

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

May, 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)**

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**President's View**

It's April 30th as I sit here, just received a text from Bill reminding me that it is time for the newsletter. My response was WHAT! I just did that. I looked out my window and to my surprise the ground was covered in frost, Deja vu. Last time it was snow, an improvement, but not much.

Last weekend was NVIS and it went very well, most if not all the contacts were in the state of Ohio. The weather was about the same as last year, cold but propagation was much better on this Saturday than in the past. There should be an article somewhere in the newsletter concerning the day's event, thanks to all who participated.

Hamvention (May 18, 19 & 20) and Field day (June 23-24) are the next events coming in May and June respectively. Hope to see you at one or the other.

Next meeting is Monday May 14 at 7pm in the American Red Cross Training building on Mulberry Street, please plan to attend. Also, if you have a project that you are working on bring it in and show it off. I for one, love to see the projects that others are working on so, bring them in and show off your work.

73,  
Frank, KC8EVS

By **Bill Stroud, KD8WHQ**



On April 28 a group of us gathered at the Centerburg Conservation Club to participate in NVIS Day. The weather started out sunny and somewhat warm, then as is the case of NVIS Day got windy and cold.

We had 8 members participating Frank Counts KC8EVS, Don Russell W8PEN, Tom Evans KD8HSA, Michael Jacobs KE8HGE, Lori Randall KE8GFZ, Terry Windsor KI8N, Greg Short W8DOH, Bill Stroud KD8HWQ.

We had 2 antennas. A dipole at approximately 30 feet and an inverted V. We made 20 contacts with the dipole on 80 meters then switched antennas and tried to contact the same counties. We were successful with 6 counties. Then the band went away.

Over all it was very successful. A suggestion was made by Don Russell, that we attach the antennas to a switch and make a contact, then switch to the other antenna to get a report.

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**April 9, 2018**

Frank, KC8EVS called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

There were 20 MVARC members present.

March Meeting Minutes accepted: Motion by Greg, W8DOH and seconded by Louie, KE8HNF.

Treasurers Report presented by Terry, K18N. Motion to accept by Emery, W8TW and Seconded by Don, W8PEN. Motion passed to accept Treasurers Report. For club finance specifics please contact Terry.



### **Repeaters:**

Don, W8PEN, reported the 146.79 repeater is working. Some noise has been detected when weather is dry, but is quiet when raining. Don, W8PEN is monitoring and thinks it may be caused by arcing at the antenna. Waiting on better weather to troubleshoot. Plan to ground hardline to water tower at top and bottom, pull all coax connectors and clean. Investigating possibility of buying/making new coax cables which have to a specific length to the diplexer.

The 444.6 repeater at Knox County Hospital and is working.

### **Mesh:**

Don, W8PEN, reported Mesh network is working. Don has nodes and equipment available to loan if installed and operational 24 hours a day. Contact Don for more information.

### **ARES:**

Bill, KD8WHQ met with Mark Maxwell and Pat Valentino at the Knox County EOC about the following:

Need to test EOC HF and VHF/UHF radios once per month.

Need to go to all Knox County schools and fire stations to check repeater access.

Stated all MVARC members are encouraged to participate in ARES activities.

### **Old Business:**

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 15: ARRL Rookie Roundup SSB – Work from Red Cross Training Center on Saturday 2 – 8 pm.
- April 28: Ohio NVIS Day – to be held at the Centerburg Conservation Club. Bring an antenna to try using club radio.
- June 24 – 25: Field Day – Bill, KD8WHQ is the event coordinator and will use last year's Planning P. Plan to operate from Apple Valley. Don coordinating radio stations with possible 2 SSB, 1 CW, and 1 Digital.
- August 9 - 11: Dan Emmitt Special Event Station August – Terry, K18N to coordinate. Working on operating schedule, QST submittal and QRZ page update. Need to develop a certificate and method for distributing.
- September 8: Ohio State Parks on the Air – Plan to operate from Mohican State Park at the Gorge.
- December 9: MVARC Christmas Dinner

**New Business:**

ARES conference in Marion was attended by several MVARC members and they took and showed the club go boxes. New ARES levels for active participation were discussed.

MVARC raffled a Yaesu FT70 HT there were 30 tickets purchased with a \$10.00 donation per ticket and Greg, W8DOH won the raffle.

Second Saturday of the month breakfast was moved to Barbs Diner at 9 am due to closing of Allison's Finer Diner.

Bill, KC8BB requested funding to purchase postage stamps and printer paper. Motion made to give \$60.00 for supplies by Don, KB8QPO and seconded by Lori, KE8GFZ. Motion passed.

Don, W8PEN has turned over MVARC Technician school lead instructor duties to Michael, KE8HGE.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Michael, KE8HGE and seconded by Scott, K8AEC. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.

Terry Windsor, KI8N  
MVARC Secretary/Treasurer

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**Radio Activity****By Don Russell, W8PEN**

The months of April and Early May were very radio active months for me. There are several reasons for this. If you have a minimum of a Technician Class license, you can have just as much fun and be just as radio active as I have been. Most of my activities lately has been in the Technician Class portions of 10, 6, and 2 meters. There is more to the Technician Class privileges than 2 meter and 70 cm FM and repeaters!

Those of you that have followed along my column for the last year or so know that I have been bitten by the Meteor Scatter and EME bug. Well, add to that E skip and Tropo propagation modes on VHF. I am also working on getting something going for weak signal 432 MHz operations.

**Meteor Scatter**

Activity on the bands have been slow for meteor scatter lately. There were no scheduled meteor showers, and even though you can make contacts 24/7 with random meteors, a shower makes it a lot more interesting. The Meteor Scatter guys have did not have any showers to speak of in February and March. Because of this, 6 meters in the morning was the band to be on. It is fairly easy to make contacts with random meteors on 6 meters in the morning. As the day goes on, random meteors slow up and things get a little boring in the afternoon and evening. The best time for random meteors is from Sunrise to maybe noon local time. If you are wanting to use 2 meters, best be at it by 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM, else you will miss all the fun.

That being said, there are two hams, Gedas W8BYA and Bob (nicknamed "Sky") VE1SKY that tested the thousand mile path between their locations using random meteors on a daily basis.

**Radio Activity, continues on page 5**

**By Don Russell, W8PEN**

### **Meteor Scatter continued**

Gedas and Sky made 27 consecutive contacts on both 6 and 2 meters via random meteors. Then we had a meteor shower in early April and they stopped. None the less, they proved that reliable contacts could be made via random meteors on a one thousand mile path. Gedas runs a KW into a 17 element Cushcraft beam at 80 feet on 2 meters, while Sky runs an 11 element beam and 300 watts at 50 feet. On 6 meters, Gedas only runs a dipole (!) but does have a KW. Sky runs a 100 watts and a 5 element beam.

It just amazes me that they had this kind of success. Even though Gedas was running a KW on each band, he still had to receive Sky's moderately low power, especially on 6 meters using only a dipole.

The distance between Sky and myself is about 950 miles. Sky and I have had quit a few contacts on both 6 and 2 meters, but there have been times that one or the other of us could not hear well enough to complete a contact.

Gedas is a little under 200 miles from Mt. Vernon. I hear Gedas all the time on both 6 and 2 meters. This means that even if you were not interested in meteor scatter, 6 and 2 meters could still be fun with other stations out to about 200 miles.

While I am heard really well when doing meteor scatter, I have a hard time hearing other stations. I rack that up to being so close to the Mt. Vernon Industrial Park. I think I have a lot of noise on receive that covers up a lot of signals. Non the Less, I do pretty good, especially on 6 meters.

Since I need to take my large 2 meter antenna down so I can use it on EME, I am thinking of replacing it with a home brew Quagi antenna. This is a popular design that is still published in the ARRL Handbook and Antenna Book. It is supposed to pick up less noise than a Yagi antenna. Since it will cost me almost nothing to build, I might give it a shot and see what happens.

### **EME**

I am still struggling with my moon bounce project, or EME. I think I have all the pieces. I have the big M2 -5WL on the tower and I have an identical one that I have yet to put together. Phasing these two antennas together should be enough to let me hear a few EME stations.

Currently my plan is to take the antenna off the tower, build the second one, and then mount them on a short 15 – 20 ft tower in the yard. By going lower to the ground, I am hoping to avoid picking up too much interference from the industrial park. At least that is the recommendations from the EME guys I have been hanging around with.

**By Don Russell, W8PEN**

### **EME, continued**

I may do manual Azimuth and Elevation control until I see if this works for me. Then think about a rotor at a later date. The two antennas will be phased using a commercial power divider. Also, the amplifier and receiver preamp will be mounted on the tower at the antenna to reduce any line loss. I will continue to use my 160 watt amplifier until I see what kind of results this system gives me. I feel there is no use spending more money until I can at least receive some EME signals.

Hopefully, I will get this done before summer is over. It is unlikely that I will get it done before the end of Spring, but you never know.

I have waited 45 or 50 years for my first EME QSO. I guess another month or so isn't going to hurt.

### **FT8 Mode**

With the lack of meteor showers to keep me entertained, I have been trying my hand at 6 and 2 meter FT8. FT8 is a digital mode designed especially for fast (relatively speaking) E skip and Tropo modes. I say relative because a transmission using FT8 takes only 15 seconds whereas the JT65 mode takes 60 seconds for one transmission. Depending on conditions, an FT8 contact can be completed in as little as a minute, while a JT65 could take four or five minutes.

I have been making FT8 contacts on 6 meters out to 1500 miles or more. On 2 meters I have made a few in excess of 400 miles. As Skip season develops this year, these distances should increase.

There is one other mode that I have been experimenting with. The current meteor scatter mode, MSK144, is not legal for use on the 10 meter band because of its baud rate. However there is a mode called JT9-H Fast, which (while not as good as MSK144) seems to do the trick. I have made many 10 meter meteor scatter contacts on 10 meters using my 160 meter windom antenna and a 10 meter dipole I recently put up.

Along with the JT9-H Fast mode on 10 meters, FT8 is also very popular and there is a lot of DX to be worked on 10 meter FT8. I usually don't go there because I would rather work state side stations. The DX bug never did hit me as hard as it has hit other hams.

I could take pages and pages talking about the pros and cons of MSK144, FT8, JT9, JT65, and all the other digital modes being invented on what seems like an hourly basis. The only way to know if these modes are for you is to try it.

One warning, which I have given before. These digital modes are good for making contacts only. They convey the minimum necessary information to make a valid contact. If you wish to rag chew (have a nice conversation with another ham), these modes are not for you. They are more of a 24/7 contest mode. Fun, yes, but practical, perhaps not. So if you want to rag chew, it would be best to stick with SSB, CW, FM, or even digital PSK31 and RTTY.

**Radio Activity, continues on page 7**

### Bargain Coax Fittings

Think you are getting a good deal on those coax fitting you purchased at the latest Hamfest? Well, check out this You Tube Video before you buy. My friend Gedas W8BYA, shows why these fittings may not be such a good bargain.

Sure, these fittings may work well enough. But is your expensive transceiver being held back due to excessive line loss?

Since getting involved in VHF and UHF, I have had mixed results with a lot of my previously good (or so I thought) coax cables. Switching to Amphenol fittings has cured most, if not all of my issues.

The You Tube Video is located at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sk0DyZPuLi8>

While you are at it, check out Gedas's other videos. Simply do You Tube search for W8BYA. My understanding is that Gedas is a former NASA Engineer.

That's a wrap for this month. Hope to see you all at the meeting.

Looking for members of MVARC to activate K8EEN as a special events station during the Daniel Emmett Days Music and Arts Festival; August 9 - 11.

If you haven't operated a special event station, give it a try. Even during bad band conditions, you can have a lot of fun and improve your operating skills. We are looking for a 3-hour operating commitment per the attached schedule.

Members have the option of operating from any area location, as long as it is within a 20-mile radius of Mt Vernon. This will allow members to set up at a point of interest in Knox County, the club station in the Red Cross Training building, or operate from their home QTH.

<b>Thursday – August 9</b>			
<b>Band</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Operating Station</b>
All	SSB – PSK - CW	Noon – 3 pm	
All		3 pm – 6 pm	
All		6 pm – 9 pm	KI8N
All		9 pm - Midnight	

<b>Friday – August 10</b>			
<b>Band</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Operating Station</b>
All	SSB – PSK - CW	Midnight – 8 AM	
All		9 am – Noon	
All		Noon – 3 pm	
All		3 pm – 6 pm	
All		6 pm – 9 pm	
All		9 pm - Midnight	

<b>Saturday – August 11</b>			
<b>Band</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Operating Station</b>
All	SSB – PSK - CW	Midnight – 8 am	
All		9 am – Noon	KI8N
All		Noon – 3 pm	
All		3 pm – 6 pm	
All		6 pm – 9 pm	
All		9 pm - Midnight	





Musician and performer Daniel Decatur Emmett was born in Mount Vernon, Ohio, on **October 29, 1815**.

As a child, Emmett had an interest in music. He taught himself how to play the fiddle and began composing his own songs. At the age of seventeen, Emmett enlisted in the United States Army and served as a fife player. When he left the army in 1835, Emmett joined a traveling circus.

Later he became associated with minstrel shows and helped to define that genre. Minstrel shows traveled around the United States, presenting skits and musical performances. The minstrels commonly dressed in baggy, mismatched clothing and painted their faces black to make fun of African Americans. Minstrel shows became very popular in the United States during the years before the Civil War.

Emmett is best known for his musical compositions. **He is most famous for writing "Dixie" in 1859.** The song became the anthem of Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

In addition, Emmett also composed many other songs, including "Old Dan Tucker," "Turkey in the Straw," and "The Blue Tail Fly."

Emmett continued to travel the country in minstrel shows until he was eighty. He then retired to Mount Vernon, where he lived until his death on **June 28, 1904**.

In 1943 Bing Crosby played Dan Emmett in the film-story of his life called, of course, *Dixie*.

# May, 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>6</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net On K8EEN KC8BB—Bill	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	<b>12</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Barb's Diner Columbus Road
<b>13</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN – Don	<b>14</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's  Dayton Hamvention, Green County Fairgrounds Xenia, Ohio	<b>19</b>  Dayton Hamvention, Green County Fairgrounds Xenia, Ohio
<b>20</b> <u>Hamvention</u> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN Net Control, ?	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KD8HSA —Tom	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	<b>31</b>	<b>1 June</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net On K8EEN KC8BB—Bill	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Hardee's	<b>9</b> 10:00 am Breakfast at Barb's Diner Columbus Road
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