if we're not using them. Encourage others to be active.

Be an Elmer to those that need it.

Teach classes to help those who want a license get a license and to help those who are already licensed to upgrade their licenses.

Be an ambassador for amateur radio, especially to related groups, such as the "maker" groups that have sprung up around the country. Make sure that they know about your amateur radio club and the classes and exam sessions that you offer.

I'd love to hear any other thoughts that you all may have on this. I really do think that at this point, we need to inundate the ARRL Board and staff with input from the membership. While they may have a long history of ignoring the membership and just going about their own merry way, now is really a time of change, and this might be the right time to set the ARRL on a better path.

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When he's not getting all worked up over ARRL politics, Dan blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches amateur radio classes, and works CW on the HF bands. He's the author of the *No Nonsense* amateur radio license study guides and *The CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code*.

April, 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN – Don	9 7:00 p.m. MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex	10	11 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	12	13 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	14 9:00 am Breakfast (any suggestions)?
15 2:00 pm Rookie Roundup at the Red Cross 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net KE8ANS – Terry	16	17	18 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	19	20 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	21
22 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KD8HSA —Tom	23	24	25 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	26	27 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	28 10:00 am Ohio <u>NVIS</u> Day Centerburg Conservation Club
29 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN—Don	30	1 May	2 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	3	4 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	5
6 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net On K8EEN KC8BB—Bill	7	8	9 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	10	11 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	12 9:00 am Breakfast at ??? We will know where, after April's meeting
13 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN – Don	14 7:00 p.m. MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex	15	16 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	17	18 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	19