



# September 2020

K8EEN VHF Repeater:  
146.790 MHz (-600KHz with  
PL = 71.9 Hz)

K8EEN-R Echolink Node:  
809800

K8EEN UHF Repeater:  
444.600 MHz (+5 MHz with  
PL = 71.9 Hz)

## Contact Us

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# Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of  
each month at 7:00 pm on the K8EEN  
Repeater.

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### MVARC Information

MVARC monthly meetings will continue to meet on the K8EEN 146.790 MHz repeater during the Covid 19 pandemic. The next monthly MVARC meeting is September 20, 2020.

**Visit us on Facebook:**

**Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club**

**Visit our Webpage:**

<https://mvarc.net>

**Email for inquires and information:**

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

## MVARC

### 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 & Facebook

#### Editors

Frank Counts, KC8EVS

Terry Windsor, KI8N

Join us every Sunday night on the Mt. Vernon 146.79 repeater for our weekly Net. Check-in's start at 9pm.

Can't access the repeater from where you are?

We are on IRLP (EchoLink) - Just look us up.

K8EEN-R Node 809800.

## Ohio Traffic Nets

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

Ohio Single Side-Band Net; 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 is 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/>

The ARRL Ohio Section calendar lists many interesting events around Ohio.

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

Parks on the Air is a fun activity: <https://parksontheair.com/>

## MVARC President's View



**Louie Wilkinson, NT8I**

No input this month from the MVARC President.

## July 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes



**G. Michael Jacobs, KE8HGE**

**Opening** (Louie Wilkinson NT8I)

The repeater was toned to Net Mode by Net Control / MVARC President at 7:00 PM with 12 members (including Net Control) checked-in, with 1 additional check-in later in the meeting.

### **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 July 2020, was accepted as presented without objection. Copies of the report and current bank statement are available upon request.

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

2-Meter Repeater: 2 weeks ago Don, W8PEN, Matt Mitchell, KB8UVN, and Shawn Bleiler, KD0DMJ took the repeater antenna down for repair after putting a backup antenna in place the previous week. The repeater is currently operating on the backup antenna. The original antenna repairs have run into problems. Matt, KB8UVN is trying to build a new phasing harness for the antenna, and progress is being made. If the repairs are not successful, we may need to buy a new repeater antenna. Costs could run about \$800 for the antenna with an additional \$150 - \$200 shipping. Don, W8PEN said that if this were necessary, he would ask for donations from members before tapping the club treasury. He continued to emphasize that this would only be if the repairs are unsuccessful but currently things were looking good for the repairs. He hopes to have the rebuilt antenna up in the next week or so but is looking for a good-weather day to get this done.

70-cm Repeater: no problems with this repeater.

## **MESH Project:**

Shawn, KD0DMJ and Don, W8PEN are going to adjust the antenna on the Municipal Building that is pointing at Johnstown. Currently, it is about 30 degrees off what it should be. Centerburg Project equipment is ready, they just need time to install it. They are looking for 2 climbers 1-2 ground support personnel to help with this. The Fredericktown Project is still on hold and waiting for an update from Shawn, KD0DMJ. A question was asked by Louie, NT8I about purchasing just a new phasing harness, if that was all that was wrong with our primary antenna. Don, W8PEN answered that he had already explored that option and phasing harnesses are not sold separately.

## **ARES (Bill Stroud KD8WHQ)**

Bill, KD8WHQ asked for people to keep an eye on the weather this evening. A storm with high winds (as high as 100 mph) is moving east and is due to hit Ohio overnight. Stan Broadway (ARRL Ohio Section Emergency Coordinator, N8BHL) sent out a message to the county EC's to be on the lookout for any damaging weather.

Terry, KI8N asked about a September exercise he had seen in the Ohio Section's weekly Postscript. Bill, KD8WHQ said that he has not received anything from Stan, N8BHL on this exercise, yet.

## **Old Business**

### [Ohio State Parks on the Air \(OSPOTA\)](#)

According to Frank Counts, KC8EVS, you cannot reserve any of the shelters at Mohican for 2020. He has not been able to get a good answer from Mohican on just using the shelter (without reservation). He also commented that some places were taping off shelters like these to prohibit their use.

Louie, NT8I suggested that those interested in participating would need to put something together among themselves since so much surrounding the park and shelter availability is up in the air.

Barry Butz, N8PPF suggested contacting the organizers about the event, to see if they have any suggestions on how to proceed with the event, or even if it will still be taking place this year. Frank, KC8EVS said he has not checked the sponsor's website yet but will do so later this evening. He does know that the sponsors are still intent on having the event and that there are other groups that are planning on going out to the parks.

Contact Frank, KC8EVS for OSPOTA participation. We may just set up someplace in the park, just not in a shelter, but this may limit the number of participants.

## **New Business / Coming Events**

Per Frank, KC8EVS, Bill Bradley, KC8BB has asked for someone new to take over the responsibility of editing the monthly newsletter. Any interested party should contact Frank, KC8EVS or Louie, NT8I or any of the Directors.

Terry, KI8N said that Larry Howell, AC8YE had a question about the club's Tax-Exempt status. Terry, KI8N said that he will be putting together something that can be put on the club's website about that and asks if anyone has any issues with him doing this.

Frank, KC8EVS said that he had spoken with Scott Yonally, N8SY and that he had some questions about missing or unavailable content on the website, and Frank, KC8EVS also asked about the Members Only part of that website. Louie, NT8I said that he would contact Scott Yonally, N8SY about the web page and see about wrapping up the Member's Area on the web page.

Frank, KC8EVS asked about the status of the repeater at KCH and internet access for the 70-centimeter repeater. G Michael Jacobs, KE8HGE reported that internet access is supposed to be available now, but that he

has not been to the hospital since the start of the pandemic to verify this in person. Louie, NT8I said he had been assembling the necessary hardware for the connection and that he would contact Michael, KE8HGE to plan to get things installed.

Don, W8PEN wanted to remind everyone about Friday Breakfast, now being held at 10am at the Large Shelter on the lakes at Foundation Park. Michael, KE8GHE confirmed that Wednesday Dinner at R&M Southside Diner was still on-going, with orders being placed around 4:45pm.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

After all questions were answered, Louie, NT8I adjourned the meeting without objection. The Net was closed at 7:38 PM.

## **Radio Activity**



### **Don Russell, W8PEN**

While there has been a lot going on the past month, most all of it has been old news. Things that are taking a bit longer to work out than originally thought.

But first, I would like to thank Bill Bradley, KC8BB for his editorship of the newsletter for the past five years or so. It has been a good run, Bill. Between Bill and I we have put together the newsletter monthly for about fifteen years. So, from one editor to

another, job well done Bill.

Perhaps the highlight of Bill's run with the newsletter was last year's honorable mention in the Ohio Section newsletter contest. However, I believe the quality of newsletter content has remained at a high level from the very beginning.

### **2 Meter Repeater**

The 2-meter repeater is working well on its backup antenna. We have good coverage to the West, North and East. Even though coverage is a bit down. Coverage to the North is somewhat suspect. Not as good as with the original repeater antenna. However, we are talking about a 22-foot-tall antenna verses a four-foot backup antenna.

Matt, KB8UVN has been working to build a new phasing harness for the old repeater antenna. These dipole arrays are built so solidly that the only thing that can go wrong with them is the phasing harness. Unfortunately, commercial phasing harnesses are no longer available, so the only recourse is to build your own.

There have been some setbacks in attempts to build a new harness. Matt is confident that current efforts have showed that a new harness can be built successfully. Once Matt figures this out, we plan to build two harnesses. One will be a backup just in case we ever run into this problem again.

I am looking forward to getting this repeater antenna back up in the air and working properly. We should return to the excellent repeater coverage of some years ago.

### **Local Mesh Network**

Mostly because Matt, KB8UVN has been busy working on the repeater antenna, the mesh nodes on the Centerburg water tower have not been installed. While this is disappointing, the project will be completed soon after the repeater antenna is back up in the air.

There are several projects to complete before this Winter starts to set in. The Centerburg water tower project for sure. Then we will be looking to install mesh nodes on Fredericktown's water tower. Next will be the installation of a node at Foundation Park. Unfortunately, this will not be a high-profile node as we had hoped. However, it will give improved coverage throughout the park.

Next, I would like to get a node installed at the Knox County EMA "Radio Room". This room has the amateur radio equipment that we would use when called into action. This will be a low-profile node since we already have a node on the roof of KCH. Most likely, it will be placed on the roof at one of our antenna support posts.

As a reminder. I have several nodes and antennas that can be used at individual ham stations. If you have a high spot on the roof, or an antenna tower to mount a node and wish to join this effort, please let me know. What I have would be free of charge. The only requirement would be that you leave the node on 24/7.

If interested, contact me, and we will run a test to see if your location can connect to one of the other nodes we have up.

One last item. I saw in the Ohio Section Newsletter where a group in Northwest Ohio ran a simulated test using their mesh equipment (Yes Scott, I read your newsletter). They are a bit further along than we are in that they are using cameras, phones, and have many individuals who set up their own equipment.

However, we could easily do something similar using the email server on the Bulletin Board I have set up. I also have several mesh phones we could set up and see what happens.

This would be a great event to see just where our local mesh group stands in our goal of providing a service to supported agencies. Any comments on this would be appreciated. Looking especially for someone willing to coordinate this and set it up.

### **Radio Activity at W8PEN**

I must admit, other than working on the repeater and local mesh network, things have been slow around the shack. I do talk to my friend in Monroe, Ohio occasionally (Lynn, KG8D).

Lynn and I have recently been trying to make contact on 6 meters. Lynn is about 70 miles from Mt. Vernon, and I thought 6 meters would be a piece of cake. We are finding out otherwise. My antenna consists of a 5-element beam at 50 feet. Lynn is using a 2 element Moxon antenna at about 28 feet.

Our first attempts were not good. Yes, we could talk.... On CW! But even CW was a challenge with weak signals. One of my problems was that I had a very large 2-meter beam up on the tower just above the 6-meter beam. This long antenna was being blocked by two pine trees that the past year has decided to grow up high enough to interfere with the rotation of my antennas. Therefore, I was not able to turn my beam enough to line up with Lynn's station.

Steve, KD8TNT helped me out by taking down this large antenna. I now have full rotation. However, it sure does look naked up there without the big beam up there. I may have to find another 2-meter beam that is short enough not to hit these pine trees. However, my EME antennas seem to do well for most of my 2-meter operating.

That is it for this month. Hope to "hear" everyone on meeting night. Boy will I be glad when the Covid-19 threat is over.

## Tips and Slips



### Barry Butz, N8PPF

I suffer from an affliction brought on by being a ham. It is the inability to throw away anything that uses electrons, specifically wall-warts – those small plug-in power supplies furnished with so many devices. At first, I kept them in a shoe box. Then I needed a larger shoe box. Then it got too heavy to lift. Whenever I needed one, I had to remove them one by one to find the voltage and current rating I needed. It got to be a problem finding a tabletop large enough to lay them out for examination.

The last time I went through that exercise I decided a different solution was needed. I sorted them by voltage and put each group in a separate plastic bag. These are the groups:

- AC voltage – This is the largest bag because they never have a use anyway.
- Less than 12 volts dc – There are so many voltages it would take a dozen bags. One bag would do.
- 12 volts dc - This is the smallest because 12 volts is the one, I am usually looking for.
- More than 12 volts dc – Quite a variety here. Also, plentiful because not very useful.

Now I keep my collection on a shelf and pull out only the bag I need.



You might wonder why I keep so many, especially those I cannot use. As I said, I have an affliction.

## Quick Updates



MVARC has had members request we publish repeater operation guidelines. Here is a list of a few general operating ideas.

- Always listen to the frequency before you start transmitting. If in doubt, then ask if the frequency is in use before you transmit.
- Identify with your callsign at least once every 10 minutes.
- Pause between transmissions to allow emergency breaks and to reset the repeater timer. The repeater times out at 3 minutes. If you do not hear the courtesy tone, then please note that the repeater timer has not reset.
- Use the minimum amount of power necessary to carry on reliable communications.
- If you have an emergency, then use a double break followed by your call sign
- Please DO NOT use "for ID" after your callsign. It is not necessary; we know what you are doing.
- Always relinquish the frequency to a breaking station
- If you are unable to hold the repeater or people cannot understand you, then wait until your conditions improve.
- No business on the repeater at any time.
- Never just kerchunk the repeater (keying the mic without identifying) for the sake of kerchunking. If you are testing your equipment remember to identify.
- Remember that Broadcasting is strictly forbidden by the FCC. Sometimes we broadcast without realizing we are, for example when we key up to announce that there is a traffic accident for anyone who is listening, then clear off. This action is broadcasting.
- Before blaming the repeater for a problem, first check your equipment, then check to see if anyone else is experiencing the same thing.
- Always be aware of your language over the air. Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club **WILL NOT** tolerate bad language, off-color jokes, or inappropriate behavior on its repeaters.

## Editors Notes



This is the first edition with Frank, KC8EVS and Terry, KI8N co-authoring. Bill, KC8BB who has been the newsletter editor for about four years decided he needed to take a break for personal reasons. We stepped in to work with Bill and ensure there was continuous coverage of club activities. Since we are new at this, we would really like to hear from you as to layout, articles, ideas

for new content and anything else you would like to read or write about. Please have all written input to us by the fourth Friday of the month for inclusion into the next monthly newsletter.

Another new suggestion is a monthly member profile. If you would like to be one of the first to let the others know about you send the editors a brief statement telling the following.

- Name and callsign
- Amateur radio license class and when first licensed
- Radio activities you like to participate in and any other hobbies you enjoy
- Most memorable amateur experience
- And any other facts/information you would like to include.



Some other possible newsletter items could be a swap meet – if there is any interest. Contest Information (as a club we compete as team Radiohio), new equipment or antennas. Let us know!

We hope to add more photos and content as we learn what we are doing and especially after receiving your feedback. Please reply to us via the club's email: [info@mvarc.net](mailto:info@mvarc.net).

## OSPOTA



The 13th annual Ohio State Parks On The Air (OSPOTA) contest is Saturday - September 12, 2020. This event starts at 10:00 AM and goes through 6:00 PM. You are welcome to join the group from MVARC at Mohican State Park, North Shelter.

If you do not want to attend the event you can still operate from home and make contacts with as many of Ohio's 75 State Parks as you can. Good just to be on the air and exercising your shack equipment.

The OSPOTA contest was conceived with three main goals in mind:

1. To promote public awareness of amateur radio and Ohio's beautiful state parks system.
2. To contribute to the recognition that Ohio has a remarkably diverse and wonderful ecology.
3. To promote camaraderie within the ranks of Ohio's Amateur Radio Operators.

Mode of Operation: SSB.

Amateur Radio Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters.

Stations may be worked once on each band.

<http://ospota.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/OSPOTA-Rules-1Jan2020.pdf>

## Contesting



Did anyone participate in the Ohio QSO Party that occurred Saturday August22? This is one contest I really look forward to competing in each year. It is a great time trying to contact all 88 Ohio counties.

This year I only competed for less than three hours out of the allotted twelve because we had company. Therefore, I was down on number of contacts made but still had 197 with 74 multipliers for a total score of 14,578. I did better this year than 2019 even with less time in front of the radio. I did good early on both 20 and 40 meters before our company arrived. After they left, I operated the last hour and a half and 80 meters was excellent.

Seems Morrow (MORR) county is not well represented, and once operators find you it generates a large pile up. That is what I had for a little over an hour. Fun to work a large pile up but takes a lot of energy and afterwards I had to take a breather which is probably why I did not make my goal of 200 or more contacts. Oh well there is always next year.

## MVARC Calendar

September							2020
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		1	2 4:45 PM Dinner at Southside Diner	3	4 10:00 AM Breakfast @ Foundation Park Large Shelter	5	
6 9:00 PM ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN 146.79 MHz	7	8	9 4:45 PM Dinner at Southside Diner	10	11 10:00 AM Breakfast @ Foundation Park Large Shelter	12 10:00 – 6:00 PM Ohio State Parks On the Air	
13 9:00 PM ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN 146.79 MHz	14 7:00 PM MVARC Monthly Meeting	15	16 4:45 PM Dinner at Southside Diner	17	18 10:00 AM Breakfast @ Foundation Park Large Shelter	19	
20 9:00 PM ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN 146.79 MHz	21	22	23 4:45 PM Dinner at Southside Diner	24	25 10:00 AM Breakfast @ Foundation Park Large Shelter	26	
27 9:00 PM ARES Sunday Night Net on K8EEN 146.79 MHz	28	29	30 4:45 PM Dinner at Southside Diner				

Final Takeaway

