

# The Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

## MVARC Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

December, 2015



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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### [The View from the Presidents Desk](#)



Another month has passed! Wow, hard to believe. Hope you've all had a great Thanksgiving, we did. We had most all the children here (spouses and their children), except for one, under one roof. Twenty-one total it was chaotic here to say the least.

Last weekend November 21-22 was the ARRL sweepstakes I attempted to participate and as usual I have the lowest score. Oh well there is more room for improvement, the other 4 will have to work harder to see any gain next year. The sweepstakes started Saturday at 4pm, I had my radio on at noon everything checked out and was ready to go. I wasn't going to start until 6pm or thereabouts, since I had some more pressing things to get done. Finally, I was able to get on the air about 6pm. Powered up the rig and the SWR meter was in the red! Why? Check everything in the shack. Went outside and found that the long leg of the 160 meter OCF dipole was down, the rope had broken. It was dark, so no time to be trying

to hang a rope in the trees so I retired for the evening. The next morning prior to church I got my antenna back up in the air, so I would be able to operate later after church. It is 2pm Sunday still some time to operate in the sweepstakes (I think it ended at 10pm). Powered up the rig, started to tune, still in the red! Determined to make some contacts I got out the only other antenna that I have my NVIS from this spring and put it up, it tuned up fine and I was set to work 40 and 20 meters. I made a total of 12 contacts before I had to quit. I was really surprised how well the NVIS worked. I worked Texas, Florida, some place in Canada called Maritime. I pulled down the 160 OCF and found that the wire broke next to the balun. I fixed that and it is back up and seems to be doing fine. Next year I will have two antennas up prior to the start of the contest, for sure.

Next weekend is the Christmas Party at Parkside Restaurant and hope to see you there. Be there to cast your vote on officers for next year. The winter months are a good time to work on the FEMA courses that I mentioned last month. If you do, let Jim or I know and send a copy of your certificate, some have already completed a couple of the certifications, good work. We are also working on a calendar for next year of activities and hope to have it out in January. There is a lot going on and I am not mentioning everything. CW classes, Tech classes in January, contest, hamfest, etc. Let me know what you like and we will see where we can fit it in and as always any help is greatly appreciated when you are able.

73

Frank, KC8EVS



- Dec 4 @ 10:00 am** Breakfast at Hardee's on Coshocton Road
- Dec 6 @ 5:00 pm** **MVARC Christmas Party at Parkside Restaurant, 108 Mount Vernon Avenue**
- Dec 9 @ 5:00 pm** Dinner at the Southside Diner, South Main St
- Dec 11 @ 10:00 am** Breakfast at Hardee's on Coshocton Road
- Dec 12 @ 9:00 am** Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner  
Located at Coshocton Rd and Gilchrist Road
- Dec 13 @ 9:00 pm** ARES Sunday Night Net on the **K8EEN** Repeater
- Dec 14 @ 7:00 pm** Mt. Vernon ARC meeting at the Knox County Red Cross Training Center, 300 North Mulberry Street, Mount Vernon
- Dec 16 @ 5:00 pm** Dinner at the Southside Diner, South Main St
- Dec 18 @ 10:00 am** Breakfast at Hardee's on Coshocton Road
- Dec 20 @ 9:00 pm** ARES Sunday Night Net on the **K8EEN** Repeater
- Dec 25**                    **MERRY CHRISTMAS !!!**
- Dec 27 @ 9:00 pm** ARES Sunday Night Net on the **K8EEN** Repeater
- Dec 30 @ 5:00 pm** Dinner at the Southside Diner, South Main St
- Jan 1, 2016**                **HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!**
- Jan 3 @ 9:00 pm** ARES Sunday Night Net on the **K8EEN** Repeater
- Jan 6 @ 5:00 pm** Dinner at the Southside Diner, South Main St
- Jan 9 @ 9:00 am** Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner  
Located at Coshocton Rd and Gilchrist Road
- Jan 10 @ 9:00 pm** ARES Sunday Night Net on the **K8EEN** Repeater
- Jan 11 @ 7:00 pm** Mt. Vernon ARC meeting at the Knox County Red Cross Training Center, 300 North Mulberry Street, Mount Vernon

**The Mt. Vernon Amateur  
Radio Club Officers**

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Meeting called to order at 7:06 PM.

Motion to approve October Secretaries report-AC8PT, 2<sup>nd</sup> KC8MAB. Approved.

Motion to approve November Treasurers report-W8TW, 2<sup>nd</sup>, AC8PT. Approved.

### Committee Reports

Repeater W8PEN, all still okay.

Mesh Network, W8PEN, still in the early stages.

Nominating Committee, W8PEN and KC8BB. All present officers agreed to run for office in 2016.

At present, the following have agreed to run for the following offices:

President-KC8EVS Vice President-KD8HSA Secretary-N8IBR Treasurer-KD8UR

The following members were nominated for the 4 open Board of Directors positions:

N8PPF, K8AEC, KE8ANS, KD8FXX, W8UMH, AC8PT.

If you would like to run, or nominate someone else to run for any of these positions, please contact W8PEN or KC8BB before the December meeting.

Motion to approve nominees made by N8PPF, 2<sup>nd</sup>, W8UMH. Approved.

### Old Business

Discussion was held again asking someone to be Field Day chairperson. W8PEN volunteered asking that he could assign station assistant chair people for each of the stations put on the air. Numerous members volunteered to help.

KC8EVS brought up that the Parkside Restaurant was willing to open on Sunday December 6<sup>th</sup> for our annual club Christmas dinner. If we have the usual 25 to 30 people attend, they will have an open menu. Anything over 30, and they may want to do a set menu. KC8EVS needs to know as soon as possible who is going to attend.

KC8EVS discussed what FEMA courses were needed to meet the EMA's requirements. He also stated last he had been informed, that the EMA's office was planning to hold 4 simulated disasters a year.

KD8HSA reported he only purchased two headsets for the go boxes. He stated he wasn't going to purchase the 3<sup>rd</sup> headset until we know the status of the clubs FT-890 radio. At present that rig has transmit problems.

### New Business

AC8PT inquired if the club would be interested in reserving a sales table at the February Mansfield Hamfest. More discussion to follow at the December and January meetings.

KC8EVS reported the repeater antenna site lease had been signed.

W8PEN reported that the upcoming CW class would be starting at 7 PM on Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup>, and will be held at the Red Cross Annex building. The class should last approximately 2 hours each session.

W8PEN also stated that the tentative start date for the next Technician Class license would be late January of 2016.

N8PPF and others discussed turning in contest scores as a club along with individual filings.

Various upcoming operating contest were discussed.

It was mentioned that the Fort Wayne Indiana Hamfest was the upcoming weekend.

KE8ANY ask if it would be possible to have an upcoming club event calendar.

Motion to adjourn made by W8TW, 2<sup>nd</sup>, KD8HSA. Approved

N8IBR Secretary MVARC



By Don Russell, W8PEN

### [Put up an Antenna in the Winter: They work better!](#)

Okay. Maybe not.

However, with the start of the Contesting Season (Radio Sport), I have decided to redo a couple of antennas. Bad timing, but I did not like the results of my effort in the "CQ World Wide DX Contest" on SSB (Voice).

So, I have put up two new antennas and I am planning a third antenna for the ARRL 160 meter. To be honest, I don't like all that wire hanging up in the air. I like clean installations, which is why I chose my 160 meter Windom antenna a few years ago as my main antenna. So two out of the three antennas I am working on are going to be easy to put up temporary antennas. They will be contest specific that I can throw up in under an hour and then take down and pack away after the contest.

### [The Loop Antenna](#)

The first antenna I put up was an 80 meter loop antenna. The loop antenna was recommended to me by Jim Williams (N8IBR). Bill Bradley (KC8BB) has had much success with his loop antenna which was recently put up.

I chose to put up my loop antenna as a three legged triangle. It simply fit my trees better. Each leg is approximately 90 feet long for a total antenna length of about 270 feet. Sounds long, but it actually fits in very nicely.

There was some debate on whether to feed the loop with coax or ladder line. While I truly believe ladder line would be the best choice, coax is so much easier to work with that I decided to at least try coax first.

The antenna had an SWR of 1.2:1 on 3.750 MHz, which was the frequency the antenna was designed for. Problem was that the SWR rose very fast when moving from that frequency. I was hoping the SWR would stay under 3:1 for the whole band, but that was not the case. None the less, I decided to try it during the "ARRL November Sweepstakes, CW (Morse Code)". SWR on 40 through 10 meters was low enough that the internal antenna tuner on my Kenwood TS-590S handled it without a problem.

I did well in the contest. The loop did have problems tuning down to the CW bands, but performed well when I routed it through the External antenna tuner, which has a much larger range.

The receive noise level was so much lower on the loop compared to the windom that I found myself using the loop most of the time.

I ended up with over 500 contacts and worked all ARRL sections except three (Alaska, Alberta, and Northern Territories). I would say a very good effort.

For the SSB contest, the loop held its own. Once again, due to the low noise, I used the loop a majority of the contest.

Results on SSB were similar. Again, over 500 contacts and I missed four sections ((Org) in California, Nebraska, Virgin Islands, (NL) in Canada). Impressively, I made 275 contacts on 75 meters alone and added 150 contacts from 40 meters. On 20 through 10 meters, I used a mixture of the Windom, Loop, and a 20 through 10 meter ground plane antenna.

I am planning on keeping the loop up as a permanent antenna. However, I am seriously thinking of taking it down and putting up a 160 meter loop. I have enough room and a clear shot to some trees. That might have to wait until next spring though.

### [The Ground Plane Antenna](#)

The second antenna I put up was the 20 – 10 meter ground plane antenna mentioned earlier. While my main reason for wanting this antenna was for the “CQ World Wide DX Contest” at the end of November, I did get this up in time to try it out for the Sweepstakes, SSB.

I am glad I did. Some pretesting before the contest showed that this is a very capable antenna in it own right.

I will not go into details on this antenna here. I am planning an article strictly for this antenna. However, in brief, this antenna is made with three separate radiating vertical elements and six elevated radial wires. Two radial wires were cut for each band. Vertical radiating elements were held about 6 inches apart by some old bamboo rods I happened to have. The elevated radials were simply tied to different points to keep the different radials separated by a few inches.

The three vertical elements were all tied to the center wire of coax. The Six radial wires were connected to the outer braid of the same coax. The Radials wires were about three feet off the ground.

SWR was low enough that I did not need an antenna tuner for any of the designed bands (20, 15, and 10 meters) so I did not do any trimming.

This antenna worked well enough to bag me some sections on 20 and 15 that I could not get with the windom or loop. So, it was worth putting up for sure.

I am looking forward to seeing how this antenna plays out in the DX contest. Readers can look forward to a construction article on this antenna in a future issue of this Newsletter.

### [160 meter “L” Antenna](#)

This antenna is in the making. I have a couple of weeks to work on this one. Please watch for details and results of this antenna in next months Newsletter.

### [Mesh Network Project](#)

One last item before I end this column. Mesh Network plans are still going at a turtles pace. I still have hopes of getting something up soon.

I have installed a Mesh Network mobile in my car. This has allowed me to roam around Mt. Vernon looking for my Mesh Node and Barry Butz's (N8PPF) Mesh Node.

The good news is that I was able to pick up Barry's Mesh Node on the North Side of Mt. Vernon on a hill. The location was very close to where we want to place one of our nodes (The water tower). Distance was 3.5 miles. Very impressive.

So, I know the mesh will work. Just need to get r done.

See you at the December Meeting / Christmas Party at the Parkside Restaurant.

### [Contesting for Fun](#)

**By Barry Butz N8PPF**

The MVARC Contesters entered the ARRL November SSB Sweepstakes with a club team of five operators. They were Jim N8IBR, Don W8PEN, Terry KE8ANS, Frank KC8EVS and Barry N8PPF. Band conditions were less than ideal, especially on 10 meters, but 40 and 80 were quite good after sunset. To my surprise, the team's total QSO count hit 1413. That's comparable to our recent Field Day efforts! I didn't have any certain goal in mind but now we have one for next year. Also, three of us came very close to clean sweeps of ARRL's 83 sections. Jim had 81, I had 80, and Don had 79. The one missed by each of us was Nebraska. Do any hams live in Nebraska? (By the way, in 2011 that was my last state worked to complete my WAS.)

Coming up in December is the ARRL 10 Meter contest from 8pm on the 11<sup>th</sup> to 8pm on the 13<sup>th</sup>. It's for phone and/or CW. If the band is open this contest can be exciting.

[Contesting for fun continued on Page 6](#)

Last year I made 131 contacts in 22 states, 32 countries, and 6 continents. For the exchange you send your call, 59 or 599, and your state. You receive the same from North American stations. For DX stations you receive call, 59 or 599, and a serial number. Logging software makes it easy. Since this is a 10 meter contest, it is a good opportunity for Technicians. The lower portion of the band is where the much of the action is. Give it a try. See [arrl.org/10-meter](http://arrl.org/10-meter) for complete details. Secretary Jim has registered us with the ARRL as the "Mt Vernon (OH) ARC Contesters". When we submit logs the club needs to be specified with exactly these words.

Also, on the first weekend in December is the 160 meter contest. I know some members are getting ready. I'm not equipped antenna-wise for 160 but maybe I should see if I can work something out. Supposedly there's a way to connect an 80 meter dipole to use it on 160. Hmm. See [arrl.org/160-meter](http://arrl.org/160-meter) for contest details.

We'd like to hear your thoughts and your experiences. Send a few words to the editor. 73.

**Editors Note:** <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar> has all details and information of current and future contests next year

## [Kids are Not the Future of Ham Radio](#)

**By Bob Witte, K0NR**

You've heard it a million times: our kids are the future. That statement gets applied to almost everything, including amateur radio. How can you argue with an obvious fact like that?

But I am starting to think it is incorrect.

We've had really good success on creating new hams of all ages in our Technician License Class (at the Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association). We've been doing this for a while now and I think I am seeing a pattern emerge. We've been able to attract middle school students to the class and help them get their ham radio license. I've talked to many of them on the air. They've helped out with public service events. They seem to have fun playing with radios.

Then this thing called high school happens. The high school phase in the US is filled with tons of stuff to do: studying, homework, AP classes, science competitions, sports, dating, movies, driving and after school jobs. Way too much stuff. Ham radio starts to take a backseat to these normal high school activities. Then we don't see the kids at the radio club meetings or chatting on the local repeater because they are busy doing other things. Have we lost them forever? Not sure.

High school is often followed by college which has its own set of challenges: a totally new environment, away from home, a new set of people, new studies, etc. There might be a ham radio club on campus but maybe not. If a kid is not off to college they are (hopefully) out doing something to establish themselves in this world. Eventually they emerge on the other side, get a job, get themselves established, sometimes with a spouse and maybe a kid or two. By this time they are 25 to 30 years old, depending on the individual.

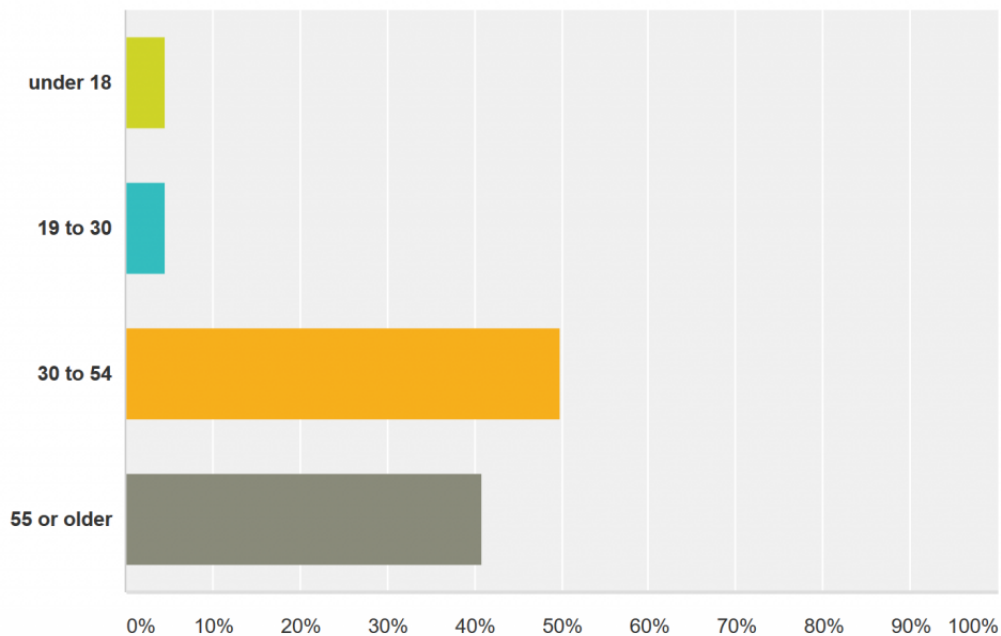
I recently posted about the demographics of our students in the Tech License Class (<http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2015/10/where-are-the-new-technicians-coming-from/>).

[Kids are Not the Future of Ham Radio continued on page 7](#)

The chart below shows the age distribution of our students from our most recent class. Hmm, clearly most of our students are 30 or older. (Sorry, we have not collected age data with finer resolution.) This particular class is light on the under 18 crowd...sometimes we have a clump of kids in the mix.

### What is your age?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



For whatever reason, it seems that most people find themselves in a situation as an adult that causes them to say “I want to get my ham radio license.” When asked why they want to get their ham license, the top response is always emergency/disaster communications, followed by backcountry communications, pursuing electronics as a hobby and learning about radio communications. I suspect that starting to be established in a community and having some disposable income also play a role.

My hypothesis is that the most effective way of growing a vibrant ham radio community is to target adults ages 25 to 40.

This age range is more equipped and ready to be ham radio operators and are still young enough that they will be around for a while. Of course, we still want to work with all age groups, including kids and retirees. We’ve all seen very young hams get the bug for ham radio early and carry it throughout their life. And we also see plenty of older folks get interested in the hobby as they approach or enter retirement. We don’t want to miss out on either of those groups.

So that’s my read on the situation. I’ve got some data to support my theory but I can’t really prove it. What do you think? What are you seeing in your ham radio community?

Bob Witte, K0NR, blogs about amateur radio at K0NR.Com. You can find this post at <http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2015/11/kids-not-the-future/>. You can e-mail him at [bob@k0nr.com](mailto:bob@k0nr.com). He is also on Twitter: @K0NR.

How do Weather Spotters communicate?      When Disaster Strikes, how will you communicate?

# Ham Radio

“Whether you want to be an effective weather spotter, useful during disasters, or just prepared, you really need a ham license.”



## HAM RADIO CLASSES NOW FORMING

Upon passing this course, you will be able to talk to local hams and at times Amateur Radio Operators around the world using voice, digital, and Morse Code. Morse Code is not required to earn your license.



**Date:** Begins Thursday, January 14, 2016 and will be held every Thursday Through February 25, 2016 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Exams will be held Saturday, February 27, 2017 at 9:00 AM. Pre-Register and Walk-ins welcome.

**Location:** Classes will be held at the Knox County Chapter of the American Red Cross, 300 North Mulberry Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. We will be using the Training Center which is in back of the main building.

**Cost:** This course is sponsored by the Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club. The course and course material are provided free of charge. Those passing the exam will receive a free one year club membership.

**Exam:** There is a \$15.00 Fee for taking the exam. This fee goes to the testing organization and the club does not retain any testing fees.

For more information about Ham Radio, please visit our website at [www.mvarc.net](http://www.mvarc.net) or check our our National Organization, the American Radio Relay League at [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).

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# Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club

## Election Ballot December 2015

### President

<b>Frank Counts</b>	
<b>Write In</b>	

### Vice President

<b>Tom Evans</b>	
<b>Write In</b>	

### Secretary

<b>Jim Williams</b>	
<b>Write In</b>	

### Treasurer

<b>Tony Spiegel</b>	
<b>Write In</b>	

### Director (Vote for 4)

<b>Berry Butz</b>	
<b>Don Blizzard</b>	
<b>Terry Windsor</b>	
<b>Scott Fields</b>	
<b>John Barr</b>	
<b>Write In</b>	

# December 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 5:00pm Dinner at Southside Diner	3	4 10:00 am- Breakfast at Hardee's  160 Meter CW Contest	5 160 Meter CW Contest
6 5:00pm Christmas Party at Parkside  9:00pm Ares Sunday Night Net on K8EEN	7	8	9 5:00pm Dinner at Southside Diner	10	11 10:00am Breakfast at Hardee's	12 10 Meter Contest. Mixed Mode 10:00am Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner
13 10 Meter Con- test Mixed Mode 9:00pm Ares Sunday Night Net on K8EEN	14	15	16 5:00pm Dinner at Southside Diner	17	18 10:00am Breakfast at Hardee's	19
20 CW Rookie Round- up 9:00pm Ares Sunday Night Net on K8EEN	21	22	23 5:00pm Dinner at Southside Diner	24	25 <b>Merry Christmas !!!</b>	26
27 9:00pm Ares Sunday Night Net on K8EEN	28	29	30 5:00pm Dinner at Southside Diner	31	1 <b>Happy New Year !!! 2016</b>	