

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

February, 2018



**Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm
at the Knox County Chapter of the American Red Cross Annex
300 North Mulberry Street Mount Vernon, OH 43050**



**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)**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| President's View | 1 |
| Contesting for Fun | 2 |
| Minutes from the January Meeting | 3-4 |
| Radio Activity | 5-6-7 |
| FT-8 | 8-9 |
| Repeater Update | 9 |
| February / March Calendar | 10 |

President's View

Hello to all, hope your January went well. I have a couple of dates to add to your busy calendars. First is NVIS Day, April 28 2018, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. I think that the hours are correct, if not close. The location has not been set in stone at this time. Tom KD8HSA is working on securing the Centerburg Conservation site as before.

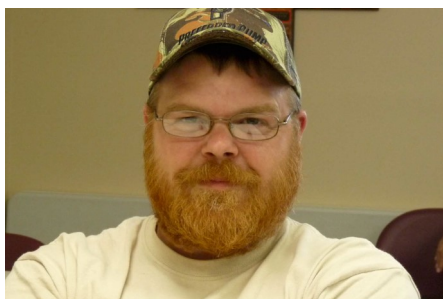
Second date is the Skywarn Spotter class, this year it is scheduled for March 29, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., Central Ohio Technical College 236 South Main Street. Located at the intersection of South Main and Ohio Avenue. Make a note of the location as this is new.

You can find all classes available at this web site, http://www.weather.gov/cle/SKYWARN_schedule

It has been very busy here in our household watching grandchildren and preparing for two additional little ones in the upcoming couple of months. This has hampered my time on the radio somewhat but still having a great time. Hope to see you at the next meeting February 12, 7:00 p m. at The American Red Cross Training Building.

Frank, KC8EVS





Greg Short, W8DOH

I had the opportunity to contest with the Radiohio for the NAQP in January. This was my first big contest with my new radio setup. I found it to be very educational and enjoyed trying to break through the noise and make contacts. At the start of the contest, there were not very many people on, so it was easy at first. I even contacted Don, W8PEN, just after the contest started. As time went on, the bands started to get full, and it was getting more difficult to hear the weak stations from the noise just above and below them. I broke out my manual and started figuring out how my filters worked. I took my time understanding what the filters were doing to the incoming signal and kept tweaking them until I had narrowed in on the signal. I found out that the DNR and DNF filtering, although very useful in most cases, was not working on the bleed over from the close bands, but my notch and contour filters did the job. After what seemed to be hours, I got my radio dialed in, and started making contacts that I could not hear before. If anything, the contest helped me to understand my radio more, and allowed me to see what the radio can actually do. In the end, I made 110 contacts, 51 multipliers, and 5,610 points in about 8 hours. I am pleased I took the time to figure out how my radio works, and how to dial in on weak signals. I look forward to the next contest now that I know where to start and hope to improve on how many stations I contact. 73's and have fun!

**The Mount Vernon Amateur
Radio Club Officers**

President:

Frank Counts, KC8EVS
fcounts@gmail.com
Phone: 740-358-9131

Vice President:

Scott Fields, K8AEC
ballixe@yahoo.com
Phone: 740-504-8204

Secretary/Treasurer:

Terry Windsor, KE8ANS
ke8ans@gmail.com
Phone: 740-507-6329

Call & Repeater Trustee:

Don Russell, W8PEN
w8pen@arrl.net
Phone: 740-397-0249

Equipment Trustee:

Barry Butz, N8PPF
n8ppf@mvarc.net
Phone: 740-397-7540

Directors:

Emery Bennett, W8TW
eabenn2002@hotmail.com
Phone: 740-397-8127

Greg Short, W8DOH
gsw8doh@gmail.com

Bill Stroud, KD8WHQ
bstroud52@centurylink.net
Phone: 740-625-5728

Scott Magers, KE8ANQ
smagers74@yahoo.com
Phone: 614-832-2851

Don Russell, W8PEN
w8pen@yahoo.com
Phone: 740-397-0249

Bill Bradley, KC8BB
wljabradley@outlook.com
Phone: 740-397-0267

Newsletter Editor &

Facebook Editor:

Bill Bradley, KC8BB
wljabradley@outlook.com
Phone: 740-397-0267

January Meeting Minutes January 8, 2018



Frank, KC8EVS called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

18 Members present.

December Meeting Minutes accepted: Motion by Scott, N8SY and seconded by Greg, W8DOH.

Treasurers Report presented by Terry, KE8ANS. Motion to accept by Don, W8PEN and Seconded by Emery, W8TW. Motion passed to accept Treasurers Report. For club finance specifics please contact Terry.

Repeaters:

Don, W8PEN reported the 146.79 back up repeater is working. (This is the Fusion repeater that was originally the 444.6 repeater.) The 444.6 repeater is still off the air.

Arlin, KD8EVR repaired and 24 hour tested the original 2M repeater. The issue was with the amplifier and that component was replaced with a similar Kenwood amplifier. Don, W8PEN will pick up from Arlin and he and Barry, N8PPF will arrange to swap all repeaters back to their original locations: 2M repaired repeater back at the water tower and the 70cm repeater moved back to the hospital. Emery, W8TW made a motion to pay \$150.00 for repair of the repeater and was seconded by Barry, N8PPF. The motion passed.

A backup repeater was purchased from the Mansfield club and will be kept at the Red Cross location for future requirements. This had been discussed at the December meeting and based on urgency the purchase was approved by MVARC Directors.

Mesh:

Don, W8PEN, reported Mesh network is working. However, the internet only access portion is down and Don will look into it soon.

There was a discussion regarding Mesh linking with Mansfield but they are not ready at this time. Louie, KE8HNF may be able to link with Mount Vernon and Mansfield, if this occurs.

Old Business:

Barry, N8PPF taking pictures for the web site. Contact Barry to have your picture included in the member directory.

New Business:

Knox County has a new ARRL Emergency Coordinator: Bill Stroud, KD8WHQ has accepted this position. Pat, KD8PSM has stepped down from this role but will still be assisting the Knox County EMA Director. All Sunday night ARES Net logs will now be sent to Bill for reporting purposes.

Frank, KC8EVS discussed upcoming 2018 club events and the need for coordinators to assist. These events are the normal activities the club participates in:

April 22: Earth Day Challenge

April 28: Ohio NVIS Day

June 24 – 25: Field Day

August: Dan Emmett Special Event Station

September 8: Ohio State Parks on the Air

December 9: MVARC Christmas Dinner

A new activity this year will be operating Winter Field Day from the Red Cross Training Center using 2 of the club radios, laptops for logging, and the R5 vertical antenna and the 80M end fed antenna. Field Day starts at 2:00 p.m. on 1/27 and ends at 2 pm on 1/28. Plans are to have a potluck if participants want to bring food or pick up something in town as needed.

Don, W8PEN to let the Red Cross know of our operating plans and Bill, KC8BB to post a Winter Field Day notice on the MVARC Facebook page. Tony, KC8UR stated he could work CW during the late night hours.

The Earth Day discussion regarded getting the EMA trailer to use as a command post and the need for an event coordinator.

Ohio NVIS day is a chance to utilize and test home built 40-60-80M antennas for emergency effectiveness. Tom, KD8HSA was asked if the Centerburg Conservation Corps facility was available to use. This is a nice area with a shelter and he was going to check on its availability.

Don, W8PEN discussed the upcoming Technician Class starting with signups on 1/11 and classes starting on 1/18. A notice was sent to the Mount Vernon News, hung in the Library and Post Office, and Scott, N8SY advertised the event in his weekly Ohio ARRL newsletter. Anyone wishing to be an Instructor, your assistance is needed Thursdays from 7 pm till 9:30. Current club members should also come to the Red Cross Training Center to meet and welcome students and eventual new club members.

Terry, KE8ANS mentioned the Arnold Sports Festival and the need for Ham Radio operators to assist medical teams assigned to each event. The Arnold is scheduled March 2, 3, and 4 this year. It is a good time and volunteers get in free and see some of the sporting events. If you wish to read about this event or sign up go to:

<https://arnoldexpo.com/medical>

Or search Facebook for: Arnoldmedicalteam

There was a discussion about radio contests and the upcoming NAQP CW and SSB and the VHF/UHF contests. MVARC does a team effort during some contests and uses the RadioOhio name. To become a team member for contest events contact Barry, N8PPF. Barry displayed some of his contest certificates on the table for club members to view. Contesting is a good way to develop radio habits and learn how to effectively use your transceiver. The ARRL is also sponsoring a yearlong contest for chasing grid squares.

Read about the event here: <http://www.arrl.org/international-grid-chase-2018>

Emery, W8TW mentioned having a raffle to raise funds for the club. One idea was for the club to purchase a new Yaesu FT70 HT and raffle it off. This idea was tabled until the March meeting.

Emery, W8TW stated he and Dick, N8RDH are going to look over Don's, W8UMH (SK) equipment and assist his wife with pricing and selling these items.

Mansfield Hamfest is February 18 at the Richland County Fairgrounds. Gates open 7:00 a.m. Discussion regarding having a table was tabled until a determination is made if this activity is needed.

Adjournment

Scott, N8SY provided ARRL Hats and winter caps which were raffled to club members.

Motion to adjourn by Scott, N8SY and seconded by Michael, KE8HGE. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 pm.

Terry Windsor, KE8ANS
MVARC Secretary/Treasurer

By Don Russell, W8PEN



Winter Field Day

The club was certainly radio active during January, participating in the Winter Field Day contest. We set up shop at the Red Cross Training Center and basically used the club station plus one for the event.

This contest is a stream lined version of the ARRL June Field Day. However, it is not sponsored by the ARRL. There are three classes: **H** Class for **Home**, **I** Class for **In Door**, and **O** Class for **Outside**. I would think only the Southern states would be interested in the Outside class. That being said, the weather was fairly warm and we had rain. I could see us setting up in a tent and be very comfortable outside. That would be one of those wait and see decisions.

Just like Field Day, there are certain bonuses that we could have obtained. There were bonus points available for Emergency Power, Operating Outdoors, Operating not at home, and for making a Satellite contact. This being the first time the club participated in the event, we did not bother with bonus points. Maybe next year if the interest is there.

There was an interest twist to the contest rules that I did not see until getting ready to submit our score. The multiplier is how many modes you operated per band. In our case we operated CW and SSB on three bands. So $2 \times 3 = 6$ multipliers. I am now glad I took the time to make a couple of CW contacts on 20 meters.

The club operated two stations. The one upstairs in the Training Center using the FT-890, and one set up downstairs using the clubs FT-847. Since the FT-847 did not have a CW filter, I brought my TS-570 in Sunday morning to work some CW. We used the already installed club antennas. Plus, we set up Barry's (N8PPF) portable end fed so that we could have one station on 80 meters and one station on 40 meters.

We used one of the clubs computers for logging. When prepping the computers, I found that the second computer did not have enough memory installed to run logging software, so we used one of my spare computers. This issue has since been resolved and now both club computers can be used for logging without a problem.

This was not the typical Field Day. Activity was a little sparse, and our antennas, while effective during the day, seemed to bite the dust at dusk (pun intended). That was expected on the 20 meter band, but we really figured 80 and 40 meters would be good all night. They were not. The group left the training center for some well deserved shut eye around 2:00 a.m. We were back at it around 10:00 a.m.

Radio Activity, continues on page 6

I think that 80 meter activity was very poor both on CW and SSB. The majority of the contacts came during the daylight on Saturday and Sunday with 40 meter SSB being the money band. 40 CW would have been good too. But we did not spend a lot of time on CW. Contacts are as follows:

80 Meter CW: 6

80 Meter SSB: 9

40 Meter CW: 17

40 Meter SSB: 82

20 Meter CW: 2

20 Meter SSB: 13

Total score after the mode multiplier: 1848.

Those operating the stations were: W8DOH, KE8HGE, KE8GFZ, KC8UR, N8PPF, and W8PEN.

Those participation in the event were Greg (W8DOH) and XYL Tasha, Michael (KE8HGE), Lori (KE8GFZ), Barry (N8PPF), Emery (W8TW), Tom (KD8HSA), Frank (KC8EVS), Louie (KE8HNF) and XYL, Scott (K8AEC), Tony (KC8UR), and Don (W8PEN).

Please forgive me, if I missed anyone.,

I was expecting to make about 100 contacts. We reached that goal by making 130 with one being a duplicate. Not bad for our first attempt.

If we do this next year, I would like to see us run emergency power for the bonus points, and run CW, Digital, and SSB. The digital will help boost our contact total especially with sparse participation. We could also use the bonus points of the **In Door** class, but would have to go elsewhere and set up antennas. I think we should stick with the Red Cross.

We also need to improve the 80 and 40 meter antenna. The end fed works well, but picks up a lot of noise. I would like to see if we could fit an 80 meter loop in the space we have. If nothing else, we could put a loop up before the event as an extra antenna (instead of the end fed antenna of Barry's).

This proved to be a fun event. While we did not make a ton of contacts, the almost 24 hours of rag chew between club members was awful fun.

2 Meter Repeater

Arlin (KD8EVR) has the 2 meter repeater repaired. All we need is a break in the weather to get it back in operation. In the meantime, the backup repeater is doing an excellent job. It will be nice to get things back together and the repeater at the hospital back in operation.

Technician Class Course

This years Technician Class Course is moving right along. So far we have six students hard at work. There will be a VE testing session Saturday, February 24 at the Training Center starting at 10:00 a.m. This testing is open to all and for all classes. Now is the time to start studying for your upgrade.

Mesh Network

The mesh network continues to operate without a problem. There are some things that need to be worked on however. Anyone that wishes to put their own node up and connect to the network should contact me.

EME and Meteor Scatter

I have decided to leave my huge antenna that I put up for meteor Scatter on the tower. It is working well and I am now making quite a few 2 meter meteor scatter contacts. Things are looking good.

My EME project creeps forward slowly. I have yet to hear any stations off the moon however. I am looking at Spring before I will be able to make serious attempts at EME communications.

Instead of adding another antenna to the one I already have on my tower, I have decided to install a separate tower and antennas for EME. This tower will be 10 to 15 feet tall and host two 35 feet long, 17 element 2 meter beams. I already have one of the beams and I have decided to buy another one. Doing so will save me the trouble of taking down the antenna I now have on the tower. As mentioned, I need to keep that one there for meteor scatter anyway.

The lower tower will hopefully solve some noise pickup problems I am having with the antenna at 50 feet. Noise is the biggest issue when trying to hear signals off the moon. I am hoping I can make a few contacts using the 150 watt amplifier, but eventually plan on boosting that to about 350 watts or more.

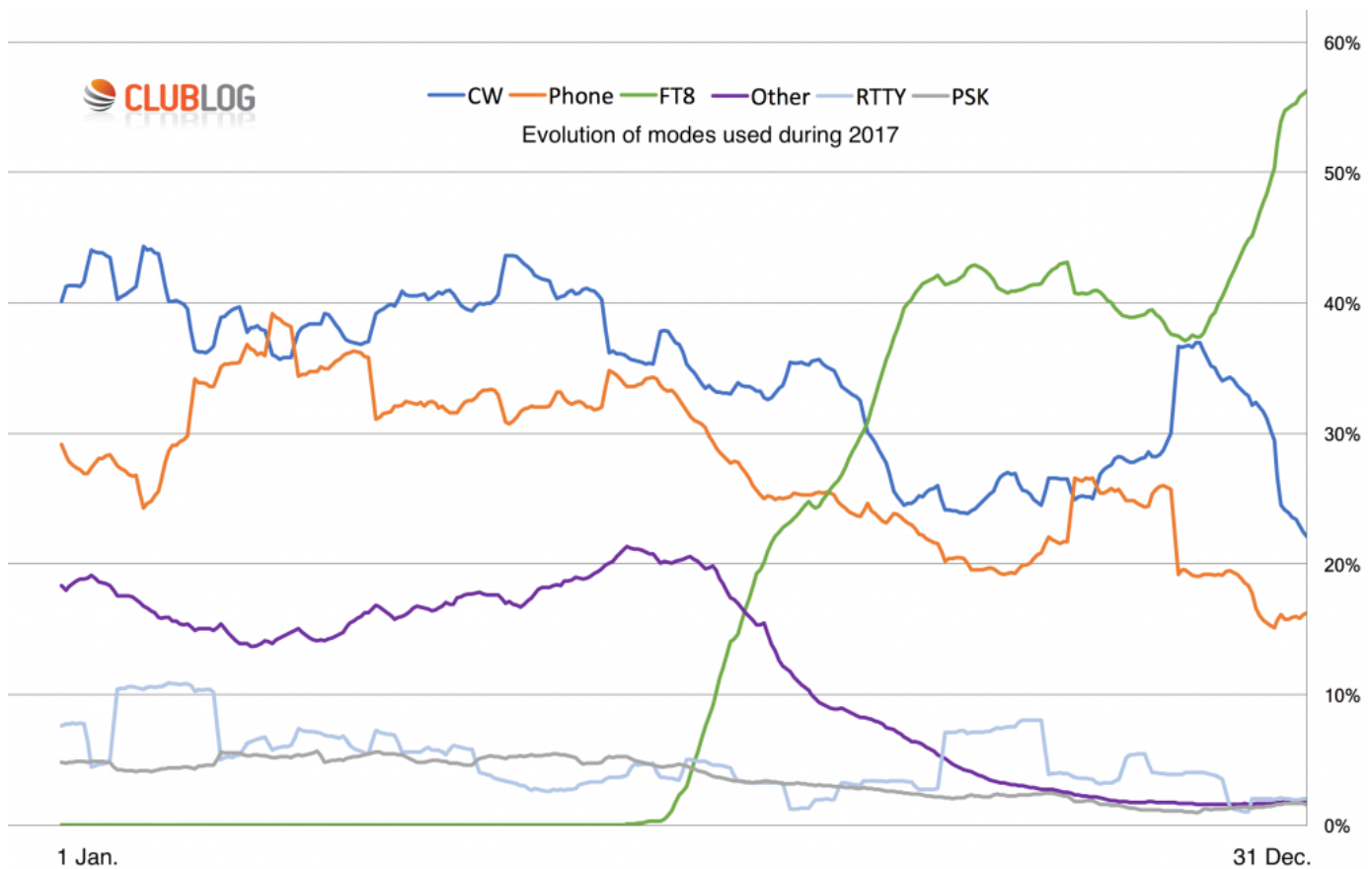
That is it for this month. See you all at the February meeting.

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

January 31, 2018



A couple of weeks ago, Michael, G7VJR, of [ClubLog](#) published [an analysis of the contacts that were uploaded to ClubLog in 2017](#). These are summarized in the chart below:



This is really fascinating information. As you can see, at the end of the year, more than 50% of the contacts uploaded to ClubLog were FT8 contacts.

As some of the commenters point out, there probably is some bias in the data. FT8 operators are more likely to update their contacts than are CW rag chewers, but even so, the trend—at least in the short term—is obvious. It will be interesting to see if this FT8 activity can be maintained, or whether operators will tire of it after a while. What happens when every FT8 operator achieves DXCC?

[FT-8, continues on page 9](#)

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

New operating guide

To help us all convert over to FT8, Gary, ZL2IFB, has just published his [FT8 operating guide](http://www.g4ifb.com/FT8_Hinson_tips_for_HF_DXers.pdf) or http://www.g4ifb.com/FT8_Hinson_tips_for_HF_DXers.pdf

I haven't read it all the way through yet, but I do like this sidebar:

Some of these tips (such as split operating, tail-ending and using low power) are contentious and not universally adopted by FT8 users—and that's fine. To an extent, we are figuring this stuff out for ourselves as we go along, which for me is all part of the fun. These tips work for me. Your situation and preferences may differ. By all means try out different approaches ... and do let me know if they work better.

I really do need to read this. As I've written before, my initial attempts at FT8 were mediocre at best. Perhaps this will help me be more successful at FT8.

If you do download and read this guide, don't skip the appendixes. Appendix A and B dig into some of FT8's technical details. Appendix D discusses some of the pros and cons of the mode.

REPEATER UPDATE

by Barry Butz N8PPF



Good news! The weather got warm enough on February 6, for Don and Barry to reinstall the Maggiore repeater at the water tower. It had been repaired by Arlin's crew and waiting to go back in operation. Here is a view of the installation:

From top to bottom the components are the Astron power supply, CAT-1000 controller, repeater receiver/transmitter, and duplexer cans. Not shown are the backup battery and charger outside the cabinet.

So have fun with our NEW old repeater.

February, 2018

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|-----------|--|--------------------------|---|--|
| 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 |
| 11 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN – Don | 12 7:00 p.m. MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex | 13 | 14 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner | 15 | 16 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's | 17 |
| 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 10:00 a.m. VE License Exam for all classes. Red Cross Annex 300 North Mulberry Street |
| 25 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KD8HSA —Tom | 26 | 27 | 28 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner | 1 March | 2 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's | 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 |
| 11 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN – Don | 12 7:00 p.m. MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex | 13 | 14 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner | 15 | 16 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's | 17 |