

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

November, 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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Presidents View

By Frank Counts, KC8EVS

Our November meeting is by far and away the most important meeting for you to attend for a couple of reasons. First, we should be finding out who is running for club offices. The offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and probably a couple of directors will be voted on in December. This is your opportunity as a club member to determine the direction you want to see the club go by either running for office yourself, or making sure a candidate that best represents you in our club gets on the ballot. Secondly, we will be deciding on the upcoming Christmas party (location, date etc.). Thirdly (I know I said a couple reasons for attending, but I thought of something else in the meantime) it is just fun to get together and meet and greet with everyone in the club. So I look forward to seeing you there.

I attended (along with Don Russell, W8PEN) an EOC training session held at the EMA office last week. It was a very interesting meeting and really got to see to organizational side of things if a disaster would occur here in Knox County.

With Patrick Valentino's, KC8PSM help and work, we look forward to participating more in these exercises. Watch for his write ups in the newsletter and come to our meetings to get regular updates on what is coming up. Pat made a presentation last month and will repeat it again sometime early next year. Attending this session enforces the need to complete the ICS courses (at least 100 and 700) to understand the organization during a disaster event.

What's on your mind? What would you like to see the club do? I would like to know. I can be contacted via email, text, phone or attend one of the meetings and let me know.



Emergency Preparedness

By Patrick Valentino

Every quarter Director Maxwell from the Knox County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) host's a disaster training for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff. This training provides the EOC staff with an opportunity to gain a more thorough understanding of EOC Operations.



This quarter's training was titled "**Severe Winter Storm**". The EOC was activated when a winter storm impacts Knox County with a snow and ice mixture that changed overnight resulting in an accumulation of over ½ inch of ice. There is a large amount of debris "trees and branches" affecting roads, buildings, and utility lines.

Emergency Preparedness, continued on page 2

Power outages are reported countywide, communications systems are almost nonexistent and as a result, Director Maxwell activates the Knox County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) to augment communications.

Participating in the training is Knox County ARES Leadership; Frank Counts – KC8EVS and Donald Russell – W8PEN. Both Frank and Don had an opportunity to train on EOC Operations. As part of the training Fredericktown's Chief of Police Roger Brown presented a module on Information Management that focused on the ICS 213 General Message Form. In application, it is the ICS 213 General Message form that is initiated by EOC Staff, the form is hand carried to the EOC's Radio Station for the ARES operator to process and then the form is returned to the initiator.

Want to be part of Knox County's ARES Membership?

Build-a-kit

<https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

ARES Application

<http://arrl-ohio.org/SEC/fsd-156.html>

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

When completing the application be prepared to enter your station's capabilities and be sure to attach any completed ICS training certificates.

Knox Alerts

http://entry.inspironlogistics.com/knox_co_oh/wens.cfm

Knox County implemented a mass notification system. This system will be used by EMA to notify and activate Knox County ARES of a pending disaster or emergency situation via; phone messages, text messages, and emails.

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MVARC MEETING MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 10th, 2016

Meeting called to order at 23:02 UTC by KC8EVS.

Motion made by N8PPF, 2nd by KC8BB to approve minutes for September 12, 2016. Approved.

Motion made to approve October Treasures report by W8UMH, 2nd N8PPF. Approved.

Motion to pay yearly Post Office Box rental of \$70.00 made by W8TW, 2nd KC8REB. Approved.

ARES presentation will be made by KD8PSM after regular business meeting adjourned.

KC8EVS appointed KC8BB and W8PEN as nominating committee for 2017 slate of officers.

KC8EVS discussed the upcoming December Holiday party and meeting. He will look into various local restaurants to hold the meeting and report back at the November meeting.

W8PEN and various other members discussed the next set of licensing classes in 2017.

Our current Tax Exempt status was discussed. It was decided to table this for now while we investigate the 501-C3 level tax exemption.

KC8EVS and KC8BB are still working on the Handbook and Web Page Updates.

KC8EVS suggested we hold operation classes for our GO-BOXES and Red Cross stations to make sure members will be able operate the equipment when called upon to do so.

Meeting floor was then turned over to KD8PSM for an excellent presentation on what our local EMA office has planned for Knox County.

Motion to adjourn made by N8PPF, 2nd W8TW. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 23:55 UTC.

There were 12 members and 1 guest present.

Respectfully submitted,

N8IBR Secretary MVARC

by **Don Russell, W8PEN**



ARES

President Frank Counts, KC8EVS, and I were at an EOC training session held November 4. It proved to be an interesting experience. There is certainly a lot involved in coordinating a disaster event.

Knox County EMA director Mark Maxwell stated that the most likely event that Knox County and the surrounding area would encounter would be weather related. This holds true when looking at the history of our county and what local hams have mostly participated in. Flooding, blizzards, snow, extreme cold. The only event I can remember that was not weather related and involved the Knox County ARES was back in the late 1970's when a construction crew dug through some telephone cables knocking out most telephones in Mt. Vernon. We actually provided communications for the telephone company while they repaired the lines. That was a long time ago.

The thing that got me thinking was Mark's statement that if an event was serious enough to knock out cell phone and other forms of communications, the EOC would be relying on hams to cover the fire departments, Knox Community Hospital, Sheriff's Office, and anywhere else needed. This would be in addition to our commitment to provide needed communications for the Knox County Red Cross and their shelters throughout Knox County.

My question is: Do we have enough trained ham radio operators in Knox County to handle this need? I stress the "trained" part. My answer would be, "not really". I think this is something we need to work on. Sure, we have a lot of hams in Knox County. How many of them would be available or even willing to help? How many of them have enough knowledge of radio communications to help?

I will take the blame for some of this. We have had really successful ham classes the last three years. We have a lot of hams from these classes that we never hear from. We (or I) need to follow up these classes with extra instruction on how to set up and operate a radio station. How to do some traffic handling. How to prepare yourself for potentially being needed to help provide communications. How to configure a "go box".

I am therefore proposing that starting with the January 2017 Technician Class Course, we add an extra two or three weeks training that would start after the students successfully pass the Technician Class test.

We should start advertising early for our January class. I think a good source would be friends and relatives of club members, Red Cross volunteers, and the many special interest clubs around the area. I would like to emphasize that we are recruiting people to bolster our ARES membership. We should not simply request that all ARES members take the online ICS training courses. The Knox County ARES should sponsor these courses and present them locally.

While doing the above, we should not forget about local hams old and new. We need to invite them to join the ARES (and our club). The ARES needs to become more visible to the local ham community.

440 MHz Repeater Update

We have a few possible sites for our new analog/digital repeater. The most promising site is at the Knox Community Hospital where there is already an antenna on the roof that is not being used.

This would be an excellent site and cover Knox County very well. It would achieve our goal of a high profile repeater at a site separate from our main 2 meter repeater. It is our hope that if one of our repeaters go down, the other one will be unaffected and be available for providing emergency communications.

Presently, the 440 MHz repeater is located at the home of Barry Butz, N8PPF. Barry is in a good location and the repeater performs fairly well. However, limited antenna height and a hill to the North East limit the effectiveness of this location.

We will continue working on this project until we have the repeater installed at the KCH or some other high profile location.

Mesh Update

In addition to installing the 440 MHz repeater at KCH, we have requested permission to install one of our high profile Mesh Nodes on the roof of KCH. If permission is granted, this will go a long way in helping to link all our nodes together. I am very encourages with this and have my fingers crossed that this will be approved.

We have just recently installed nodes at Bill Bradley's (KC8BB), and Tony Spiegel's (KC8UR). These two nodes are talking to each other, however, we have not been able to get either node to link to a Mt. Vernon node. We have a temporary internet tunnel being used to connect these nodes to Mt. Vernon and will continue to work on the RF linking part.

Our current list of nodes are: W8PEN-MTV-SOUTH, W8PEN-900MHZ, AC8PT-ARHP, AC8PT-RM2-ARC, N8IBR-2, KE8ANS-2, W8TW-2, KC8BB-1, KC8UR-BRANDON, and N8PPF-2.

The W8PEN-900MHZ node is experimental and on 900 MHz We are trying to link to KC8BB on 900 MHz The rest of the nodes are on 2.4 GHz or being tunneled via the internet.

The AC8PT-RM2-ARC is the Red Cross node and has good coverage to the West, North, and South side of Mt. Vernon. Both the W8PEN-MTV-SOUTH and the N8PPF-2 nodes have coverage to central Mt. Vernon if one has a node at about 30 feet or so. I am hoping that the KC8UR-BRANDON or the KC8BB-1 node will allow KC8EVS to link to the Mesh.

We have six phones online at W8PEN, N8IBR, W8TW, AC8PT, KC8BB, and KE8ANS. I am planning on a phone at the Red Cross and KCH, and any other new node that would like a phone installed.

Mesh Network Update

There is a web page up and a few chat rooms that allow mesher's to keep up to date and communicate between one another.

As you can see, we are making headway on this project. Several nodes are still connected via internet. Most of these will switch to RF once we get our high profile nodes online.

Anyone wishing to join this project should contact me. I think we are close to being in a position to link almost any ham in Mt. Vernon (who wishes to do so) to our little network.

My 20 Meter Vertical

I was very disappointed with the performance of my 20 meter vertical antenna during the CQ World Wide DX Contest. I called stations continuously and unsuccessfully.

Seeing how a vertical antenna is supposed to be a very good DX antenna, I was really puzzled. But I may have found the answer.

Usually a vertical needs lots of radials to be effective. I mean like twenty or thirty minimum. I put ten radials down and check the antennas performance. Seemed like I worked everyone I heard, but I did not try it on DX. Just stateside, as far as California. So, I decided not to add any radials. My bad.

I think that radials effect the signal take off angle of the vertical antenna as well as ground loss. I have summarized that the take off angle of my vertical antenna is a bit too high for much DX work. This high take off angle makes it an effective antenna for domestic communications but not so much for DX.

I am about to find out. I will be using the 20 meter vertical during the November Sweepstakes. If it works well on CW, I will try it on SSB. If not, perhaps I will revisit some other antenna possibilities for the SSB portion of the contest.

Antennas are one area where hams can still experiment without a lot of test equipment or special soldering techniques. It is fun to build different antennas and see how they work. Wire antennas cost little and generally perform well. I encourage local hams to build their own antennas and publish their results in the newsletter. I think experimenting with antennas always provide interesting reading.



Don Blizzard, W8UMH; Tom Evans, KD8HSA



Emery Bennet, W8TW; Scott Keyes, AC8PT



Don Russell, W8PEN; Scott Keyes, AC8PT
Don Blizzard, W8UMH in background



Tom Evans, KD8HSA



Emery Bennett, W8TW
Don Russell, W8PEN
Scott Keyes, AC8PT



By Terry Windsor, KE8ANS

CW Academy

I just finished an 8 week online class to learn Morse code letters, numbers, punctuation, and conversational CQ exchanges. This was CW OPS level 1 class, that built upon and reinforced the CW class Don, W8PEN, taught at the beginning of this year. There were a couple of big differences between the local class and this class.

The online class is conducted via Skype twice a week for one hour each session. There is homework that requires approximately 30 to 60 minutes studying and practicing every night. We also practiced sending using the monitor function on our transceivers to get the letters and spacing correct. The second difference was the class is taught at 20 words per minute with Farnsworth timing at 20. The instructor would send and we would have to decode and either state what he sent or indicate via webcam that we got the word or phrase correct.

There were only 3 students in the class so we got to know each other and work together to decode what the instructor sent. Since we were connected via Skype we could see and hear each other which made working together easier and we were all in the same time zone. There is an individual test after the 8 week class to verify each student learned the letters, numbers, punctuation, and prosigns.

If you are interested check out www.cwops.org and select CW Academy to view and enroll in the class offerings. I would like to thank Don for teaching a local class this year which allowed me to learn CW code so that I did not struggle as much when it was taught at 20 wpm.

Celebrating your club's Elmers might encourage others

Sam, W5KF, recently sent me a link to the Elmers' page on the Norman, OK South Canadian Amateur Radio Society (SCARS) website. Not only is it a listing of the club members who have stepped forward to Elmer new members, but also provides ways to honor current and past Elmers. This is from the SCARS newsletter:

"Elmer List on the W5NOR.org website"

"This week we talk about a brand new feature on the W5NOR web site. In the amateur radio community, an experienced amateur radio operator who mentors a new or prospective ham is commonly called an "Elmer". In our hobby, that seems to be a great way for knowledge to be transferred.

"Yes, we all have taken an FCC test to receive our license, however that's only the starting point. Remember that person that helped you set up your first radio, or gave you the courage to press the PTT button, or answered endless questions about a radio, or an antenna? That's the kind of thing we're talking about.

"Thanks to a great suggestion from Gary Skaggs WB5ULK [not sure it was my idea. – Editor], we've created the SCARS Elmer Page, located at <http://w5nor.org/elmers>, for us to celebrate Elmers; past, present, and future. We provide a place for Elmers to list their specialty, and contact information, which allows new hams to find someone they can ask questions of.

"Since this is a new section of the web site, this list is rather short. If you're willing to help others on a given topic, send a message to n5hxr@arrl.net and you will be added to the list. Right now we need lots of different categories, like antennas, radio setup, HT programming, contesting, satellite operation, high power operation, test gear, building your own gear, repairing radios, APRS, D-Star, DMR, CW, logging, etc. oh well, you get the idea.

"You don't need a PhD to be listed here. You just need a willingness to help others in a given area. It's OK to be a new ham, and be listed here. You may have just struggled through your first space contact, but you'll have infinitely more knowledge than the person who's been a ham for 40 years, and has never tried that portion of the hobby.

"Also, there is a link to the "ARRL Elmer Award" page of the American Radio Relay League's web site. Here, you can enter your favorite Elmer's name and call sign. The ARRL will print a nice certificate, and mail it to the address you enter. Yes, for FREE! This certificate can either be mailed to your favorite Elmer, or you can mail it to yourself so you can present it to them personally. Feel free to order an Elmer certificate, and present it to your Elmer at an upcoming SCARS meeting. Talk with one of the officers before the meeting to get your place on the agenda. What a great way to recognize these people for their extra efforts.

"Finally, we've got a place to list YOUR favorite Elmer in our SCARS Elmer Hall-of-Fame. This is the place to memorialize your Elmer, whether they are SCARS members, Silent Keys, or not. I've already listed a few Elmers on the list from my own travels through the hobby. We'd love to list the people that help us all succeed.

"So, please help make this page useful, visit the SCARS Elmer page at: <http://w5nor.org/elmers> and be listed as an Elmer, and list your favorite Elmers."

I think this is a wonderful idea, and I hope that you will consider doing something similar in your club. A little recognition could go a long way, and we need all the Elmers we can muster. And, if you're already doing this, please send me a link. I'll add that link to my website, KB6NU.Com.

When he's not Elmering new hams, you'll find Dan building kits and working CW on the HF bands. He 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.

November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KC8BB –Bill	7	8	9 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	10	11 Veterans Day 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	12 9:00 am Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner
13 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN –Don	14 7:00 pm MVARC Meeting at the Mt. V. Red Cross	15	16 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	17	18 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	19 Contests Nov 19-21 November Sweepstakes -Phone Nov 19-20 EME
20 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KE8ANS –Terry	21	22	23 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	24	25 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	26
27 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KD8HSA –Tom	28	29	30 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	1 Dec	2 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's 2-4 160 Meter Contest	3
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