

The Listening Post

Slow-Scan TV to be featured at the March Meeting

The March 2024 meeting of QCEN will take place on Thursday evening, March 14th, at 7:30 p.m. in the Red Cross building, 2111 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207. The program will feature Cesi, KD8OQB, talking about Slow Scan TV. Did you realize that images can be sent back and forth over the repeaters? He'll explain, show some examples, and give advice on how to get set up for those who might like to try it.

In addition to the in-person meeting, we'll continue to offer the meeting through Zoom, for those who can't be present in person. Members will see an email with the information. Guests are welcome, and can find out how to connect by contacting a club officer.

With the way certain days fell on the calendar this year, our February meeting was about as early as it could be, and our March meeting is at a more normal time. So we've had an extra week or so between meetings. Not much has happened in the way of club activities, but that will change as we get into Spring. In pretty rapid succession, we'll have NVIS day, the Flying Pig Marathon, and the Hamvention.

While there haven't been on-air activities, some club members have been busy with teaching the license classes. We've got over twenty people involved in preparing for their first license, or upgrades to General and/or Extra. We'll soon have some new hams on the air, as well as some experienced hams with new license privileges.

For anyone wishing to test into a new license or upgrade, there will be a testing session on April 6th at 10 a.m. in the Red Cross building.

See you at the meeting.



Coming Events:

- March 14 QCEN Meeting
- March 24th ARRL North American Sprint
- March 30 & 3 CQWW WPX Contest -SSB
- April 18 World Amateur Radio Day
- April 27 Morse Code Day
- April 27 Ohio NVIS Day
- May 3, 4 & 5 Flying Pig Marathon
- May 17, 18, & 19 Hamvention

HamVention 2024 Update - Get Your Sale Stuff Together

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

The Hamvention weekend will be here in two months; that may seem like a long time, but QCEN will need some “prep time” for the Flea Market booth. The good news: our spaces are confirmed, and all of the Vendor tickets have been sold. We now look for the booth to make at least \$175.00 (break even point); more if possible. To date, we have never had a “losing” year!

If you have anything to sell, please bring it to the March, April, and/or May meetings; should you be assisting with a “silent key” estate, please reach out to Bob, W8NFM for assistance with equipment transfer.

More details at the date approaches: May 17th through the 19th.

Weather Spotter Training via NWS Wilmington Office

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

The past 12 months have clearly shown severe weather can happen any time of the year; having said that, we are now in what is traditionally considered “tornado season” in our area. With that in mind, the National Weather Service office in Wilmington, Ohio is conducting on-site and virtual training classes. For more information, please visit: <https://www.weather.gov/iln/>

Those new to amateur radio will hear the terms WARN and Skywarn; this organization utilizes amateur radio operators to observe (and report, when conditions warrant) weather information. For further details, please visit: <https://www.warn.org/>

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Editor: Tom Delaney W8WTD

QCEN is an ARRL-affiliated club.

QCEN Officers for 2024

President: Scott Tengen, W8GXR
Vice President: Em Rhodes, N8MCR
Treasurer: Bob Bross, W8NFM
Secretary: Rob Blocher, N8JMV
Communications Manager: Steve Lewis, N8TFD
Director: Francis Smith, N8PEE
Director: Steve Imhoff, W8SCI

Are We Ready?

By Tom Delaney, W8WTD



At the end of February, the National Weather Service placed the Tri-State in an “enhanced” risk of severe weather. What happened? Nothing. Areas to our north and northeast suffered some tornado damage from a variety of storms moving through. At one point, I looked at the radar, and there was rain and weather all around the Cincinnati area, but it looked like we were in a “bubble” of protection. And that’s not the first time. That can lull us into complacency.

Historically, March, April and May are the months where we need to be prepared for storms and rough weather. But it has been twelve years since QCEN got called out to help the Red Cross. That’s right. In 2012, we helped with Disaster Relief for the tornados that swept through Northern Kentucky and over into Clermont and Brown Counties in Ohio. Since then, we’ve been lucky.



Northern Kentucky, 2012

It becomes harder to pay attention when nothing has happened in so many years. But which year will it be that the streak ends and we need to help again? To be true to its mission, QCEN has to be ready and prepared for any disasters that come our way. So I’ll repeat the usual advice for this season. Make sure your batteries are charged. Go through your “kit” and make sure you have everything you might need, for radio communications and for personal needs if deployed. If you need to look at a checklist, you can go to our website under “library” and read the “Communicators’ Manual.” Even though it needs to be updated, the basic principles there still apply.

No one wants to see disasters happen. We want to be safe, and we want our neighbors to be safe. Our club was founded on the principle that we will help out if disaster comes our way. We need to be ready.

“Here Comes the Sun” - Amateur Radio Activity for 2024 Solar Eclipse

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

The “Great North American Eclipse” will arrive in the afternoon on Monday, April 8th. Why is this one so special, and what role will amateur radio play in it? We’ll get to the amateur radio part in a moment; first, it’s time for a little science.



The Greek astronomer Aristarchus of Samos first provided a mathematical formula illustrating a heliocentric (sun-centered) solar system in 270 BC; however, it was Polish mathematician, astronomer, and Catholic canon Nicolaus Copernicus who independently developed the mathematics of a sun-centered system into the “modern” age. While he was not prosecuted for his so-called “heretical” writings, later followers were not as fortunate: Galileo Galilei was imprisoned, and Italian Giordano Bruno’s “barbecue” was probably not what he expected!

The “big reveal”, however, belongs to German mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler, who proved that celestial bodies **MUST** move in elliptical - not circular - orbits. For those of you studying for General and Extra class licenses, the terms “apogee” and “perigee” will be familiar to you. When an object is farthest from what it is orbiting, it is at its apogee; conversely, its closest approach is the perigee. That variation is what makes the upcoming solar eclipse so special.

During the 2017 “Great American Eclipse”, the totality path traversed the continental US from the Pacific to Atlantic oceans; however, the Moon was near its apogee at the time, presenting a smaller totality time (less than two minutes) and shadow. Next month, the Moon will be at its perigee, resulting in a totality time of almost four minutes and a much wider shadow. While a partial eclipse will be visible in Cincinnati, the BEST viewing will be in the center of the totality path - it’s absolutely worth the drive!

How does amateur radio play into this? Two ways: assistance in logistics and crowd control, and collection of scientific data on ionosphere effects. Communities around the country will be using amateur radio operators to support local crowd control; expect local repeaters and frequencies along the path to be **VERY** active (and thank you to those who are volunteering for such efforts.) On the science end, visit the ARRL Web site for additional information. Several key links for this event:

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<https://science.nasa.gov/eclipses/future-eclipses/eclipse-2024/where-when/>

<https://www.arrl.org/news/solar-eclipse-qso-party-seeks-amateurs-and-radio-enthusiasts-for-global-experiment>



One final note: PLEASE wear solar glasses specifically designed for the eclipse (available at retail outlets now) and heed the words of Manfred Mann's Earth Band, so you're not "Blinded by the Light."

Working DX: What is that "Split" Button For?

By Bob Cross, W8NFM



When first working DX stations, it's exciting to track several sought-after stations at the same time. You might be waiting for conditions to improve and reach Namibia, while simultaneously monitoring a Canary Islands operator. Many radios produced in the last 30+ years have two VFO's; this can be presented as either two different tuning dials/displays, or a switch to select between two different frequencies. This feature also serves another purpose: working a station on split frequencies. Here is an example of a situation where that technique was needed.

DX

The term "DXpedition" refers to a group of amateur radio operators who travel to a remote location (where there are few, if any, resident operators) and set up multiple stations for a specific time. Imagine what happens when such a DXpedition traveled to the Galapagos Islands: the airwaves were swamped with callers. It quickly became impossible for the on-site people to work a station, as other callers continuously overrode the QSO. The operator, working on 21.287MHz, began stating: "HD8M listening up 5". This meant they were listening for calls on 21.292MHz, 5MHz above their transmit frequency. The operator could then respond to the last clear Call Sign (or partial Call Sign) heard, and that caller could then complete the contact. There would be the occasional respondent on 21.287, whereupon someone else would interject: "They're listening up 5!"



Now YOUR second VFO comes into play. If you have only one frequency display, make certain you are tuned to 21.287 on VFO 1; select VFO 2 and tune to 21.292; then switch back to VFO 1 and select the “Split” button. You are now listening on 21.287; however, while transmitting your display will read “21.292”. If you have two separate displays and tuning knobs, select the receive frequency using the primary VFO (larger knob) and the transmit frequency using the secondary VFO (smaller knob.) There will be a “transmit” switch near the secondary VFO tuning knob; select “transmit” - and you’re in business!

At my personal disposal are three Yaesu HF rigs: the FT-900 uses a button to select which VFO is being displayed and has the “split” switch; the FT-920 has two separate tuning knobs and displays; I have not (yet) learned how to work split frequencies on my mobile FT-891, but that time is coming! Time to go experiment with your personal gear - and have fun!

Contest Corner

By Bob Gross, W8NFM

Please fasten your seat belts; make certain your keyboard trays are in the extended position.

The “contesting season” is revving up for a busy year. Over the next several weeks, we will have specific state-wide, country-wide, continent-wide, world-wide, and solar-system wide activities going on. Many operators are now beginning to appreciate - and make use of - the great band conditions Solar Cycle 25 has been providing us. Here are just a few to whet your “DX” appetite:

03/16-03/17 Russian DX Contest	CW Ph	www.rxdc.org
03/16-03/17 Africa All Mode Int’l DX Contest	CW Ph Dig	www.sarl.org/za
03/16-03/17 Virginia QSO Party <u>fa_QSO_Party</u>	CW Ph Dig	www.qsl.net/sterling/
03/30-03/31 CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	Ph	www.cqwp.com
04/06-04/07 Missouri QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	https://www.w0ma.org
04/06-04/07 Mississippi QSO Party <u>mississippi-qso-party/</u>	CW Ph Dig	https://arrlmiss.org/
04/06-04/07 Louisiana QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	http://laqp.org/
04/08-04/08 Solar Eclipse QSO Party <u>faqs</u>	CW Ph Dig	https://hamsci.org/seqp-

The Experimenter

Here's a novel idea from one of our newest hams, Kurt, KE8ZLH. Imagine making a dipole out of pencils!

Kurt wrote: I cut it a skosh shorter than I *should* have . . . "with just oooooone more trim I can get it *perfect* . . . "but SWR is low enough that being tuned a bit too high it's still perfectly fine in the repeater portion of UHF.

It would probably have better Q if I'd used genuine Ticonderoga pencils, but these are what I had on hand. I didn't sharpen them, just used the factory points





QCEN Meeting February 8, 2024

Called to order at 7:45pm, Pledge to the flag, self-introduction. Pres. Scott W8GXR welcomed all at Red Cross & on Zoom.

New Member, Rosemary KE8WYJ introduced & voted in.

Secretary's report of January meeting accepted as in L.P. on website.

Pres. Scott - we had a zoom exec. meeting in January.

We have a new Net Manager - Jim KB8UCJ, 147.240 Tue. 9pm.

Pres. Scott said Tom D., W8WTD to continue as QCEN Publicist.

Vice Pres. - Em N8MCR to send survey for meeting programs.

Treasurer report W8NFM - Bills are paid and member dues received.

Comm. Mgr. Steve N8TFD , Flying Pig Marathon is May 4 th &5th We need volunteers still for Sunday May 5th, email: n8tfd@fuse.net

HamVention - May 17 & 18, W8NFM, Flea Market & tickets are paid. We will be selling on Friday and Saturday at HamVention, more later. If you have items to sell or can help at flea market: w8nfm@arrl.net

License Classes - Tom D., w8wtd@yahoo.com - at Red Cross soon.

Adjourned 8:15pm, we had 27 people attend at the meeting & on Zoom.

Next Meeting: Thursday March 14th -- 7:30pm at Red Cross & on Zoom.

Program: Logging - Bob B., W8NFM - slide-show about why log contacts, and who & how far, when , contests. You need call sign, band, mode, date. Computer software or paper log or both. There are several ways to save the contact information. Some are Logbook of the world, LoTW is ARRL, QRZ.com, N3FJP.com (this is what QCEN uses at W8VVL radio room). It all depends on what you like. A lot of Q & A discussion.

Q.C.E.N. Secretary

Robert Blocher, N8JMV

<p>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.</p>
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