

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

December, 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
K8EEN Repeater: 444.600 MHZ (+5 MHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)**

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Emergency Preparedness

**By Patrick Valentino, KD8PSM
Knox County ARES Emergency Coordinator**

Are you Winter Storm Ready?

According to NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate Prediction Center, La Niña will influence winter conditions, bringing wetter, cooler conditions to the northern United States. Forecasters say La Niña will bring more snow across Ohio and all of the Great Lakes. There is still time to prepare!

A winter storm watch means conditions exist for a severe winter storm to develop. A winter storm watch alerts the public to the potential for heavy snow, significant icing or a combination of these events. Winter storm watches are issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a winter storm. Prepare for the weather event in case conditions worsen.

Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local television or radio news station for up-to-date weather information.

Emergency Preparedness, continues on page 2

A winter storm warning is issued by the National Weather Service when heavy snow or a combination of heavy accumulation of snow, freezing rain, heavy sleet or blowing and drifting snow is expected to occur in your area. Continue to listen to NOAA Weather, local television, radio or news station for up-to-date weather information, including school and business delays/closures.

Ensure you have enough supplies for every member of your family to survive on for at least three days. Include winter-specific items such as rock salt to melt ice on walkways, sand to improve traction, snow shovels and other snow removal equipment. Keep a stock of food, drinking water, warm clothing, blankets or sleeping bags on hand.

Have a Family Plan and make sure to have in place before there's an emergency. Sit down with the family and decide what the family is going to do. Keep a copy of the plan in safe place where everyone can access it and remember to include provisions for pets and family members with functional needs.

Prepare for possible isolation in your home. If your main source of heat is a propane tank, ensure it has fuel. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood if you have a fireplace or wood-burning stove. Store extra blankets, coats, sweaters, etc. in your family preparedness kit. Keep a fire extinguisher on hand, and ensure that everyone knows how to use it.

Everyone should be prepared for a power outage. Keep a flashlight and extra batteries handy. Use care when burning candles; open flames are a fire hazard. If you have a water well and pump, keep an emergency supply of bottled water and if possible fill your bathtub with fresh water.

And if you're traveling:

LEVEL 1: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be icy. Motorists are urged to drive very cautiously.

LEVEL 2: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be very icy. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roads.

LEVEL 3: All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be driving during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel or a personal emergency exists.

Have a great Holiday and travel safe.

Patrick Valentino, KD8PSM

The Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club Officers

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MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14TH, 2016 MVARC MEETING

BEFORE THE MEETING STARTED, A DRAWING FOR A DOOR PRIZE OF AN ARRL COFFEE MUG DONATED BY N8SY WAS MADE. KE8ANS WON THE MUG. CONGRATS TERRY, THANKS SCOTT.

GENERAL BUSINESS

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY KC8EVS AT 00:05 UTC.
MOTION MADE BY W8TW, 2ND W8PEN, TO ACCEPT OCTOBER 10TH MINUTES. APPROVED.
MOTION TO APPROVE NOVEMBER TREASURERS REPORT MADE BY KC8BB, 2ND KE8ANS.
APPROVED.

REPEATER REPORTS: 2 METER OK. 446 MHz REPEATER AND A MESH NODE HAVE RECEIVED APPROVAL TO BE INSTALLED AT KNOX COMMUNITY HOSPITAL. W8PEN WILL ORGANIZE WORK GROUP TO GET THESE INSTALLATIONS TAKEN CARE OF.

N8SY ANNOUNCED TO THE GROUP THAT KD8PSM HAD BEEN SELECTED AS OUR NEW KNOX COUNTY EC.

KD8PSM THEN REPORTED THE ARES AND EMA ARE STILL WORKING ON THE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIO ROOM AT THE 911 CENTER. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT THE ARES AND EMA ARE ASKING THAT ARES MEMBERS HAVE A MINIMUM OF THE ICS COURSES 100 AND 700 TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE AT THE 911 CENTER. BOTH ORGANIZATIONS WOULD ALSO LIKE MEMBERS TO TAKE THE ICS 200 AND 800 COURSES FOR FIELD DEPLOYMENT. HE THEN STATED THAT THE EMA HAS ADDITIONAL SIMULATED DISASTER TRAINING SESSIONS PLANNED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. MORE INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW AS HE RECEIVES IT.

N8SY WHO WAS PRESENT, EXPLAINED TO THE MEMBERSHIP WHY MANY OF THESE COURSES THAT THE EMA AND ARES ARE REQUESTING ARE NEEDED. SO IF ARES IS IN YOUR INTEREST, THE WINTER MONTHS ARE A GREAT TIME TO GET ON LINE AND TAKE THESE COURSES.

KC8BB AND W8PEN PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS FOR NOMINATION FOR 2017

KC8EVS-PRESIDENT
KE8ANS-VICE PRESIDENT
N8IBR-SECRETARY-TREASURER
KC8BB-BOARD OF DIRECTORS
N8PPF MOVED, W8TW 2ND TO ACCEPT SLATE AS PRESENTED. APPROVED.
IF ANY MEMBER WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE OR RUN FOR AN OFFICE, PLEASE ADVISE THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

PRESIDENTS GOODIES

DUE TO LIMITED RESTURANT AVAILABILITY, IT WAS DECIDED TO HOLD OUR DECEMBER 12TH REGULAR MEETING AND HOLIDAY MEAL AT ALLISON'S FINER DINER. THE MEETING WILL START AT 6 PM INSTEAD OF THE USUAL 7 PM. AND THE RESTURANT WILL HAVE LIMITED BUFFET STYLE MEAL AVAILABLE. YOUR MEAL COST WILL BE \$15.95 PLUS TIP. KC8EVS WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE MEMBERS WHO PLAN TO ATTEND WOULD LET HIM KNOW SO HE CAN ADVISE THE RESTURANT ON THE NUMBER OF DINERS TO EXPECT.

KC8EVS REPORTED THAT THE COMMITTEE WORKING ON THE NEW CLUB HANDBOOK WAS STILL REVIEWING AND AMENDING IT. THEY HOPE TO HAVE A NEW VERSION AVAILABLE SOON. HE ALSO STATED THAT TRAINING SESSIONS TO FAMILIARIZE MEMBERS WITH OUR GO BOXES AND CLUB STATION EQUIPMENT ARE IN THE PLANNING STAGES. THESE SESSIONS ARE TO MAKE SURE MEMBERS WILL KNOW HOW TO USE THE EQUIPMENT IF CALLED ON TO DO SO, IN AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY SITUATION.

GENERAL INFORMATION

N8IBR MENTIONED THE UP COMING ARRL SWEEPSTAKES CONTEST, AND ENCOURAGED MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE. SOME CONTESTS SUCH AS THIS ONE, CAN BE OPERATED BOTH AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND A CLUB. SO WHEN YOU TURN YOUR SCORE IN, IF IT IS LISTED AS A JOINT CONTEST, TURN IT IN WITH BOTH YOUR CALL, AND "Mt Vernon (OH) ARC Contesters". SEVERAL MEMBERS ARE DOING THIS NOW. CHECK WITH W8PEN, N8PPF, KE8ANS, OR N8IBR FOR MORE INFORMATION. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THESE TYPES OF CONTESTS CAN IMPROVE YOUR OPERATING SKILLS UNDER DIFFICULT CONDITIONS, HELPING TO MAKE OPERATING DURING AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY EASIER FOR THE OPERATOR AND, AN ADDED BENEFIT IS THAT CONTESTS ARE JUST PLAIN FUN.

IF ARES DOESN'T INTEREST YOU, THERE ARE DOZENS OF CONTESTS OUT THERE THAT MAY INVOLVE THE PARTICULAR PART OF OUR HOBBY THAT INTERESTS YOU. IT WAS SUGGESTED YOU LOOK INTO AND PARTICIPATE IN SOME OF THESE CONTESTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THAT PART OF THE HOBBY.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

N8IBR THEN REMINDED MEMBERS WE WERE ENTERING THE TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN YOUR 2017 MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE. BY OUR BY LAWS, WE START COLLECTING DUES FOR THE NEXT YEAR DURING THE LAST QUARTER OF THE PRESENT YEAR. IF YOU CAN'T ATTEND OUR REGULAR MEETINGS, AND WISH TO PAY YOUR DUES, SEE ANY CLUB OFFICER, OR MAIL THEM IN WITH THE MEMBERSHIP FORM, IN MOST NEWSLETTERS.

W8PEN MADE, N8PPF 2ND A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 00:58 UTC. APPROVED

WE HAD 16 MEMBERS AND 2 GUESTS PRESENT
NO 50/50 THIS MONTH
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
N8IBR-SECRETARY MVARC

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JUST A REMINDER

This is just a reminder that your MVARC 2017 dues are now due. The following members have paid their dues and can ignore this reminder. They are not listed alphabetically:

Paid through 2017: KD8AFT, KD8UT, KD8WSJ, W8PEN, KC8REB, N8PPF, N8IBR, KE8HNB, KC8EVS, W8TW, KE8ANS, KD8PSM, W8UMH, KB8YL, KE8EYX, KE8FHI & KE8FHF

Paid through 2018: KB8WCU, W8DEP, KF4HHZ

Life Member: N8NMQ

If you feel you have been omitted in error, please contact me.

A membership form appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Thanks, and have a safe and joyful holiday season. 73,
N8IBR-Secretary MVARC

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AMAZON SUPPORT FOR ARRL

Amazon is offering to donate a portion of its sales to charities of customer's choice. ARRL is one of the listed charities. The amount they donate is 0.5% of the price. That seems like small amount but it has amounted to over \$11,600 so far. If you'd like to do this shop at www.smile.amazon.com instead of www.amazon.com. You can choose ARRL or another charity if you wish. Also see www.arrl.org/amazon for more info.

Barry, N8PPF

Now Recruiting New Members

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service Needs You!

Amateur Radio or “Ham” License required

Help communicate during local and national disasters

Use your skills to assist during public service events such as bike races, marathons, and parades.

Become an official “Weather Spotter”

Join the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and become trained in emergency response.

Enjoy talking to hams all over the world via radio

Ham Radio Classes are now forming. Upon passing this course you will be able to talk to local hams and Amateur Radio Operators around the world using voice, digital, and Morse Code. **Morse Code is not needed to earn your license and requires extra study.**

Date: Classes begin Thursday, January 12, 2017 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm and will be held every Thursday through February 23, 2017.

Exams will be held Saturday, February 26, 2017 starting at 9:00 pm

An optional two part course will be offered March 2nd and March 9th from 7:00pm to 9:00pm on how to set up your ham radio station, program your radio, and conduct “on the air” contacts.

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. There is a testing fee of \$15.00 at the time of the exam.** This fee goes to the testing organization and the club does not retain any of the testing fees. The club offers a one year free membership to those taking the course and passing the exam.

For more information about Amateur Radio and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, please visit these websites:

<http://www.arrl.org>

<http://www.mvarc.net>

<http://www.arrl-ohio.org>

For more information or to sign up for the course contact:

Don Russell, W8PEN, Phone: 740-397-0249, Email: w8pen@arrl.net

Radio Activity

By Don Russell, W8PEN

There have been a few major things that have happened concerning our club over the last month. These are positive steps in our continuing effort to supply a public service to our community and have some fun while doing so.



Patrick Valentino, KD8PSM, Knox County EC

First I would like to congratulate Pat as our new Knox County ARES Emergency Coordinator. Pat has taken on a huge responsibility here and I am sure he is worthy of it. I encourage all club members to support Pat to the best of their abilities. If you have not joined the ARES team, now would be a good time to do so. With fresh leadership, local hams should see improved relations between the club and the ARES. But nothing can be done without the support of our Knox County Ham Community.

Repeater at Knox Community Hospital

The club and ARES have been approved for the installation of our 440 MHz repeater at the KCH. The repeater itself has already been installed in a communications rack owned by Arlin Bradford, KD8EVR. During the installation we ran into one hiccup. The antenna we were going to use had been up on the roof for 20 or 30 years. It was found corroded and defective and not worth the effort trying to repair.

After some discussion, it was decided that the club would purchase a new antenna for around \$200. Then Arlin, once again came to the rescue and offered the club a used commercial antenna and all the trimmings (feedline, lightning arrestor, etc.) The antenna is about 2 years old, so it has plenty of use left in it. I am hoping to have the antenna installed by the end of November or the first week of December.

The repeater is the Yaesu DR-1X analog/digital repeater that the club bought this past summer. It has been in operation most of the summer at Barry's, N8PPF residence. However, the coverage was not very good to the North East of Mt. Vernon and the club has been looking for an alternate site.

Mesh Network Node at KCH

The club and ARES was also approved for installing a Mesh Network Node on the roof of the KCH building. This has been done and the Node is working very well indeed.

After some antenna adjustments at our Red Cross Node, we now have linked RF Nodes between W8PEN, N8PPF, K8EEN (KCH), and AC8PT (Red Cross). We also have an RF link between KC8BB and KC8UR, but we are using an internet tunnel to connect these two Nodes to our other RF Nodes. I am hoping to have this a total RF link in the near future. Honestly though, we may be forced to wait until Spring and some warm weather.

In addition to the Nodes listed above, we have three nodes tunneling via internet: W8TW, KE8ANS, and N8IBR. Once again, we will strive to get these three Nodes online as RF Nodes in the future.

We also have Frank, KC8EVS, working on a Node. He should be up and running soon. We expect Frank to be able to link with KC8UR or KC8BB.

Radio Activity, continues on page 7

As you see, this project is growing fast. If you wish to join the fun, contact me at w8pen@yahoo.com or w8pen@arrl.net. I am pretty confident that if you supply a 20 foot mast and the equipment, and live in Mt. Vernon, we can get you connected. Your cost would be right around \$100.

Technician Class Course

It is time to start preparing for our Technician Class course. This year, I am planning on the first class to be January 12, 2017. I am thinking of a sign up day Saturday, January 7th. I am not sure we have enough time to organize an individual sign up day however.

This year we are going to be stressing public service with the hopes of expanding our ARES membership. If there is anyone wishing to become an instructor, let me know. Currently we have five instructors but can always use more. I am also planning to add a two part course on how to set up and operate your radio and communicate via ham radio, which would start on the following Thursday after the VE test session. Please see the flyer in this Newsletter. Feel free to copy and post with proper permission.

My Antenna and Contesting

The last couple of newsletters I have been writing about my 20 meter vertical. I am somewhat mystified by its performance. While chasing Parks in the ARRL National Parks on the Air event, I have busted many pileups. I hear parks with the vertical that I cannot copy on my other two antennas I use for 20 meters. Yet, during contests it seems to be very ineffective. I call and call and no one answers my CQ's. Or, I search and pounce and have to repeat the contest exchange more than I should.

Curiously, the 20 meter vertical has proven to be a very good low noise antenna on 160 meters. I was not expecting that. Signals that are in the noise on my 160 meter Windom or 160 meter inverted L are weak but above the noise on the vertical. So, during the ARRL 160 meter contest, I plan on using the vertical strictly as a receive antenna. I will let you know how that works out.

Since the vertical was not working out as I hoped it would during contests, I decided to try raising my 160 meter windom antenna a bit. I had it in place as an inverted V antenna for many years. Got the old sling shot out yesterday and I now have the long end on the windom up about 40 feet. The short end is still up about 15, but I figured that getting 75 percent of the antenna up higher may be enough. The antenna is almost horizontal to the ground now. Will let you know next month if I see any improvement.

Contesting for Fun

by Barry Butz N8PPF

We may not have set the bands aflame but the MVARC Contesters had a great time trying in the ARRL November SSB Sweepstakes. Participants were Don W8PEN, Jim N8IBR, Terry KE8ANS, and Barry N8PPF. Those four made 444, 308, 195, and 183 contacts – 1130 in all. Maybe that will place us as high as last year in the standings. (Last year was good; see the August newsletter). A new thing we tried was the Mesh Chat among us during the contest. Each sent occasional updates on how he was doing.

The CQ Worldwide DX contest was in late October. Entering were Don W8UMH, W8PEN, KE8ANS, and N8PPF. Conditions weren't so hot. Personally, I only made half as many contacts as last year. They were mostly in South America and the Caribbean, just a few in Europe. Results haven't been published yet.

Coming up on December 10 and 11 is the ARRL 10 meter contest. This one can be exciting if the band cooperates. These days you never know about that but being a 48 hour contest, there are two chances that one day will be good. Technicians have the full CW portion of the band and the most active part of the SSB portion available to them. See <http://www.arrl.org/10-meter> for details. That page also has a link to an easy to build ground plane antenna.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Club dues run from January 1 to December 31st and are collected the last quarter of the year. You can mail in your dues to the address shown below, bring them to a meeting, or give them to any club officer. Visit our web page at: www.mvarc.net for further club information. Dues are \$12.00 regular membership. They are \$10.00 for those over 65 years of age, 2nd members in the same family, and for those living outside of Knox County.

The Mt Vernon Amateur Radio Club
P O Box 372
Mt Vernon, Ohio 43050

NAME _____ CALLSIGN _____

STREET OR P O BOX _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ LICENSE CLASS _____

ARRL MEMBER (Y/N) _____ E MAIL ADDRESS _____

DONATIONS (OPTIONAL) _____

SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE MEETING PROGRAMS:

Is there a market for a \$400 “prepper” radio?**By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU**

A couple of days ago, a reader wrote:

"I would like to know if it would be feasible to build a radio with the following features:

- * SSB operation (only SSB is required, CW would be an additional benefit)
- * 20 – 50W of power
- * Portable-friendly (lightweight, capable of operating at lower voltages from small portable batteries)
- * Low receiver current drain
- * Coverage of 40m and 80m bands. Very limited coverage is acceptable. Even channelized coverage of a few select frequencies would be acceptable.
- * S-meter

"It strikes me that there is a large market for ham radio products for “preppers,” and there has been a lot of interest in the Baofeng line of radios from that market. I think there would be a LOT of interest in a radio that could go far beyond line-of-sight and contact friends or family hundreds of miles away. Preppers would have little interest in contacts more than a state or two away, and no interest at all in novel operating modes. I wonder if a radio that trims away excess features (all-mode operation, wide frequency coverage, high power output, sophisticated audio filtering) could be produced for a lot less cost than currently available HF rigs. If so, and it was paired with a decent NVIS dipole and some General-class study materials and sold as a package deal, it could be a huge hit – Something you could tuck in a bug-out-bag, set up in the field, and use to make contacts in a reasonably local area, or set up in your backyard at home and use minimal power to operate.

"Is there a reason why I don't see radios like this on the market, some kind of technological limitation that would make this sort of thing impractical? If something like this was built, what kind of cost and performance would you expect? I'm certainly not expecting any kind of detailed analysis, but even just a speculation about if such a project could be feasible would be appreciated."

I replied:

"I think one of the reasons you don't see radios with the feature set you describe is that more full-featured radios are already pretty inexpensive. The Yaesu FT-450D, for example, costs less than \$800 and offers 100W output. The FT-817ND, which is designed for portable operation, costs less than \$700. Is that too much for preppers?"

"While it might seem like you could sell a radio with fewer features for less, I think that you hit the law of diminishing returns. At some point, removing features, doesn't reduce the cost all that much. For example, removing the CW capabilities from a transceiver capable of SSB operation really doesn't save that much because in a way CW operation is really just a subset of SSB operation. You'll save the cost of a key jack, but how much is that? Maybe a buck or two. Having said that, it could be that the big amateur radio manufacturers are overlooking an opportunity here."

We swapped a couple more e-mails about this. He noted, “Most preppers would probably rather buy a high-end AR-15 or several months worth of storage food for \$800 than a radio.” I suggested, “If there was a catastrophic event, and you really needed to communicate, wouldn't it seem silly to have not spent the extra \$400 on a really decent radio?”

What do you think? Is my analysis a little too simplistic perhaps? Are amateur radio manufacturers ignoring a potential market?

Dan, KB6NU, is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. You can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KC8BB –Bill	5	6	7 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	8	9 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	10 9:00 am Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner ***** Dec. 10-11 10 Meter Contest
11 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN –Don ***** 10 Meter Contest	12 6:00 pm MVARC Meeting at Allison's Finer Diner	13	14 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	15	16 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	17
18 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KE8ANS –Terry	19	20	21 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	22	23 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	24
25 Christmas 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN	26	27	28 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	29	30 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	31
1 January 2017 New Years Day 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KC8BB –Bill	2	3	4 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	5	6 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	7