

The Listening Post

January Meeting

By Tom Delaney, W8WTD

The January meeting of QCEN will take place on Thursday, January 17th, at the Red Cross building, 2111 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207 at 7:30 p.m. There will be a Zoom session for those who cannot attend in person.

This meeting will include the election of club officers for 2024. Please attend and cast a ballot.

The program will be presented by Andrew, K4AWC. It will focus on digital modes for VHF and UHF, including topics like System Fusion, DMR, P25, and DStar, among others.

Looking back to December, we had a great holiday party. It was nice to see a few people from the other clubs we had invited, like the Cincinnati FM Club and GCARA. There was good food and good companionship.

Looking ahead, it was just recently announced that there would be another Ohio VHF Simplex contest, on January 20th. I encourage everyone to participate, mostly from home, even for an hour or so. If there is enough interest, particularly from our newer hams, we could open up W8VVL and possibly even use the remote set-up for W8VND so people can see how it works. We can discuss interest and logistics at the meeting.

The ARRL VHF Contest is also going on that weekend, but it is not something we are set up to do. The simplex contest uses antennas and rigs we already have set up. The ARRL contest is much more about SSB and other modes using horizontally polarized antennas. Also, in my experience, there is not as much activity on those modes in this area as there might be in other areas around the country.

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Coming Events:

- Jan 11 QCEN Meeting & Election of Officers
- Jan 20 Ohio Simplex VHF Contest
- Jan 27 & 28 Winter Field Day
- Feb 8 QCEN Meeting

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Also, just announced, is the NVIS event for late April. In the past, QCEN has operated from the W8VND Field Site, and has done well with experimental antennas. Again, it's a good chance for newer hams to participate, but all of us can enjoy a little field operation, particularly if it happens on a nice spring day.

Finally, good luck to the new club officers. The club is thriving because of new people who are curious to learn and ready to participate. Let's work to keep QCEN a magnet for those who want to participate in any aspect of ham radio!

Contest Corner

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

What contest(s) did you participate in during 2023? Have you made any significant progress on a Worked All States award? How about Worked All Continents - or even DXCC? For some of us, there is a challenge in getting that rare contact confirmation with Niue or St. Helena; or, maintaining a radio friendship with someone. Hopefully, this column helps to highlight some of the interesting - and challenging - contest opportunities throughout the year. Here's what lies ahead for the next few weeks:

01/13-01/14	North American QSO Party-CW	CW	www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf
01/20-01/21	North American QSO Party-SSB	Ph	www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf
01/20-01/22	ARRL January VHF Contest	CW	www.arrl.org/january-vhf
01/27-01/28	Winter Field Day	CW Ph Dig	www.winterfieldday.com
02/03-02/03	Minnesota QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.w0aa.org/mnqp-rules/
02/03-02/03	Vermont QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.ranv.org/vtqso.html
02/03-02/03	10-10 Int'l Winter Contest-SSB	Ph	www.ten-ten.org/
02/03-02/03	European Union DX Contest	CW Ph	www.eudx-contest.com/

More information can always be found on the ARRL Web site and www.contestcalendar.com

The *Listening Post* is a publication of The Queen City Emergency Net, 2111 Dana Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45207
Editor: Tom Delaney W8WTD

QCEN is an ARRL-affiliated club.

QCEN Officers for 2023
President: Tom Delaney, W8WTD
Vice President: Bob Garfield, W8MRG
Treasurer: Bob Bross, W8NFM
Secretary: Rob Blocher, N8JMV
Communications Manager: Steve Lewis, N8TFD
Director: Richard Turner, KA8HXR
Director: Francis Smith, N8PEE

Winter Field Day is just a couple weeks away!

By Bob Cross, W8NFM

QCEN will be participating in Winter Field Day this year from the warm confines of the W8VVL at the Red Cross building, 2111 Dana Avenue. As an emergency communications station for the Cincinnati Red Cross region, it is important for as many of our members as possible to be familiar with the equipment. It is JUST as important for non-member amateurs - and those unlicensed but interested in amateur radio - to have an opportunity to explore the airwaves AND get on the air as well. We make this promise: you WILL get "air time."

This event officially runs from 1400ET Saturday, January 27th through 2000 Sunday, January 28th; however, stations are limited to a maximum of 24 hours on the air total. QCEN will run continually from 1400 Saturday to 1400 Sunday. We will be operating on the following bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, 2, 1.25 meters and 70 centimeters; modes will include Phone, CW, and PSK-31. Three stations will be set up for HF and a fourth for 6 Meters and above. There will also be DX stations participating in Europe and Asia (and possibly other continents) - so keep an ear open for them as well.



QCEN will be providing some food and drink; we ask you to bring something to share with the attendees. Please note: the Red Cross building will be locked the majority of the time; for access, call on the W8VND repeater or contact the Red Cross Radio Room at 513-579-3936. We will have someone at the front desk on Saturday around noon for antenna and equipment setup; let us know if you would like to help with that so we are ready to go at 1400.

While you can come at any time, we would like to have an idea when to expect people. During the afternoon and early evening Saturday will likely be the busiest, and operators will like some time to eat and take a break; overnight provides an opportunity to generate pile-ups, with contact rates of 60 per hour; Sunday will facilitate a lot of East Coast and DX contacts. Please contact Bob, W8NFM at w8nfmusa@gmail.com to let him know when you plan to attend - whether it's just for an hour, or for an extended time. If you are unable to be there, but will be operating from home, let us know so we can recognize your participation.

Mark your calendar now - see you there!

Have You Set Any 2024 Amateur Radio Goals?

-by Bob Cross, W8NFM

Many of us make resolutions at the beginning of a new year; typically, some of those are forgotten rather quickly. Amateur Radio is unique, as there can come a time with little or no warning where your skills are needed right away. Attending our monthly meetings, participating in the weekly Net, working an event - all of these help to test our capabilities. There are those who work contests for fun and others who enjoy the challenge.



Have you set any Amateur Radio goals for this year? Here are a few suggestions:



- Fix that broken base antenna - or set up your first one.
- Participate in a weekly net - and perhaps volunteer to work as Net Control one evening.
- Enhance your mobile communications capabilities - or set up a mobile rig.
- Get that license upgrade you have been thinking about.
- Take the opportunity to work a contest.
- Write an article for the Listening Post.
- Attend the Hamvention.
- Get a friend or family member interested.



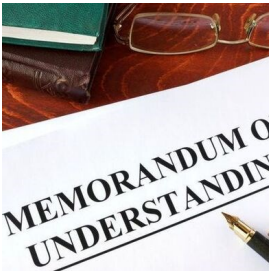
There are many ways to increase your knowledge and abilities in Amateur Radio. Talk with others about what they are planning to do this year; perhaps some of their goals will mesh with yours. No matter what you do, enjoy doing it!

President's Report for 2023



It was a good year for the Net. We accomplished a lot, and had fun doing it. Probably the most notable thing that happened in 2023 was the tower work we did in August. Thanks to one of our new members, Don, KE8WYK, we got the loan of an 80-foot lift, and were able to completely re-cable the antennas on the main tower at the W8VND Field Site. We also managed to take down an old non-working HF beam and replace it with a newer one. The old coax had been there for at least twenty years.

Almost as a direct result of that work, the Net participated in the ARRL SET (Simulated Emergency Test) in October by doing a propagation survey in an eleven-county area using mainly simplex VHF, but also testing the range of the repeaters. We can, as expected, cover that area very well. Thanks to the volunteers who went out some 30 or more miles from the center to test our coverage.



Another major event for the club was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Red Cross. They reached out to us, and in mid-November, we signed the agreement. Over the last several years, Red Cross has changed, and we felt that we no longer had the excellent relationships with the Red Cross, partly because so many of their people have moved on, and their focus is on the regional work they do. But this agreement reaffirmed that they want us to help in times of disaster, and gives us continual privilege of using the W8VVL radio room, with access to the roof for antenna work. In return, we need to be ready in times of disaster. Of note, the changes in climate have been good for this area (only in regard to disasters.) Our past disasters have almost all been weather-related. We have seen few really severe storms over many years now. We need to stay ready, and be prepared to help, both from the radio room and in the field. We need to keep up our skills in portable and mobile work, including with portable antennas and stand-by power.



Together with OHKYIN, we offered instruction in ham radio twice this past year, in the Spring and the Fall. Of note, our club recruited eight new members because of this effort. And they are enthusiastic and dedicated to learning all about ham radio. We welcomed them and hope we can all continue the efforts of QCEN in ham radio and in disaster communications in particular.

After almost eighty years of meeting on the third Friday of the month, the club voted to change the meeting dates for 2024. As you know, we'll meet on the second Thursday of each month. We hope more people will be able to come to the meeting. We'll see.

Our remote station is working well after some setbacks. The units



called Remoterig failed, and so we migrated to Ham Radio Deluxe for our operations. On the positive side, instead of having one location or individual able to use the station, this gives us the ability to have other users, since there is no need to pass along hardware, but instead the station can be accessed from personal computers. The only thing not working right now is the remote control of the rotor. The rotor works fine if you are controlling it on location. We need to find out why the software for remote control is not working. We hope to get to that in the spring. Right now, since we can't turn the beams remotely, the Station Master omni-directional antenna works great for VHF. And we can operate on HF using the loop antenna. Once the rotor is back on-line, we could think about adding another antenna relay so we can switch between the HF beam and the loop. Right now, we can still operate either VHF or HF remotely.

One of our goals as a radio club is to provide opportunities for understanding ham radio. We continue to hold our monthly "mentoring" sessions via Zoom. We also try to have operating events. We held both Winter Field Day and ARRL Field Day at W8VVL. We took part in the NVIS operation in April. In May, we had a booth in the Flea Market at the Hamvention.



Of course, the club provided communications for both the Flying Pig Marathon in May, and the Queen Bee Half-Marathon in October.

Those were the main events/activities for the year.

There are three things on the list of "not completed" projects for 2023. The first is the inventory of club equipment. Thanks to Francis, N8PEE, and Carl, AD8HM, only a few items need to be added for it to be complete. We also intended to do a review of our insurance. Renewal time is in May, so the next president and the Executive Board still has time to work on that. And finally, a decision needs to be made on replacing the shed at the W8VND Field Site.

It's been a privilege serving as President for another term (my third time around, as I recall.) I'll still be active in many of the Net activities, but look forward to having others step up in leadership roles.

Tom Delaney

W8WTD

QCEN Meeting December 15, 2023

Arrive at 6pm, dinner at 6:30pm, lots of good food and socializing.

Called to order at 7:45pm

Pres. Tom D., W8WTD welcomed all at Red Cross, no Zoom.

- Secretary's report of November meeting accepted as in L.P. on website.
- Treasurer report By V.P. Bob G., bills are paid, dues received.
- Comm. Mgr. Steve L., thanked all for volunteer help during 2023. It is his daughter Vanessa's 6th birthday; we all sang happy birthday.

Mentoring on Zoom last Tuesday each month to be Dec 26th.

Next meeting will be Thursday January 11th & Officer Voting for 2024.

Audit Committee to meet with Treasurer and submit report in January.

Winter Field Day - Bob B., W8NFM - W8VVL at Red Cross 1-27&28-24.

Nominations for 2024 Officers were asked for and one more was added. Kitty H., W8TDA was nominated for Director by N8MCR & accepted. Nominations were closed. There will be two offices to vote for 1-11-2024. Voting will be for: Vice President & Junior Director.

A Mail-In Ballot to be sent out by email needs to be received before the next meeting by Secretary Robert Blocher, N8JMV (n8jmv@yahoo.com).

We have another new member tonight: WA8VBP Allen Gerth.

Adjourned 8:00pm, we had 33 people attend at the meeting

Next Meeting: Thursday January 11th -- 7:30pm at Red Cross & on Zoom.

Q.C.E.N. Secretary

Robert Blocher, N8JMV

QCEN MEMBER DUES DUE IN JANUARY EACH YEAR
WWW.QCEN.ORG , go to Membership to pay thru Paypal
or at any club meeting or by mail to club treasurer.