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

September, 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
KD8EVR Repeater: 444.600 MHZ (+5 MHz with PL of 71.9 Hz)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The view from the Presidents Desk

2016 Special Event Station
Dan Emmett Music and Arts Festival
August 12th and 13th

If you did not make it out you really missed a great chance to get hoarse calling CQ! We may have made only 50 contacts over the couple of days but considering the band conditions and still working on the ARC station I think that we did great. The bands were up and down; you would hear a station call 59 then they would drop out almost completely. All that aside, we had fun.

73
Frank KC8EVS

Special thanks to all who participated:
Jim N8IBR
Don W8PEN
Emery W8TW
Terry KE8ANS
Don W8UMH
Tony KC8UR
Ed KE8ANU
Tom KD8HSA

Editors Note: Jim Williams, N8IBR added the following information regarding the Dan Emmett Festival Contacts

Our first contact was VE3VET in Fenwick, Ontario, Canada. We then added the following interesting contacts:

Michigan State University, ARC-W8SH; The Plymouth Historical Museum Radio Club Plymouth, MI KC8SWR.

Martin F Jue, founder of MFJ Enterprises, (he was mobile). K5FLU/M.

Associated Radio Amateurs of Long Beach, CA. The W6RO club station is located on the Queen Mary in Long Beach Harbor.

Our last contact was with N8PPF via the 2 meter echo link. I believe Barry was in New York state visiting family.

We worked a total of 51 stations. 2 Canadians, and 49 stateside.

The list included our working 2 of our club members, W8PEN and N8PPF.

Emergency Preparedness

By Patrick Valentino, KC8PSM

In the event of a disaster situation Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) could be deployed in a response. There's an abundance of things that could influence and challenge ARES ability to respond in a disaster situation. Want to be part of the planning process, participate in specialized training, included in drills and exercises? Build a kit, submit an ARES application and sign-up for Knox Alerts.

Emergency Preparedness, continued on page 2

Emergency Preparedness, continued from page 1

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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Naming our Newsletter

After viewing several Amateur Radio Clubs newsletters, I would like to give our MVARC Newsletter a name. There has been several names come up in conversations, many with Mount Vernon or Ham Radio in the title, such as:

Mount Vernon Transmitter; Relay; Static, or Radio Activity.

Ham Radio Gazette

Ham Radio Journal

The K8EEN Radiogram or some variant

Perhaps we could have a contest and the winner would win a prize.

Think about it and I will bring it up at our meeting on September 12.

73,

-Bill, KC8BB

The Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club Officers

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MINUTES FOR MVARC AUGUST 8TH, 2016 REGULAR MEETING

Meeting called to order at 2301 UTC by KC8EVS.
13 members, 1 guest present.
W8TW moved, N8PPF 2nd, to approve July 11th minutes. Approved.
W8UMH moved, W8PEN 2nd to approve August treasurer's report. Approved.

PRESDIENTS REPORT

Need to review with members on how to use the various pieces equipment (IE: Go Boxes, and Club Station at the Red Cross) we have accumulated at future meetings.

Reminded the members of the upcoming following activities; Dan Emmett Music and Arts festival, the Ohio QSO Party, the North American QSO Party, and The Ohio State Parks on The Air.

Ask for report on Columbus Hamfest: W8PEN reported it appears the new location will work quite well for the hamfest. He also reported that the club was able to raise new funds for the treasury after the sale of some of the recently donated equipment at the hanfest.

It was also stated that various items on our website need to be updated.
KC8EVS and KC8BB will do a re-write on the membership Handbook.

GENERAL BUSINESS

W8PEN reported that the progress on the MESH Network has been slow, but steady. He has recently purchased new Bullet Nodes and antennas to add to the system at a cost of $230.00.We are still looking for more higher profile sites to put additional nodes.
W8PEN reported all appears to be OK on the 2 meter repeater. He plans to order a new duplexer for the UHF repeater to improve our desense problem we area experiencing with it.

ARES REPORT

KD8PSM reported that the Knox County EMA is working on the new Knox Alerts program which will be used to notify citizens through out Knox County of any emergency situations in their area. KD8PSM also mentioned that the CERT program has recently expanded into the Knox County area. Like ARES, CERT works with the EMA and various other disaster agencies to help the citizens in an effected area.

KC8EVS inquired how the bicycle and marathon events were coordinated with the ARES. KC8PSM stated that KB2SAI usually handled that, but he would inquire and report back.

Motion to adjourn made by W8TW, 2nd W8PEN. Approved at 2013 UTC

Respectfully submitted,
N8IBR, Secretary -MVARC

Recently I have had request for a list of membership. The following is the current list of active club members. It is listed in alphabetical order by the members last name. Callsign will be listed first, followed by members name.

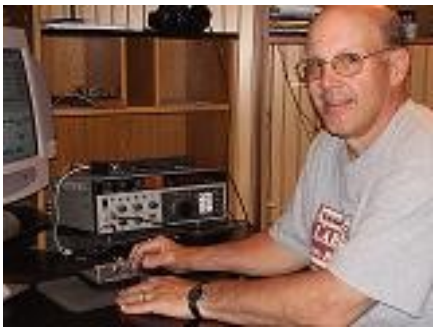
N8IBR, Secretary -MVARC

Update: One member has been added to the list as posted in last months newsletter.

A reminder, club dues should be paid by the December annual meeting

K8NJA-Nick Altstatt
W8TW-Emery Bennett
KD8UEP-Emery Bennett Jr.
W8UMH-Don Blizzard
KE8DKG-Harold Bower
KE8DKH-Ralph Bower
KD8EVR-Arlin Bradford
KC8BB-Bill Bradley
K8SLY-Larry Brengman
KB8QPO-Don Bunner
N8PPF-Barry Butz
N8SMT-Jeff Butz
KB8WCU –Wesley Caldwell
KB2SAI-Ruben Clark
KD8SWJ-Steve Cochran
KC8EVS-Frank Counts
KC8VTA-Kathleen Dean
KE8AFT-Jim Dorough
KD8WSI-John Eagle Spirit
KD8HSA-Tom Evans
K8AEC-Scott Fields
K8KLW-Rick Gibson
KE8ANV-Brian Hockenberry
KB8QPP-Peggy Hockenberry
W8LFR-Ralph Hoffman
N8RPZ-Charlene Householder
N8RDH-Dick Huggins
KD8UT-Jim Jennessee
KE8DKJ-Calib Keller
KE8DKI-Harry Keller
AC8PT-Scott Keyes
N8JQZ-Jack Koelbl
KE8DKL-Pete Lawhon
KE8ANU-Ed Liddle
KE8ANP-Mike Liston
KE8ANQ-Scott Magers
KE8ANR-Ron McGlone
KD8UEB-Craig McMurry
KE8DKF-Mark Peakovic
W8DEP-Dave Phillips
KE8ANY-Bobbie Robey
KE8DKK-Ryan Rupp
W8PEN-Don Russell
KD8TNT-Steve Salyers
KC8UR-Tony Spiegel
KF4HHZ-Daniel Staiger
KD8WHQ-Bill Stroud
KD8PSM-Pat Valentino
N8OGX-Bill Waits
N8NMQ-Kelly Warner
N8IBR-Jim Williams
KE8ANS-Terry Windsor

Membership Profile: W8PEN



By Don Russell, W8PEN

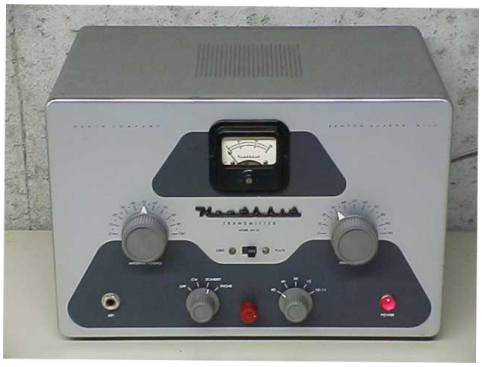
I was bitten by the Ham Radio bug around 1962 or 1963 when coming across a Popular Electronics magazine. There was a column, and many stories of ham radio in each issue of Popular Electronics back then.

From this magazine, I built one and two transistor shortwave receivers, found out about SWL'ing and DX'ing the Broadcast band, and learned about ham radio operators who worked the world with Morse Code.

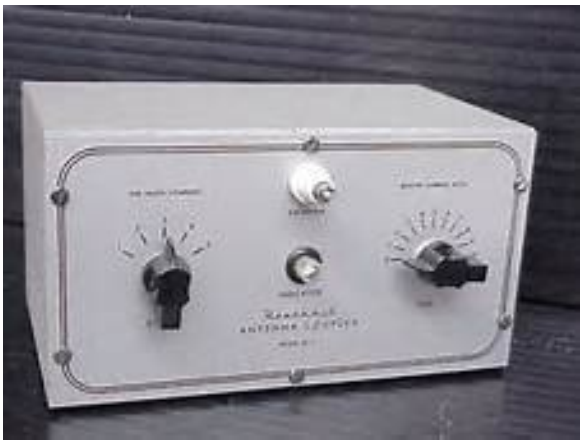
I was first licensed as WN8ODK in 1964 and using a Heathkit DX-35 transmitter, a Knight Kit Span Master receiver and, and a Heathkit AC-1 Antenna Coupler, I too, worked the world with Morse Code.

I was a Freshman in High School then, and my Brother, WA8ONN and I had daily chats while he was off to college at Dayton University via ham radio (which led to my first Dayton Hamfest!). Who needs cell phones?

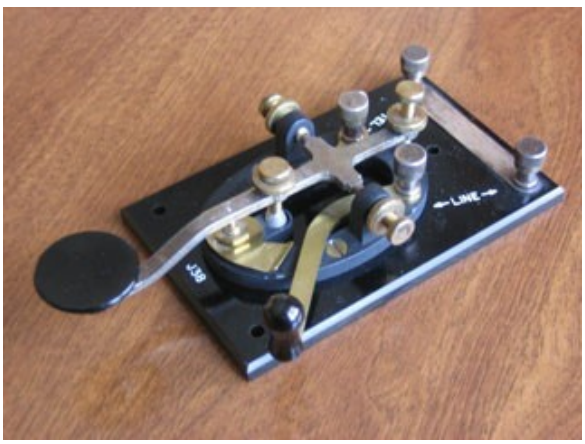
KNIGHT KIT SPAN MASTER



HEATHKIT DX-35



Heathkit AC-1



J-38 Telegraph Key

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W8PEN Profile continued from page 5

The antenna was a homebrew inverted V. Well, kind of. My brother had talked mom and dad into buying me the DX-35 transmitter for Christmas in 1964. The Span Master receiver was his that he had built the Christmas before. Chuck and I put up an antenna that looked like an inverted V, but was really a long wire because we had a single wire feed that came into the shack connected to the AC-1.

I tried for many days to make my first contact with no success and was getting pretty frustrated. Then I read somewhere that you needed to insulate the antenna from the ground. Duh. Chuck and I did not use any insulators. The antenna wire was being grounded to the tin roof on the house. Chuck was still home for Christmas break, so he and I went back up on the roof and installed insulators so the antenna was not grounded. That did the trick.

That day I made my first contact. I don't remember the call, but the ham was from Athens, Ohio. I must have been sending at about two words a minute I was so nervous. But I got through that first contact and the rest is history. As I gained confidence and experience my code speed went up and ham radio was really becoming fun.

My Novice license expired and I failed the General Theory test several times before realizing you really did have to study!

I was again licensed in 1966 or 1967 with the call WA8YRS. I held this call for many years until deciding to get the vanity call of W8PEN in honor of my Elmer and long time friend, Royce "Woody" Woodward, W8PEN, SK. It took me over two decades to satisfy this yearning, but I am glad I did. The call is a great contest call, both on CW and SSB.

My passion is contesting using Morse Code. I do a limited number of SSB contests throughout the year. I like to rag chew on 40 meters, chase a little DX, and have fun using my original Novice straight key for Straight Key Century Club (skcc) contacts.

As most club members know, I am very active in many club projects. While public service is not really my thing, I recognize the value of the ARES and contribute enough operating time to keep my skills sharp.

I have held many club offices, including president in 1970. I found I do not make a good president and have resisted opportunities to do so again. I prefer to help direct the club from the sidelines.

Admittedly, I tend to push the club in a direction that is favorable to me. I realize that perhaps most members have no interest in our Mesh Network project or the digital FM repeater. But I feel the club needs to embrace new technology or be left behind. Besides, learning new things is fun.

I recently bought a Heathkit SB-100 80 – 10 meter transceiver. This is a mid to late 1960's transceiver with all tubes. After some work fixing it up, and a good alignment, this radio has proven to be a good performer. Just today I was trying to work a station barely copyable on 40 meter SSB with my Kenwood TS-590S transceiver. I switch to the SB-100 to see what a difference it would make. Wow. Although still weak, I had a perfect copy on the station. Modern radios use phase circuits which create some noise in the receiver. Old radios such as the Heathkit SB-100 do not use phase circuits. The noise floor is much lower with these radios. I am thinking of trying the SB-100 in the next contest. Would be interesting.

W8PEN Profile, continued on page 7

W8PEN Profile, continued from page 6

I am now following in my elmers footsteps. I have been lead instructor at the local radio clubs ham radio courses for ten years or so. I am also past editor of the clubs newsletter. Did it for ten years and finally gave it up last year. I believe I am looked upon as everyone's elmer by my fellow club members. It is a lot of fun teaching new hams effective operating techniques and how to build antennas. Lately some local hams have been bitten by the contest bug, so this has been lots of fun having local competition to deal with. So far I am holding my own, but some of these younger hams are starting to get really good at contesting.

I am hoping that I am respected enough as an elmer that when I go SK, someone else will take my call, W8PEN, and continue to put it out there on the air.

Radio Activity, by Don Russell

August was a pretty hectic month for me. Besides the new repeater, the Mesh Network, setting up a station at the Red Cross, and the EOC project, I have been trying to find some time for fishing and camping. Neither of the last two has been done to my satisfaction. Hopefully, I can finish off the Fall season with a bang and get a bit of fishing in. Of course, the extremely hot August weather has kept me from really pushing for any projects under the sun.

New Antenna Project

I am adding a project to my to do list before Winter sets in. This summer, Dave Phillips, W8DEP, gave me two Hustler 4-BTV vertical antennas. They have been stored along the garage since then. Now that the hot weather is over, I am planning on putting at least one of these up, and maybe both.

As a trial, I will start with one. This antenna is a trapped antenna and works on 40. 20. 15, and 10 meters. For a while, I was considering using just the base of the antenna and no traps. A piece of tubing would be added to the base so the antenna would be 16 feet long, which should resonate at 20 meters, which is the band I am particularly interested in. However, after thinking about it, I should probably put up the antenna as designed so that I can work all four bands. So, that is the plan. Starting with one antenna will give me an idea on how well this antenna will perform. If it does reasonably well on 20 meters, I will add the second antenna and fed them in phase to give me a bit more gain towards the East Coast, or perhaps Europe. Probably the East Coast. There is a high ham population that way, which would be very good for domestic contesting.

So one antenna. How about the radials? I am planning on a minimum of 20 radials 33 feet long. This will be placed on the ground or slightly beneath the ground. These radials should give me good performance on all bands. If not, I can always add a few more. The other alternative would be to put up elevated radials. This may work better performance wise, but makes the project a bit more complex. I would need at least two ¼ wavelength radials for each band. I would also have to find a way to put up and take down the radials when I want to use the antenna. I think on the ground and out of the way is the way to go.

My hope with this antenna is to give me a bit better signal on the East and West Coast and perhaps also let me do better in DX contests.

So, why would I want to put two of these up? Phased verticals have be proven to be very effective on bands that a beam would be too big for. Like 160, 80, and 40 meters. While you may not be able to get 8 Db gain out of a set of phased verticals, it is certainly possible to get 3 Db or better.

Radio Activity, continued on page 8

This depends on the spacing and I will have to look it up in the Amateur Radio Handbook or Antenna Book to be sure. But with ½ wavelength spacing, you get 3 Db gain and with 5/8 wavelength spacing I think you get close to 5 DB. Of course this gain comes at a price. You have to install the antenna broadside to the direction you want to work. Also, the more gain, the narrower the antenna pattern. So, even though I would only get 3 Db gain out of a set of phased verticals separated by ½ wavelength, the antenna pattern would be broader and I could work more area. Okay. My main band will not be 160, 80, or 40 meters. But then I don't have a beam up high in the air either. I will let you know how this works out in a future issue.

Moon Bounce Anyone?

Along with the vertical antennas, Dave also gave me an 11 element 2 meter beam. My plans for this antenna have not changed. I would like to try some Moon Bouncing, better know as EME (for Earth-Moon-Earth). I also bought a 160 watt 2 meter amplifier off of Jim Williams, and a 2 meter transverter off of E-bay. This should get me in the ballpark for my EME station. Not sure when I will get time to work on this though.

Putting the antenna together and getting the amplifier working should be a piece of cake. The transverter is another problem. I will take some work before even being able to try it out. So, I am thinking of maybe making this a club project. We use my antenna and amplifier and the Clubs Yaesu FT-847. Many hams have used the FT-847 successfully in their EME stations. We can try this all on a weekend sometime. Of course the ideal time would be during one of the ARRL's EME contests.

We would have to use the WSJT digital mode. So, we would have to set up some sort of soundcard interface. Of course a computer would also be needed.

Bottom line is, we could do this for practically nothing because we have all the hardware necessary. An extra antenna would be helpful, but may also cause problems on how to phase the two antennas.

The antenna does not have to be very high. Five to six feet would do and we could use the armstrong method of antenna rotating (by hand).

So, anyone interested in joining this project, let me know.

Mesh Network Update

The Mesh Network project continues to frustrate me. We desperately need at least one high profile Node. And it seems like this is taking forever!

We have been trying to work around this setback however. My Node is up high enough that I feel anyone in Central and West Mt. Vernon should have a good chance of hitting it if you can get a node up 20 to 30 feet. Same with Barry's (N8PPF) Node. Many areas in Mt. Vernon should be able to hit the Node at the Red Cross. So we are not hurting as badly as we could be. Just need to get more Nodes up.

Currently, we have three Nodes running full time. Three more RF Nodes are close to being a reality. We also have three Nodes that cannot connect with RF, but for now, will be able to connect via an internet tunnel.

We also have a ham in Mansfield wanting to connect to one of our Nodes, Mike Thompson, WB8ERJ. So we already have some interest in expanding our link to outside the county. You would want this for ARES work.

We have something really neat here. We just need to get over the hump on this project.

See you all at the meeting.

5…4…3…2…1: Readability Reports

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU
I'm big on Twitter. It connects me to a lot of interesting amateur radio operators, and I find a lot of food for thought there. Yesterday, I saw the following Tweet:

Charlie – M0PZT @M0PZT
Blog updated: RST and Speed Matters http://www.m0pzt.com/blog/rst-and-speed-matters/ #hamradio

Being a CW geek, of course I was interested. Charlie's point is that if you get a bad report, you probably should send more slowly. I certainly have no argument with that. What I do take a little bit of an issue with is that Charlie says, "A Readability 4 report should really make it known that information needs to be brief, but repeated – Certainly no ANT/RIG/WX waffle!"

According to most sources, Readability 4 means, "Readable with practically no difficulty." When I receive an R4 report, I might slow down a little, but it doesn't mean to me that I have to cut the contact short or repeat information over and over. I replied on Twitter that if the operator at the receiving station is having so much trouble copying, then the report should probably be 319 or even 219.

Of course, RST reports are open to interpretation. With that in mind, I thought I'd explain a little more fully how I decide what Readability report to give:

R5: Perfectly readable. To me, this means that copying a signal is no work at all, and that it sounds like it's coming out of a code practice oscillator. I can put my feet up on the desk or putter around the shack while I'm rag chewing with the other operator.

R4: Readable with practically no difficulty. "Practically no difficulty" is the key phrase here. There may be some QRN or QSB on this signal, and I have to pay some attention while copying. An R4 is still solid copy, though, and rag chewing is definitely possible.

R3: Readable with considerable difficulty. A signal that rates an R3 needs my full attention. I have to work at copying the signal, and even then, might miss characters here and there. Even though I don't copy every single character, I'm able to fill in the gaps. An R3 signal might not be good enough for a rag chew, and repeating information is probably a good idea.

R2: Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable. A signal that rates an R2 is usually so weak that it's below the noise level or drops below the noise level occasionally. At this level, the contact will definitely be brief and any important information, such as the call sign needs to be repeated.

R1: Unreadable. Generally, I would never give out this report, as I would never attempt making contact if a signal was truly unreadable.

Although my explanations above reflect the fact that I'm primarily a CW operator, I think they also apply to phone or even digital contacts. For example, an R5 for a phone contact would mean that the signal sounds like it could be coming from just down the street or coming through the local repeater.

What do you think? How do you decide what Readability report to give?

Dan, KB6NU, 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. If you want an honest Readability report, look for him most evenings on 40m CW.

September 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN **W8PEN –Don**	**12** **7:00 pm MVARC Meeting at the Mt Vernon Red Cross An-**	**13**	**14** 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	**15**	**16** 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's Dan Emmett Days	**17** 9:00 am Breakfast at Allison's Fine Diner Dan Emmett Days Celebration
18 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN **KE8ANS –Terry**	**19**	**20**	**21** 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	**22**	**23** 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	**24**
25 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN **KD8HSA –Tom**	**26**	**27**	**28** 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	**29**	**30** 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	**1 Oct.**
2 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN **KC8BB –Bill**	**3**	**4**	**5** 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	**6**	**7** 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	**8** 9:00 am Breakfast at Allison's Fine Diner