



**Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm  
On the K8EEN Repeater shown below.  
This will continue until public meetings at the Red Cross resume.**



**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  
Louie Wilkinson, NT8I**



Early in the year, when life was still normal, I ordered 30 trees from the arbor day foundation. They arrived late spring and a close friend helped me dig 30 holes in the yard and plant them. Since then I have been dragging 350' of garden hose around my yard once or twice a week depending on the weather. This process takes about two hours total between dragging the hose to different parts of the yard and standing around while each tree gets a good soak. After several months of this many of the trees are sporting nice leaves and new growth. Of course, some of them look the exact same as when they were planted, just a little stick in the ground. Through this, once or twice a week I get to spend a couple hours just enjoying my yard and it has been glorious.

I hope you have found your own ways to enrich your life and find joy and comfort in this crazy time. As you may have guessed, our meeting this month will again be hosted by me on our 2 meter repeater. Join us at 7pm and let your voice and input be heard on club business and events.

-73  
-Louie, NT8I  
-MVARC president

MVARC Monthly Meeting

We will be holding our Monthly Meeting on Monday August 10, on K8EEN Repeater: 146.790. MHz (600KHz with PL of 71.9 Hz) at 7:00 pm. Please tune in to stay informed, participate and share your views.

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Visit us on Facebook:

**Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club**

Visit our new website:

<https://mvarc.net>

Please email for inquires and information at:

[info@mvarc.net](mailto:info@mvarc.net)

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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.

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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/>

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

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

**The Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club Officers**President:

Louie Wilkinson, NT8I

Vice President:

Greg Short, W8DOH

Secretary

Michael Jacobs, KE8HGE

Treasurer:

Terry Windsor, KI8N

Club Call Trustee:

Don Russell, W8PEN

Equipment Trustee:

Barry Butz, N8PPF

Directors:

Chairman: Frank Counts, KC8EVS

Greg Short, W8DOH

Michael Jacobs, KE8HGE

Don Russell, W8PEN

Barry Butz, N8PPF

Emery Bennett, W8TW

Bill Stroud, KD8WHQ

Newsletter Editor & Facebook Editor:

Bill Bradley, KC8BB

## July Meeting Minutes July 13, 2020



### Opening (Louie Wilkinson NT8I)

The repeater was toned to Net Mode by Net Control / MVARC President at 7:00 PM.

### Reports / Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as presented in the MVARC Newsletter without objection.

### Treasurer (Terry Windsor KI8N)

The Treasurer's report for June, 2020, was accepted as presented without objection. Copies of the report and our current bank statement are available upon request.

### Repeater and Mesh Report (Don Russell W8PEN)

(This report was actually made later in the meeting but is included with the other reports for organizational consistency - ke8hge)

Work party plans for the Academia water tower repeater include running new feed line up to the repeater antenna, replacing the current repeater antenna with a backup antenna, and then running the repeater on the backup antenna while our regular one undergoes repairs. There is an issue with the backup antenna in that it is a commercial antenna and it has a high SWR in the 2-meter range that we cannot adjust. MESH is working fantastically. The Centerburg project is on-going. He hopes to get both the Centerburg MESH project and our repeater project resolved before the end of the month.

KI8N asked about the status of getting a MESH node on the Fredericktown water tower. Per Don Russell W8PEN, at last check, the Engineers for the water tower had approved, but it needed to go to the Fredericktown Village council for final approval, and he didn't know if that had happened, yet. Shawn Bleiler KD0DMJ (not present at the meeting) would know more about this.

### MESH Project: Centerburg (Larry Howell AC8YE)

We are trying to get 2 MESH nodes installed on the Centerburg Water tower. This includes a pair of Rockets (5 GHz and 2.4 GHz) and a dual-polarity mast. The setup should provide coverage in the SW corner of Knox County, as well as project into NE Delaware County and to the Johnstown area in Licking County. Most of the modifications to the water tower itself are being completed by Delco (who operates the Centerburg water and sewer system) and we hope to have access to the water tower before the end of the month.

### ARES (Bill Stroud KD8WHQ)

Bill has no ARES update. ARES has not contacted us for any projects, and he did confirm that ARES has all of our contact information.

### Old Business

Field Day happened, although it was different than it was last year. Barry Butz N8PPF offered that Don Russell W8PEN's write-up in the newsletter was pretty good.

During the ARES Net yesterday (July 12, 2020), Don Russell W8PEN said that our prospective score for this year was exactly the same as it was for last year, which was actually the club's best score. We didn't have a public information table this year, which would have given us enough points to set a new record. Most of our contacts were on CW (80m, 40m, and 20m) and Phone had contacts on 80m, 40m, 20m, 15m, 10m, and one by Satellite. We didn't have the number of people attend that we normally do.

### New Business / Coming Events

#### Ohio State Parks on the Air

Ohio State Parks on the Air is September 12 of this year. Louie Wilkinson NT8I cautioned that Coronavirus looks like it may be with us for the long-haul, and that we should expect changes in the event similar to the ones we experienced during Field Day due to social distancing.

Frank Counts KC8EVS offered to make whatever reservations might need to be made, but will call first to see what might be open in September. There is the shelter we used last year or the one by the Gorge. Shelter availability will probably be affected by coronavirus, but if we were to do something at Mohican we would still need to observe social distancing.

Terry Windsor KI8N said that we used the North Shelter last year and made far more contacts from that location than we have at previous years at the Gorge.

Barry Butz N8PPF agreed with Terry Windsor KI8N. He said that it was a pleasant place and a large shelter. He suggested not reserving it and save the \$50 reservation fee. He said that there was a lot of space there that would allow for easy social distancing. He added that if we didn't reserve that shelter and we arrived with someone else using it, there would be enough space available that we could use whichever end of the shelter was not already being used.

Louie Wilkinson NT8I asked Frank Counts KC8EVS to notify the Directors of what he discovers about shelter availability. It can be decided at that point whether or not to formally reserve the shelter.

Frank Counts KC8EVS agreed that the North Shelter was a great place for the event. He also said that there was a lesser shelter just before you arrived at the North Shelter. It was not as big or as nice as the North Shelter, but it might be a viable back up to the North Shelter if it is not available.

Greg Short W8DOH asked if Frank Counts KC8EVS could find out if our deposit is refundable if we pay in advance and then a stricter coronavirus lockdown takes place that would prevent us from using the shelter.

### Other Events

Larry Howell AC8YE offered that during MESH-related conversations with Matt Mitchell KB8UVN and Don Russell W8PEN that a repeater work party was going to be assembled to install back up repeater antenna at the Academia water tower, remove current repeater antenna for examination and repair, and do some other work at that site, but he doesn't know when that will take place.

(during a standby at this point in the meeting Don Russell W8PEN checked-in; his report and related questions are addressed above - ke8hge)

### Meeting Adjourned

After a motion to adjourn from Terry Windsor KI8N was seconded by Don Russell W8PEN, the repeater was returned to Normal Amateur Use without objection. The Net was closed at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

G Michael Jacobs KE8HGE

By Don Russell, W8PEN



July was a busy month for those club members working on various technical issues related to the 2 meter repeater and the local mesh.

## 2 Meter Repeater

Since early April members have been experiencing issues with the 2 meter repeater. I thought our problems were over after the last bit of work done on the feed line cable at the top of the water tower. The repeater duplexer had also been giving a tune up. Thought we were good to go. However, recently there has been an intermittent noise and poor repeater performance. This issue seems to be worse when it rains so the general feeling was that water was getting into our antenna somewhere.

Covid-19 had basically put a stop to any group club activity and we were trying to hold off until this virus problem was under control. You can only wait so long.

Through a Directors meeting, it was decided that we would install a backup antenna for the 2 meter repeater. This antenna turned out to be a dual band (2mtr / 70cm) vertical. This is a small antenna when compared to our regular repeater antenna and repeater performance has suffered accordingly. However, the backup antenna did prove up to the task of receiving everyone checking into our Sunday Night Net. Signals were just not quite as good as they usually are.

A week after installing the backup antenna, a group met at the water tower to check out the regular repeater antenna. The group consisted of Shawn Bleiler KD0DMJ, Matt Mitchel KB8UVN, Frank Counts KC8EVS, and myself, Don Russell W8PEN.

What we found was not good. SWR was very high on the antenna. However, there was a loose fitting connecting the antenna to the feedline. So there was some hope. After replacing the connector, the SWR was lower, but still very high.

For those new to amateur radio, SWR is an indication of how well an antenna is tuned to the desired frequency. An SWR of 1 to 1 is considered a perfect match. On a VHF antenna such as the repeater antenna, an SWR of 2 to 1 would be considered undesirable. Our initial check of SWR was 3.6 to 1. After changing out the connector, the SWR was 2.6 to 1. This was considered unacceptable and it was decided to bring the antenna down for further analysis and repair. The general feeling was that water had gotten into the phasing harness on the antenna.

Matt Mitchel KB8UVN is working on building a new phasing harness. With a bit of luck, the antenna will be back up and operating before the August meeting.

## Local Mesh Network

Again, Covid-19 has slowed down our planned progress on the local mesh. We are looking to install mesh nodes on the Centerburg water tower and the Fredericktown water tower.

Shawn Bleiler KD0DMJ has been working with a representative from Delco, who has control of the Centerburg water tower. Shaw has obtained permission to install the nodes and this project should be completed around mid August.

The opportunity to use the Centerburg water tower was presented to us by a Centerburg official. While we did not seek permission to use the tower, we certainly accepted the offer.

Shawn is also working on getting permission to use the Fredericktown's water tower to put a few nodes on. We have been assured that permission to use the tower is forthcoming. All that is needed is for the Fredericktown councils approval. Again, Covid-19 has put a temporary halt to council meetings and we just need to be patient.

Our local mesh project has been growing. Once we get nodes on these two water towers, our coverage of Knox county will be greatly expanded. Right now mesh coverage includes Mt. Vernon, Johnstown, Delaware, and Sunbury.

Looking forward, we want to put additional nodes at Foundation Park and the Knox EMA office. Expansion of the network to Gambier, Apple Valley, and Danville are also being looked at.

Is this a big project? Yes it is. It may take several more years to fully develop the local mesh network.

### USB to 4 RS-232 Ports

If you are like me, you have a "shack" computer. This computer handles logging, rig control, antenna rotor control, CW keying, PTT for digital modes, etc.

I therefore have a lot of USB to RS-232 converters. Why they eliminated the RS-232 ports on computers, I will never know. But because of all the USB adapters, I have a real wiring mess. Trouble shooting is like looking in the proverbial haystack. Not to mention using up all the USB ports. I have a USB port extender and still have that full.

I think I found a solution though. I found a USB to four RS-232 port converter on Amazon.com. Yes, one USB port provides four communication ports. I am hoping that this simplifies things a bit.

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004ETDC8K/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_asin\\_title\\_o05\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004ETDC8K/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o05_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

While I have yet to try it, the reviews by hams have been mostly positive. Some said there was some interference issues, others said not so. I believe interference issues depend a lot on the computer brand and how the wires are run. I am hoping that I have no interference or if I do, can easily be solved with a few ferret beads.

Next month I will give a report on how this thing works. I just wanted to get it out there that you did not need to have all those USB ports on a computer used up.

# August, 2020

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
<b>9</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN NT8I, Louie	<b>10</b> 7:00 pm MVARC Monthly Meeting	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 4:45 pm Dinner at South Side Diner	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 10:00am Breakfast at Foundation Park, Large Shelter north of Lake	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN KE8HGE, Michael	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 4:45 pm Dinner at South Side Diner	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 10:00am Breakfast at Foundation Park, Large Shelter north of Lake	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8DOH, Greg	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 4:45 pm Dinner at South Side Diner	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 10:00am Breakfast at Foundation Park, Large Shelter north of Lake	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN NT8I, Louie	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> <b>September</b>	<b>2</b> 4:45 pm Dinner at South Side Diner	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 10:00am Breakfast at Foundation Park, Large Shelter north of Lake	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9:00 pm ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN W8PEN, Don	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 4:45 pm Dinner at South Side Diner	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 10:00am Breakfast at Foundation Park, Large Shelter north of Lake	<b>12</b> Ohio State Parks on the Air at Mohican State Park, Shelter TBD
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