Mahoning Valley Amateur Radio Association
Voice Coil

February 2026	mvara.w8qly@gmail.com	The Voice Coil - Volume 26-2

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President's Corner

Hey Everyone!

I hope everyone has been staying warm and staying safe in the recent weather we've had! Participating in the recent ARES activation, my own personal snow measurements sat around 13 inches by the time the snow stopped flying! That being said, we still had the opportunity to put on a Winter Field Day this year despite the weather! A HUGE thanks to all of the volunteers that came out and helped set up, especially with the extreme cold and wind we were dealing with. I'd also like to thank Joe Vasko and Dave TouVelle for bringing their Propane heaters, it made operating in the low temperatures very comfortable! We ended up operating till about Midnight on Saturday before calling it quits, and decided not to operate on Sunday due to the weather. Overall we had a total of around 450 QSOs between CW and Phone. For those of you that were able to make it out, whether you operated or just stopped by to say "hello!", I appreciate you all supporting these events and look forward to our next one! Finally, a big thanks to Mike McCleery, Joe Vasko, and the entirety of

the Mahoning Valley Rail Heritage Association for allowing us the use of their yard for this event for the second year in a row! I'm hoping and aiming to continue making Winter Field Day an annual event for our club and look forward to our continued partnership with MVRHA. See you all at the next club meeting!

73s
Ralph Streb - K8TCP President

Upcoming MVARA Events

Date	Event	Location
February 12, 2026	**MVARA Meeting**	**Boardman**

February Club Program

For February we will be joined by Mark Pride, K1RX. In addition to serving as the President of the Port City Amateur Radio Club in New Hampshire, Mark works closely with the IARU and the 10th World Radiosport Team Championship (WRTC), taking place 8–13 July 2026 in the United Kingdom. Often likened to the Olympic Games of amateur radio, WRTC brings top-tier contesters together under equal operating conditions to showcase skill, strategy, and camaraderie.

Mark will speak about the significance of the event and explore how all ham radio operators, regardless of contest experience, can contribute through volunteering, outreach, and donations.

Mark has Over 60 years of amateur radio experience, contesting for the past 45 years in HF and VHF/UHF events with several awards for top scorer in his region, a past president of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club, past director of WRTC 2014 for Towers and Antennas, leading 16 teams to standup 65 operating sites in 72 hours! Additionally, he was a Referee at the WRTC 2018 event in Germany for the Finnish team.

Groups.io

This is a reminder that MVARA has a groups.io page we use to make announcements and discuss upcoming events and such. The page is available to all members of the club and can be found here: https://groups.io/g/mvara and there is a subscribe link about midway down the page.

MVARA Winter Field Day 2026

Winter Field Day 2026 began with a Zoom meeting Thursday night to poll participants to see if we wanted to do it given the extreme weather. The forecasts had been changing daily and now was for temps around 10 degrees, with below zero wind chills Friday, and a major snow storm, 6 to 12 inches Saturday night into Monday. Myself and a couple others felt that given the weather we should cancel but the vast majority wanted to go forward with it. I am always amazed at the enthusiasm for this event.

We decided on a minimum plan of putting up the K8MSH OCF dipole and operating for at least 6 hours to qualify for an extra multiplier. The Mahoning Valley Railroad Heritage Association gave us permission to leave the antennas and coax up for a few extra days so we didn't have to tear them down late Saturday or Sunday during the storm.

Friday we had a great turnout to put up antennas. A couple of propane heaters in the caboose allowed anyone who got cold to get warmed up. The OCF dipole went up so well that we decided to add a 40 meter inverted vee and run two stations.

Saturday temperatures were in the single digits with below zero wind chills. We got on the air right around noon. It was wonderful to see a steady stream of club members and visitors all day and night. The pair of propane heaters got the old P&LE caboose so hot we had to turn some of the burners off!

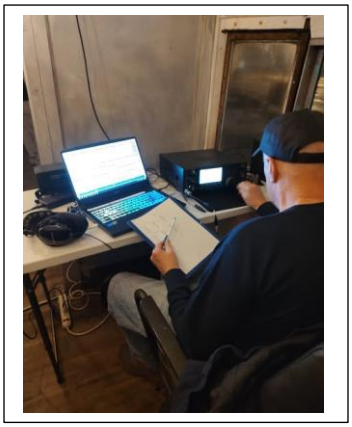
Band conditions were good. When I left at 10:00pm the log had over 400 QSOs on 5 different bands, 10, 15, 20, 40, and 80 meters that were split pretty evenly between SSB and CW. Don W8DPG worked with Karl ND8DX who showed him the N3FJP software then he got on the air made his first WFD contacts.

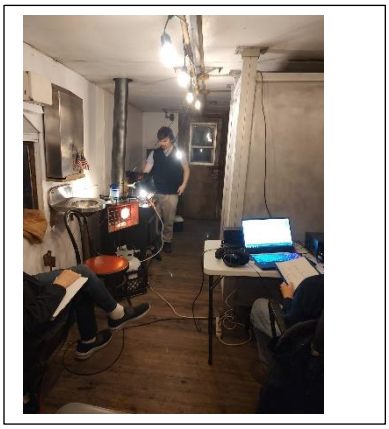
Rob KE8OKO, Dave KF8BFD, and Ralph K8TCP worked together to send a Winlink message from the field day site for an additional multiplier. They did it by loading up the 40 meter inverted vee on 2 meters! This year we tried to receive the WFD Bulletin but CW and phone were both so fast we couldn't copy them. The digital message wasn't heard. Lesson learned, next year we will record them.

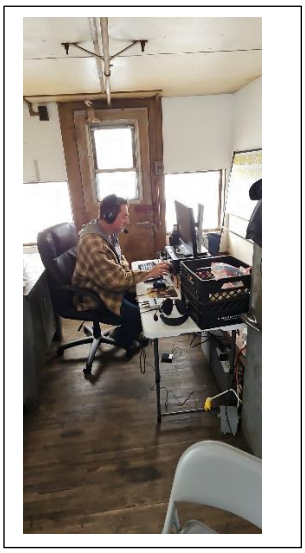
We not only exceeded our minimum plan we blew it away proving we can deploy and communicate in extreme weather. Congratulations MVARA! Thanks to all the club members who made this year's WFD so successful.

A heartfelt thank you to the Mahoning Valley Railroad Heritage Association for the use of Marter Yard and allowing us to leave our antennas up for a few extra days.

I hope everyone had as much fun as I did. See ya all next year.
Rich KB8GAE







From the Shack and Field: A New Amateur's Notes

Neal Bayless, KA3UON

My 2025 In Radio

What a year for an amateur to get back on the air. From what I can tell, this solar cycle might have peaked last fall. I'm not sure I could tell the difference if I had been on the air late in 2024. The bands have been just fantastic and eye opening to this 2nd time rookie operator. I'm often overcome with manic obsession when any topic that my brain fixates on, and there is no rhyme or reason for how long it will stick. I have noticed over the years that when it sticks for a very long time, it is going to get wild, expensive, reckless, but usually quite interesting in one way or another.

License

With the now obsolete Novice license, it looked like a wildly limited amount of radio space to work, and I'm not wrong, but it does share much of the bandwidth with the Technician ticket. I was out of the radio game for so long that it was like starting over again, and so I went for the Technician. I thought I could go right to the General exam with my Novice credentials, but soon found out I would need the newer Technician first. A few weeks study with almost every available minute and I passed the exam without a doubt.

I remembered 2m in the late 1980's as active and fun for my father, so I bought one of the cheap Baofeng HTs before I even had the ticket listed with the FCC. $25 and a cumbersome, but quick process of loading the repeater information only to find a few operators discussing what mower one op used while the other explained his penchant for mowing his city lot on Thursday's. I think I turned the HT on after that during a summer thunderstorm for the NOAA warnings and that was my last long dive into 2m.

I knew nothing then, and still don't. I cut a piece of wire close to a half wave, hooked it to the ATU, and I made several troubling contacts all over North America and into Central America. I did not know the rules of contests and would start rag chewing in the middle of pileups that I broke through. I laugh now and feel a bit like a lid – another term I learned during that time when I'm sure I read a rant about a guy who did exactly what I did during a big contest. I laugh now, but also cringe. I apologize if you were unfortunate enough to QSO with me this summer. I have gotten much better, I think, but I still tell new people to just jump in and get on the air; to not be ignorant, but feel free to fail and actually make a fool of yourself. I think that might be a good lesson for life, not just radio.

I was basic with my setup. I still am, for the most part, and I like it this way. I can still use my desk to write and work, while still having a small enough footprint for radio gear. I have my mobile/POTA setup and a few HTs here to start diving into DMR and ARES in the coming year.

The General was my way to do just about anything I knew anything about in amateur radio. The test is not much harder than the Technician. I took me a few more months of study and prep before I decided I was just good enough to maybe pass this thing, so on a whim I walked into the VE session to try a first attempt. I passed. Look out RF world.

By now I had amassed several QSOs on CW all over North America and dabbled in the digital modes for a few minutes. That is not much of an exaggeration. I was having a blast on the Tech portion of 40m, and propagation was good enough for me to relearn cw.

By the time I had the General ticket, I had my FT-891 pulled off of the end fed wires and a real Off-Center Fed Dipole I had built. 10m was opening, and I went from usually doing QRP, to cranking up the watts to what is still a fraction of some of yours – 90w. I racked up several countries in no time. Easter Island, Ships on the Air, 13 Colonies, SOTA and POTA hunting, all over the world, and I cannot get enough.

Clubs
I was banging around self-teaching, studying, and consuming YouTube daily. I was able to join the Lisbon Amateur Club as well as MVARA for a few different events and meetings. I met a bunch of great fellow operators. I learned something from everyone, even if chatting only for a few minutes. Often this brief interaction would lead to another week's worth of exploring some facet of amateur radio I had previously only heard talk of, if at all.

Outside the physical and geographical "real" flesh and bones clubs, I joined SKCC, Feld Hell, Flying Pigs, NAQCC, ARRL, and a I am sure a few others I am forgetting. All these groups again teaching at least a handful of new things about radio from their resources or within QSOs with other members.

QRP
I do not have the interest in major contesting now, so I do not have the necessity or justification for a high wattage setup or even a beam (subject to change at any given second). It seems almost instinctual to start basic, small, and build up to bigger antennas, fancier rigs, and putting more heat into the atmosphere through increased watts. That said, had I started out with a milliwatt Rockmite and a wire, I may not have made it past my first day getting back on the air. Heck, I might not have ever made it back on the air at all. So, I get it. I see the reason new guys get a nice rig with fantastic filters and DSPs with a touchscreen waterfall and zero beat function. Further, I think it is great for those that want to get on the air and just make QSOs. I have those days, and they are fun.

I cannot get over the magic of QRP. I know it makes me sound like a simpleton, but having a QSO with 5w of power from Ohio to Europe just amazes me. It further amazes me that I can sit here at home with 5w and QSO with someone in the Rockies who is using a wire and 1w. I love it, and I will keep doing it for a long time to come. I would have to add, that starting the process of learning propagation and solar weather was due in large part to QRP and how it is quickly affected by our recent solar activity.

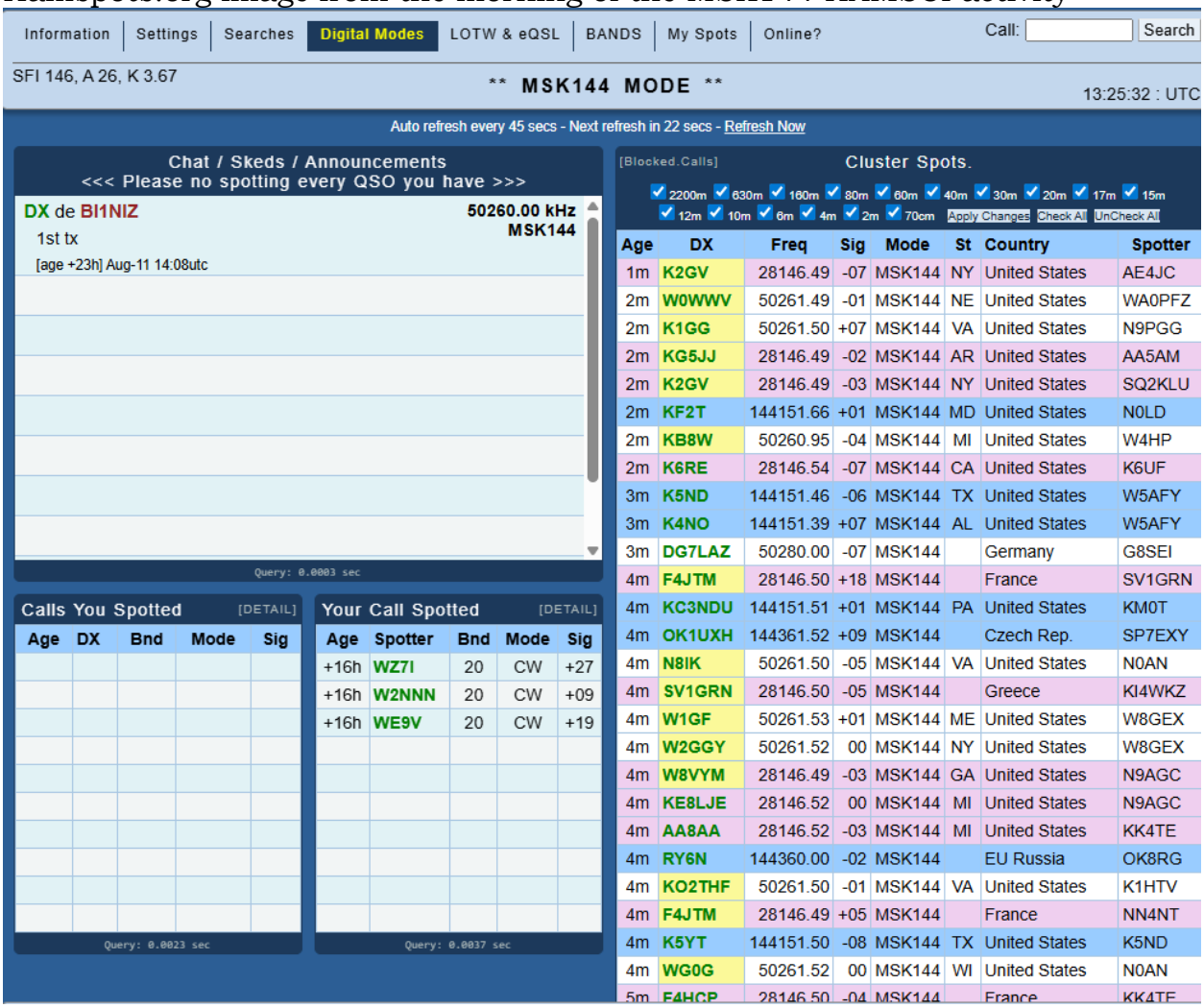
Failures
There have been plenty. I made an air cannon to put up my dipole. I won't lie; it is really cool to pump that up using a bicycle tire pump and watching the weighted tennis ball fly into the tree with a loud WHOOSH! But that thing was a real failure. The old innertube nozzle fell off after a few shots that missed their target, and it was back to the caveman days of slinging the weighted arbor bag. I threw that stupid thing so many times that it took a week for whatever muscle that is in my back to feel normal again.

I already mentioned the butchered QSOs, and there are others. The 2nd or 3rd failed attempt at a POTA activation where I was getting eaten by mosquitoes in Florida while banging brass and trying to head copy enough QSOs, when along came the 3rd ranger in 20 minutes to talk about radio. I just shut it off and enjoyed the conversation.

Then there is the soldering. I think I soldered a few things in the lab at YSU 20+ years ago, and before that it was about another 12 or more years. The point of this story is, I have a few kits for QRP to build, but I must do a few practice kits to see if I get any better than I am now. I used to be ok at it, I think. Now I am just awful.

Meteor scatter… I talked about it. I planned for it. I just didn't have time. What can you do? I did look on the hamspots page during the weekend and saw a ton of MSK operations going on for the HAMSCI event during the December Geminid meteor shower. I will do this eventually.

Hamspots.org image from the morning of the MSK144 HAMSCI activity



Wins

There have been far more wins than losses at this point. And the amateur radio game is about experimentation, right? So, failure is built into the model and is an accepted and expected practice.

Getting this deep and doing as much as I have in ¾ of a year seems like a great accomplishment to me personally. I don't say this to brag or boast. Many of you are far more accomplished in every way in comparison, but for me, it has been a huge year of learning and growth.

In addition to advancing to the General ticket, I successfully registered for VE credentials. I learned a lot from that as well and will write about that in 2026 to try to encourage more of you to take on this essential responsibility to grow the number of operators on the air.

I activated my first park officially yesterday for POTA. As mentioned before, I failed the first few times for multiple reasons, but I got one before the end of the year. It was quite worth it. I watched an Eagle circle the frozen lake while it snowed heavily. Not another soul around. It was heavenly.

The digital modes have brought a fun new way to chase radio. I didn't know anything about FT8, MSK, VARAC, or any of the others. I'm no master at any of them, nor do I fully understand them yet. I see value in some of them for EmCom, and others for studying propagation or to develop other new methods of wireless communication.

Writing here was a big win. I enjoy writing and putting thought and experience into words. I have written for other groups, audiences, and publications before this newsletter. This radio hobby was all new to me, and still in large part is very new to me. It took me out of my comfort zone and is still stretching me to find new and deeper topics in a limited space.

Future

What does 2026 look like for me in radio? I have just started to dive into DMR and the Meshtastic realms. I think that will play heavily into my exploration of ARES and emcomm. The ARRL has announced it is going to do a revamp of the ARES structure and organization. To that I say, kudos. We have had several instances in the last few years where ARES and an emergency communication response proved critical to the communities it served. I.e. California's wildfires, Hurricane Helene's devastation to not just the coastal areas, but rural Appalachia, and I often wonder how amateur radio would respond if another 1985 tornado outbreak like the one reflected on earlier this year occurred, or a train derailment like we suffered in East Palestine. How would Amateur Radio play out if an unfortunate disaster like that happens again?

I also have a goal to keep refining my CW skills this year. I feel like I could always improve at this as an operator. Trying to copy some of what comes out of some of you, I know I'm not alone.

Maybe, just maybe, I'll make my first SSB contact this year. I don't know why I don't feel more drawn to that mode. If anyone here can shed some psychological light on that, I'd love to hear it. (Before I submitted this article for the newsletter, I made 5 SSB contacts on 20m hunting POTA operators. My first since April 6, 1989. After the first one, fumbling my QSO with mic fright, it was fine.)

I still have my soldering technique to conquer as well as these QRP kits to build (or sell if the soldering proves as elusive as it seems today).

And there is the Extra ticket. That is a goal, and whether it happens this year remains to be seen. I am trying to juggle studying for the exam while having fun with all the other fun that is to be had on the air.

Writing for this newsletter is a big one for 2026. I feel like I must get more technical, and maybe that is how I'll learn more for the Extra or these other networks I have in mind. I feel like I have written enough of these entry level pieces to lull you to sleep and it is time to up my airwave writing savvy.

I should probably include being a better MVARA member and doing more for and with the group.

I might contemplate a way to bring back the glory days of 2m again where local amateurs could schedule some QSOs on the HF bands, problem solve, share ideas, or even plan where to get a hot dog. (Update no. 2 – I just saw that Struthers has fired up a local repeater. Is this a sign?)

Most likely, the months will fly by as they have this year, and I'll be a little further along and experience a lot more of what this group and radio have to offer. I can't wait to see what is next. Whatever it is. Let's keep the wonder we had when we started in radio and keep having fun and experimenting with all the possibilities we have at our fingertips.

Happy New Year, MVARA!

Mahoning County ARES Update

ARES Update January 2026

Just when we think we have the typical after the holidays "winter pause" ARES gets activated all day long January 25th for what became one of the heaviest snowfalls our County has experienced in recent years.

Days before as the national forecast developed, Mahoning County EMA worked on contingency plans for how that weather might impact our area. Very early in that process ARES was contacted and worked together with EMA.

Our role had a number of aspects.

First, we were the eyes and measuring sticks for EMA working with the National Weather Service. ARES provided real time analysis of actual snowfall compared to the forecast model. Our County-wide network of professional communicators updated those measurements every two hours, something no government agency could do. It's really amazing the kinds of important services Amateur Radio can provide.

Secondly, ARES Members and non-ARES operators monitored local repeaters, simplex frequencies, scanners and their nearby neighborhoods and communities as the winter weather brought not only large snow accumulations but sub-zero temperatures as well. ARES members are everywhere in our County and County EMA now values the contributions we can make keeping our communities safe.

We'd like to thank all Amateur Radio operators that took part in this past weekend's EMA Activation. Your professional communications skills and interest in helping in times of need exemplify the best of Amateur Radio.

Your ARES Leadership Team

How Many, How Long: Advice for Installing Ground or Above Ground Radials

by Mark Haverstock, K8MSH

Installing a radial system is a must for any quarter-wave vertical antenna system. Without one, a vertical antenna is only half complete. The radials are the second half of the antenna, just like there are two elements to the common dipole. Radials contribute to the radiation efficiency of the entire vertical antenna system. The worse your ground conductivity, the more important your radial system becomes.

The big question is, How many radial wires are needed and what length should they be? A typical answer from most Hams is, "The more the better and make them as long as you can." In 1937, the FCC set the "standard" for AM broadcast antenna radials at 120, each ½λ long at the working frequency. The traditional belief is the more total wire installed, the better the performance, especially with poor ground conditions.

For some reason, it became the norm for amateurs to use ¼λ radials at the antenna's lowest frequency. But when buried or placed directly on the ground, radials couple into the earth so they don't actually need to be resonant at all—and often their length is not overly critical.

From the Ground Up

Antenna manufacturers vary widely on their ground radial recommendations. For example, Hustler suggests you install two insulated wire 1/4λ radials for each band used on its BTV series vertical antennas. The same number is suggested for roof mounting. Butternut recommends a minimum of 30-60 radials at 65 feet each. Hy-Gain suggests numbers based on a chart similar to Table 1 below. It's clear there's no consensus among vertical antenna makers.

If you need a starting point, 20 32-foot radials will give you a workable system with most vertical antennas. You might consider 65-foot radials if you use the low HF bands. As we increase to 32 radials, improvement continues. As we move toward 64 radials, diminishing returns kick in and the improvement gets progressively smaller.

But if you dig into radial research over the last few decades, you'll find there's a tradeoff between the number of radials and their optimum length. John Stanley, K4ERO, wrote an article in *QST* a number of years ago to answer that question. Summarizing data contained in "Radio Broadcast Ground Systems," Stanley compiled the following table, which appears in *The ARRL Antenna Book, 22nd Edition.*

Table 1: Six Possible Configurations for Ground Radials (Source: The ARRL Antenna Book)
The figures reflect results over average soil conditions–6-8 mS/m

Length of Radials	0.4λ	0.25λ	0.2λ	0.15λ	0.125λ	0.1λ
Number of Radials	120	90	60	36	24	16
Impedance	35 Ω	37 Ω	40 Ω	43 Ω	46 Ω	52Ω
Low-Angle Loss	0db	0.5 db	1 db	1.5 db	2 db	3 db

This table provides us with information about the "how many and how long" relationship, though the findings may not be what you expected. For example, the fewer radials you put down, the shorter they can be—notice the 16 radials on the chart at 0.1λ. That's not suggesting a few short radials will work as well as many longer ones (they won't). But it does mean that if you have a limited amount of wire for making radials, you can maximize your results by finding a balance between length and number of wires.

What if you already had sixteen 1/4λ long radials on the ground? Interpolating between the numbers in the table, you could expect to improve your low-angle loss by about 1.25dB if you decided to substitute 30 radials, each 0.125λ long. In this case, you are using the same total length of wire in less space.

As for placement, should radials be buried in shallow ground or placed on top of the ground? It really doesn't matter, and the easiest solution is to lay the radials on the ground. Cut the lawn very short (about 1 inch), put the radials down on top of the grass, holding them in place with landscaping staples, then allow the grass to grow over them. Mow a bit higher than usual to avoid damaging the wire. After a month or two, the wires will disappear into the turf.

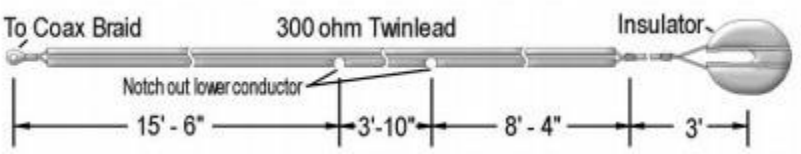
Elevated Radials
When mounting a vertical antenna on a pole, roof or tower, elevated radials are the solution. Elevated radials need to be made resonant at 1/4λ. They also need to be high enough (eight or more feet) to prevent people from clotheslining themselves on the wires or from coming into contact with high voltage while transmitting. Four resonant 1/4λ radials spaced 90 degrees apart will provide a low-loss ground plane for a monopole vertical antenna, nearly matching the performance of a 1/4-wave monopole antenna at ground level with 120 buried radials.

For multi-band antennas like the Butternut HF or Hustler's BTV series, add four resonant 1/4λ radials for each band. You can share one radial for 40/15M, since 15M is nearly a 3rd harmonic of 40M. That would mean 12 radial wires, each with a tie-off point. If

installation space is limited, you can cut that number in half by running two radials per band, 180 degrees apart. The worst case would be one radial per band, evenly spread around the radiator. It works, but you limit the omnidirectional pattern, producing a slight null behind the radial.

In the Butternut vertical antenna manuals, they have a slick solution for a minimal number of radials on a four-band vertical. As shown in Figure 1, a piece of 300 Ω twinlead is cut to length and notched to resonate on a combination of bands. Four of these would replace the 12 individual wires mentioned earlier.

Figure 1. Multiband Twinlead Elevated Radial



When it comes to radials, here are some points to remember:

- There is little difference in performance between buried radials and radials laid directly on the ground.
- The efficiency of the antenna system relies less on soil conductivity as the number of radials increases—something we can control.
- Ground radials do not need to be resonant.
- The shorter your antenna, the more you need radials.
- Elevated radials should be electrically 1/4λ long.
- Four elevated radials can perform as well as an extensive ground radial system, but a greater number is likely to work even better.
- For a given length of wire, choose more short radials over fewer long ones. There is a relationship between the two and an optimum number-to-length ratio.
- Bare or insulated copper radials are the best choice, with insulated wire being more durable. Using thick wire doesn't change ground loss enough to justify the higher cost.
- If you have limited space for ground radials, put down as many as you can wherever they'll fit.

Originally appeared in *On All Bands*, March 2021)

Amateur License Refresher

It's probably been a while since you took your Amateur License exam. Here are a few sample questions from the current question pools just to keep those synapses firing.

Extra Pool

E4D01
What is meant by the blocking dynamic range of a receiver?
A. The difference in dB between the noise floor and the level of an incoming signal that will cause 1 dB of gain compression
B. The minimum difference in dB between the levels of two FM signals that will cause one signal to block the other
C. The difference in dB between the noise floor and the third-order intercept point
D. The minimum difference in dB between two signals which produce third-order intermodulation products greater than the noise floor

E4D02
Which of the following describes problems caused by poor dynamic range in a receiver?
A. Spurious signals caused by cross modulation and desensitization from strong adjacent signals
B. Oscillator instability requiring frequent retuning and loss of ability to recover the opposite sideband
C. Poor weak signal reception caused by insufficient local oscillator injection
D. Oscillator instability and severe audio distortion of all but the strongest received signals

E4D03
What creates intermodulation interference between two repeaters in close proximity?
A. The output signals cause feedback in the final amplifier of one or both transmitters
B. The output signals mix in the final amplifier of one or both transmitters
C. The input frequencies are harmonically related
D. The output frequencies are harmonically related

General Pool

G9A01
Which of the following factors determine the characteristic impedance of a parallel conductor feed line?
A. The distance between the centers of the conductors and the radius of the conductors
B. The distance between the centers of the conductors and the length of the line
C. The radius of the conductors and the frequency of the signal
D. The frequency of the signal and the length of the line

G9A02
What is the relationship between high standing wave ratio (SWR) and transmission line loss?
A. There is no relationship between transmission line loss and SWR
B. High SWR increases loss in a lossy transmission line
C. High SWR makes it difficult to measure transmission line loss
D. High SWR reduces the relative effect of transmission line loss

G9A03
What is the nominal characteristic impedance of “window line” transmission line?
A. 50 ohms
B. 75 ohms
C. 100 ohms
D. 450 ohms

E4D01 (A)
E4D02 (A)
E4D03 (B)
G9A01 (A)
G9A02 (B)
G9A03 (D)

Upcoming Contests and QSO Parties

Dave Fairbanks N8NB

Source is www.contestcalendar.com

+ North American SSB Sprint Contest	0000Z-0400Z, Feb 1
+ Marconi Club ARI Loano Slow CW QSO Party	1300Z-2300Z, Feb 1
+ Real Time Contest	1600Z-1900Z, Feb 1
+ RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	2000Z-2130Z, Feb 2
+ VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	1700Z-2100Z, Feb 4
+ Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest	0000Z-0100Z, Feb 5 and 0200Z-0300Z, Feb 6
+ Vermont QSO Party	0000Z, Feb 7 to 2400Z, Feb 8
+ LABRE-RS Digi Contest	0000Z, Feb 7 to 2059Z, Feb 8
+ 10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB	0001Z, Feb 7 to 2359Z, Feb 8
+ F9AA Cup, CW	1200Z, Feb 7 to 1200Z, Feb 8
+ Mexico RTTY International Contest	1200Z, Feb 7 to 2359Z, Feb 8
+ Minnesota QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 7
+ FYBO Winter QRP Sprint	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 7
+ AGCW Straight Key Party	1600Z-1900Z, Feb 7
+ British Columbia QSO Party	1600Z, Feb 7 to 0359Z, Feb 8 and 1600Z-2359Z, Feb 8
+ North American Sprint, CW	0000Z-0359Z, Feb 8
+ 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	0100Z-0300Z, Feb 9
+ ARRL School Club Roundup	1300Z, Feb 9 to 2359Z, Feb 13
+ DARC FT4 Contest	1900Z-2029Z, Feb 10
+ NAQCC CW Sprint	0130Z-0330Z, Feb 11
+ VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	1700Z-2100Z, Feb 11
+ RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	2000Z-2130Z, Feb 11
+ YLRL YL-OM Contest	0000Z, Feb 13 to 2359Z, Feb 14
+ CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest	0000Z, Feb 14 to 2359Z, Feb 15

+ PODXS 070 Club Valentine Sprint	0000Z-2359Z, Feb 14
+ KCJ Topband Contest	1200Z, Feb 14 to 1200Z, Feb 15
+ OMISS QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 14 to 1500Z, Feb 15
+ WAB 1.8 MHz Phone	1900Z-2359Z, Feb 14
+ RSGB 1.8 MHz Contest	2000Z-2300Z, Feb 14
+ VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest	1700Z-2100Z, Feb 18
+ AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening	1900Z-2030Z, Feb 18
+ ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Feb 21 to 2400Z, Feb 22
+ Feld Hell Sprint	1900Z-2059Z, Feb 21
+ Classic Exchange, Phone	1400Z, Feb 22 to 0800Z, Feb 23 and 1400Z, Feb 24 to 0800Z, Feb 25
+ QCX Challenge	1300Z-1400Z, Feb 23
+ QCX Challenge	1900Z-2000Z, Feb 23
+ CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	

DX Information
Source is www.ng3k.com

February

2026 Feb04	2026 Mar09	St Kitts & Nevis	V4	LoTW	K0YA 20260103
2026 Feb05	2026 Feb20	Sao Tome & Principe	S9BV	Club Log OQRS	DXW.Net 20250912
2026 Feb06	2026 Feb19	Cape Verde Is	D4VR	DDD0VR	DXW.Net 20251202
2026 Feb07	2026 Feb14	Falkland Is	VP8TDX	LoTW	DXW.Net 20251227
2026 Feb10	2026 Feb17	Greenland	OX7AKT	LoTW	OZ7AKT 20251028
2026 Feb14	2026 Feb28	Falkland Is	VP8TM	LoTW	OPDX 20250816
2026 Feb15	2026 Mar14	Bouvet I	3Y0K	M0OXO	DXW.Net 20250815
2026 Feb19	2026 Feb27	Guyana	8R1WA NEW	LoTW	OPDX 20260112
2026 Feb21	2026 Feb28	Barbados	8P9XB	VE2XB	OPDX 20251210
2026 Feb21	2026 Mar07	St Kitts & Nevis	V4	LoTW	DXW.Net 20251210

Follow/Like us at: https://www.facebook.com/mahvalradio

Website: The MVARA is on the web at www.mvara.org. It is the place to go for club events, classes, newsletters, VE exams, swap and shop, repeaters, history, documents, and contact information.

24/7 Club Connection: The MVARA is on groups.io at https://groups.io/g/mvara. Members are invited to hang out with us there and discuss any ham related topic that interest them such as, Club Activities, Parks on the Air, Solar Cycle 25, EmComm, Special Event Stations, Contesting, Public Service, and Swap and Shop. There is video on our website at **https://mvara.org/videos.html** that shows how to use and join the 24/7 Club Connection.

The ***VOICE COIL*** is the monthly publication of the Mahoning Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (MVARA) and is intended to present news, issues and opinions of interest to MVARA members and the Amateur Radio Community. We encourage contributions of articles, letters to the editor, etc. and welcome newsletter exchanges with other clubs from around the country and around the world. Permission is granted to reprint material contained herein as long as proper credit is given to this newsletter and the author. Ideas for and contributions to the VOICE COIL should be submitted to: **mvara.w8qly@gmail.com**

Submissions must be received **no later than the 24th** of the month prior to the month of issue, unless otherwise specified. **Submissions should be in MS Word format or ASCII text—no PDF, please!** Material received after the deadline will be used in the next month's VOICE COIL if it is still current and /or newsworthy.

Swap and Shop Policies
Swap and Shop listings are open to all licensed Mahoning Valley Hams--you don't need to be an MVARA member. You can include a picture for your listing. Please submit your list to mvara.w8qly@gmail.com for placement in both *Voice Coil* and website. MVARA assumes no responsibility for transactions made or inaccuracies in ads. You are responsible for checking your ad and notifying us of any corrections. Ads will run for two consecutive issues unless we are notified otherwise.

The Mahoning Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc, meets the second Thursday of every month. Location and time are subject to change. Dues are $20.00 per year, $10.00 each for additional family members. Contact Nancy, nanceanne34@gmail.com for details.

The club call is **W8QLY**; equipment operated under this call includes a two-meter voice repeater at 146.745 (-600, 110.9 PL).

Club email: mvara.w8qly@gmail.com

MONDAY NIGHT NET operates every Monday at 9:00. PM on 146.745 MHz.
SKYWARN NET - On 146.745 MHz as weather warrants.
ARES NET- First and third Mondays of each month at 8:30 PM on 146.745 MHz; prior to the Monday Night Net.

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