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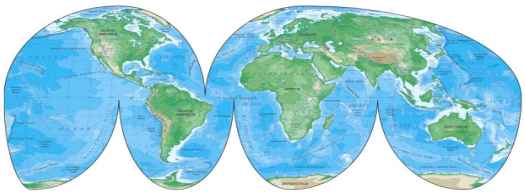
C  Q

January 2008 Newsletter

MEETINGS SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH AT THE RED CROSS ANNEX BUILDING, 300 N MULBERRY ST, MT. VERNON, OHIO
Local Community: K8EEN/R, 146.790 Mhz (-600 Khz. with PL of 71.9 Hz.); KD8EVR/R 442.100 Mhz (+5 Mhz. with PL of 71.9 Hz)
*****SUNDAY NIGHT ARES NET AT 8:00 P.M ON THE K8EEN REPEATER OPEN TO ALL*****

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings and 73 for 2008! And it is a great year to celebrate. According to ARRL records, on September 29, MVARC will turn 50 years old! That is a lot of history, a lot of community service, a lot of learning, a lot of changes and a lot fun. I think it is a worthy enough milestone for a big celebration.

This year will be special. We start with bringing back activities to our meetings. In January we will have members gives their own testimony on how they became interested in ham radio and/or how ham radio has made a difference in their lives. I am hoping to record these accounts and perhaps post them for others to see. If you can't make this meeting, make arrangements to tell your story another time. I also am challenging everyone to acquaint or reacquaint themselves to some of the "old-timers" in the county and perhaps and get their stories as well. This can be a year-long project. Our next meeting will be Monday January 14, 7pm at the Red Cross Training Center.

In February we will be venturing to Kenyon for a lesson in wave theory. Then for future meetings look for us to do some building, learn how to solder, discuss grounding our stations, learn something about circuits, how to find quality information and goodies online and get on the air. Right now we have 25 paid members but I am hoping to double that over the course of the next month or two. So get the word out that we are active and doing stuff, not just having meetings. So let's have some fun by getting more and more "Radio Active."

73
Mike McCardel, KC8YLD

AND FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the New Year. Here is hoping that this year sees the Club, as well its members, successful in all endeavors.

There is a new column for readers of this Newsletter beginning in this issue. Dan Romanchik, KB8NU, has made his popular column for Michigan clubs available for all ARRL affiliated clubs. Dan is the ARRL Michigan Affiliated Club Coordinator and will be writing a column on various Amateur Radio interests. I gladly took him up on his offer to allow this Newsletter to publish his ramblings.

While gaining a new column, we will be losing one too. Barry Butz's column on Ham History has run its course and Barry is planning only one more article. Barry's final article will appear next month,. Our loss. Perhaps I can entice Barry into a few articles of the technical nature as the year progresses.

Received an E-mail from Earl Paazig, N8KBR, indicating that his web pages have moved to a different location. Earl maintains quite a site, especially for those wishing to learn about or teach Ham Radio. Check him out at:

http://my.eqth.info/

And

http://studyguide.eqth.info/

Earl had an opportunity to recommend to the ARRL that they start to embrace some of the free study material available on the internet for beginning hams and instructors. Thus, the ARRL added the information to their "ARRL RESOURCES FOR LICENSING INSTRUCTION" web page. You can find that here:

http://www.arrl.org/es/instructor-resources/

Thanks Earl.

There is plenty of interesting stuff to read this month, so lets get to it.

Election of New Officers for 2008

At the December meeting of the MVARC, which was held at Ryan's Steak House as our annual Christmas Dinner, the club elected officers for 2008 Mike McCardel (KC8YLD), Jeff Butz (N8SMT), and Barry Butz (N8PPF) were reelected as President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Arlin Bradford (KD8EVR) was elected as Vice President, replacing Don Russell (WA8YRS). Don had held the Vice President position for three years.

Larry "Doc" Heltzer (AA8WP) and Dick Huggins (N8RDH) were elected has Directors.

This makes current list of officers for 2008 as:

President: **Mike McCardel, KC8YLD**
Vice President: **Arlin Bradford, KD8EVR**
Secretary: **Jeff Butz, N8SMT**
Treasurer: **Barry Butz, N8PPF**

Directors: **Dick Huggins, N8RDH**
Don Bunner, KB8QPO
Larry Heltzer, AA8WP

Club Trustee: **Don Russell, WA8YRS**

Congratulations to all incoming officers.

Remember When? Remember Now.

By Norm Fusaro, W3IZ

(This Article is From the ARRL Club Letter December 14, 2007. Ed)

At one time or another we have all drifted back to happier, simpler times to help ease the stresses of life. While many professionals might agree that an occasional trip down memory lane is healthy and often therapeutic, few would recommend that we live in the past. Our human brains are wired to remember things that are comforting and suppress unpleasant memories. That is why we tend to use phrases like "the good old days" even if the time in reference was peppered with hardship.

Depending on how you look at it, ham radio like the automobile, has either hardly changed over the last 100 years or has advanced dramatically because of technological progress. Today's automobiles are loaded with safety features and convenience gimmicks yet the basic car is still a wheeled vehicle that burns fossil fuel in an internal combustion engine in order to transport passengers from point A to point B. In comparison radio operators still modulate and demodulate electromagnetic signals to communicate with stations near and far. Computer processing and micro electronics play a big part in how these illustrations have evolved, but have things really changed?

Amateur Radio is just one of many sectors where we see state-of-the-art technology blended with traditional concepts. A trip to any marina will find modern sailboats made from composite materials and loaded with the latest navigational electronic devices but the basic component, harnessing energy from the wind to propel a vessel, has not changed in the thousands of years since its discovery. I am sure that you can think of your own examples where the application of modern technology has reshaped an old-fashioned idea, but the point is that while it is nice to remember and replicate things from the past, we live in the present.

Many people have an image of Amateur Radio as a nostalgic remembrance of another time when radio seemed to be magical when in fact it has always been cutting edge and futuristic. This portrayal of ham radio is reinforced by radio amateurs themselves through their reluctance to accept change and their insistence on preserving old technologies. The propensity to look back is not as prevalent in other activities as it is in Amateur Radio. When I go fishing I don't run into any anglers sporting woven rattan creels and bamboo fishing poles yet there is not a day that goes by when I am not reminded that "real radios glow in the dark" or some other witty reference to bygone times. How far back do we want to go to be authentic before it becomes absurd? "If it ain't spark it ain't radio?"

Years ago companies like Heath provided a way for many to get involved with Amateur Radio through kit building. The radio kit was less expensive than factory produced gear and, depending on the skill level of the builder, the finished products performed pretty well. Maintenance and repairs were easily performed because the builder had an intimate knowledge of the circuitry. Today, mass production and robotic manufacturing processes help drive down the cost of electronic equipment and in many situations make replacing a device more cost effective than repairing it. A current manufacturer of Amateur Radio that started life as a kit

company quickly experienced a similar evolution. After a few short years of producing kits, the company found that they could offer a better product at a lower cost by providing assembled circuit boards populated with surface mount components. Assembly is a matter of plugging-in boards and configuring systems similar to how a computer is built. Digital electronics has allowed the experimenter to trade-in the soldering iron for computer software codes and the term home-brewing, once a common ham radio activity, has now given way to a more descriptive phrase -- soft-brewing.

Developers like Joe Taylor, K1JT have completely re-written the rules when it comes to EME, meteor scatter and other exotic digital modes once reserved for the eccentric radio amateur. Today many hams employ WSJT software with modest stations to ricochet information to one another via the lunar surface. Other software experimenters are developing new modes and tools for the radio amateur to exploit the power of digital processing. Commercial interests are able to offer feature packed equipment that is relatively less expensive than gear offered in the past, and hams are finding applications for this stuff that could only be imagined a short time ago.

Amateur radio has many examples of innovation and creativity. Sometimes an idea can be ahead of its time. Take for instance an article that appeared in the July 1934 issue of QST that suggested "International Round Table Nets and Globe Circling Relays" using an elaborate network of tape machines and relays to remotely control HF stations as far as 200 miles away so that the ARRL broadcast could be made simultaneously in all 48 United States. We are able to do that exact thing today using Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) but there are some who will argue that this is not "real" radio. Phooey!

ARRL founder Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW was a forward thinker who moved in the same circles as Edison, Ford and Firestone, people who changed our world. Maxim was innovative and has many inventions to his credit. When the spark gap transmitter used at Maxim's station 1AW, could no longer generate radio signals it was replaced by a modern transmitter that used vacuum tubes. When asked if there were plans to repair the spark gap transmitter Maxim acknowledged the position of employing modern technology when he remarked "The voice of the spark set at 1AW will not be heard again." (QST, January 1923, pg 14)

Maxim was always looking beyond the horizon. Displayed in a showcase at ARRL headquarters is the Elser-Mathis cup. This trophy was inspired by Col Fred Johnson Elser, W6FB and SCM Lt Cmdr Stanley Mathes, K1CY after Elser learned of Maxim's fascination with the planet Mars. The unique wooden cup is waiting to be awarded to any radio amateur for the first Amateur Radio Contact between Earth and Mars. I am certain that "tongue may have been firmly planted in cheek" when this award was conceived but I believe that this trophy may be awarded to some radio amateur in my lifetime.

I would like to think that if Mr. Maxim were here today he would be very happy to see that Amateur Radio and the ARRL have stood the test of time and continue to attract newcomers to the hobby nearly 100 years since the League was founded. However I would not be surprised if The Old Man shook his head in bewilderment to find that we have spent much time and energy worshiping the past instead of looking ahead to the future.

It may be comforting to stroll down memory lane and fire up the vintage radio for the evening. The warm glow of the tubes and the refreshing aroma of heat radiating from the chassis will create soothing reflections and transport you back to a time when there was no internet, e-mail or cell phones. As you blow smoke rings from your briarwood pipe and replicate the authenticity of what you refer to as "real radio," try to remember that the icons of technology that you pay homage to were once state-of-the-art, modern appliances that filled the dreams of many. As much as Amateur Radio owes to its past, adoration of vintage radio should not take away from Amateur Radio's future.

REPEATERS AND STUFF

By Don Russell, WA8YRS

I was reading the September/October issue of “The AMSAT Journal” the other day. Apparently, AMSAT has an opportunity to place a payload on a Intelsat platform. This is a rideshare opportunity that Intelsat has made available.

This rideshare opportunity is actually meant to be available only to U.S. Government Agencies; however, AMSAT has put together a proposal that is under serious consideration.

The platform would be put in a geosynchronous orbit, which means that the platform would remain in the same position of the sky, just like the Dish Network and other satellites.

The advantages to putting a satellite into geosynchronous orbit is pretty obvious. No antenna rotators needed for the earth stations. Point your antenna once and forget it. Available 24 hours a day.

Putting an amateur satellite in geosynchronous orbit is considered a Phase IV satellite project. If AMSAT’s

proposal is accepted, a Phase IV satellite would become reality much earlier than expected.

From what I have been able to find out, this Phase IV satellite would have a linear transponder which would be 100 Khz wide, supporting SSB and CW. This 432Mhz uplink and 145 Mhz downlink is called Mode U/V. Of course the linear transponder is just one of many features this satellite would have. I mention this mode in particular because it is one of the better known satellite modes. A lot of locals have the Yaesu FT-847. That rig works very well in this mode.

According to AMSAT, if their proposal is accepted, this Phase IV satellite would cover the continental U.S. at a minimum.

Certainly AMSAT wants to take advantage of this opportunity. AMSAT already has an very aggressive schedule with their P3E and Eagle missions already being worked on. Much of the hardware and software has already been developed for these two missions, and I believe the satellite developed for the Intelsat platform would have similar capabilities. Thus, here is a rundown of these two projects.

P3E Project: This AMSAT-Phase 3 satellite is dedicated as a communication and scientific platform for a highly elliptical orbit around Earth. The P3E mission is actually being built by AMSAT-DL, our German partners. Much of the hardware and software has been developed by AMSAT-NA (North America). This will be a high orbit satellite, but not one in geosynchronous orbit. It is a downsized version of the ill fated AO-40 satellite. Being on a highly elliptical orbit, it will be available for hours at a time instead of the 10 to 20 minutes of use we get out of the low orbit satellites. Again, it will have a mixed bag of tricks, including the Mode U/V transponder mentioned above. Taken from the AMSAT web page, here are the projected capabilities of P3E:

Uplink Receivers:

29.500 (A): multimode, low speed RUDAK
436.200 - 436.350 (U): multimode RUDAK
436.050 - 436.150 (U): linear passband
1268.775 - 1268.925 (L1): multimode RUDAK
1268.600 - 1268.750 (L1): linear passband
1260.275 - 1260-425 (L2): multimode RUDAK
1260.100 - 1260.225 (L2): linear passband
5668.600 +/- 25KHz (C): (linear)

Downlink Transmitters:

145.812 (V): PSK 400 BPS General Beacon
145.957 (V): PSK 400 BPS Engineering Beacon
145.837 (V): multimode, low speed RUDAK
145.845 - 145.945 (V) linear passband
2400.250 (S): PSK 400 BPS General Beacon
2400.500 (S): PSK 400 BPS Engineering Beacon
2400.600 (S) - 2401.000: multimode, high/low speed RUDAK
2400.275 (S) - 2400.425: linear passband
24048.350 (K): beacon
24048.300 +/- 25KHz (K): linear passband
47088.350 (X): beacon
47088.300 +/- 25KHz (X): linear pass band

P5-A Transponder Experiment:

2560 MHz (S) uplink and 10450 MHz (X) downlink. Also usable as a linear transponder with approximately 50 KHz bandwidth.

Other Features:

LELIA
RUDAK
Main Beacon with FEC-coded telemetry
2 or 3 Cameras

As you can see, this satellite will be very impressive. Launch of the P3E satellite is scheduled for sometime in 2008. By the way, the P5-A transponder experiment is something AMSAT-DL is working on for a mission to Mars! Wow!

Project Eagle: The Eagle mission is being built by AMSAT-NA. It is being designed as a next generation high earth orbit satellite. Eagle will build on the technology developed for P3E. Indeed, much of the major components for Eagle have already been designed, tested and being used on P3E. Other components, such as a software defined transponder, have been demonstrated.

Although exact frequencies have not been announced as of yet, here is a summary of Eagles proposed capabilities, again take from the AMSAT web page:

Transmitters

- V band using SDR techniques (bandwidth configurable, nominal 50 - 100KHz).
- Two S Band transmitters will be flown
- 100 KHz bandwidth
- C band wideband digital including telemetry, will be flown
- All bands should be capable of being operated simultaneously

Receivers

- U band 100 KHz bandwidth. (SDR)
- L band 100 KHz bandwidth. (SDR)
- C band wideband digital.
- Command uplink shall be on at least U and L-band receivers.

GPS (NASA)
Camera Characteristics

- Narrow Field of View (FOV) on +Z axis
- Wide FOV on –Z axis
- Cameras should survive all beta angles

Telemetry

- Telemetry beacons shall be active on all transmitters
- The IHU will provide digital data and clock to the transmitter. The transmitter itself is responsible for data delivery

The ultimate goal of the AMSAT-NA Eagle project is to have three phase 3 satellites in orbit, which would provide world wide coverage on a continuous basis.

There has been no launch date set for this satellite.

Note to satellite veterans: The information I have given is to the best of my knowledge correct. Please forgive me if I missed the mark on a few statements.

The bottom line is that it looks like we may have several interesting satellites to play with in the future. Note I did not say “near future”. I have no idea what kind of time table would be reasonable. The Intelsat platform project is not a sure thing. AMSAT is in a wait and see mode right now. It would be fun though.

All this costs money. Anyone interested in using satellites should consider joining AMSAT. The membership is pretty steep, as memberships go at $44 per year. Plus, you are usually asked to donate more once or twice a year. Of course the donation part is optional. If you just wish to help out, send a dollar or two or whatever to the Clubs P.0. Box with a short note to Barry, N8PPF, that you wish to donate it to AMSAT. In turn, Barry can give me whatever he collects and I can send it in as a donation in the name of the Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club. Or you can just give me your donation at one of the meetings. I am not pushy, and this is purely optional. I will not mention this again. AMSAT has reached a bit over 50% of the cost of the first Eagle launch and could use final push.

See you at the meeting.

Want to Get Your Community Involved in Amateur Radio? Get Involved in Your Community!

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU
MI Affiliated Club Coordinator

I often hear hams lament that their communities show little interest in amateur radio. While this may be true, hams have to realize that community involvement is a two-way street. To get communities involved in amateur radio, amateur radio needs to be involved with the community.

Let me give you an example.

In early 2006, I decided to become more involved in community service. On a road trip to the Marshall Hamfest, one of the guys in our club--Jack, WT8N--mentioned that he was a member of the Ann Arbor Rotary Club. I told him that I would be interested in joining, and he agreed to sponsor me.

I joined the club in March 2006. Shortly after I joined, the executive director of the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum (www.aahom.org) spoke to our Rotary Club. The Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum is a science museum that gives kids (and adults, too) real, hands-on experience with science and technology. There are, for example, exhibits that help kids learn about electricity, springs, weather, and other topics in science and technology.

As the director was speaking, the thought occurred to me that the museum would be a great place for an amateur radio station. I discussed my idea with Jack, and he agreed to work with me on the project. We then approached the museum director, who is also a Rotary Club member, and met to discuss our idea.

As we discussed the idea, he became very enthusiastic about the possibilities. Our original idea was to set up a permanent station there, but as they were in the process of remodeling, this wasn't immediately possible. Instead, we operated a series of special events throughout the fall of 2007. These events have been very successful, and now we are discussing how and where to set up a permanent station at the museum. We expect this to happen some time in 2008.

We even have a vanity call sign for the station already--WA2HOM. A2 stands for Ann Arbor; HOM stands for Hands-On Museum. Look us up on QRZ.Com.

I'm sure that my involvement with the Rotary Club was a big part of the enthusiastic response to our proposal. Membership in the Rotary Club, and other community service clubs, such as Kiwanis or the Optimists, give one, if not instant credibility, at least some measure of it. There's no doubt in my mind that my involvement with

the Rotary Club was a factor in the museum deciding to become involved with amateur radio.

Are you working on a community-service project or have questions about setting one up? Let Dan know! You can e-mail him at kb6nu@w8pgw.org or phone 734-930-6564.

Thinking About Field Day?

Probably not, but I have a few ideas I would like to pass around. Maybe get everyone in the thinking about FD mode.

The last several years the club has done Field Day at the Red Cross. This has been really fun. Challenging in the fact that there is limited space for antennas, and lots of power lines to watch out for. Comfortable for the equipment being inside the building and not having to sweat the weather.

For FD 2008, it has been pretty much decided that we should pick another location. The new location will most likely be our old site at the Fairgrounds. This site has been a very good location for us in the past, and home of our highest scoring Field Day in club history during 2004. If not this site, then another equally well located site will be found. The point is that most likely we will be back to setting up at a location without power, but hopefully high trees and lots of space.

One of the biggest grips about doing FD in the field has been having to listen to the generator run all day long. With the solid state equipment of today, there is no reason that we cannot use battery power instead of a generator for the full 24 hours. From experience, I believe my deep cycle battery can power my 100 watt HF rig for at least 10 to 12 hours continuously. In fact, one Field Day years ago, I actually did this. I decided to run Field Day on battery power until the battery went dead. I used 25 watts on CW. Worked everything I heard and lasted until about 2:00 in the morning. Later, I found out that my battery, being about 7 years old at the time, was only holding about half a charge. That is 12 hours on a bad battery!

With this in mind, I plan on buying one more deep cycle battery before FD. My "new" battery is only 2 years old and in top condition. These two batteries, plus my two solar panels should allow me to run my Field Day CW station plus the logging computer 20 to 24 or more hours. That is one station down, two to go.

Now, I know lots of club members have at least one deep cycle battery in storage. Perhaps we could round up enough for two more batteries per station plus maybe an extra just in case. Then we could skip the generator altogether, saving money on gas as a bonus. I do have a small generator that we could have available in case we need to recharge batteries for a few hours to keep us going.

I do see some problems with this however. If we use our network logging software, we will need another battery to run the router and database computer. Then again, a battery may be safer than the generator in this regard.

Any takers? Don, WA8YRS.

Review: Belkin FM Tuner Transmitter

By Mike McCardle, KC8YLD

Note that many reviews I have read about this device summed it up as a "pure crap product." However, for my use it worked like a dream. Perhaps way out here in the Knox county boonies I don't get much interference on the frequency I chose. Despite the less than stellar reviews, I got a real good deal on them at 3 for $9.99 from woot.com, so I bought 3 deals and used them for stocking stuffers.

The Belkin FM Tuner Transmitters are little micro transmitters that send out a signal approximately 10-30 feet, to an FM radio set to 88.1, 88.3, 88.5 or 88.7 MHz. Just plug in the 1/8 inch stereo speaker jack into your iPod, cassette tape, DC player or other device and tune it in on a nearby radio. I am real impressed with the little mechanism which came packaged with 2 AAA Duracell batteries! I plugged my unit into the speaker out jack of my Kenwood VHF/UHF transceiver set the tuner to 88.5 and dialed my car radio to the same frequency and got clear audio right through my car's speaker system. This was ideal since I use my remote head to operate and the base of the transceiver sits under a seat which typically muffles the audio somewhat.

The Belkin tuner sits right next to the transceiver under the seat. No need for an external speaker and tedious wire. I just adjust the volume from my car radio. Why did I choose 88.5? Well, because it was the only channel I wasn't picking up another station. It was simple to set up and, for me, works great.

PICTURES FROM THE CHRISTMAS DINNER

Barry Butz (N8PPF) Connie Butz (KC8DLG), and Jeff Butz (N8SMT)

Larry "Doc" Heltzer (AA8WP)

Don Russell (WA8YRS) and Michael Dean (W8OIO)

VHF/UHF WORLD

By Don Russell, WA8YRS

An Introduction to WSJT

Here is a secret many of you may not know about our VHF and UHF bands: There is more to it than just FM! Okay, most of you know that if you wished, you may run SSB or CW on 6 and 2 meters and 432 Mhz. Some of you may even have tried. By the way, calling frequencies for SSB are 50.125 Mhz, 144.200 Mhz., and 432.100 Mhz. I monitor these frequencies at times and usually hear activity in the evening. Standard procedure is that one calls CQ on the calling frequency and when a contact is established, the two stations move up or down frequency so that someone else may call CQ. This keeps the calling frequencies clear for all to use. Remember, SSB uses horizontal antennas so it is best that you match that. However, I switched to vertical polarization this summer on 2 meters and 440 Mhz. I still hear SSB activity on these bands. So don't let your antenna polarization stop you from trying.

Both SSB and CW have many advantages over FM that make them the communications mode of choice for skip and weak signal contacts. The main disadvantage I see is that when monitoring a frequency, you always here the background noise; plus, if not tuned in properly, SSB does sound a bit Donald Duck-ish. Not as good on the audio quality as FM.

One mode that has always interested me has been working stations via meteor tails, or what is called Meteor Scatter. The idea behind this mode of communications is that when a meteor hit's the earths atmosphere, it leaves an ionized tail behind it that can reflect radio signals. Interesting isn't it? This is not new. Hams have been doing this at least since the 1960's, when SSB became popular. I actually did some meteor scatter work during ARRL VHF contests when 6 meter SSB was King. When the band was dead, the only way to work them was via meteor scatter!

Meteors hit the earths atmosphere all the time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Theoretically, one can use this mode at any time of the day. Best chance of success is in the early morning hours between 1:00 AM and 4:00 AM, plus or minus some. Something to do with the inclination of the Earth to the meteors. Ask Doc, AA8WP. I have, however, copied meteor scatter signals as early as 9:00 PM, so don't let the early morning hours scare you off. Especially during one of the many Meteor Showers throughout the year.

In the past, the only way to do Meteor Scatter was with

SSB or CW. CW was the common choice because it had more punch. Meteor Scatter on 6 meter SSB is rather easy. Even 10 meters supports Meteor Scatter contacts using SSB. Attempting this mode of communications on 2 meters is much more difficult. Here, CW has been the mode of choice.

That is until about 6 years ago, when Joe Taylor, K1JT developed a program called WSJT. WSJT, as many of you might know is a digital soundcard program that supports mode FSK441 for High Speed Meteor Scatter, mode JT6M optimized for meteor and ionospheric scatter on 6 meters, mode JT65 for Earth-Moon-Earth (EME) and weak signal troposcatter, and CW for EME using timed, computer generated transmissions. Quite a bit for a program in the public domain (meaning free to use by everyone).

This program is allowing successful Meteor Scatter, EME, and troposcatter contacts between hams with very modest equipment. System requirements are simply an SSB transceiver capable of one or more VHF/UHF bands and matching antennas (preferably a beam antenna). You will also need a computer with Windows, Linux, or FreeBSD operating systems. Computer requirements are modest, needing an 800 Mhz or faster CPU and soundcard. If you have a slower computer, it is recommended that you download WSJT Version 4.9.8

The last requirement is some kind of soundcard interface. These can be built rather cheaply. Commercial versions are reasonably priced for just the basics. Here is a good source of information on soundcard interfaces:

http://www.qsl.net/wm2u/interface.html

If all you want to do is listen, all you need is a patch cable from your headphone jack to your soundcard line input. You can make one or go to Radio Shack.

Here is the link for downloading this software and documentation:

http://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/

Click Download on the left, then follow instructions. While you are on this page, scroll down and download the samples file. This file is used in the WSJT tutorial that is included with the documentation. You will also find WSJT Version 4.9.8 by scrolling down. Then Click Documentation on the left and download that file. The documentation is very good and includes a primer to get beginners started.

If you have a computer, but no internet, let me know. I am willing to put these files on a CD for you. Perhaps I will bring a few CD's with these files to the January meeting.

Since the documentation is very well written, I am not going to try and explain how to set up the software. If you are interested enough in WSJT, then you will certainly have the program and documentation in hand shortly. If you are expecting a full blown rag chew QSO, then you can stop reading right here. This program allows for the minimum amount of information to be exchanged in order to make verified, or good contact. This being call letters and some exchange of information, which on the VHF bands is usually grid squares.

Requirements for a QSO:

Exchange of both call signs
Exchange of information or report
Exchange of confirmation

All exchanges above must be copied via Meteor Scatter Pings only with **NO OUTSIDE HELP!**

If you are more interested in EME, the exchange information may be different. Here are links to go to if you are interested in EME:

http://web.wt.net/~w5un/

And here:

http://www.qsl.net/g0isw/g0isweme.htm

Schedules may be arranged, which makes it easier to complete a good contact. Using a schedule, you will already know your partners call letters. Even so, the call must be decoded by the software on a Meteor Ping to make it a good contact.

Here is a good site to make schedules with other stations:

http://www.pingjockey.net/cgi-bin/pingtalk

Random contacts using CQ are much harder, but not impossible.

I understand that Meteor Scatter on 6 meters is much easier than on 2 meters, so perhaps one should start out on 6 meters. That being said, I have actually decoded signals on 2 meters. I have heard very little on 6 meters.

Frequencies to monitor are 50.260 Mhz and 144.140 Mhz. All Meteor Scatter work with WSJT uses USB (Upper Sideband). Using the link from above, you can see what frequencies others are using and listen in on their attempt at a QSO. This is a very good way to learn

I admit to not putting enough effort into this mode to actually make a QSO. I have, however listened in on contacts in progress. Perhaps I will give it a try.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER CHANGES LOCATION AGAIN

Dick Huggins, N8RDH, reports that the Wednesday night dinner has changed location to Wendy's on South Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

If readers remember, the location was previously changed from Pizza Hut to Donato's Pizza late last year. While Donato's was okay, there was some logistics that hampered a group get together there. So, the MVARC group gave Pizza Hut another chance and were very disappointed in the service. Thus, an alternate location was discussed again. There is plenty of room at Wendy's and being fast food, orders should be in hand on the way back to our seating area. Plus, one can choose what he/she wants, whether it be a garden salad, or lots of food!

So for now, Wendy's it is. **The MVARC will now meet each Wednesday at 5:00 P.M. at Wendy's on South Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio.** All local hams are invited to this dinner, whether a club member or not. Please join us for this get together as often as you wish.

On a side note, there has been interest in members having a breakfast get together once or twice a month. Suggested locations have been Tim Horton's, Ryan's, and the R&M restaurant. This would be done on Saturday mornings. Plans are still in the makings and no one has really taken charge of this. I would suggest contacting Arlin Bradford, KD8EVR, for more developments on the breakfast idea. Dick Huggins, N8RDH, should be contacted for more information about the Wednesday night dinner. Catch either one of these fellows on the 2 meter repeater. Arlin can also be found on the new 440 Mhz repeater.

I will update everyone in the Newsletter as needed….
Don, WA8YRS

DXCC DESK ANNOUNCES NEW ENTITY

(From the ARRL Letter, December 21, 2007)

The ARRL DXCC Desk is pleased to announce the addition of St Barthelemy (FJ) to the DXCC List, making the island entity number 338 with an effective date of December 14, 2007. Cards with contacts dated December 14, 2007 or after will be accepted for DXCC credit. New card submissions for St Barthelemy will not be accepted until January 1, 2008 in order to allow time for administrative adjustments.

On February 21, 2007 the French Ministry issued a decree making St Barthelemy an Overseas Collective, where its status is now equal to that of Guadeloupe, Martinique and other French territories currently on the DXCC List. On November 8, 2007 the President of Association Des Radio Amateurs De St Barthelemy, Philippe Delcroix, FJ5DX, contacted the DXCC Desk, requesting that St Barthelemy be considered a new DXCC entity.

The "event date" that caused St Barthelemy to be added to the DXCC list was December 14, 2007, the date the US State Department added St Barthelemy to the "List of Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty" with its Administrative Center in Gustavia, qualifying it under DXCC rules in Section II - 1 Political Entities (c): "The Entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government, and is located at least 800 km from its parent. To satisfy the 'permanent population' and 'administered by a local government' criteria of this sub-section, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the U.S. Department of State's list of 'Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty' as having a local 'Administrative Center,' or (b) the United Nations list of 'Non-Self-Governing Territories.'"

French St Martin (FS), while also added to the List of Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty, will remain on the DXCC List, but it is now considered a Point 1 Political Entity under the same classification as that of St Barthelemy.

Treasurer's Report: For the year 2007

Balance on Jan 1, 2007:	$1785.08
Income:	
Dues:	$ 601.00
Interest:	$ 63.80
MVPL book donations:	$ 112.50
General Donations:	$ 24.00
50-50 / Field Day:	$ 114.30
KD8EVR repeater donations:	$120.00
Other:	$ 38.00
Total income:	$ 1073.60
Expenses:	
Post Office Box rent:	$ 40.00
Postage stamps:	$ 82.00
Prizes:	$ 100.00
Insurance:	$75.00
MVPL book donations:	$ 200.00
Repeater council dues:	$ 5.00
KD8EVR repeater controller:	$ 259.00
Total expenses:	$ 761.00
Balance on 10-29-07:	$ 2097.68
Designated Funds:	
Year 2005 repeater fund:	$642.94
Field Day fund:	$108.30

Barry Butz, N8PPF Jan 4, 2008

Mt. Vernon ARC Officers

President: Mike McCardel, KC8YLD	**kc8yld@arrl.net**	**Phone: 740-599-6614**
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The ARRL letter is a weekly e-mail publication by the ARRL. You may read the entire ARRL letter by visiting the ARRL Web page at http://www.arrl.org/. **Other News** from: http://ky4ky.com/fyi.htm.

The ARES E-Letter is an e-mail digest of news and information of interest to active members of the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). Past issues of The ARES E-Letter are available at http://www.arrl.org/ares-el/. Issues are posted to this page after publication.

Project OSCAR is a monthly column written for Newsletter Editors. Columns will appear as space permits. You may download all the columns yourself at: http://www.projectoscar.net/beacon.php

Members are encouraged to send articles pertaining to ham radio, with an emphasis on local activities, equipment reviews, and personal experience to wa8yrs@arrl.net or Don Russell, WA8YRS, 815 Brookwood Road, Mt. Vernon, Ohio 43050

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, for those over 65 yrs. of age, and for those living outside Knox County

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: