

The Listening Post

March Meeting

The March 2026 meeting of the Queen City Emergency Net will take place on Thursday, March 12, at 7:30 p.m. in the Red Cross building, 2111 Dana Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45207. Members are reminded to attend, and guests are welcome. For those who can't be there in person, there will be a Zoom component to the meeting.

The program for the evening will feature Em, N8MCR, speaking about Parks on the Air. This exciting aspect of ham radio continues to grow in popularity. It involves operating from national and state parks (activating) and being received by thousands of hams at home (hunters). You can earn points and sharpen your operating skills. It is like Field Day every day! As an organization focused on public service and emergency communications, this activity is a good way to keep our skills fresh and have some fun!

Also during the meeting, discussion is planned for the following topics: NVIS Day, an operating event testing antennas for close-in HF work; a possible day in April for "mobile tune-up," that is, help for anyone wishing to check out and improve their mobile operation; and the need to move the date of the May QCEN meeting to avoid conflict with the Hamvention, which a lot of us like to attend. There may also be updates to the project for getting the UHF repeater back on the air.

Finally, remember that QCEN and OHKYIN will offer a one-day class for the Tech license on March 28th. If you know of anyone who would like to get a license, let them know!



Coming Events:

March 12th QCEN Meeting
April 9th QCEN Meeting
April 25th NVIS Day
May 1-3 Flying Pig
May 7th QCEN Meeting
May 15-17 Hamvention

Contest Corner

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

What results can one expect from a few hours of on-air time in a contest? While it does depend on the type of contest, this past weekend provided a great opportunity during the ARRL DX-Worldwide event. In approximately five hours (while simultaneously going through home paperwork) I made 90 contacts across four bands and 52 total countries - including a new one (Guam.) Not too bad; I also cleaned my desk!

While the next few weeks are mostly state QSO parties, there are a couple continental-based ones AND a worldwide DX event:

03/14-03/15	South America 10 Meter Contest	CW Ph	www.sa10m.com.ar/wp/rules
03/14-03/15	Oklahoma QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.k5cm.com/okqp.htm
03/14-03/16	Idaho QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.idahogsoparty.org
03/15-10/16	Wisconsin QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.warac.org
03/21-03/22	Virginia QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.qsl.net/sterling/uf1.htm
03/28-03/29	CQ WW WPX SSB	Ph	www.cqwp.com
03/28-03/29	Africa All Mode Int'l DX Contest	CW Ph Dig	www.mysari.org/za
04/04-04/05	Louisiana QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.laqp.louisianacontestclub.org
04/04-04/05	Mississippi QSO Party	CW Ph Dig	www.arimiss.org

For more information on other contests, check the ARRL site and www.contestcalendar.com

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Editor: Tom Delaney W8WTD

QCEN is an ARRL-affiliated club.

QCEN Officers for 2026
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Director: Kitty Hevener, W8TDA
Director: Franics Smith, N8PEE

Hamvention is Two Months Away - Is It on YOUR Calendar?

By Bob Bross, W8NFM

May 15th-17th, 2026 - let's lead with that information. Location: the Greene County Fairgrounds in Xenia, Ohio. For some of you, this will be your first time attending what is billed as the largest amateur radio gathering in the world (36,814 attended last year, breaking the previous record set in 2024.) Here are a few facts about the Hamvention:



- The official name is “Dayton Hamvention” - even though it is now in Xenia, OH.
- Supported and sponsored by the Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) since its inception.
- The first gathering (Initially called the “Southwestern Ohio Ham-vention”) was held in 1952 at the Biltmore Hotel in Dayton; over 600 people attended.
- One year later, the event was re-branded as the “Dayton Hamvention.”
- As it grew, a larger location was needed; thus, the move to Hara Arena in 1964 - where it remained for 53 years until that site closed.
- In 2017, the Hamvention moved to its current location at the Greene County Fairgrounds.
- The ONLY time it has been cancelled was in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID.

To say this is an international event is NOT hyperbole; in 2019, attendees came from 60 different countries. It is also common to encounter recruiting for upcoming DXpeditions. Astronauts are often in attendance; approximately 50% of those who have been on the International Space Station are licensed amateurs. Astronaut Douglas “Wheels” Wheelock, KF5BOC will be making his seventh Hamvention appearance in 2026.

QCEN will once again be operating a booth in the Flea Market this year. That space serves several purposes: the sale of equipment for us, members, and on behalf of “Silent Keys”; a gathering place for our members and friends; and a place to temporarily store your personal purchases, freeing your backpacks/bags/arms to buy more things!

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To help fund our booth, we keep 10% of any sales - with a maximum of \$30.00 for any one item. Our volunteers who staff the booth work hard to make sales, for our benefit and yours; to do that, we need an hour or so of your help during Friday and Saturday (we normally do not run it on Sunday.) A sign-up sheet will be at our March meeting; recruiting will continue in the weeks leading up to Hamvention.

For more information, please visit www.hamvention.org

Technician Class Licensing Coming Up

This Spring we will be offering a one-day instruction in how to get a license. The day will feature an overview of ham radio, tutorial sessions on various topics needed to pass the exam, and practical advice on how to choose a radio and put up an antenna. The session will take place on Saturday, March 28th, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Red Cross building at 2111 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH, 45207.

Participants will be expected to obtain a textbook and thoroughly read it. Instructors will not go over the book in great detail, but will instead attempt to answer any and all questions participants have. Much of the material is rather obvious on a close reading, so the instructors will concentrate on the technical sections that may need further explanation.

The textbook will be the **ARRL Ham Radio License Manual Fifth Edition**. (Please note that the FCC question pool changes on June 30 of this year, so the manual is good until that time.) There are many fine websites with information and practice exams that students can make use of. Once signed up, students will receive links and other materials to help them prepare.

To sign up for this instruction session, please email hamtutor@ohkyin.org. We are going to require a minimum number of students before we hold the session. If not enough students sign up, we will cancel the day. However, we hope to have more than the minimum, and look forward to helping interested people get their first ham radio license.

Troop 674 Radio Demo Day

By Shawn Grubb, KE8BBC

On the evening of March 3, 2026, the Dan Beard Council Radio Scouting Committee (RSC) rolled into Montgomery's Troop 674 with antennas, radios, and a lot of enthusiasm. About 30 Scouts and 6 adult leaders gathered at the Church of the Savior in Cincinnati for what started as a regular troop meeting and turned into a STEM night on the radio. Running under the Scouts on the Air and call sign K2BSA/8, the RSC team set up three radio stations and spent the next hour getting every Scout on the air - talking to people across the region, across the city, and right across the gym.

The format was simple and it worked well. Scouts rotated through three stations every fifteen minutes, each one showing off a different side of amateur radio. The gear alone turned heads - military-style hard cases popped open to reveal HF rigs running off portable battery packs, handheld VHF radios crackled with local traffic, and FRS walkie-talkies got passed around for a tactical challenge game that had the whole campus buzzing.

One of the real highlights of the night was how many people from the ham radio community "showed up" to support the event. The Queen City Emergency Net (QCEN) jumped in at the last-minute and allowed the scouts to use their club repeater and they had operators checking in all evening. Robert Overstreet and the Milford Amateur Radio Club (MARC) were supporters as well. On the HF station, Scouts made real contacts with W8TDA (Kitty Hevener), KE8TDE (Ben), W8NFM (Bob), KB9ORF (Roy), K9CVO (Ken), KB7PKD (Mark), N8JMV (Rob), Scott Harshman, Ken Castille, Jay Wysong, John Christopher, and Adam Stone - all volunteers who parked on frequency just to talk to a Scout. Bill Stearns (NE4RD) from K2BSA and Kirk Musselman (K9MSG) from Scouts on the Air were also key in making the whole thing happen. And in a pretty special moment, Michael (N2HTE) shared that he was an alumni of Troop 674 - although his Troop 674 was in West Seneca NY.

Troop 674 was a great host and a great group to work with. The energy from the Scouts and their leaders made the whole night click. For the RSC, this is exactly what the committee was built to do - get radios in the hands of young people and show them that amateur radio is alive, relevant, and a lot of fun. Next up, the team is already looking at tightening up the format - smaller patrol groups, a real-time contact map, and a more polished frequency plan.

Is your pack or troop interested in hosting a radio demo? The Dan Beard Council Radio Scouting Committee is actively looking to bring this experience to more Scout units across the Dan Beard Council. We'll bring the gear, the operators, and the fun - you just bring the Scouts. Reach out to us on Facebook at [facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585942053513](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585942053513) or drop us an email at ke8bbc@arrl.net and let's get your unit on the air!

Two big events coming later this year, be sure to mark your calendar for Summer **Field Day on June 26-27** and **Jamboree on the Air**, the largest scouting jamboree in the world on **October 16-18**.

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The Three Stations

Station 1: HF - Talking Across the Region (40 Meters SSB)

The HF station was the centerpiece of the night. Jocelyn (KD8VRX) ran it under K2BSA/8 on 40 meters SSB, and Scouts took turns at the mic making real contacts with operators across the region - some hundreds of miles away. Scouts spoke with operators as far away as Texas and Georgia, and plenty of hams here in Ohio. They spoke to former scout masters, a Taekwondo instructor and even an Eagle Scout.

Station 2: VHF - Connecting Across Cincinnati (2 Meters FM)

Kurt (AD8ML) ran the VHF station connected to the local QCEN 2-meter repeater, where Scouts spoke with hams across Cincinnati who had tuned in to say hello. If HF is the big show, VHF is where you realize just how much radio activity is already happening all around you. Scouts got a quick lesson on how repeaters work and why that matters.

Station 3: FRS/GMRS - Tactical Radio Challenge Game

Michael (N2HTE), Lance (KF8EEM), and Adam (KF8EKW) ran the FRS/GMRS station, and this one was loud in the best way. Each mini patrol got a tactical call sign, radios went in hands, and the Radio Roulette challenge kicked off - net control issuing movement orders, teams responding and relaying across the church. It was competitive, it was chaotic in stretches, and the Scouts loved it. It's also a natural bridge to Option E of the newly updated 2026 Radio Merit Badge requirements, which now formally recognizes FRS/GMRS as a valid path into radio communications for Scouts.

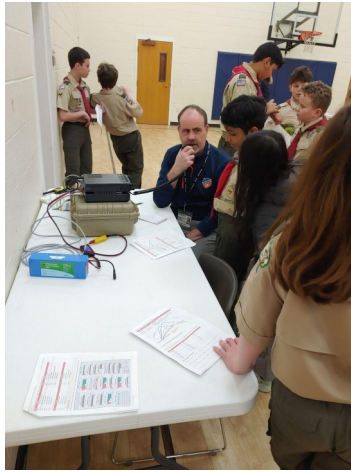
Thanks to the following: W8TDA Kitty, KE8TDE Ben, W8NFM Bob, KB9ORF Roy, K9CVO Ken, KB7PKD Mark, N8JMV Rob, Scott Harshman, Ken Castille, Jay Wysong, John Christopher, Adam Stone, and all the stations we missed!

Organizations & Key Individuals

- ◇Queen City Emergency Net (QCEN) - qcenorg.wordpress.com
- ◇Milford Amateur Radio Club <https://milfordhamradio.org/>
- ◇K2BSA - Bill Stearns (NE4RD) - k2bsa.net
- ◇Scouts on the Air - Kirk Musselman (K9MSG) amateurradioevents.com/scoutsontheair
- ◇Troop 674 host venue - Church of the Savior - cos-umc.org
- ◇Troop 674 Scoutmaster - Ernie Wallace

Special thanks to on-site amateur radio operators of the DBC Radio Scouting Committee: Jocelyn KD8VRX, Adam KF8EKW, Kurt AD8ML, Shawn KE8BBC, Lance KF8EEM and Michael N2HTE.

Event Photos:



Troop 674 Scouts and RSC team at the close of the event.

“Microphone Shy” in Amateur Radio

By *Bob Cross, W8NFM*

You are excited about getting into the amateur radio world, purchased some gear, and are ready to get on the air . . . but hesitate to “push the button.” What the heck is going on?



“Microphone Shy” is a real thing, and we have all faced it when first firing up the rig (even CW folks; their hand starts shaking.) This phenomenon is similar to glossophobia - the fear of public speaking - which ranks as one of the top human phobias, alongside or even ahead of death, heights, and spiders (though my wife would rather give a speech atop a tall building to avoid an arachnid encounter.)

There are some simple ways to overcome this initial nervousness:

Listen to nets. The atmosphere is normally relaxed and casual; embrace that warm feeling before joining in.

Write down something of interest you would like to talk about. When it is your opportunity to join in, the words are already there for you to say. After a few times, the thought of “this is stupid - I know what to say” is your cue to “ad lib” as the occasion warrants.

Monitor a contest or two. It is a more intense, rapid-fire environment; however, once you decipher the pattern, it makes sense and easier to understand.

Keep in mind that amateur radio is all about communication and outreach. While it is often said “There’s no such thing as a stupid question,” that’s mostly true - but no one is going to bite your head off or make fun of you - at least until we get to know you better!

There is one other method (allegedly suggested by Winston Churchill) to imagine your audience not wearing any clothes. If you think this might help, try contacting NU5DE - a “naturist” amateur radio group in Texas. Their motto: “We always run barefoot”

QCEN Meeting February 12, 2026

Called to order at 7:30pm, Pledge to the Flag & self-introductions. Vice Pres. Jim C., KB8UCJ welcomed all at Red Cross & and on Zoom.

Secretary report of January meeting accepted as in L.P. online..

Winter Field Day - all went well, till 8pm Saturday then snow...

Treasurer report - not present, Audit needed, dues received by Secretary.

Comm. Mgr. Steve N8TFD - Flying Pig sign-up online is open, Bike MS July 18 & 19 help needed, Picnic July 11 at Selman Park.

HamVention May 15 & 16 Flea Market help needed, We sell Fri & Sat.

W8VND Site - Steel Shed to be named for Richard Turner KA8HXR.

442.700 Repeater needs a new home, possible being checked.

147.240 Repeater Echo Link needs a new home, being checked.

Program: Don M, KE8WYK - WIRES-X you can talk around the world using Internet. Lots of good info & slide show and demo on air, Q & A.

New Member: Paul L., KF8FNS got Tech and studying for General.

Meeting adjourned 8:50pm We had 19 people present.

Next Meeting to be Thursday March 12, 2026 at Red Cross.

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.