



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
Ham Radio News & Information	2
August Meeting Minutes	3-4
Radio Activity	5-6
DXpedition to use FT8 robot?	7
September / October Calendar	8

President's View

Good morning all how was your August? The weather was great and we had a great time at Courthouses on the Air. Thanks to all who came out Saturday to make this happen. We made several contacts, but no contacts with another courthouse. Kansas was having a QSO party and I made 8-10 contacts in the state of Kansas! Terry, KI8N and Don, W8PEN made several contacts in Ohio as the Ohio QSO party started up around noon. I also want to thank Mark Maxwell EMA Director for the use of the Knox County Command Post (communications trailer). The use of the trailer insured that the weather would be nice and we would have a good place to get out of the rain and cold.



If this gets to you in time and you read it right away Ohio State Parks on the Air will be taking place, September 7, 10a to when we get tired but no later than 6p. We will be operating from a new spot the North Shelter at Mohican State Park. It looks to be a great spot to work from so I hope you come out if nothing more than to enjoy a day out in the state park. We will be operating the 857 from our go box but if you want to try something different bring it out.

I would be amiss if I did not mention the birth of Talitha Grace August 28. Both mom and baby are doing fine. Mom and Dad (grandparents included) are tired as this is the fifth in this tribe so it is a busy household especially if Granddad is in charge (I use that term loosely).

Love to hear from you, let me know what is happening and it does not have to be radio related. There are a lot of interesting things being done by our members and I love to hear what you are up to. My email: fcounats@gmail.com.

Next meeting is September 9, at 7pm, same location the American Red Cross Annex building at 300 Mulberry St. Also check out the new web page mvarc.net and let me know what you think.

73, Frank KC8EVS

The ARRL Ohio Section calendar lists many interesting events around Ohio. The webpage is shown below:

<https://arrl-ohio.org/g-calendar/default.html>

Ohio State Parks on the Air: September 7, at Mohican State Park, (North Shelter)

Traffic Nets:

<http://www.ossbn.org/>

Ohio Single Side-band Net.org, our Ohio connection for what is going on in the Ohio Traffic System. The Net meets on 3.972.5 KHz at 10:30 a.m., 4:15 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. daily. Alternate Frequency for all sessions 3.968 KHZ

<http://www.cotn.us/> The Central Ohio Traffic Net is a part of the Ohio Section of the National Traffic System. We meet daily to handle traffic; all licensed amateur radio operators are welcome to check in and to learn how to handle traffic. The Net meets daily at 7:15 p.m. local time.

Area Radio Clubs:

Delaware Amateur Radio Association: <http://k8es.org/>

Newark Amateur Radio Assoc: <https://www.n8ara.org/>

(Mansfield) InterCity Amateur Radio Club: <https://iarc.club/>

SDR:

<http://websdr.org/>

A WebSDR is a Software-Defined Radio receiver connected to the internet, allowing many listeners to listen and tune it simultaneously. Go to the chart in the middle of the page and select the **Band** you want, then **Region** (North America). This will bring up 18 listening stations in the United States and Canada. Pennsylvania, Alabama and Utah are favorites for this area. There is also a mobile application available for free.

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August 2019 Meeting Minutes**By G Michael Jacobs**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by President Frank Counts (KC8EVS).

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as presented in the monthly newsletter without correction or objection.

Congratulations were given to Bill Bradley, (KC8BB) for his work on the MVARC Newsletter. It earned an Honorable Mention in the 2019 Ohio Section Newsletter Contest held annually at the Columbus Hamfest / Ohio Section Conference. Thank you, Bill, for all of your hard work to help us keep communicating!

In the absence of the Secretary/Treasurer, the Treasurer's report was given by Frank (KC8EVS), The report was accepted as read, after a motion from Scott Keys (W8HK) and a second from Barry Butz (N8PPF).

Don Russell (W8PEN) reported that both of the repeaters and the MESH network were working without issue. He wants to check the 2-meter repeater to make sure that it is still transmitting at 50 watts.

There is nothing new to report on getting the 70-centimeter repeater connected to the internet. The MVARC web page is up and running. Frank (KC8EVS) encourages the members to check out the web page (<https://mvarc.net>). Louie Wilkinson (NT8I) is working on the members only part of the site, but the rest -- including past newsletters, picture archive, and other important links -- is up and running. Ohio State Courthouses on the Air event is Saturday, August 24, 2019. It runs from 9:00am to 4:00pm and we will be setting up in the parking lot between the Courthouse and the County Service Center. The Ohio QSO Party will be taking place on the same day.

Ohio State Parks on the Air event is Saturday, September 7, 2019. It runs from 10:00am to 4:00pm and we will be setting up at Mohican State Park. The specific location has yet to be determined; the shelter at the Gorge Overlook that we have used previously has already been booked this year. The Fire Tower had been suggested as an alternative site, but while it is located in the Mohican Forest, it is not a part of the State Park.

Proposed changes to the MVARC Constitution and By-Laws are going to be mailed out to the club members. These changes will be up for discussion and vote at the next meeting.

Emery Bennett (W8TW) has purchased a Yaesu FT-70 DR/RE to be raffled by the MVARC. Tickets are \$10.00 each with a limited offering of 30 tickets. The drawing will be held after the last ticket is sold. Proceeds from the raffle will go to the MVARC.

Emery (W8TW) also mentioned that Mike McCardel (AA8EM) has been involved in an accident that placed him in Grant Hospital with multiple fractures. Our best wishes and prayers go out to him for a quick and complete recovery.

The Meeting was adjourned without objection at 7:35pm after a motion from Don (W8PEN) and a second from Nick Anthony (W8NIX).

After the meeting, Larry Howell (AC8YE) gave the second in a series of demonstrations on Mesh Networks; this evening, setting up a Mesh Node.

In Memoriam: William Waits (N8OGX) in Butler, Ohio, has gone Silent Key.

Respectfully submitted,

G Michael Jacobs (KE8HGE)

By Don Russell

One of the fun things that hams can do is design and build their own wire antennas. Building a yagi may be a big project involving lots of aluminum tubing. But putting a wire up usually consists of a bit of wire and insulators and some feedline.



I like to experiment with different wire antennas. In 2017 I decided to modify my 160 meter window to hopefully improve its performance. What I did was remove the 4:1 balun and feed the antenna directly with ladder line. I had two choices here. I could leave the balun out entirely and run ladder line into the shack to the external antenna tuner, or reinsert the balun somewhere outside so that I could use coax in the shack rather than ladder line. I decided to reinsert the balun at the antenna switch mounted at the base of the tower. I reinserted the balun at the base of the tower. I thought I would have improved efficiency in the feed line since ladder line has less loss at high SWR than coax.

Well, the antenna worked okay. But that was the problem. Just okay was not what I was looking for. In fact, I could no longer tune the antenna on all bands with just the internal antenna tuner on the radio. I had to use my external antenna tuner. On 160 meters, the antenna turned into an okay performer, but before my modification the antenna was a stellar performer on 160 meters.

So on to plan B. When I originally took the 160 meter window down, I had planned on replacing it with two fan dipoles. One dipole for 80/40 meters and the other for 20/15 meters. Plans changed when I decided to modify the 160 meter window.

So I took the modified window down. I will rebuild it to its original form later.

For now I have put the two mentioned fanned dipoles up. The 80/40 meter dipole has an apex of 45 feet and the ends drop down to only 40 feet. The 20/15 meter dipole will be at about 40 feet and as level as I can get it. If you would like to build your own fan dipole, see my article in the July 2018 issue of this newsletter. I describe in detail how to build one.

Using the 80/40 meter fan dipole to talk to my friend Lynn Drown KG8D, who lives in Monroeville, Ohio, on 80 meters, we were both hitting 40 over S9 on the meter. We always have good signals both ways, but not usually that good. So I would say the 80/40 meter antenna is a good one.

I used these two fan dipoles in the Ohio QSO party in August. Once again, the 80/40 meter fan dipole worked pretty darn good. I made a few contacts on the 20/15 fan dipole, but I will have to make a few more before I decide how it is performing. That being said, I did talk to two German stations on 20 CW. They called me, I didn't call them.

What I am lacking now is an antenna for 160 meters. I am planning an inverted L soon. Also, 10 meters is lacking. Maybe a loop mounted on the tower. Or I may go back to my home brew rotatable 20-10 meter dipole that I had up a few years ago.

Radio Activity continues on page 6

Backing up a bit, during the Ohio QSO party the 80/40 fan dipole quit working! I mean went from lots of signals and me running a frequency to zilch on both. I actually shut down. I figured the antenna had broke or came down and it was dark.

Luckily, it was not the antenna. The wire supplying voltage to my antenna switch had broke off. After 20 years or so, the antenna switch finally had a problem. I think I bought it in 1995. I was curious about the antenna switch and decided to take it apart and look inside. Thought it might need cleaned out or something. Maybe corrosion on the inside?

What I found was that the terminal strip used to connect the wires from the remote switch in the shack to the main antenna switch on the tower was mostly rusted. So I cleaned that up.

On the inside, things were very clean. However, one of the wires going from the circuit board to the chassis coax connector either had a cold solder joint, or was corroded. In any case, it had come loose from the circuit board and needed re-soldered. This was not a problem as I had not been using that particular connector anyway. After some cleanup, the antenna switch was returned to the tower and working well.

This seems to be the month of difficulties for me. Another problem I have been dealing with is the elevation rotor on my EME array. It is not working. I have made several attempts at fixing it, but so far have been unsuccessful. It will go up, but not down. To make matters worse, the last time I reinstalled it on the tower, I did it backwards. Now it goes down, but not up. Geezy.

I took the rotor apart, cleaned it up, and re-greased it. It worked on the bench but when I put it back on the tower, it quit working again. Originally I suspected the starting capacitor that is built into the rotor. Currently, I am thinking there is something wrong with the control box. I set the whole project aside for awhile so I could work on the HF antennas. But I am going to have to look at it again shortly.

Repeaters and mesh nodes are working fine. There is a station, KB8UVN, from Johnstown linked to the water tower node, which is fantastic! About 19 miles on 2.4 Ghz. Matt, if you would send me an email so we can get together, I would appreciate it. Or check into Mesh Chat on the mesh. I have left you a message. Welcome to our local mesh. My email is w8pen@yahoo.com

In the near future we are going to add another node to the water tower. This node is mostly to get a better signal from the water tower to Louie NT8I. While Louie is connected, the link quality is not very good. We are going to try parabolic antenna pointed a Louie.

The mesh is coming along slowly. With the water tower node, I believe most members in Mt. Vernon can set up a node at their house and join the mesh network. Just about any node with an antenna 20 feet or higher should work. Let me know if you would like be to run a test at your home. It would be easy to verify link quality.

Those outside of Mt. Vernon would likely need a bit better setup. Just depends on whether there are any hills or trees blocking your path. Non the less, if members outside of Mt. Vernon would like to try, we can run a test pretty easily.

That is a wrap for this month. See you all at the September meeting.

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



It's inevitable. At some point, machines are going to render humans irrelevant. It's been a recurring theme in science fiction since before I was born (1955), and there are numerous predictions of the Singularity, the point in time when machines will be smarter than human, occurring between 2030 and 2045.

It may happen in amateur radio sooner than we think. A couple of days ago, one of my readers sent me a link to a blog post by John, AE5X: [Automated FT8 "FoxBot" in upcoming DXpedition – confirmed](#). He wrote:

"A [DXpedition to Tokelau](#) will take place from 1 to 11 October and it will be your chance to work an FT8 robot operating in Fox/Hound mode.

"Stathis SV5DKL has been working on a "FoxBot" for some time now, is listed as a partner to this DXpedition and has confirmed that the DXpedition will be using his FoxBot."

John has since updated this post, noting "The SV5DKL logo has now been removed and the DX team will be in 'full compliance' with the mode." Full compliance meaning following the rules set up by the ARRL DXCC rules.

The ARRL is, of course, against the use of robots. A recent *ARRL Letter* noted:

"ARRL has incorporated changes to the rules for all ARRL-sponsored contests and DXCC, prohibiting automated contacts and requiring that an actual operator is initiating and carrying out a contact. These changes also apply to Worked All States (including Triple Play and 5-Band WAS), Fred Fish W5FF Memorial, and VUCC awards. The changes are effective immediately and affect the rules for both HF contests, and VHF/UHF contests as well as DXCC.

"A resolution at the July ARRL Board of Directors meeting pointed to 'growing concern over fully automated contacts being made and claimed' for contest and for DXCC credit. The rules now require that each claimed contact include contemporaneous direct initiation by the operator on both sides of the contact. Initiation of a contact may either be local or remote."

As AE5X says, however, the use of FT8 robots in the future is a certainty. Sooner or later, some DXpedition is going to use an FT8 robot without saying anything about it. How is the ARRL going to know that a DXpedition is using robots if the DXpedition operators don't tell them?

I'm wondering when some DXpedition is going to give up on SSB and CW altogether. Why bother with those modes when you can make hundreds or thousands more contacts by just operating FT8?

Another thought just occurred to me. If the ARRL gets its way and Techs are awarded HF digital privileges, how long will it take for some enterprising Tech to make the DXCC Honor Roll using FT8 exclusively. Oh, the horror of it all!

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Non-sense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not wondering when robots are going to take over the world, he likes to (manually) operate CW on the HF bands.

September, 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN, Don	9 7:00 p.m. MVARC Monthly Meeting -Red Cross Annex	10	11 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	12	13 10:00 am Breakfast at Club Meeting room	14 10:00 am Breakfast at Barb's Diner Columbus Road
15 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN NT8I, Louie	16	17	18 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	19	20 10:00 am Breakfast at Club Meeting room	21
22 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KE8HGE, Michael	23	24	25 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	26	27 10:00 am Breakfast at Club Meeting room	28
29 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8DOH, Greg	30	1 Oct	2 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	3	4 10:00 am Breakfast at Club Meeting room	5
6 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN, Don	7	8	9 5:00 pm Dinner at Southside Diner	10	11 10:00 am Breakfast at Club Meeting room	12 10:00 am Breakfast at Barb's Diner Columbus Road
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