



Ham Radio Rocks

The Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club February, 2015 Newsletter



Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each Month at 7:00 PM at the Knox County Chapter of the American Red Cross, 300 N. Mulberry Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio

Local Ham Community

K8EEN Repeater: 146.790 Mhz (-600 Khz With PL of 71.9 Hz)
KD8EVR Repeater: 442.100 Mhz (+5Mhz With PL of 71.9 Hz)

Sunday Night ARES Net at 9:00 P.M. on The K8EEN Repeater
Wednesday S. Main St. Wendy's Dinner at 5:00PM
Friday Breakfasts at Hardy's at 10:00AM



Technician Class Course off to Fantastic Start

The Technician Class course is off to a very good start reported Don Russell, W8PEN, lead instructor and class organizer.

Presently, there are eighteen students signed up. Anywhere from 14 to 15 have actually made it to the class. Over the years, the class has averaged 4 – 8 students, so this is indeed a step up.

There are a few, that due to family circumstances, have not been able to attend class. These students have been given all the material they need for self study plus an offer of support from the instructors. We may well have four or more students never attend the class, but show up to take the exam on February 28th.

There is still time. For anyone wishing to join us, please send Don an email at w8pen@arrl.net. We would be happy to help you get caught up and move on to the current study sections.

Due to the large class and possible walk-ins during the VE testing, a larger testing site is being considered. Members can check out last minute changes to the testing site, once determined, by going to this web page:

http://www.arrl.org/exam_sessions/search

Simply put in your zip code and do a search. Our test session should show up with all the current information (once submitted). Information should be there by the time members receive this Newsletter. If not, keep checking.

In helping students with their self study, a very good web

Calendar of Events Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club

- Feb 9: Mt. Vernon ARC meeting. 7:00 PM at the Knox county Red Cross Training Center, 300 N. Mulberry St, Mt. Vernon, Ohio
- Feb: Upcoming VE Exam Sessions
http://www.arrl.org/exam_sessions/westerville-oh-43082-9033-6
- Feb 1: Navassa Island Dxpedition:
<http://navassadx.com/>

Announced Dxpensions:
<http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html>
- Feb 11: Dinner at Wendy's on S. Main St. 5:00 PM
- Feb 13: Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 AM
- Feb 14: Breakfast at Allison's Finer Dinner, 11587 Gilchrist Rd. 9:00 AM
- Feb 15: Mid Winter Hamfest & Computer Show Plus VE Test Session
<http://hamfest.w8we.org/>
- Feb 18: Dinner at Wendy's on S. Main St. 5:00 PM
- Feb 20: Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 AM
- Feb 25: Dinner at Wendy's on S. Main St. 5:00 PM
- Feb 27: Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 AM
- Feb 28: VE Testing for all license class at the Training Center, 10:00 AM
- Mar 4: Dinner at Wendy's on S. Main St. 5:00 PM

*** Continued on Page 2 ***

page for Technician Class Self Study was found. If members know anyone who wishes to self study for the Tech Class license, you might direct them to this site:

<http://dcasler.com/ham-radio/training/>

You will need to buy the current edition of the ARRL Technician Class Study Guide to use this course, but it is well worth it. You can also use this site with the Tech Class Study Guide (W8PEN TECHNICIAN CLASS STUDY GUIDE), however, one would have to choose which video relates to which sections of the guide.

For those wishing to upgrade to the General Class license, this page may be of help:

<http://dcasler.com/ham-radio/general/>

This is the General Class Version and requires the ARRL Technician Class Study Guide.

General Class License Course Announced

Announcing the first annual General Class License Course sponsored by the Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club.

A general class course has been requested for several years by club members. "I have been shying away from organizing this course due to the complexity of a General Class course. It is much more difficult than the Technician Class course". Said Don Russell, W8PEN. "This will be an experimental class and success of the class will determine if future classes will be held"

Prerequisite for the class will be a Technician Class license. Required study material will be **The ARRL General Class License Manual For Ham Radio, ISBN 978-0-87259-811-9** and must be purchased by the student.

You can buy this study guide here:

<http://www.arrl.org/shop/ARRL-General-Class-License-Manual-7th-Edition/>

or here:

http://www.amazon.com/General-License-Manual-Softcover-Amateur/dp/087259811X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1331424339&sr=8-1

The videos from this site will be used during the class:

<http://dcasler.com/ham-radio/general/>

Classes are tentatively planned to begin two weeks after the end of the Technician Class course, which would be Thursday, March 12th. Site is to be determined, but will

Calendar of Events Continued from Page 1

- Mar 6:** Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 AM
- Mar 9:** Mt. Vernon ARC meeting. 7:00 PM at t Knox county Red Cross Training Center, 300 N. Mulberry St, Mt.Vernon, Ohio
- Mar 11:** Dinner at Wendy's on S. Main St. 5:00 PM
- Mar 13:** Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 AM
- Mar 14** Breakfast at Allison's Finer Dinner, 11587 Gilchrist Rd. 9:00 AM
- Apr 25:** NVIS Antenna Day: See Page 5
- June 27:** ARRL Field Day June 27 – June 28, 2015
<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>

probably be at the Red Cross Training Center or the Knox County Public Library.

This would be a good time for all the clubs Technician Class hams to upgrade before Field Day!

Minutes from the January 12th, 2015 meeting of the MVARC

Meeting called to order and all attendees were welcomed by President KC8EV5 at 7:03 PM.

Motion to accept December Secretaries minutes made by W8TW-2nd W8PEN and approved.

Motion to accept January Treasurers report made by W8PEN-2nd KD8WSI and approved.

Old Business

Repeater report- W8PEN reported all okay.

Go Box committee- KD8HSA reported that they were awaiting the receipt of the HF and vhf/uhf radios and other items so they could properly determine the needed size for the actual Go Box.

K8AEC reported that the K8EEN Yahoo group is still active and growing. If you have not joined the group, look up "K8EEN Yahoo Group" on the web and join the fun.

W8PEN reported the new Technician License Classes will be starting Thursday January 15th 2015 at the Red

Cross Annex Building. At present it looks like this will be a large class with at least 8, and possibly more students.

New Business

KC8EVS reported he was researching various yearly activities that the club had participated in in the past, and would have an updated Events list for 2015 at the February 9th meeting.

Vice President KD8HSA suggested that the club look into participating in operating special events such as The Ohio Parks on the Air. He also suggested the possibility of putting a special event station on the air during Mt. Vernon's Daniel Emmett Days celebration.

A non-working 12 volt power supply was offered to the club. A motion to accept, and then if cost effective to acquire and pay for the necessary parts to fix the power supply was made by W8PEN-2nd W8TW and approved.

With sadness, Emery, W8TW informed those members that were not aware that David Byrd, KD8RST was now a Silent Key. David's son is compiling a list of the equipment David had, and told W8TW that the family would like to sell this equipment. The family will get a list to W8TW, and Emery will advise the club of its contents.

N8IBR noted that a Sympathy Card had been sent to the David's family from the MVARC.

The upcoming state level ARES sponsored NVIS antenna test in late April was discussed, and W8PEN volunteered to head up the group looking into designing antennas for this event. N8IBR offered to assist. This event could be a great time to learn about designing HF antennas for the 40 and 80 Meter Bands. All members are encouraged to participate.

N8IBR mentioned he had learned of a Red Cross offered DST One-Shot Training Program covering 'Disaster Relief Operations'. Persons interested in attending this 6 hour free course need to contact James Sage via email at (james.sage@redcross.org). This course will be held at the Columbus Regional office of The American Red Cross, and registration must be received no later than January 25th, 2015. While this course is free, pre-registration is required.

A motion was made to give W8PEN a \$50.00 check to cover postage and printing cost for the clubs newsletter and Technician Class study guides. Motion made KD8HSA-2nd KD8WSI approved.

W8TW moved a letter thanking the City of Mt. Vernon for the use of the returned ENCOMM vehicle be sent. Moved W8TW-2nd KC8BB approved. KC8EVS and N8IBR will handle this. There were 11 members present.

The 50/50 drawing was won by N8IBR. The winnings were donated for a total of \$9.00 to be added to the treasury from the 50/50 drawing.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by W8TW-2nd W8PEN approved.

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Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
N8IBR Secretary MVARC

How do we promote better operating practices?



By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A lament that I often hear is that many amateur radio operators either don't seem to understand the importance of good operating practices or just don't care about them. Just this morning, a reader sent me an e-mail saying, "I think there are too many hams out there that don't know how to call a station on split frequency. It's amazing that we have so many dummies out there."

I wrote back, saying, "Maybe we need another type of Official Observer, called the Operating Observer. This group would note when operators aren't following good operating procedures and send people gentle reminders." Of course, as soon as I hit Send, I knew this wasn't a very good idea. As my reader noted, this would be a thankless job, and chances are the poor operators would simply ignore the notices, anyway.

Even so, there must be some way to encourage good operating procedures. One effort to promote better operating procedures is the DX Code of Conduct (<http://www.dx-code.org/>). This is a list of 13 suggestions to make DX operation, particularly pileups, less chaotic. The website includes a small image that you're supposed to post to your website to show that you support the Code. While this is certainly a step in the right direction, I wish there was something that we could do to be more proactive in improving operating practices.

There is, of course, the ARRL Operating Manual. This publication is now in its tenth edition and is a valuable source of information about how to operate properly. The problem is only a fraction of the amateur radio operators on the air have a copy, much less read it.

Another attempt at promoting good operating practice is the ARRL's A-1 Operator's Club (<http://www.arrl.org/a-1-op>). While a noble effort, I think that this program really requires more

promotion. In addition to being more aggressive about finding A-1 operators and bringing them into this "club," the ARRL should use it to promote better operation. Perhaps a series of videos with the A-1 Ops logo showing how to operate split or how to properly call CQ would help improve operating practices overall.

Talking about videos, I'd be surprised if there weren't already some YouTube videos that illustrate good operating practices. If you know of any, please e-mail me. It would be great to have a list of really good ones that I can send to people who want information on how to operate better.

What do you think? Do we need to be more proactive about encouraging hams to use good operating practices? If so, how do we go about it? What do you do to encourage better operating practices?

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When not worrying about the state of amateur radio operating practices, you'll find KB6NU working on updates to his "No Nonsense" study guides, teaching one-day Tech classes, or blogging about amateur radio at www.kb6nu.com.

It's catch up time! Please see Dan's second article on page 7.

Editor Comments:

This is a great subject. One of the things I notice with new hams that have not been corrected on our repeater is identifying call signs correctly. Unfortunately, the more senior hams fail to point out this error and as the new hams become senior hams, old habits die hard. So please listen up:

- When calling a station with a known call sign, always use his/her call first. Example: "**K8EEN this is W8PEN**". Do not give your call sign first. That confuses others on which station you really are.
- Likewise, when doing a 10 minute ID, do as above. Always say your call last.
- When Identifying a group, try to give the calls in the order in which the conversation is going. This is easier said than done. FCC rules require you to only ID your station, so you can simply give your call if you wish.
- Also, when in a group, it is nice to let a station know it is his or her turn to talk, so when you finish making your comments indicate which station you are giving the floor to. Example: "**Your turn Don**" or "**Over to you W8PEN**"

The above is the only things I notice on our repeater that probably should be corrected. Especially the first two items. Remember this: **HIS OR HER CALL FIRST!**

A very good free book in PDF format is called "**Ethics and Operating Procedures for the Radio Amateur**".

Download the book here:

<http://www.hamradio-operating-ethics.org/versions.html>

You will want to download the IARU-R2 file.

I have read this through. I do not agree with all that is said but if you follow the guide it would be hard to go wrong.

NVIS Antenna Day in April: "Sure, But Does That Emergency Antenna Really Work?"

From the ARES E-Letter, January 21, 2015

Ohio ARES is sponsoring the *NVIS Antenna Day*, April 25, 2015. We are encouraging groups in every Ohio county to devise several portable NVIS antennas that they think will perform, and then test them on the air. The program grows out of an annual antenna party in Ashtabula County, which is both an operating event and a great time in early spring to break out the hamburgers and have some fun. They have found a vast difference in actual antenna performance, and have been able to narrow down their choices for a real emergency setup.

The *NVIS Antenna Day* will begin at 10 AM Eastern time. We will operate on both 40 and 80 meters, operating at 100 watts as you might during a real emergency. While a typical session might go through the afternoon, there is no official closing time. It is not necessary to set up a completely portable or remote station, although the location should have enough room for several antennas and be in a fairly quiet RF environment. This is not a contest for QSO rates and points; rather it's aimed specifically at determining the best of several NVIS antennas through signal reports, and through coverage. A group could make several contacts with the same station as they try different antennas. Stations at key locations such as the Ohio state EOC will be on the air.

Groups should compile a list of their top three antennas with descriptions and photos. Ohio ARES will see if any particular antenna design bubbles up as the top performer across the entire state.

Antenna experimentation is an integral part of the hobby and the outcome will benefit each ARES group or club by helping to create an arsenal that can be deployed during a real

emergency. It could be a great time to test potential Field Day antennas, too. This is open to all hams as we hope they will become interested in joining their local ARES organization. - *Stan Broadway, N8BHL, Section Emergency Coordinator, Ohio*

Off To A Busy Start

Your new MVARC officers are now in office and busy getting things organized for the year 2015.

The continuation of activities from previous administrations is one of the goals of President, KC8EVS and Vice-President, KD8HSA. They are gathering a list of past events, i.e.: bike-a-thons, marathons, field day, and program presentations for our meetings.

They additionally are looking for any new activities that the members may wish to explore. If you have an idea, please forward it to them.

Currently the MVARC has 31 registered members for the year 2015. While this number is down a little from our total of 38 at the end of 2014, it still represents a good number of area Amateurs. And, some folks may have forgotten it was time for their yearly registration.

Treasurer, KC8UR, and Secretary, N8IBR, have the up to date membership list if you need to check on your status.

If you haven't registered, and wish to do so, you can do it at any club function. Or, you can complete and mail in the membership form found on page 10 in this newsletter with your 2015 dues.

Our Treasury is healthy, and should be adequate to cover any expenses the club might encounter in 2015.

We have a committee working on the assembly of our "GO BOX". They hope to have their recommendations turned in, and this project completed in the near future.

The club's 2015 Technician License Class started on January 15th, and had turnout of 13 students. This is thought to be one of the larger, if not the largest class sponsored by the club.

We have the upcoming statewide ARES NVIS antenna test on April 25th. W8PEN is heading this up for the club. All members are encouraged to present antenna ideas and participate.

Finally, we have our additional social gatherings. Wednesday's at 5 PM at Wendy's on the south side, Friday's at 10 AM at Hardees, and the 2nd Saturday of every month at 9 AM at Allison's Finer Diner. These

get-togethers are a great way for folks to get to know other members better.

And folks, this is just a brief list of the activities for the year 2015. Get ready, it looks like we are in for a fun and busy year ahead.

73.

N8IBR Secretary MVARC

Radio Activity



By Don Russell, w8pen

The club has decided to participate in the Ohio ARES NVIS Antenna Day scheduled for April 25, 2015. The club appointed Jim Williams N8IBR and myself to chair an organizational committee to coordinate this event.

I have lots of ideas for NVIS antennas. I am sure others have their own ideas. What I would like to do is that anyone wishing to help out would present an antenna design he or she would like to try. Email me your proposal at w8pen@arrl.net. Describe your design in detail and provide a picture, drawing, or web page so Jim and I can get a complete picture or your suggestion.

The antenna should be made out of inexpensive materials. PVC pipe for the masts should work. The antenna wire can be anything from size # 12 – 18. We are interested in antennas for 80 and 40 meters only. Antenna should not be over 10 to 15 feet high. I am thinking of asking the club for financial assistance on this endeavor so that members will be more willing to participate.

I already have a design in mind. I am planning on an 80 – 40 meter dipole at ten feet off the ground. There will be a reflector wire below the dipole at 1 foot off the ground which would form a beam straight up. Not sure if the dipole will be a fan dipole or use clip leads to determine the band. Still thinking about it.

Total cost of my project:

1-1/2 inch PVC pipe (2 pieces):	\$9.35
Antenna wire from junk box:	\$0.00
Coax from club FD:	\$0.00

As you can see, an antenna can be made on the cheap. If we use the clubs Field Day site, there are plenty of close spaced trees and you may not even need an antenna mast.

If you need something to build your antenna just spread the word. Members can loan or give wire and feed line.

Remember that I have lots of coax that we use for our Club Field Day. If your antenna is terminated into a short piece of coax with a PL-259 fitting, we can easily attach coax to it. Not all antennas have to be used at once. The idea is to compare performances of each antenna design. So one or two feed line should accommodate several antenna designs.

I will be looking forward to seeing several designs. Maybe we can go over them at the February Club meeting.

ARES Volunteers in Ohio Activate Following Loss of 911, Telephone Services

From the ARRL Letter, January 22, 2014

ARES volunteers in northeast Ohio activated on January 13 after 911 and other telephone services went down in six counties due to a power failure at a major AT&T center in Akron. The outage was blamed on a burst steam pipe. Cell telephones and the 800-900 MHz digital Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) remained functioning.

The Medina County Emergency Management Agency requested ARES communication support with surrounding counties and with the Ohio Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Columbus as a backup. At the same time, EMA Directors in Stark, Summit, Portage, Mahoning, and Columbiana counties alerted their ARES organizations.

Ohio ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator Stan Broadway, N8BHL, also requested activation of RACES station W8SGT at the Ohio EOC. Communication was established on 75 meters with several county Emergency Coordinators. The EOC also was able to link up with the Stark County 2 meter repeater, some 135 miles away.

Amateur Radio tactical communication regarding the status of systems and repairs confirmed what was being reported via MARCS. The Amateur Radio activation terminated after 4 hours, once the 911 system was brought back online.

"The Ohio EOC staff was extremely cordial as we coordinated with them, and the various county EMA directors were quick to activate Amateur Radio during the event," Broadway said.

Broadway said Ohio volunteers already had practiced for such an event, since the emergency scenario during the Ohio Simulated Emergency Test

(SET) last fall involved a statewide communication breakdown.

As occasionally happens, Broadway said, such events occur at inconvenient times. One EMA director was away on a honeymoon, and the Stark County EOC had no antennas in place while the roof of their building was being replaced. "Summit County (Akron) had an additional challenge," Broadway noted. "It was decided to move their EOC, because all phone service was down. ARES members had to grab a 'go bag' and quickly set up operations at an alternate site."

"My thanks to all who were involved!" Broadway said. "Our response was quick and professional, and was a great opportunity to show the value of Amateur Radio."

With Just a WSPR

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

It's really amazing what you can do with computers in amateur radio, and there's been an explosion in the number of digital modes. One interesting mode that I've recently been introduced to is WSPR, which is short for Weak Signal Propagation Reporting. The protocol and the original WSPR program was written by Joe Taylor, K1JT, and is designed for sending and receiving low-power transmissions on the HF bands to test propagation paths.

I won't try to cover all the technical details here. There are several sites that cover them pretty well:

- Wikipedia: WSPR (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WSPR_%28amateur_radio_software%29)
- G4ILO's Shack: WSPT - Distant Whispers (<http://www.g4ilo.com/wspr.html>)

I was introduced to WSPR by my friend, Joe, AC8ES. He posted a message to our club mailing list asking if anyone had a toroid core that he could buy to make a QRP balun for 10 MHz. When I asked what he was going to use it for, he said that he was making a WSPR transmitter with a Raspberry Pi, and the balun was for the dipole he built for it. He said that he'd gotten roped into doing this because he'd attended a local Raspberry Pi users' group, and when he mentioned he was an amateur radio operator, they encouraged him to try this project.

How could I refuse a request like that? I have a whole kit of ferrite cores, and after some back and forth, we found a small core that he could use.

The software he chose is

WsprpyPi (<https://github.com/JamesP6000/WsprpyPi>).

It's described a "Raspberry Pi transmitter using NTP-based frequency calibration." It uses a GPIO port to generate WSPR signals anywhere from 0 to 250 MHz. Joe said that there are several Raspberry Pi programs that run WSPR, but that he

chose this one because it seemed to have more features than the others.



The figure above shows Joe's setup. Since the output generates a square wave, a low-pass filter is needed to filter out the high-frequency components. As you can see, the GPIO output is fed through a 0.1uF decoupling capacitor into a Mini-Circuits 10.7MHz low-pass filter, then to a 1:1 balun, which is connected directly to the dipole elements.

Joe says, "The antenna is just a dipole taped up to the walls of my living room and hallway." As you can see he made the balun and dipole from 24 ga speaker wire.

The performance of this setup has been kind of amazing. In one e-mail, Joe reported, "Your toroid seems to be working well. Got the balun and antenna finished and executed seven WSPR transmissions from the Raspberry Pi. The WSPR reporting website WSPRnet (<http://wspnet.org>) came back with a couple dozen reception reports; typical distance is ~300+ miles, max was 593 miles." In a second e-mail, Joe writes, "Did a few more beacon transmissions and checked the WSPR signal reports again. Someone picked up my 5 mW signal from 1010 miles away in Canada."

Joe's turned into quite a WSPR fan. He's even written an Android app - WSPRnet Viewer

(<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.glandorf1.joe.wsprnetviewer.app>)

to retrieve and displays report from www.wspnet.org. Tapping on a specific report displays more details about it, along with a world map that shows transmitter and receiver locations.

Unfortunately, I don't have a Raspberry Pi, or I'd try this as well. I do have a BeagleBone Black, but there doesn't seem to be software that I can download and install as easily as the Raspberry Pi software. That being the case, this might be a good excuse to purchase one of those new, cheaper RPIs.

When he's not digging through his junk box or teaching amateur radio classes, KB6NU writes about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. He has just released The CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code. The book is available on Amazon.Com or on KB6NU.Com.

AFFILIATED CLUBS COORDINATOR REPORT

From the Ohio Section Journal, January 2015



By: John Myers, KD8MQ - ACC
kd8mq@arrl.net

Hi everyone,

Last month, I sent out several reminders about club report forms. The response has been good, but some still need to get your club information updated on the league website.

I realize that I hammer on this subject each month, but it really is that important. According to the league, you must update your information each year in order to remain in their database. I prefer that clubs do it not just once a year, but whenever there's a change in your club information. It really is in your clubs best interest to do this.

For instance, if a new or prospective Ham wants to find an Amateur Radio club in your area, the league website is often their first stop. If your clubs information at [arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) is inaccurate, or even worse, non-existent, what would happen? How do they find you? Think about it.

Affiliation is free. All we ask of you is to keep your paperwork up to date. If you don't, there are several affiliation benefits that could be jeopardized. Let's have a look at them.
Referrals

- Mailing Lists
- Club Commission Program
- Club Liability Insurance Plan
- Ham Radio Equipment Insurance Plan
- Library Book Set
- ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service

- Annual report
- Club Gavel Competition
- 50% Discount on Club Ads in QST

By the way, you can read more about all of these benefits at <http://www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-benefits>

That's quite a list, isn't it? Is your club information current? You can find out at www.arrl.org/find-a-club.

Pull up your club information using the search box on the left side of the page, then click on your club name to expand the listing. If the date in the annual report form is more than a year old, then you need to update your information. If you have questions, e-mail me at kd8mq@arrl.net

And, while we're on the subject, let's put in a plug for the ARRL Special Service Club Program.

Special Service Clubs have offered to go over and above to develop proficiency in five specific areas:

- New Ham Development and Training
- Public Relations
- Emergency Communications
- Technical Advancement
- Operating Activities
- Miscellaneous Activities

In a lot of cases, you may already qualify as an SSC. The application/renewal is simply paperwork. You can find the application form online at www.arrl.org/ssc-application.

Not sure if you qualify, or have questions? E-mail me at kd8mq@arrl.net Moving along, here's some freebies from the league:

First Contact award – lots of clubs have recently wrapped their licensing classes. I know that here in Northeast Ohio, there are some new call-signs on the air, and at club meetings. If you are fortunate enough to be someone's first contact, then check out this award on the league's website. The first contact award is presented to celebrate someone's first contact using Ham Radio. You can apply online at <http://www.arrl.org/first-contact>

Active Club Online Primer – This 48 page PDF is a compilation of the ARRL Club Presidents workbook, and the Special Service Club Manual. In my opinion, it should be required reading for all club officers. You can find it on the league website by doing a search

on "Active Club Online Primer". The URL is <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/Active%20Club%20Online%20Primer.pdf>

The ARRL Library - On January 13th, "The ARRL Library" opened for business. You can read about this in depth at <http://www.arrl.org/news/the-arrl-library-goes-live>.

So, what is the ARRL Library? It's a free repository of educational presentations and oral histories pertaining to Amateur Radio. It is aimed at helping to preserve Amateur Radio's history and to educate clubs and individuals. It's divided up into three sections, PDFs, PowerPoints, and Oral Histories.

While you can download PowerPoints and PDFs to use for club programs, you can also upload your material to the library. Full details are on the League's website.

They'll also be accepting oral histories for the library. Why not interview some of your older members about the state of Amateur Radio "back in the day", and submit those recordings to the library?

There's lots more to be found, and the collection will be growing, so you can bet that I'll be writing more about this in the coming months.

Club News –

Highland ARA - In a recent issue of the Monday Morning Memo, John, WA8KIW notes that Ozzie Johnson, KA8UGI turned 100 on January 10th. Ozzie is a life member of the Highland ARA. Cards may be sent to Oswald Johnson, 700 East Main Street, Condo #30. Hillsboro, Oh 45133.

Massillon ARC - Massillon ARC's Mentoring classes have begun, with a Saturday morning class on Grounding your station the right way. In February, John, N8CD will host a group Build of Variable offset attenuators. Congratulations to Massillon ARC's new officers, Ralph, K8HSQ, Pres; Terry, N8ATZ, VP; Fred, KD8SMO, Secretary; Gary, WC8W, Treas.

Canton ARC - The Canton ARC recently hosted Mel Vie, W8MV at their annual awards banquet. Mel presented a program about his trip to North Korea.

Mahoning Valley ARA – According to Wes, W8IZC, President of the Mahoning Valley ARA, congratulations are due to one of their members on his completion of QRP DXCC in only two weeks. Dave achieved this during the weekends of the CQ WW DX contests. Be sure to congratulate Dave when you see him.

Alliance ARC – Club members are preparing for a busy year ahead. Their first event will be participation in SPAR Winter Field Day this weekend.

Western Reserve ARC – Western Reserve's General Classes wrapped up in December, with two students upgrading afterwards.

West Park Radio Ops – West Park Radio Ops recently had a discussion & demonstration on D-Star. Also, add them to the growing list of clubs employing Skype for their club programs. Bob Heil is scheduled to do a Skype program sometime in 2015.

West Central Ohio ARA – Congratulations to the following new officers of the West Central Ohio ARA: Keith, KB8GYB, Pres.; Pat, N8WAA, VP; Jeanette, KD8AFR, Secretary; Don, KB8LWL, Treasurer; Shirley, N8LX, Board member.

Well, that wraps up another column. Remember, keep those newsletters, and e-mails coming!

Till next time, 73 DE KD8M

NORTH AMERICAN QSO Party By Barry Butz, N8PPF

The NAQPs are 12-hour contests held in the winter and summer. There are events for SSB, CW and RTTY. Power is limited to 100 watts so no one has to feel inferior. The exchange is your call, state and name.

In January, Don W8PEN and I entered the January SSB contest as a team known as MVARC Contesters. A team can consist of from 2 to 5 operators. The good thing is that there are no geographical restrictions on your location. Don operated from Ohio and I from Florida. Team members operate independently and their scores are totaled.

My station might have been the same as my Field Day station but had to be modified. My usual antenna arrangement is 20 and 40 meter inverted V's crossed at 90 degrees. Overhead trees and underbrush prohibited that so I rearranged the wires as two verticals separated by spreaders (made of palmetto stems), each with a single radial as a ground plane. That isn't a configuration you'll find recommended in any handbook but it worked out okay. Each band tuned up easily with an antenna tuner. However, when I got on 10 meters I was told I had RF in my microphone and my audio was terrible. So I stuck with 15, 20 and 40 meters and was happy with the result.

Don likes to CQ and as usual he outdistanced me with 246 contacts. I like to hunt and pounce and collected 109 contacts. We both enjoyed the contest a lot. Hopefully some other club members will join us another time.

Membership Form

Club dues run from Jan. 1 until Dec. 31 and are collected during the last quarter of the year. You can mail in the dues to the address below or bring them to a meeting. Dues are prorated for new members at the time of application. Visit our Web Page at www.mvarc.net

Dues Schedule: \$12 regular

\$10 for second member in the same family and for those over 65 yrs. of age.

Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 372, Mt. Vernon, OH 43050

Name_____Call-Sign_____

Street_____

City_____State____Zip Code_____

Phone Number_____License Class_____

ARRL Member (Y/N)_____E-Mail_____

Extra Donation (Optional)_____

Members are entitled to a free MVARC E-Mail address. Would you like one? No____Yes____

If yes please enter password_____

Other Comments: