

The Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club Newsletter MVARC Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

September, 2015



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
KD8EVR Repeater: 442.100 MHz (+5 MHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)



AA8WP (SK)
Larry "Doc" Heltzer DVM
1945 - 2015

We are all saddened by the news that Doc, AA8WP passed this week. He was the greatest conversationalist I have ever known. No matter the subject being discussed, he knew something about it or had experience with the topic. He always had a smile on his face and a kind word for all he met.

He will be missed by all who knew him. Ham radio has lost a great asset and friend and we offer our condolences to the family from all of us in the Ham Radio Community. Bill, KC8BB

Goodbye Fellow Hams

Some of you have already heard that I am giving up the MVARC Newsletter after 10 years of being the editor. The only real reason I have is that of being burned out of organizing everything.

I have asked Bill Bradley, KC8BB, to take over the newsletter and he has graciously accepted this opportunity. I will work with Bill the first month or two so that our newsletter maintains its local quality flavor. I will also support the newsletter effort with at least one column and possibly an extra article from time to time. I will also keep a lookout for interesting articles on the internet that can be used.

Needless to say, the last ten years of being "the main man" (editor) has been very rewarding and at times very frustrating. Our newsletter could improve in quality 100% if we had a few more club members willing to give up an hour a month to write a short article.

I would love to see several monthly columns in our Newsletter. The Presidents Corner, ARES Happenings and Club Activities Update.

I will continue my "Radio Activity" column. Another possibility since we seem to have a small group interested in contesting would be a column listing upcoming contests and hints on how to be an effective contester. I feel that the club has put out a first rate Newsletter since I took the reins.

As proof, I offer you pictures of second place and third place in the Ohio Section Newsletter Contest. The second place award was especially thrilling because our newsletter lost to the winner by only one point. And both first and second place scores were record setters point wise for the contest at the time of the award.



I am hopeful that Bill can take our newsletter to the next level and actually win the darn contest next year. Bill does have a lot of excellent ideas in the format of our newsletter so look for some changes in the next several months.

With that, 73 to all. Please wish Bill a welcome and congratulations at the September meeting.

Don Russell, W8PEN

Upcoming Events

- Sept 9:** Dinner at 5:00 pm at the Southside Diner on South Main Street.
- Sept 11:** Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 am
- Sept 12:** Ohio State Parks On The Air Contest at Mohican State Park, (Gorge Overlook) just off SR 97, Loudonville, OH Operations will start at 12:00 noon and continue until 8:00 pm
- Sept 13** Findlay, Ohio Hamfest. Opens at 8 :00 am <http://www.findlayradioclub.org>
- Sept 13:** ARES Sunday Night Net at 9:00 pm on the K8EEN Repeater.
- Sept 14:** Mount Vernon ARC meeting. 7:00 pm at the Knox County Red Cross Training Center, 300 North Mulberry Street, Mount Vernon, OH
- Sept 16:** Dinner at 5:00 pm at the Southside Diner on South Main Street.
- Sept 19:** Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner at 9:00 am **(Rescheduled from September 12)** located at Coshocton Rd and Gilchrist Rd.
- Sept 20:** ARES Sunday Night Net at 9:00 pm on the K8EEN Repeater.
- Sept 23:** Dinner at 5:00 pm at the Southside Diner on South Main Street.
- Sept 27:** ARES Sunday Night Net at 9:00 pm on the K8EEN Repeater.

(Continued on 2nd column)

Upcoming Events
Continued

- Sept 30:** Dinner at 5:00 pm at the Southside Diner on South Main Street.
- Oct 4:** ARES Sunday Night Net at 9:00 pm on the K8EEN Repeater.
- Oct 7:** Dinner at 5:00 pm at the Southside Diner on South Main Street.
- Oct 9:** Breakfast at Hardy's on Coshocton Rd 10:00 am
- Oct 10:** Breakfast at Allison's Finer Diner 9:00 am Located at Coshocton Rd and Gilchrist Rd.
- Oct 11:** ARES Sunday Night Net at 9:00 pm on the K8EEN Repeater.
- Oct 12:** Mount Vernon ARC meeting. 7:00 pm at the Knox County Red Cross Training Center, 300 North Mulberry Street Mount Vernon, OH

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MVARC Treasurers Report
September, 2015

Checking:	\$1,274.57
Savings:	\$ 505.75
COD 1:	\$ 578.28
COD 2:	\$ 811.67
 Total:	 \$3,171.27
 Deposits:	 \$ 507.00
 Checks:	 \$ 150.00 Apple Valley POA
	\$ 53.00 Frank Counts
	\$ 87.29 Matt Ware
Total	\$ 290.29

Tony R. Spiegel, KC8UR

Radio Activity



By Don Russell, W8PEN

AA8WP Silent Key

Most everyone knows we lost a key member of our ham community. Larry "Doc" Helzer, AA8WP passed away August 30, 2015.

AA8WP has always been there to share his wisdom when needed. For many years he chaired the Field Day committee and made sure we had way more food than we could consume in one weekend.

Doc was a trusted fellow ham and friend. I will miss him.

Our condolences and prayers go out to Docs family. I am sure the club is prepared to help the family in any way we can.

Local Ham Mesh Project

I must admit to being a bit frustrated with our Ham Mesh project. After a terrific start and lots of enthusiasm we have been at a standstill for nearly two months. I am still hoping to get at least two Mesh Nodes going before winter weather sets in.

Thanks to Frank Counts, KC8EVS, Ruben Clarke, KB2SAI, and myself, we have enough equipment to install two complete nodes without any cost to the club. This includes the Mesh AP (Access Point), antenna, Power over Ethernet (POE), and plenty of Cat 5 cable. We really need to push to get things in gear.

Once we have at least the two nodes going, we can really start to experiment.

Barry, N8PPF, and I have our two nodes up and running on a permanent basis. We can connect to each other and use a chat room to communicate. Next step will be to try Video Conferencing just to get a little experience while the rest of the group catches up. Of course we also have VOIP to play with.

One of the problems has been that most of the club members interested in the Mesh project have had really busy summers, including me. This is actually a good thing,

because a lot of the "busy" has been with Club projects. Our club has had a very busy and successful year thus far.

But we need to get this Mesh Network done, so I will start bugging people and see what happens.

I will give another report in the October Newsletter. Lets hope we have made some progress.

EMA Disaster Drill

Local hams were invited to participate in the Knox County EMA disaster drill held on Tuesday, August 25.

Beforehand, a group of club members were allowed entrance into the radio room which has been set up at the EOC for ham radio use. The hope was that we could get the antennas and radios hooked up and going before the disaster drill.

This was a nice plan, however, after putting connectors on the radio end of the cables and using an antenna analyzer, we found high SWR across all bands. If that wasn't enough, when we hooked the cables to the radios, we got zilch signals. It was determined that the cables must not be connected somewhere on top of the roof. We did not have access to the roof, so we had to wait for the commercial guys to check that part out. Sure enough, the antennas were not plugged into the bulkhead on top of the roof and the radio came alive once getting that issue resolved.

Thanks to the following club members for helping with these Radios:

Ruben Clarke	KB2SAI
Frank Counts	KC8EVS
Bill Bradley	KC8BB
Al Coulson	KC8MAB
Don Russell	W8PEN

This same group participated in the EMA drill plus Jim Williams, N8IBR. This was an interesting test, as the local hams have not been invited to participate in something like this for a long time. Thank you Mark Maxwell, Knox County EMA Director, for inviting us.

I was Net Control out of the EOC (Emergency Operations Center). Frank was at the site of an accidental chemical spill, Bill and Jim where at the Hospital, and Al was at the Red Cross Shelter.

Unfortunately, most of the communicating was between the EOC and the Event site. Not too much went on at the other places.

It was a positive experience for the group and we hope to participate in similar drills in the future.

Continued on page 5

Continued from Page 4

One real positive that came out of all of this was that some club members may have access to the radio room in the near future. I am thinking we can check into the Ohio Single-Side Band traffic Net from time to time simply to see what kind of coverage we would have. This experience would go a long way towards us knowing our capabilities in a real life situation.

That is it for now. See you all at the September meeting.

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Antenna Analyzers You Can Hack



By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I'm a nut for antenna analyzers. I think that they are one of the most useful things a ham can own.

I've often wondered why there aren't more DIY antenna analyzer projects, though. Perhaps it's because designing measurement circuits isn't easy. An antenna analyzer has to have a signal source as well. Even so, an antenna analyzer doesn't need a whole lot of accuracy to be useful, so you would think that more builders/hackers would tackle a project like this.

I do know of one antenna analyzer kit on the market. The VK5JST Antenna Analyzer Kit (<http://www.ahars.com.au/about/kits/>) costs about \$110 USD. I actually purchased this kit a year or so ago, and it looks like a great unit. The unit seems well designed, and it comes with a plastic case, unlike many projects these days, but I haven't yet gotten around to building it.

I've also recently found out about an Arduino-based antenna analyzer project (<http://hackaday.com/2015/08/06/40-antenna-analyzer-with-arduino-and-ad9850/>). It uses an AD9850 module as the signal source. The approximate cost for all the parts is about \$40, and you can experiment with the code, if you like. If you have the time and inclination, this project might be worth taking a hack at. [[NOTE TO EDITORS: A photo of this project can be found at <http://www.kb6nu.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/analyzer.jpg>]]

Another antenna analyzer project from Australia is the VK3YY antenna analyzer (or "analyser" as they spell it there). It uses an Arduino Nano. The interesting thing about the blog post in which VK3YY describes the project (<https://vk3yy.wordpress.com/2014/09/29/antenna-analyser-project/>) is that you can follow his design and experimentation process.

Yet another analyzer

While I'm talking about antenna analyzers, let me mention another one that I've just found out about: the IW2NDH Antenna Analyzer (<http://www.iw2ndh.com/>). This antenna analyzer isn't a kit, but at \$175 seems to be a good deal. This unit has a frequency coverage of 2 – 160 MHz, and can be used as an antenna analyzer, signal generator, and a scalar network analyzer.

Apparently, this started out as an Arduino project. As Maximo, EA1DDO, pointed out on the radioartisan Yahoo Group, there is source code for this project on GitHub (<https://gist.github.com/jackdev23/7876502>), and a schematic is available on the Union de Radioaficionados Espanoles (URE) website (<http://www.ure.es/media/kunena/attachments/2420/Schematic.jpg>).

When not writing about antenna analyzers, Dan, KB6NU, actually builds an antenna now and then. You can often find him on the HF bands (mostly 40m and 30m), working CW. His #1-rated amateur radio blog can be found at KB6NU.Com, and you can e-mail questions, comments, or complaints to cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



Eighth Annual Ohio State Parks On The Air Amateur Radio Contest

Mark your calendars for Saturday September 12 for the 8th Annual Ohio State Parks On The Air — OSPOTA contest

We will be holding this years event at the Mohican State Park and will be a lot of fun in a natural setting with other Hams and their radios from all over Ohio.

OSPOTA is not just fun, it is also an emergency preparedness exercise that allows ham radio operators to test their emergency skills. The event also serves to raise awareness about the Amateur Radio Service. The goal is to simulate emergency conditions by setting up "in the field" and operate using emergency power and to make contact with as many other amateur radio stations as possible.

Operators set up stations that run off of battery and generator power and use antennas strung over trees or portable masts which are easy to setup. It is important to have a back up station ready for portable/mobile/ use. They are the last link of communication when all else fails.

The Ohio State Parks On The Air (OSPOTA) Amateur Radio contest was conceived with four main goals in mind:

1. To promote public awareness of amateur radio and Ohio's beautiful state parks system.
2. To contribute to the recognition that Ohio has a very diverse and wonderful ecology
3. To promote camaraderie within the ranks of Ohio's Amateur Radio Operators
4. To encourage contact with other Amateur Radio Operators around the state, country, and world.

Operations will commence at noon on Saturday, September 12, 2015 and continue until 8:00 pm.

*** Important things to remember:

We are all guests at the Ohio State Parks. We must not disturb others and we must do no damage and clean up when we're done. Let's keep our beautiful Ohio State Parks just as beautiful as we found them.

If you need more information, please check with Frank Counts (KC8EVS).

Hope to see everyone there.

<http://www.ospota.org/ospota/index.php>

View from the Presidents Desk



Well it's the end of summer. For me it passed by all too quickly. I hope all is well at your home. As a club I think we have had a great summer. Our planned events have gone well, and so have the unplanned ones. The most excitement that I was involved in this summer happened a couple of weeks ago when a rider in the Pelotonia ride lost control of her bike and crashed into Bill, KC8BB. Both survived the crash with only a couple of scrapes but it makes for a good story if embellished properly. If you want my version come to the meeting and I would be glad to fill you in, September 13 at 7 pm the Red Cross Training Building.

We have one more planned event coming in September. On Saturday September the 12th we planned to participate in the Ohio State Parks on the Air (OSPOTA). This event runs from noon to 8 pm. It's not a contest so to speak but groups or individuals activate a state park by getting on the air and making contacts with as many other individuals or state parks in Ohio. They have a web page with all the rules etc. check it out (Google Ohio state parks on the air). Come out and join us we are going to activate Mohican State Park at the Gorge Overlook.

We have reserved the shelter there and plan on putting two stations on the air. One being our new go box built by Tom KD8HSA, the other will be our other club radio. It will be a great time to get experience in operating these two radios. This would also be a good time to try out any NVIS antennas that you are working on. We will also have a pot luck sort of cook out with the club providing the hamburgers and brats you bring whatever you want to add to this. We plan on eating around one or two.

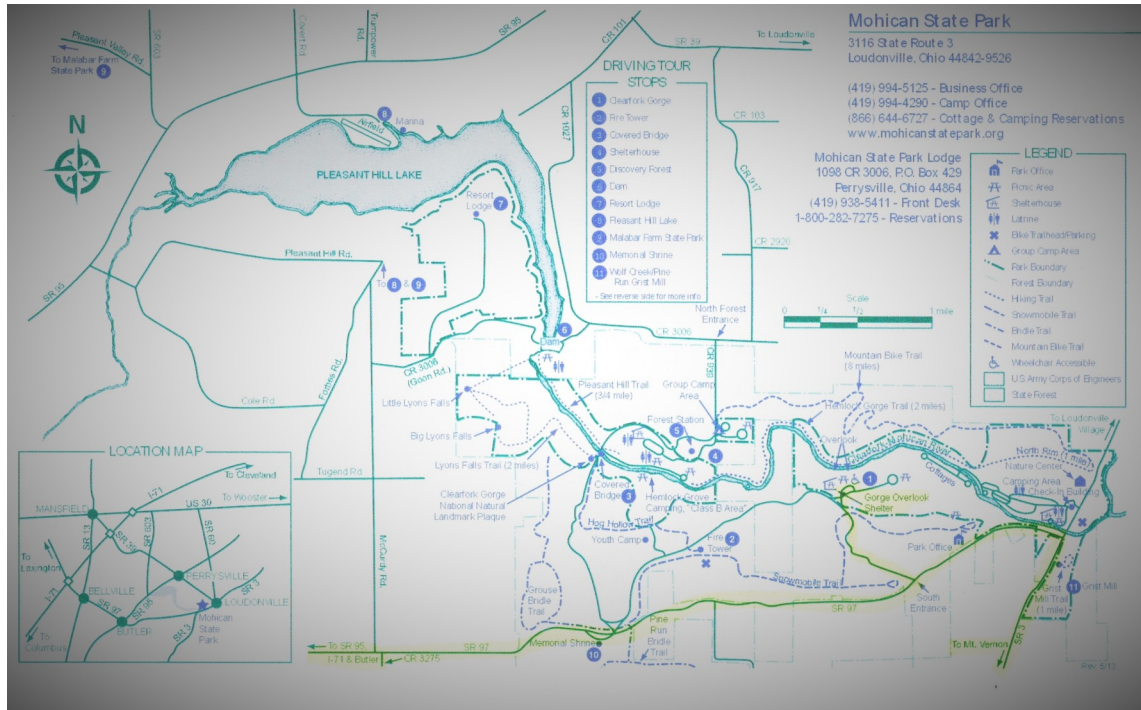
I plan on seeing you there or at least the meeting following Monday.

73
Frank KC8EVS

PS: I wrote this prior to Bill putting together the newsletter and he has a great review of the OSPOTA, plus the web page noted. Check out the web page if at all possible.

**See Map of Mohican Gorge area on
page 7**

Mohican Park Gorge area



Contesting For Fun!

Upcoming Contests:

WAE DX Contest, SSB:

0000Z, Sep 12 to 2359Z Sep 13, 2015: Logs due: Sep 28 <http://www.darc.de/referate/dx/contest/waedc/en/rules/>

Arkansas QSO Party:

1400Z, Sep 12 to 0200Z, Sep 13, 2015: Logs due: Sep 26
<http://www.arkqsoparty.com/#!rules/c205y>

Ohio State Parks on the Air

1600Z-2400Z, Sep 12, 2015: Logs due: Sep 26
<http://www.ospota.org/ospota/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/OSPOTA-Rules2015-13Dec.pdf>

ARRL September VHF Contest

1800Z, Sep 12 to 0300Z Sep 14, 2015: Logs due Oct 14
<http://www.arrl.org/september-vhf>

Contest tip of the month (Tip #1)

To maximize fun and contact / point totals contesters absolutely must learn how to call CQ and run a frequency. Sure, one can make quite a few contacts search and pouncing, however, the fun starts with the first CQ.

Continued on page 8

“Contesting” Continued from page 7

For an inexperienced contester, this is not an easy task. The rate of stations calling you can at times be intimidating, especially if there is a lot of weak stations calling.

Best advice from the pros is to practice CQ'ing in the smaller contests such as a State QSO Party. The action is less fierce and it will not matter as much if you go slow or bust a call once in a while.

If possible, start with a State QSO Party not in your state. For example, in the Wisconsin QSO party use this script or something similar to it:

“CQ the Wisconsin QSO Party from Ohio, W8PEN, Whiskey 8 Papa Echo November in Ohio”

This lets all stations in the contest know that you are not in Wisconsin and you are looking for stations inside Wisconsin only. This procedure works rather well and slows the pace down to a Rookies level. With just a little experience, one will start to feel comfortable in much bigger contests.

One wise old contester said: “Search and Pouncing is fun, but some stations never bother to “CQ”. If you are not CQ'ing at least part of the contest, you are missing out on all those stations that refuse to CQ”.

Howdy to all,

Since this is my first issue as editor of the MVARC Newsletter, I thought I would write down a few thoughts.

First I wish to thank Don W8PEN for all your patience, understanding and assistance to get my first newsletter off the ground. I have a fair amount of experience in writing up a 4 page program for a organization I am a member of, but nothing like writing a newsletter. I am familiar with Microsoft Publisher in making the monthly program so I am using Publisher for this newsletter as well. I certainly have learned a great deal this last week and discovered several more tasks Publisher has available that I had not used.

It certainly has been a challenge, but very enjoyable and rewarding as well. I try to be a perfectionist and that tends to make things very time consuming in making things right. At first I didn't think I would have enough information to make 10 pages, but to my surprise I had more than enough.

Lastly, I cannot leave out Jim, N8IBR for sharing his knowledge and suggestions for this newsletter. I also want to Frank Counts has contributed much of his time and talent in so many ways this year and also as president of our club.

If anyone has suggestions, criticisms, or something I could do to improve this letter, please don't hesitate to let me know. I hope to add a few things every month to make it easier to navigate and have educational subjects included that we all could learn and enjoy them.

Thanks again to everyone who contributed in some way and hope to talk to you soon.

73, and see you on the radio,

-Bill

KC8BB

REPEAT REQUEST FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

I would like to thank those members who have forwarded their current information to me. As explained previously, some information has been lost, and we are trying to become current on all membership information.

I understand some members don't have e mail accounts, while others share those and phone numbers with family members. Please advise your situation on those. We also need to know who is an ARRL member. The ARRL information could affect our club's affiliation status with the ARRL. So, we need that information.

If you are worried about your information's security, we do not share any personal information (phone numbers and E-mail addresses) with any other organization. It is only used for club business. We respect your privacy.

We need the following member's information to complete our records:

MEMBERS CALL	ARRL MEMBER?	PHONE NUMBER?	E MAIL ADDRESS?
<u>KD8NGS</u>	X	X	
<u>KD8FXX</u>			X
<u>AC8FV</u>		X	
<u>KD8RZZ</u>	X	X	X
<u>KD8WSJ</u>	X	X	X
<u>KC8VTA</u>	X	X	
<u>KD8WSI</u>		X	
<u>N8RLW</u>	X	X	
<u>KD8YYY</u>	X	X	X
<u>KE8ANV</u>	X	X	
<u>KD8UT</u>		X	
<u>KE8ANZ</u>	X		
<u>KE8ANU</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8ANX</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8ANP</u>	X		
<u>KE8ANQ</u>	X		
<u>KE8ANR</u>	X		
<u>KE8AOB</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8ANY</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8AOC</u>	X	X	
<u>KF4HHZ</u>			X
<u>KE8ANT</u>	X	X	
<u>KD8PSM</u>	X	X	
<u>N8OGX</u>			X
<u>KD8PSK</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8AOA</u>	X	X	
<u>KE8ANS</u>	X		

You can forward the information in a number of ways. The easiest would be to bring your information to any club function and give it to any Officer present. You also can e mail me at n8ibr51@centurylink.net, call me at 740-507-3623, or mail the information to "The MVARC, ATTN: SEC N8IBR, P.O.BOX 372, MT VERNON, OHIO 43050".

By the way we are 54 members strong and growing.
Again, your help in getting our records up to date is greatly appreciated.

Thanks and 73,
N8IBR SECRETARY MVARC

