

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

April, 2016



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



K8EEN Repeater: 146.790. MHz (600Khz with PL of 71.9 Hz)
K8EEN-R Echolink Node: 809800
KD8EVR Repeater: 442.100 MHz (+5 MHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)



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There is also a need for some to be stationed out and about the park for emergency communications, so there are many ways to help. For more information or any questions contact Jim N8IBR or myself Frank KC8EVS.

This month we have a couple of events coming up. April 17, is the Earth Day Challenge at Kenyon College. As of to date I have not heard anything concerning this event but I should know more by our meeting on April 11. This is a fun event and as I look out across my snow covered farm I am praying it will be warm! The second event is a fun one also, NVIS it is on the following weekend, April 23. I think that we will be activating the Centerburg Conservation Club, more concerning this to follow at our meeting on the 11th.

The view from the Presidents Desk



Another month has passed, wow that has gone quickly. A lot has happened in the last month. We participated in the Woodland Trails Freeze-In. You can read more about that somewhere else in this newsletter. If you missed last month's meeting, you missed the presentation by Matt Murphy concerning the upcoming Scout Fest 2016 to be held at Foundation Park on May 13-15. I have to confess that I reported the incorrect dates in the last newsletter. There is still time to register to participate, to get a T-shirt and lunch (this will cost \$20) you must register prior to April 8. Jim N8IBR has the forms that need to be completed. You can register after that but no t-shirt or lunch. There are several ways to participate. There will be a special events station in operation. You can sign up to operate. They will have a Fox hunt. You will need your hand held and a BNC adaptor to fit your radio. The cheaper Chinese radios don't work as well as you need a better power meter to help find the signal. Be prepared to follow the scouts around as they will be using your radio.

If you have been on the repeater you have noticed that it was not its old self. That is because we put the new repeater in service and it has worked well. Since it does not have a fancy controller like our old repeater there are a few bells and whistles that are missing. And as I am putting this together we have taken the new repeater out of service and replaced it with the old. Not because there is a problem but we have better ideas as to how to use it. Come to the meeting on the 11th to participate in the discussion.

The American Red Cross, all I can say is wow, as this has moved very quickly. Not only do we have meeting space, storage space and now we will have a station right here in the heart of town. There is a lot to be discussed at the upcoming meeting so don't miss it. The station is yet to be set up, but by the way things are going we could be operating there very soon. It will be a great for our tech training classes, nets and contest so stay tuned. There will be a lot to discuss as we move forward with this project. Currently we are working on getting a permit to erect a tower which has been donated to the club.

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So, the 11th meeting is important as we move forward.

We had our first meeting at the EMA station and we will be meeting monthly. It was an introductory meeting, so more to come as we get things set up there. This will be another station that we will be able to operate from in the future, similar to how we will use the ARC station. So things should be moving quickly there also.

The Mesh network is progressing as we have two nodes connected via the internet and they have voice and data communication between the two. Don W8PEN and Scott AC8PT have put in a lot of time and hard work on this project. I think that later this summer we will all be able to appreciate what is going on in the background here.

I have rambled too long and need to get this into Bill. Look forward to seeing all of you on the 11th. Or if not, I am usually at the Hardees brunch at 10 am on Fridays. I will be at Allison's on April 9th at 9 am for breakfast. I look forward to making contact with you soon. Frank KC8EVS



Editors Musings

The clubs Morse Code class, lead by Don, W8PEN ended last week, with 3 members participating:

N8IBR, Jim

KE8ANY, Bryan

KD8WSI, John

Congratulations to all those involved and just keep practicing!

I mentioned last month that we can all hope Spring is finally here... Well maybe! I mowed my grass twice, even though last Saturday was chilly, I had to wear gloves to keep my hands being comfortable and besides, it was very windy. The grass looked nice and I was happy to get the back half of the yard done. On Sunday morning, I looked out and my gosh there was at least 1 1/2 inches of snow! It only stuck around until after lunch and was gone. My wife and I drove to Columbus and Sycamore Road was snow covered and icy in spots. When we reached the Licking county line the roads very quickly dried up and there was no more snow south of Knox county. Go figure!

Volunteers Needed for Earth Day Challenge

The Kenyon College Earth Day Challenge half marathon will be Sunday April 17, 2016. Operators will be needed between the hours of 7:00 am and 12:00 pm. If you can help out, please email Frank Counts @ fcounts@gmail.com.

Hope to hear everyone on the radio or at one of our scheduled restaurants or at our next monthly meeting.

73's all and take care.

-Bill KC8BB

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Meeting called to order by KC8EVS at 7:01 PM. He then suspended the meeting so Matt Murphy KC8BEN, from the Muskingum Valley Boy Scout Council could make a presentation concerning the upcoming BSA Camp-o-Rama to be held in Foundation Park, May 13th to 15th, 2016. He stated that numerous Amateurs would be needed to assist in the operation. These Amateurs would be used for numerous different functions, such as helping a hidden transmitter foxhunt, to helping with their special event station. If you are able to help out, please let KC8EVS know before April 8th.

Regular meeting started at 7:26 PM.

Motion to approve Secretaries report made by KD8UT, 2nd KD8WSI. Approved.

Motion to approve Treasurers report Made by KD8WSI, 2nd KD8HSA. Approved.

Old Business

W8PEN reported the old repeater is still ok. Stated we have received new repeater, and the group would be able to view it after the regular meeting adjourned.

KC8EVS reported that the Earth Day Challenge would be held on April 17th. At present we have not been contacted about providing communications.

On Saturday March 19th, the Faith Baptist Church has requested that we set up a demonstration area on Amateur Radio for their Hobby Freeze In Event. This event is held to let youth be exposed to various hobbies. Volunteers need to contact KC8EVS.

NVIS day is Saturday, April 23rd. We will be setting up at the Centerburg Conservation Club this year. Design your antennas and bring-um.

Field Day chairman, W8PEN, passed out his preliminary assignment sheets. W8PEN will head up the CW station. N8PPF is in charge of the 20 meter station, N8IBR is in charge of the 40 meter station, K8AEC is in charge of the Digital station. KC8UR will handle the bonus points.

W8PEN still needs someone to head up the 80 meter station, and someone to co-ordinate the most important position, the Food /Picnic manager to feed the masses. If you are interested in helping with anything, contact W8PEN.

New Business

KD8PSM stated that KE8ANS, W8PEN, KC8UR, KC8BB, and KC8EVS would be going to the EMA command center to inspect the ARES communications room, and make any needed suggestions for improvements.

KC8EVS stated that the Red Cross has supplied us with a secured storage area for our equipment. It was suggested that we inventory all club owned equipment so we could get it properly insured. At present the only insured equipment is the repeater and its antenna.

KC8EVS also stated that the Red Cross was going to allow us to have a communications room on the 2nd floor. More to follow in the near future.

Motion to adjourn made by KB8QPO, 2nd KD8WSI, Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Membership then participated in an unveiling and inspection of the new YAESU FUSION Repeater. There were 21 members and 3 guests present.

The 50/50 drawing was won by W8TW.

Respectfully submitted
N8IBR, Secretary MVARC

Communications at the Arnold Festival – by Terry Windsor, KE8ANS

After receiving Ruben Clark's email about volunteering at the Arnold Festival, I thought this would be fun and a chance to see some of the Arnold events. I contacted Patrick Gibson (KD8ION) and was signed up for working Saturday, March 5.

As a new volunteer, I attended an orientation and walkthrough of the Columbus Convention Center on Sunday February 28. There were about 100 people in this group and we were shown how to get through the convention center tunnels to different event areas without having to wander through large crowds in the main halls. We were also told what was expected of us, how to handle emergencies and the media. It was a fun and informative time to get to know some of the Medical Team members.

I signed in at the event Saturday at 7:00am and was assigned to a Medical Team working Olympic Weightlifting. A Medical Team is staffed by a Doctor, Nurse, Medical Student, and a Ham operator. I was at this event for about three hours when relieved. Next I was assigned to a Medical Team monitoring Pole Fitness and MAS wrestling. I spent about two hours with this team.

My next assignment was a Teen Challenge event. During this competition I got involved in communicating a medical transport event when a competitor fell and hurt her back and neck. After about 2.5 hours I was relieved and called back to the control room to be reassigned. My final event was working with a team monitoring Martial Arts/Grappling. This event was my last and at 6:30pm I signed out and left the Convention Center to come home.

It was a long day but I had a fun time working with several teams all of which were friendly, having a good time and great at working with the competitors. I also met and worked with several Hams some of which knew people in Mount Vernon's radio club. The Hams I remember were Paul Flautt (KB8CMW) who knew Frank, Eli (last name and call sign escape me) who is Barry's nephew, Kim Doran (KE8CLB), Andrew Whitacre (K8ARW) who was my mentor for my first event, and Patrick Gibson. I also got to see Arnold Schwarzenegger two times, once at MAS wrestling and when he came into the Control Room to thank us for volunteering and assisting competitors with medical issues. Overall this year I look forward to working local events and next year's Arnold Festival.



Arnold Schwarzenegger at MAS wrestling

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

The Amateur Extra Class license is the highest class of license in the United States, and perhaps the world. Many hams—even hams that live outside the U.S.—aspire to pass the test and be awarded one.

There wasn't always an Amateur Extra Class license. The Extra class license, as we know it today, was created as part of the 1951 license restructuring, that also created the Novice and Technician Class licenses. (In 1951, the Novice license was the “beginner’s license.” To get a Technician Class license, you had to pass the written test that General Class operators had to pass.)

Although it gave an operator no additional privileges, to get an Extra Class license, one had to:

- * Pass a 20 wpm code test (Generals had to pass only a 13 wpm code test).
- * Pass a longer and more difficult written examination than the General Class exam.
- * Have at least two years of experience as a licensed radio amateur.

Today, without the code test and the experience requirement, many hams upgrade to Extra Class as soon as they can. Some even pass the Technician Class, General Class, and the Amateur Extra Class exams in a single test session.

So, what's the attraction? Why should you upgrade to Extra?

One of the reasons that you should upgrade to Extra is that you get use of the entire 80 m, 40 m, 20 m, and 15 m bands. Portions of those bands, such as 3.6 – 3.7 MHz in the 75m band and 14.150 – 14.175 MHz in the 20m phone band, are reserved exclusively for Extra Class licensees. Extra Class operators also have exclusive privileges in the CW portions of the 80 m, 40 m, 20 m, and 15 m bands. These are the frequencies where the DX stations hang out.

Another reason to get your Extra Class license is that only Extra Class licensees can administer General Class and Extra Class license exams. General Class operators can become Volunteer Examiners (VEs), but they are only allowed to administer Technician Class exams.

Another reason you might want to get an Extra Class license is to get a fancy vanity call sign. Only Extra Class operators can apply for 1×2 or 2×1 call signs, such as W8RP or KT8K. A short, snappy call sign can help you work more DX or improve your contest scores.

Whatever your reason, studying for the Extra Class exam will open your eyes to many aspects of the hobby that you may not be familiar with. And, as you work your way through the material, you'll learn things that make you a better amateur radio operator and enable you to enjoy the hobby more. It's not easy, but in the end, an Extra Class license will help you have more fun with amateur radio.

From Your Membership Minder

In an earlier writing, the membership was advised that we would be updating the club records. We are one quarter of the way through the year, so in April we will begin making the changes.

If you haven't paid your dues by the April 11th, 2016 meeting, you will no longer be listed on the active club roster. This is simply housekeeping of our records. We will still have the old files available with removed person's information, they just won't be listed on the current club roster.

The following are the call signs of the folks who are on the current paid member's list:

W8TW	KD8EUP	W8UMH	KE8DKG	KE8DKH	KC8BB
K8SLY	KB8QPO	N8PPF	N8SMT	KB2SAI	KD8SWJ
KC8EVS	KC8VTA	KD8AFT	KD8WSI	KD8HSA	K8AEC
K8KLW	KE8ANV	KB8QPP	W8LFR	N8RPZ	N8RDH
KD8UT	KE8DKJ	KE8DKI	AC8PT	KE8DKL	KE8ANU
KE8ANQ	KD8UEB	KE8DKF	KE8ANY	KE8DKK	W8PEN
KD8TNT	KC8UR	KF4HHZ	KD8WHQ	KD8PSM	N8OGX
N8NMQ	N8IBR	KE8ANS			

At present we have 45 paid members.

An informational breakdown of membership follows:
 We have 19 Technician class, 13 General Class, and 13 Extra Class licensees.
 Of these 45 members, 23 belong to the ARRL.

If you don't see your call on the list, and would still like to be an active member of the club, you may do so by simply bringing your dues up to date.

New 2 Meter Repeater Working Great

March was a very exciting month for the club. I am sure club President Frank Counts, KC8EVS, has addressed much of what has been happening. I am happy to announce that the club's new repeater, a Yaesu DR-1X has been installed and working extremely well. This new repeater not only does standard FM (called analog FM), but also handles a digital mode called C4FM. This is Yaesu's answer to Icom's D-Star and other digital modes. Currently, if you wish to use digital, you will need to buy the Yaesu digital radios. Not sure if other manufacturers will be allowed to sell radios with C4FM or not.

Some are wondering why we need a digital repeater here in Knox County. Frankly, we don't. However, the club was looking for a way to backup our older repeater system. Research showed that a new 2 meter repeater with a controller would cost the club about \$1600. The club certainly cannot afford that kind of price. Yaesu was offering the DR-1X for \$600 to clubs and repeater groups. I am sure this is a marketing ploy to sell their base, mobile, and hand held digital radios. It is working. Regular price of the DR-1X repeater is about \$1600 from Universal Radio Supply in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, our local "Candy Store". Yaesu has sold thousands of these repeaters for \$600 or lower (the program started at \$400. our club waited to see what kind of reliability these repeaters would have). I am sure that Yaesu is selling tons of digital transceivers so that hams can make full use of these repeaters.

Currently there is very little digital activity on the repeater. This will change as more local hams buy digital radios. Since I am repeater trustee, I felt the need to be able to monitor both modes so I have purchased the Yaesu FT1XDR digital handheld. These are selling for around \$300, which is compatible with other standard FM dual band radios in pricing. Yaesu just came out with a 2 meter only digital mobile for \$180. About the same price as you would buy an analog FM single band radio for. As digital radios become more popular, prices should come down.

Here is a list of Yaesu digital radios one can buy at Universal Radio Supply:

FT-991	160 Meter through 70 cm	\$1350
FTM-3200DR	2 Meter Mobile	\$180
FTM-100DR	VHF/UHF Mobile	\$340
FTM-400XDR	VHF/UHF Mobile	\$530
FT1XDR	VHF/UHF Handheld	\$320
FT2DR	VHF/UHF Handheld	\$450

Again, while these price may seem high, if you compare them to standard FM radios, the prices are not significantly higher.

Regular users of the repeater will notice a few things are different when using the new repeater. For one, it has a very basic controller with no bells or whistles. Gone is the hourly chime, net announcements, and courtesy beep. Analog monitors will also hear an annoying buzz through their radios when a digital signal is present. This can be eliminated by turning on the CTCSS Squelch decoder of your radios receiver. Set the CTCSS frequency to 71.9 Hz. This is our standard CTCSS. A benefit in doing this will be that the distant repeaters you have been hearing will no longer be heard. Of course that is not a benefit if you like listening to them.

Analog users take heart: We are planning on putting the old repeater back on the air and moving this new repeater to a different frequency. Having a new toy, we wanted to check it out and make sure it was working properly. Things will return to normal soon.

We will have three local repeaters (counting the UHF KD8EVR/R repeater). Those that wish to do digital will basically have their own frequency to play with. Those that wish to continue with analog FM will not be bothered by the buzzing sound and all the bells and whistles will be restored. I believe this will happen very quickly.

This accomplished the original intent of buying a new repeater in the first place. If one two meter repeater goes down, there will still be one two meter repeater up and running. And being at two different sites, the odds of both repeaters going down at the same time will be minimal. This is good for our long range plans in working with the Knox County Emergency Management and Knox County American Red Cross.

On March 18th and 19th our club participated in the **Woodland Trails Freeze-In**. This event took place at the Faith Baptist Church on Martinsburg Road. We actually set up four different demonstrations and the kids really enjoyed themselves, and so did the 67 “**Trailmen**” (that is what they call the young people) plus fathers that attended the event.

We set up the Go Boxes and had the HF and VHF station up and running. In the future we need to think through the antenna placement to get better performance but otherwise this went over very well. **Tom, KD8HSA** and **Scott, AC8PT** manned this demonstration and did a great job at describing our hobby.



The second station was a demonstration of a digital station and **Scott, K8AEC** was the expert here. Again antenna placement could have been better, but again kids and fathers were very interested in this set up.



The third station was outside! It was cold and at times even snowing. It was a demonstration of Fox Hunting and believe it or not **Emery, W8TW** along with **John, KD8WSI** endured the cold and snow. They had great fun looking for the fox, they also made several 2 meter contacts. Sorry no pictures from outside!

The fourth station was an information table and a CW demonstration. **Terry, KE8ANS** and **Don, W8PEN** were the gurus here and had great fun demonstrating code. We also made a little card to hand out to the kids as they passed through this station with the code and phonics listed on the front and back plus a little information concerning the club. This was a hit as the kids enjoy being able to make some noise.



There was actually a fifth station now that I think of it. I was comprised of those members who hung around on the repeater to talk with the kids. **Don, W8UMH; Jim, N8IBR** and **Ed, KE8ANU** filled in here.

We all had a great time and I would like to thank all those who participated.

Jim N8IBR

John KD8WSI

Don W8UMH

Ed KE8ANU

Emery W8TW

Terry KE8ANS

Don W8PEN

Tom KD8HSA

Scott AC8PT

Scott K8AEC

April 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>3</p> <p>9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN</p> <p>KC8BB –Bill</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner</p>
<p>10</p> <p>9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN</p> <p>W8PEN –Don</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7:00 PM MVARC meeting at the Knox County Red Cross Building</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17 7:00 am Earth Day @ Kenyon College, Gambier, OH</p> <p>9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN</p> <p>KD8WSI –John</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's</p>	<p>23 9:00 am NVIS Day at the Centerburg Conservation Club, Sycamore Road</p>
<p>24</p> <p>9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN</p> <p>KD8HSA –Tom</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's</p>	<p>30</p>
<p><u>I</u> MAY</p> <p>9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN</p> <p>KC8BB –Bill</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10:00 am Break- fast at Hardee's</p>	<p>7</p>