



Mahoning Valley Amateur Radio Association Voice Coil



September 2026

mvara.w8qly@gmail.com

The Voice Coil - Volume 26-9

MVARA Officers

President	Ralph Streb K8TCP
Vice President	Mark Haverstock K8MSH
Secretary	Rich Slutz KB8GAE
Treasurer	Nancy Brett KD8QNY



Trustees & Chairs

Trustee	Don George W8DPG (1)
Trustee	Andy Brincko WA8ZLK (1)
Trustee	Dean DeMain W8YSU (2)
Trustee	Dave Brett KD8NZF (2)
Facebook	Mike McCleery K8PRR
Webmaster	Rich Slutz KB8GAE
Newsletter	Dave Brett KD8NZF
VE	Mark Haverstock K8MSH

President's Corner

Hello Everyone!

Hello Everyone! It's wild how fast Summer flew by! Schools are going back in session and little by little the days are getting shorter again! With that being said, also with the close of summer is Officer Elections! This year the following positions are up for re-election: 2 Trustee positions (Currently occupied by Dave Brett, and Dean DeMain), Vice President (Currently Mark Haverstock) and Treasurer (Currently Nancy Brett). Nominations are allowed to be made during the September and October meetings, with elections taking place in November. So, if you've been a member of the club for at least 1 year and would like to run for a trustee position or for Treasurer, I urge you to attend one of those two meetings in order to accept the nomination. The trustee position

specifically gives newer members a great opportunity to get involved and helps keep a fresh perspective on club operations, so if you're looking for an official way to get involved, this could be your opportunity! Also, if you've been a member for at least 2 years, the same sentiment applies to the Vice President position. I'd also like to give my general thanks to the current officers that are up for re-election, everyone on the board has been doing a fantastic job, and the next couple of meetings we will be discussing some upcoming proposed changes to the MVARA Code of Regulations and Bylaws, another important reason to ensure you make these next few meetings! If any member would like to reach out with questions on the positions, please email the club

mvara.w8gly@gmail.com and the corresponding officer can give their insight! Aside from the elections, I hope you all enjoyed the Corn Roast, unfortunately I came down with something on my way back from Black Hat and DefCon so I wasn't able to attend. I'm feeling better now aside from a lingering cough, so I'll see you all on the 10th! And a final reminder that we have a license test session coming up on Wednesday, September 2nd at 7PM, so if you're looking to get a license upgrade now's a good time to do it! That's it from me, see you all soon!

73s

**Ralph Streb - K8TCP
President, MVARA**

Upcoming MVARA Events

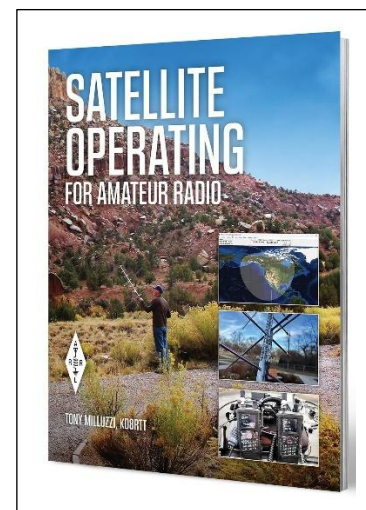
Date	Event	Location
September 2, 2026	VE Testing	Boardman
September 10, 2026	MVARA Meeting	Boardman Park
September 12, 2026	Ohio State Parks on the Air	Lake Milton

August Club Program

For September our speaker will be Tony Milluzzi, KD8RTT. Tony is the author of a brand new book from ARRL on Satellite Operating.

Tony's QTH is the Kansas City area. He has been licensed since 2012 and since then has tried out many parts of amateur radio from SOTA to satellites. He enjoys trying out new areas in the hobby, building electronics projects, and volunteering with the ARRL's Collegiate Amateur Radio Program.

In addition, Tony has a YouTube channel, **Tony, KD8RTT**, that has videos on equipment reviews, operating events, and activities he is interested in.



Tony also holds a Commercial Pilots license with Instrument Rating. Please mark your calendar for September 10 and join us to explore operating via satellite.

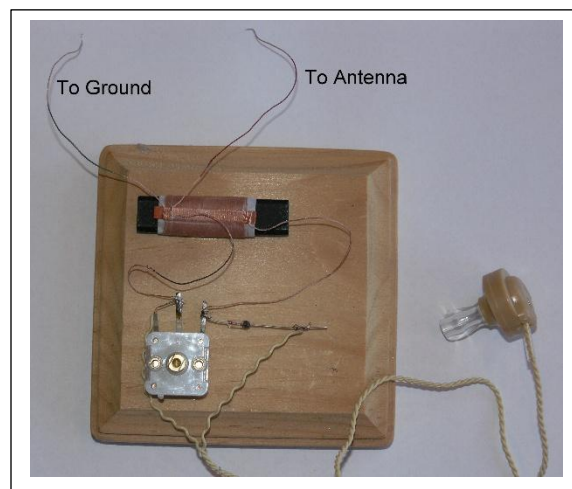
Crystal Radio

The club received an email from Rebecca Baxter, a 9th grade Science teacher in the Champion School System. Rebecca recently emailed the club asking for help with a project to have her students build Crystal Radios. We met with her recently and are working with her on the project. She explained the project in a Tribune Chronical article and credited us with helping:

Baxter was just one of four area teachers who traveled to Poland to study the Holocaust in the locations where it happened for 11 days in June -- visiting former Jewish communities, ghettos, concentration camps and extermination camps to understand the destruction of European Jewish lives and what existed before it happened.

Baxter said that, with her mixed background in science and languages, she's starting to partner with the Mahoning County Amateur Radio Club after she was inspired by a Holocaust speaker who spoke about making homebrew radios because her family couldn't have outside contact outside of Nazi propaganda.

"We are going to partner together to set up a lab, an experiment where the students take found objects that would be available for Holocaust victims to make, and it's called -- it's a crystal radio," Baxter said. "Then the second part that is tailored to my class, is the communication piece -- English language learners have to work on reading and writing but listening as well."



OSPOTA

Ohio State Parks on the Air is an annual event that originated in 2008 with the Portage County Amateur Radio Service. It grew quickly and in 2016, ARRL created a version called NPOTA – National Parks on the Air. That was very successful and led to what we know as Parks on the Air (POTA) today, but it all started with PCARS.



MVARA will be operating OSPOTA from the Harry Meshel Picnic area at Lake Milton. Our set up all depends on who shows up to operate, so feel free to bring an antenna and radio. If you don't want to bring a radio, no worries, we always have several stations and plenty of opportunities for anyone interested in operating.

We start setting up about 9:30 and operate until we get tired, somewhere in the late afternoon. To find the Picnic Area, take the Rt. 534 exit off Interstate 76, go south to Mahoning Avenue, turn right (West) on Mahoning Avenue. Shortly after turning onto Mahoning there is a Y with Milton Ave going to the right and Mahoning to the left. Take the Y to Milton Avenue and you'll run right into the Harry Meshel Recreation Area a few blocks down. You will pass a fire station and go through a stop sign to get to the park. (if you cross the Lake on the bridge, you missed Milton Avenue at the Y)

Mahoning County ARES Update

ARES Update

If our records are correct and you've been paying attention to your email inbox you've noticed that Mahoning County ARES is asking all members to reply to an email and fill out an online "Goggle Form". **Please respond to this email and fill out the form if you haven't already.** We are attempting to update our ARES Membership Roster and find out which of our members want to continue to be involved in our Mahoning County ARES. Thank you for taking care of this small, but important item.



Our County's Simulated Emergency Test (SET) will be taking place sometime in October. The details haven't been worked out yet, but we can tell you that off-grid operation will be an important part of our SET this year. So, get those batteries, generators, etc. in operational shape and be prepared for this year's test.

Also, if you haven't already, please sign up for the ARES DialMyCalls alert system. This is the way we are currently notifying Mahoning County ARES of exercises and actual activations. DialMyCalls costs you nothing and tracks no information on your phone. It provides ARES with a way to instantly send emails, voice messages and texts, all at the same time to our members for any purpose. It's free to you and another important tool we have to assist our communities in times of need. Please sign up if you haven't already at this link:

<https://www.dialmycalls.com/opt/cs1/f>

Mahoning County ARES has a lot going on. It's all happening because of you, our ARES Members. Thank you for your commitment to serving our communities in times of need.

If you're interested in joining Mahoning County ARES, please visit our website <https://www.mahoning-ares.org/> or email mahoning.ares@gmail.com

Your ARES Leadership Team

The Age-Old Debate: New vs Used HAM Radio Equipment

by Mark Haverstock, K8MSH

To buy new or not to buy new, that is the question.

If Hamlet had been an amateur radio operator (with a name like Hamlet, why not?), maybe he would have asked something like this before shopping for a new rig. There's nothing like a shiny new radio in your shack. But there's also something to be said for getting a bargain and saving money. Hams have a reputation for being frugal to the extreme.

Whatever path you choose, make your shopping list first. Consider the features you want and do some research. What radios do your Ham friends recommend? Check out reviews in amateur radio magazines or seek online reviews on sites such as eHam. Look for radios with a solid record of reliability and good manufacturer support. Find out as much as possible about the equipment before settling on a particular item.

Choices, Choices

If you're willing and able to spend the money, buying new equipment is a no-brainer. You get the advantages of current technology, more features, tech support, and a warranty. There are no worries if it will work or not, you're covered. And, of course, there are the bragging rights.

Buy used or new? Why should you consider used equipment? The lower cost of used Ham Radio equipment means that with a limited budget, you get more bang for the buck. Good bargains are available, and most people are very satisfied with the used equipment they buy.

With used equipment, it's "buyer beware," so be realistic about your expectations. Radios will likely show some cosmetic imperfections and may be missing some accessories such as mounting brackets or manuals. Remember that used equipment may be out of warranty, and if you buy from an individual seller, you buy it as-is. Also understand that equipment may have hidden issues that could lead to unexpected repairs later. Now don't let that scare you away from the used market. There are plenty of good rigs out there waiting to find their next home.

Dealer or Private Sale

If you buy used Ham Radio equipment, is it better to buy from an individual or from a dealer? Each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

Prices may be lower and it will be easier to negotiate with an individual seller—they don't have overhead or other expenses included in the price. Since they own it, they are familiar with the equipment and can answer specific questions. If it's a local seller, you could arrange to take a peek at the merchandise and, in some cases, try before you buy.

A disadvantage is that you can't be 100 percent sure the seller is giving you an accurate and honest description of the radio—and they may or may not stand behind the sale. Though I've found the vast majority of Hams to be honest in transactions when purchasing radios, there are always a few bad apples out there.

If you buy from a Ham Radio dealer, there will likely be less risk. The condition of the used Ham Radio equipment is likely to be good since the dealer has a reputation to maintain. You can see the equipment firsthand and may be able to try it out. Most will have some form of warranty or a return policy—be sure to ask about the terms! The downside is that the price is likely to be higher than from an individual seller, since they have overhead and will charge sales tax. Not every dealer trades in used equipment, so you may need to look around outside your area.

Another Option

Do you have champagne tastes but a beer budget? Shop for bargains on new equipment. Seek out promotional codes, coupons, rebates, package prices, free shipping, and other discounts. Don't be afraid to ask a dealer whether they will match prices or beat a competitor's price.

Other Things to Consider

Though equipment is generally more reliable these days, there's always a possibility that something will go wrong. New equipment can always be returned to the dealer, but service for older equipment may be a different story. There are still many used radios on the market that were manufactured 15 or more years ago. Some repair parts may be obsolete and no longer available, and older equipment may not be supported by the dealer or factory repair facility.

If you're buying online, new or used, look closely at the pictures and descriptions. Don't be shy about asking questions. Online sites like QRZ and eBay encourage sellers to post pictures—ask for more if there aren't enough. If the used equipment looks well cared for, it suggests the owner has properly maintained it and may be as fussy as you are.

Also, consider a phone call with the buyer before you commit to the purchase—a short chat can answer additional questions and tell you a little about the dealer or seller. Check out private sellers by visiting their QRZ pages and Googling their names or call signs.

If you buy online, be sure to use secure payment methods. Never send cash through the mail—consider USPS money orders, or services like PayPal, Zelle, or Venmo for private sellers, credit or debit cards for dealers. All can provide some degree of protection for a buyer.

New or Used?

Buying new is preferable if you have the cash or find a good sale. Choosing used Ham Radio gear can give you more on a limited budget. If you decide to buy used, do some research to be sure you're getting good equipment at a reasonable price.

(Originally appeared in *On All Bands*, May 2019)

Amateur License Refresher

The Amateur License Exams are updated on a rotating basis between the three license levels. In July the new Tech License Exam went live. It will be in use through June 30, 2030. 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

E6B01

What is the most useful characteristic of a Zener diode?

- A. A constant current drop under conditions of varying voltage
- B. A constant voltage drop under conditions of varying current
- C. A negative resistance region
- D. An internal capacitance that varies with the applied voltage

E6B02

Which characteristic of a Schottky diode makes it a better choice than a silicon junction diode for use as a power supply rectifier?

- A. Much higher reverse voltage breakdown
- B. More constant reverse avalanche voltage
- C. Longer carrier retention time
- D. Lower forward voltage drop

E6B03

What property of an LED's semiconductor material determines its forward voltage drop?

- A. Intrinsic resistance
- B. Band gap
- C. Junction capacitance
- D. Junction depth

General Pool

G1B09

On what HF frequencies are automatically controlled beacons permitted?

- A. On any frequency if power is less than 1 watt
- B. On any frequency if transmissions are in Morse code
- C. 21.08 MHz to 21.09 MHz
- D. 28.20 MHz to 28.30 MHz

G1B10

What is the power limit for beacon stations?

- A. 10 watts PEP output
- B. 20 watts PEP output
- C. 100 watts PEP output
- D. 200 watts PEP output

G1B11

Who or what determines “good engineering and good amateur practice,” as applied to the operation of an amateur station in all respects not covered by the Part 97 rules?

- A. The FCC
- B. The control operator
- C. The IEEE
- D. The ITU

E6B01 (B)
E6B02 (D)
E6B03 (B)
G1B09 (D)
G1B10 (C)
G1B11 (A)

Swap & Shop

Aursinc TinySA Ultra+ ZS406 Spectrum Analyzer

4" touch screen

100kHz to 900MHz (Ultra mode - 900MHz to 5.4GHz)

SMA Antenna, 2x 12" SMA/SMA patch cables, SMA coupler, 32G Micro SD card, USB charger/cable, Guitar Pick

I broke down and bought a Rigol DSA-815 TG.

LNIB \$75

Roy K3BBC - k3bbc.usa@gmail.com

Upcoming Contests and QSO Parties

Dave Fairbanks N8NB

Contests:

Source is contestcalendar.com

Many more activities online. These are recommended.

September 2026

+ Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0600Z-0800Z, Sep 5
+ CWOps CW Open	1200Z-1559Z, Sep 5
+ IARU Region 1 Field Day, SSB	1300Z, Sep 5 to 1259Z, Sep 6
+ IARU Region 1 145 MHz Contest	1400Z, Sep 5 to 1400Z, Sep 6
+ PODXS 070 Club Jay Hudak Memorial 80m Sprint	2000Z, Sep 5 to 2000Z, Sep 6
+ Tennessee QSO Party	1700Z, Sep 6 to 0300Z, Sep 7
+ MI QRP Labor Day CW Sprint	2300Z, Sep 7 to 0300Z, Sep 8
+ ARS Spartan Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Sep 8
+ K1USN SST Open	2000Z-2359Z, Sep 11
+ SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	1200Z, Sep 12 to 2359Z, Sep 13
+ Colorado QSO Party	1400Z, Sep 12 to 0359Z, Sep 13
+ ARRL September VHF Contest	1800Z, Sep 12 to 0300Z, Sep 14
+ North American Sprint, CW	0000Z-0400Z, Sep 13
+ 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Sep 14
+ ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest	0900 local, Sep 19 to 0759 local, Sep 21
+ Iowa QSO Party	1400Z, Sep 19 to 0200Z, Sep 20
+ Texas QSO Party	1400Z, Sep 19 to 2000Z, Sep 20
+ QRP Afield	1500Z-2100Z, Sep 19
+ New Hampshire QSO Party	1600Z, Sep 19 to 2200Z, Sep 20
+ Wisconsin Parks on the Air	1600Z-2300Z, Sep 19
+ North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Sep 20
+ ARS Flight of the Bumblebees	1700Z-2100Z, Sep 20
+ Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	2300Z, Sep 20 to 0100Z, Sep 21
+ SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Sep 23
+ CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY	0000Z, Sep 26 to 2359Z, Sep 27
+ Maine QSO Party	1200Z, Sep 26 to 1200Z, Sep 27

September 2026	mvara.w8qly@gmail.com	Volume 26-9
----------------	------------------------------	-------------

DX Information

Source is www.ng3k.com,

September			
2026 Sep01	2026 Sep12	Grenada	By MM8IJU as J38LD and GM5RDX as J38DX fm IOTA NA-024; 80-6m; SSB FT8 FT4; QSL via M00XO
2026 Sep01	2026 Sep15	Cape Verde Is	By DF2WO fm Praia, Santiago I (IOTA AF-005); 160-6m; SSB CW; QSL via DF2WO direct
2026 Sep02	2026 Sep09	Panama	By WE9G as HP/WE9G fm Paraiso; 160-6m; FT8, some CW SSB; QSL via Club Log OQRS, WE9G (B/d)
2026 Sep03	2026 Sep07	San Andres I	By PY8WW fm IOTA NA-033; 20-6m; SSB CW + digital; holiday style operation; QSL via Club Log OQRS
2026 Sep04	2026 Sep07	Palau	By JA0JHQ fm Koror I (IOTA OC-009, PJ77fi); HF; CW; QRV for All Asia DX SSB; QSL via JA0JHQ direct
2026 Sep04	2026 Sep11	Kosovo	By IZ2DPX fm Grashtice; 60-6m; SSB FT8 FT4; 100w; vertical, dipoles; QSL via Club Log OQRS or IZ2DPX (B/d)
2026 Sep04	2026 Sep12	Vietnam	By SP5APW fm Hon Son I (IOTA AS-128); focus on 6m, some 20 15 10m; QSL via Club Log OQRS
2026 Sep09	2026 Sep25	Franz Josef Land	By RA1ZZ R9LR RA9USU RW6MD R9LM fm IOTA EU-019 (LR30us); 160-10m; CW SSB FT8; QSL via Club Log OQRS or R9LR
2026 Sep09	2026 Sep30	St Kitts & Nevis	By K0YA as V47YA and W5RCX as V47RCX fm St Kitts I; 160-6m; CW SSB FT8, V47RCX FT8 only; QSL OK via home_call
2026 Sep10	2026 Sep24	American Samoa	By YL2GM EA5EL fm Aunu'u I; 160-10m, incl 60m; CW SSB RTTY FT8; Spiderbeam, vertical, DXCommander, inverted vee
2026 Sep20	2026 Oct10	Maldives	By DJ3JH fm Thulhagiri I (IOTA AS-013, MJ64me; 20 15 10m; CW SSB FT8; verticals; QSL via DJ3JH (B/d)
2026 Sep21	2026 Oct12	Samoa	By SP5EAQ fm Apia; 40-10m, perhaps 80m; SSB
2026 Sep23	2026 Sep29	Bermuda	By N7NU WJ7R K7AR; @VP9GE; CQWW DX RTTY; QRV Sep 23-29 as N7NU/VP9; HF; SSB CW + digital; QSL via N7NU
2026 Sep24	2026 Oct06	Ogasawara	By JA1UII as JD1BON, JI1LET as JD1BOK, JE1NVD as JE1NVD/JD1, JI1CRM as JI1CRM/JD1 fm Chichijima I (IOTA AS-031); 160-6m; CQ SSB FT8 FT4; 200w, 50w; TA33jr, SpiderBeam, Dipole; QSL direct only

September 2026		mvara.w8qly@gmail.com	Volume 26-9
2026 Sep25	2026 Sep28	Mariana Is	By JR1FKR as KH0/JR1FKR; 40 20 17 15 10 6m; SSB FT8 RTTY; holiday style operation; JA stns QSL via JR1FKR Buro or direct (w/ SASE)
2026 Sep30	2026 Oct11	Dem Rep Congo	By MDXC Team; 160-6m; SSB CW FT8 RTTY; QSL via IK2VUC (B/d)

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.

Disclaimer

The **VOICE COIL** is published by the MVARA. All material contained herein is considered the opinion of the author and not necessarily that of the MVARA. Announcements of events are for informational purposes and do not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the MVARA. No responsibility for accuracy is assumed by the editor or newsletter staff. Typos are included for the entertainment of those who enjoy looking for them and should be reported immediately to any nearby MVARA member :-)