



Ham Radio Rocky!

The Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club



October, 2012 Newsletter

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each Month at 7:00 P.M. 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



AFFILIATED CLUB NEWS

There is a lot going on the Ohio Section this month. Reading through this month's newsletters five things seem to be very much on the minds of our members.

The new Ohio Texting Ban law.

The ARRL Ohio Section Convention.

Ohio's ARES Membership Drive.

All Ohio ARES Conference.

A Yahoo Ham Radio Help Group thread "Is Amateur Radio Too Focused on EmComm?"

Many club newsletters spent time on these topics

It's good to know that our clubs are engaged in what's going on around them and promoting events that have meaning to them.

Many clubs are sponsoring license classes. Don't forget to bring your kids or grandkids to class.

Election of Officers are coming up for many clubs. Don't forget to update your ARRL listing after your elections. Around the state a lot is happening. There seems to be a lot of eating going on along with everything that is happening. I hope we're all getting some exercise as well.

Around the state..

At Lake Erie ARA's August meeting Nathan

The next meeting of the Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club will be Monday, October 8, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. in the Red Cross Annex Building, 300 North Mulberry Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

Please remember to check into the long running Sunday Night ARES net at 9:00 P.M. on the K8EEN 2-meter Repeater.

Every Wednesday at 5:00 PM, MVARC club members meet at Wendy's, 522 South Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Dinner Coordinator Dick Huggins, N8RDH, reports good turnouts for this event. Come share dinner with friends, or make new friends, by attending one or all of these events.

Join MVARC club members every second Saturday of the month for breakfast. Breakfast Coordinator Arlin Bradford, KD8EVR, reports good turnouts for this event.

The next Breakfast will be Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 9:00 AM at Allison's Finer Diner, 11587 Upper Gilchrist Road, Mt. Vernon, Ohio

Stevens of Bulldog Batteries presented "The Care and Feeding of Rechargeable Batteries. This was at their 6th 2012 Restaurant of the Month Tour held at Dina's Pizza & Pub in Brooklyn. In September the tour move on to Rider's Inn in Painsville, September 27, where SEC Matt Welch W8DEC will present his "Public Service Communications 101" presentation.

Cambridge ARA will meet September 24 at 6:30pm, October 27 9:30am and November 24 9:30am at the Community Healthlink Building 1205 Clark St. Visit their web site www.w8pv.org for their Thursday Noon luncheon schedules.

The OH-KY-IN group will begin their Tech class Sept 27. Come join their Brunch Bunch, 1pm the second Saturday of every month. It moves so you need pay attention. If you have a recommendation for a location contact Bruce N8BV.

Congratulations to the Portage County ARS and editor "Parky" KB8UUU for his award winning newsletter. One thing winners of this contest have in common is a bunch of local content. It makes their newsletter interesting, and relative. Big News out of PCARS is their moving of their meeting location to Stringz & Wingz in the Streetboro Plaza beginning in September. PCARS sponsors the Ohio Parks on the Air contest (which within their group they call the The Ohio Bar-B-Q QSO Party. This year it was an "Uber" event.

The Buckeye Belles' Buckeye Burr lead story, appropriately, was the announcement that Erin King AK4JG was named 2012 Young Ham of the Year. From Columbus, GA, Erin's radio activities are proof that Amateur Radio is alive and relevant for young ladies today.

The Western Reserve ARC were the guests of the the Astro-Hams event at Scenic Vista Park August 8. The Astro-Hams are a group of Radio Telescope enthusiasts. What a great blend of two really cool technical hobbies. Their Tech class began Sept 12 and their General Class will begin November 7. Both will be held at ITT.

Massillon ARC hosted SEC Matt Welch W8DEC at their September 7th meeting. They began celebrating the 85th anniversary September 15 at Menards in Massillon. The all-day event highlighted demonstrations from their communications trailer to all who visited. They will continue their celebration by spotting their trailer at Tappan Lake for the US Islands On The Air

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Members are encouraged to send articles pertaining to Amateur Radio, with an emphasis on local activity, equipment reviews, and personal experiences to the Newsletter Editor. Articles are due on the Sunday before the first Monday of the month.

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October. In other events they have their hotdog and brats fund raiser at Buehler's Grocery September 22 and their Hamfest October 28 at the Massillon Boys and Girls Club. Congratulations to their being runner up in this year's newsletter contest.

The Greater Cincinnati ARA just held their annual Hamfest. Next year they will be hosting the Great Lakes Division Convention at the Hamfest. Their next meeting is October 24 7:30pm at Breeze Manor.

The Alliance ARC finished third in this year's newsletter contest. They meet the second Wednesday of every month. At their September meeting Dennis Conklin AI8P spoke on "QSLing Tips for Best Return Rates". AARC will hold their elections in October. They sponsor their last Fox Hunt September 22, 6:30pm at 1906 S. Union Avenue. They will close out September with their Club Picnic at Silver Park 1pm September 29.

Delaware ARA was visited by SEC Matt Welch W8DEC at their September meeting. Matt is really pushing the meeting circuit. DELARA put 10 stations on the air for the Ohio QSO Party and increased their point total by 200,000 over what they scored a year ago. They are also expanding their Radio Loaner Program, where they collect and refurbish old radio to lend to hams that need a radio. Also check out the DELARA September newsletter to see picture proof of an existing Beercan Antenna.

Central Ohio Radio Club will hold their 18th annual Fall Festival Pot Luck October 7, 6pm at Genoa Hall. They will resume their TechNet on 147.33 beginning October 14. CORC's website www.corc.us has been getting a lot of attention lately.

The Salem Area ARA will hold an Amateur Radio communication demonstration outside the H.S. Friday October 12 during the Columbiana Safety Conference and Expo.

Mount Vernon ARC continues to hold their monthly breakfasts every second Saturday 9am at Alison's Finer Diner on Coshocton Road. There is also a casual Wendy Wednesdays every week at 5pm. At their September meeting they discuss and reviewed an audio tape of a recent event in which a central Ohio ham used his Amateur Radio to get him medical attention when he was out of cell range. The hams who answered his call were praised for their procedure and professionalism. They also were presented a cubesat simulation

by Ohio ACC EMike McCardel KC8YLD, while wearing his AMSAT hat, who brought the cubesat simulator he will be using as an educational tool at Pacificon in a few weeks. MVARC's next meeting is Monday October 9 where the agenda will include a demonstration of ham radio phone apps for Android and iPhone.

As mentioned earlier I will be traveling to Santa Clara, CA to attend Pacificon which is hosting the ARRL National Convention October 12-14. I'm on an education team for AMSAT-NA and will help with their educational initiative and demos there. The highlight of the weekend will be an AMSAT sponsored ARISS contact with the youth groups attending the convention. Look for my Facebook posts on the AMSAT-NA Facebook page. Then two weeks later I will attend the AMSAT Symposium in Orlando where our team will present our experiences. I am truly looking forward to these opportunities and hope I bring back a wealth of ideas and motivation to share. I hope to have time to include some of these in next month's newsletter.

73,
E.Mike McCardel, KC8YLD
Ohio Section Affiliated Club Coordinator
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Information Regarding Ohio Ban on Texting While Driving

From the ARRL, Sept 3, 2012

In an earlier publication we noted the passage an Ohio law prohibiting drivers from texting behind the wheel. Since then, a number of additional questions have been raised and the following is offered in an attempt to answer those questions.

(The following discussion is offered as an information service of the Ohio Section. It is not intended as, and should not be construed as legal advice.)

What's Prohibited.

Ohio's texting law, H.B. 99 (the Bill) became effective on August 31, 2012. The Bill prohibits driving a motor vehicle while using a handheld electronic wireless communication device to write, send, or read a text-based communication. The use of cell-phones for voice communication is not prohibited by the Bill. The term text-based

communication is not defined, but there a number of exceptions in the Bill to tell us what it is not. For example, the act of reading, selecting, or entering a name or telephone number in a handheld electronic wireless communication device for the purpose of making or receiving a telephone call is not prohibited. Other exceptions include the receipt (but not the reading) of wireless messages via radio waves, the use of a wireless navigation device and commercial truck mobile data transmission. If convicted, the texting prohibition for adults is classified as a minor misdemeanor. R.C. 4511.204(D).

Secondary Offense.

The texting prohibition is designated as a secondary offense, meaning that the act of texting cannot, by itself become the basis for a traffic citation without the commission of some other, primary offense. Specifically, the Bill provides, [no law enforcement officer shall cause an operator of an automobile being operated on any street or highway to stop the automobile for the sole purpose of determining whether a violation of division (A) of this section has been or is being committed or for the sole purpose of issuing a ticket, citation, or summons for a violation of that nature or causing the arrest of or commencing a prosecution of a person for a violation of that nature, and no law enforcement officer shall view the interior or visually inspect any automobile being operated on any street or highway for the sole purpose of determining whether a violation of that nature has been or is being committed. R.C. 4511.93.

Six Month Pass.

In addition, for the first six months the Bill is in effect, no traffic citation may be issued for the violation of the texting prohibition of the Bill. Instead, law enforcement officers are required to issue a written warning informing the operator of the motor vehicle of the existence of the new texting law. H.B. 99, Section 3.

Kids Beware.

Additional prohibitions apply to juveniles. Specifically, no holder of a temporary instruction permit who has not attained age 18 and no holder of a probationary drivers license shall operate a motor vehicle while using in any manner a wireless communications device. This cell-phone prohibition, like the texting prohibition, is subject to a number of exceptions including emergency

contact with law enforcement, hospital, fire department or similar emergency agency. The use of a cell-phone by minors is permitted if the motor vehicle is in a stationary position, outside the lane of travel. Interestingly, the secondary offense limitation on law enforcement for texting violations does not appear in Section 4111.205, which is applicable to juveniles holding a temporary operating permit and holders of a probationary license. Additionally, the penalty for those individuals is much greater.

Municipal Cell Phone Rules Not Affected.

In Ohio, certain municipalities have the power to adopt local traffic and other kinds of laws that regulate conduct within the territorial limits of the municipality. In the exercise of that power, a number of Ohio cities have already prohibited driving while texting and in some cases, cell phone use altogether while driving. The Bill makes it clear that the state law prohibition on texting is not intended to supersede local ordinances prohibiting the same conduct. R.C. 4511.024(E). As a result, a cell-phone conversation or mobile QSO lawfully commenced on one side of the city line may become unlawful once the municipal boundary is crossed.

Mobile Amateur Radio Communications.

For most of us, the Bill has very little application to amateur communications. Voice communication via mobile amateur radio is not prohibited. Text-based communication via amateur radio, however, is likely prohibited subject to the same exceptions as applied to cell phone based texting. The Bills definition of electronic communications device does not specifically address amateur radio equipment, but does include any other substantially similar wireless device that is designed or use to communicate text. This would appear to include mobile PSK and RTTY communications. APRS transmissions would, arguably, fall within the navigation purposes exception to the prohibition on texting. (See Note-1 Below) There may be other mobile amateur applications that would be subject to the Bill as well, if they involve communications by text-based messaging.

However, it is likely that the cell-phone use prohibition on juveniles under the age of 18 and those with probationary driver licenses will include the use of mobile amateur radio. The term electronic wireless communications device as used in that section includes, any w]ireless device that is

designed or used to communicate via voice, image or written word. That broad definition would likely be interpreted to include mobile amateur radio, but subject to the exceptions noted in the Bill.

(Note-1) - The statute does not specifically address that issue, and the assumption is based on my reading of the Bill.

73
Nick Pittner, K8NAP
Ohio State Government Liaison

Radio Activity



By Don Russell, W8PEN

New Antenna

A couple of months ago I mentioned in this column that my 160 meter window antenna had finally bit the dust and I was looking for a replacement antenna. I also said that I would most likely buy another identical antenna as the replacement simply because the old antenna has done a really good job for me over the years.

Not really sure how long I had the antenna up, but certainly at least five years. I would say more like ten years though.

As luck would have it, I remembered that the antenna we had been using on the CW Field Day station was identical to my old antenna. The Field Day antenna belonged to Jeff Butz N8SMT and had been used only twice (the last two Field Days). I made Jeff an offer he could not resist and purchased the antenna. We will have to find another antenna for Field Day. Hey, it is nice to switch Field Day antennas anyway. I have a few ideas I have been wanting to try for Field Day anyway.

It took me awhile, but I finally have this antenna up. I have made enough contacts with the new antenna to assure me that it is working well. I can't wait for the ARRL 160 meter contest to try this

antenna out on my favorite contest. Before that, there is the November Sweepstakes. Perhaps I will try the antenna then.

I did take more care in the antennas installation. I took some shortcuts when installing the old antenna. For example, there is a vertical radiating element to this antenna that consists of about 23 feet of coax running down to a choke. This is supposed to be an advantage of the antenna, however, the specs call for it to hang at least 15 feet away from any metal structure (like the tower). Well, my old antenna had this element just a couple of feet away from the tower. This time I made sure that the vertical radiator was 15 feet away from the tower. I also increased the apex of the antenna from about 35 feet to 45 feet and the ends are much higher that with the old antenna. These changes may make a noticeable difference or it may not. Only time will tell.

Contest CW Speed

In the last issue of the Newsletter (September 2012), Mark Bisenius AC8FV gave an excellent review of a program called Morse Runner. I have been using this program to help get my speed up to par before a contest for years. I will start a week before a contest and practice at least 20 minutes each day. This amount of practice is enough to wipe off the rust of my CW copying abilities and be ready to go at the beginning of the contest. Before this program, I would have to get the rust off during the early part of the contest. Of course this always attributed to slow starts. No longer.

One thing I will disagree with. Mark said that you needed to be able to copy at about 25 Words per Minute (WPM) before entering a contest. This may be if you are trying to be complete and win your section or place as high as possible. However, if you just want to have fun and can copy at least 15 WPM or so, there is no reason why you cannot get your feet wet in a contest.

Most contest ops will slow down for you, so if you answer them with only your call, they will usually slow down to your speed. If they still go too fast for you (or don't slow down at all) then a simple question mark in code or a QRS (Q signal for please slow down) will usually do the trick.

Some contest operators will not slow down to start with because they might figure you already have the contest exchange. Once they realize you do not though, they are more than happy to slow

down to get you in their log.

If you want to work a contest but you are not very speedy there are a few things you can do as to not slow a competitive contester up. Number one is to search and pounce only. Do not call CQ. At least not at the start of a contest. Search and pouncing simply means you're tuning the band and picking stations to call. At the beginning of a contest, this is really easy to do as there will be lots of stations for you to work. It would also help if you had your radio set up so that your logger can send the CW for you. That way you can send at the same speed as the other station. But this is not necessary. Before you give them a call though, listen to them make a few contacts and get their contest exchange. That way you do not have to copy it down when the station comes back to you. You already have his exchange. All you have to do is send yours. This works really well when it is a standard exchange like Name and State, RS/T and state, etc. Not as easy if there is a sequential number involved. In some contests you have to include the number of contacts you have made in the exchange. An example of these contests would be the November Sweepstakes. You can get the number of the stations previous contact and increment by one for each of his contacts until he calls you, or you can avoid these type of contests until you have a bit more experience.

Okay, you will not make a lot of contacts this way, but at least you are enjoying the contest and having fun. My guess is that after the contest is over, you will have increased your CW speed by at least 5 WPM. Don't stop there. Keep practicing with Morse Runner.

To quantify all of this, I consider myself a fairly good CW contester. My top speed during a contest is usually about 24 WPM. Sometimes I will increase that to 26 - 28 WPM, but not very often. Sure, many stations come back to me faster than I am sending, but I can usually pick up the call and exchange easy enough at the higher speeds because I know what is coming and I have practiced with Morse Runner. After the early rush of contacts is over and there are fewer stations to work, I often slow down to 18 WPM. I will sit on a frequency and call CQ at 18 WPM and work the slower stations for hours on end. And will even slow down more when a really slow station calls me. A contact is a contact!

Contests are fun. In my opinion, CW contests are lots more fun than SSB ones. But try a few contests with either mode. You will be glad you did. Field

Day may be the most popular, but there is a contest going on most weekends, especially in the Fall and Winter months.

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: