

The Listening Post

April Meeting

By Tom Delaney, W8WTD

Lots of activity this month. Classes have wrapped up, and a number of people will be taking their exams this coming Saturday, some to get into ham radio for the first time, and some to move upward with a license upgrade. Speaking of upgrading, Kim, KF8AUW, was so anxious to get her Extra Class license that she didn't even wait until the classes were over. She took the exam a week or so ago, and is now an Extra class licensee. Congratulations!

World Amateur Radio Day is the 18th of this month, and on Saturday, April 19th, we'll help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the IARU with a day of ham radio at the Cincinnati Museum Center. Along with OHKYIN, our club will provide a historical display in the History Museum, a hands-on demo experience (a variety of technical exhibits will be featured) in the STEM lab of the Science Museum, and a chance for the public to see real ham radios in operation on the lawn outside the Center. A number of our members will be on hand to help. The regular admission fee for the Museum Center will allow guests full access to the Center, as well as to our exhibits.

There are also two big events coming up in May. The Flying Pig weekend is May 2 through 4 (the marathon itself is the 4th of May) and the Dayton Hamvention takes place at the Greene County Fairgrounds over the weekend of May 16th.

And of course, our April club meeting is this coming Thursday, April 10th, at 7:30 p.m. in the Red Cross building, 2111 Dana Ave. The program will be "Getting Started with Winlink," presented by Scott, W8GXR.



Coming Events:

- April 10 QCEN Meeting
- April 12 VE Exam session
- April 18 World Amateur Radio Day
- May 2, 3, 4 Flying Pig Weekend
- May 16, 17, 18 Dayton Hamvention
- June 28 & 29 ARRL Field Day

Contest Corner

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

Despite having no major ARRL contests in the next few weeks, there are a wealth of opportunities to make some great contacts. State QSO parties, international DX, and some interesting specialty events.

04/12-04/13	Japan International DX Contest	CW Ph	www.jidx.org
04/12-04/13	New Mexico QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.newmexicoqsoparty.org
04/12-04/13	North Dakota QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.ndarrlsection.com
04/12-04/13	Georgia QSO Party	CW Ph	www.gaqsoparty.com
04/19-04/20	Worked all China Provinces	Ph	www.mulandxc.com
04/19-04/20	Nebraska QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.nebraskaqso.party.com
04/19-04/20	Michigan QSO Party	CW Ph	www.miqp.org
04/19-04/20	Ontario QSO Contest	CW Ph	www.va3cco.com
04/20-04/20	Quebec QSO Contest	CW Ph	wp1.quebecqsoparty.org
05/03-05/04	Indiana QSO Party	CW Ph	www.hdxcc.org
05/03-05/04	Delaware QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.fsarc.org
05/03-05/04	New England QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.neqp.org/rules

For a full list of all upcoming contest, please visit www.contestcalendar.com

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Editor: Tom Delaney W8WTD

QCEN is an ARRL-affiliated club.

QCEN Officers for 2025
President: Em Rhodes, N8MCR
Vice President: Jim Craycroft, KB8UCJ
Treasurer: Bob Bross, W8NFM
Secretary: Rob Blocher, N8JMV
Communications Manager: Steve Lewis, N8TFD
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Director: Kitty Hevener, W8TDA

Yes, you can get on the air with a \$5 antenna!

By Scott Tengen, W8GXR

Part of the hobby is building things which certainly have changed over the decades of radio. Today many, including myself, may have a modern radio which would be nearly impossible to build on my own. Sad fact is purchasing electronic parts is a new hobby since many stores do not exist anymore; regardless, we still have things to build!

An antenna is a critical part of any station. The better the antenna the better it will radiate your signal out to the world. Better does not mean more money out of your pocket.

Building a 2-meter antenna is a great starting point. You can use everything you have learned to build antennas upward or downward in frequency; the math and science are the same.



Basic parts list:

SO-239 Panel mount connector	\$1.95
5' of 10- or 12-gauge wire (rigid is better)	\$1.50
Crimp ends	\$1.00
Screws	\$0.00 (hunt in your boxes)
3" of copper wire	\$0.00
hunt in your electric box	
Zip ties (surely you have these)	\$0.00

Misc Parts:

Coax cable
Mounting pole

Notes:

This design is based on a $\frac{1}{4}$ wave antenna; to increase gain you need longer elements which is another step to learn more about antennas.

Calculating Antenna Length:
 $468 / \text{frequency} - \text{half wave}$

(Continued on page 4)

234 / frequency - quarter wave

In today's example we will use 146.00 MHz to derive a element of 19.24"



- Measure and cut 5 lengths of wire to 19.24" (radials)
- Attach a crimp end to one side of 4 of the radials cut
- Solder the 3" copper wire to the center connector
- Use one of the lengths of wire you cut, carefully coil the copper wires around the radial you cut, securing it in place with a spring-like look. Now solder the copper wire to the radial to secure it in place.
- Connect the 4 radials with screws to the SO-239 connector
- Connect your coax
- Zip-tie the assembly to a wood or plastic pole
- Connect your radio - extend your range and go!

If you have the equipment, it would be better to measure to SWR, however if you followed the math and process you should have a good match on 2 meters.

Hamvention 2025 is Less Than SIX Weeks Away - Sign Up Now!

By Bob Cross, W8NFM

The 2025 Hamvention is less than six weeks away. If you haven't already done so, please mark your calendars NOW for Friday, May 16th through Sunday, May 18th. As previously stated, QCEN will once again have a booth in the Flea Market area; to staff it, we need volunteers - no prior experience necessary! If you can help out just for an hour or so, that's fine; we will take whatever help we can get. Extra hands are needed for setup prior to the official opening at 0900; if you can arrive early, call in on 147.420/123.0 (or call Bob, W8NFM at 513-550-1889) and someone will come to escort you inside.

This same message has been sent out to our membership, along with the schedule: please note that we are operating it on Friday and Saturday ONLY. In addition to sales, our booth provides shelter from the sun (and in the rare chance it may rain) as well as a place to temporarily store your purchases.

If you have something to sell, please bring it to the April or May QCEN meeting; for larger and/or numerous items, call Bob W8NFM. Email a list of your equipment, asking price, and minimum sale price; send to w8nfmusa@gmail.com

New Feature: Member Profile

We'll be introducing new members as well as veteran members in this space. This month we feature an interview with Rosemary, KE8WYJ. She went from Technician to Extra in little over a year.

What inspired you to get into ham radio?

Every day/night when I was a kid, I heard my brother Jack, WB8FSV, through my bedroom



wall or through the organ as I was practicing for my lessons. I've always wanted to be able to do what Jack was doing - talking to people around the world!

How did you first obtain your ham radio license?

Despite my hope to be a HAM, I had no way to do so until QCEN offered classes. Even getting my General then Extra would never have happened without their classes.

Can you share a memorable experience or QSO (contact) you've had?

I haven't spoken to many people and am still learning how to contact people. I did drive to QCEN at the Red Cross on Dana Avenue for a Saturday morning and was able to talk to a few more distant locations which my little end-fed wire can't reach.

What equipment do you currently use, and why did you choose it?

I have my brother Jack's Kenwood TS-450 and his endfed wire along with the power supply and microphone. Now I also have Jack's TM-261. Year before last, when I first got my Tech License I purchased a Yaesu FT-60 then upgraded its antenna.

How has ham radio impacted your personal or professional life?

Talking to people from Washington state to Puerto Rico has been fun! Also talking to people around the area through the local repeaters makes walking/exercising enjoyable.

What advice would you give to someone new to ham radio?

I don't know. Except that it's a lot of fun.

Science Fiction Radio Communications - How Realistic Are They? By Bob Bross, W8NFM

Science fiction books, movies and television programs have inspired many technical innovations. As space travel became a reality, so too did the fiction begin to illustrate what actually occurs "out there." The television series *Star Trek* showed Captain James T. Kirk could conduct real-time "subspace" two-way communications across many light years; however, the film "2001-A Space Odyssey" routinely reflected the delay in radio signals from Earth to other planets (thus showing the importance of the AE-35 unit; the "right" people will understand that reference!)

Beginning with Sputnik in October 1957, amateur radio operators have detected signals from satellites and manned spacecraft orbiting Earth; and, most notably, direct communications from astronauts orbiting the Moon and walking on its surface. Data transmissions from satellites orbiting Mars have been picked up as well.

In today's world, the ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) program sets up communication between the ISS and schools an average of every five days; QCEN members have participated in several such local events. If you monitor the downlink on 145.800 MHz, chances are you will pick up the ISS now and then. Multiple AMSAT (Amateur Radio Satellite) relaying communications are common, as are EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) reflected contacts. At least two signals have been bounced from Venus back to Earth; these took a five-minute round trip to make.

With plans to return to the Moon and eventually establish a base there, the three-second delay will not be much of a factor. In the movie "The Martian" the delay in communications between Earth and Mars was referenced several times, though rarely specified. The



"The AE-35 unit seems to be fine."
"Perhaps HAL made a mistake"

reality paints a daunting picture: at Opposition (Earth and Mars are at their closest point) a round-trip conversation would take eight minutes - awkward, but tolerable. At Aphelion (Earth and Mars are on opposite sides of the Sun) one would have to wait 40 minutes for a reply - over an hour for a complete QSO confirmation, to say nothing of the delay in exchanging QSL cards!

So - during "World Amateur Radio Day" this month, why not think about "other" worlds to be included in the future? Equipment manufacturers will supply gear just for the opportunity to advertise "Our rigs are out of this world!" The first such contacts will end up on the cover of QST, "Logbook of The Worlds" will have its new title, and there will be a "Worked All Worlds" certificate hanging in someone's shack. While some family members might say "Why?" - hams on - and off world - will reply "Why not?" Once again, science fiction of today be-

comes the reality of tomorrow.

QCEN Meeting March 13, 2025

Called to order at 7:30pm, with Pledge to the Flag and self-introductions_Pres. Em R., N8MCR welcomed all at Red Cross and those on Zoom.

- Secretary Report of February meeting is accepted as in L.P. online.
- Vice Pres. Jim C., WB8UCJ Checking into having Win Link at the W8VND Site. Mike N2HTE has a system available / VHF Gateway.

The shed repair work is planned to be getting done this summer.

Tuesday Net Control Ops. Are needed and Standby Net Control Ops.

Program: Emergency Communications by Jim KB8UCJ & Steve N8TFD talked about how we would alert to get help, listen to repeater. Red Cross D.O.C. may be used in some cases, every event is different. We are here to help Red Cross when needed, family always comes first.

- Treasurer Report - Bob B. - Bills are paid, will have more info on the Verizon Internet for W8VND Site at April meeting. A member equipment list -word doc- is being sent out by email. It should be filled in and then sent back to W8NFM@ARRL.Net
- Comm. Mgr. Steve L., N8TFD - Flying Pig Vol. Registration Online. We still need several more volunteers to help May 2, 3, 4.

Mentoring on ZOOM is the last Tuesday each month.

ARRL World Amateur Day is April 18. QCEN & OHKYIN will work together at Cincinnati Museum Center Saturday April 19th 9am-4pm.

Amateur License Classes - Exams on April 12th 10am at Red Cross.

HamVention - May 16 & 17 we will have a flea market space - 7543 -Volunteers needed & anything to sell contact W8NFM@ARRL.NET

SkyWarn has online and in person training available.[]

Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm, we had 25 people.

Next regular meeting at Red Cross is Thursday April 10th at 7:30pm.

73;

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.