

Sparks

W9OG



Taken at Burdette Park –
Fall colors all around.

Find a quiet spot on a hill, set up a QRP station and enjoy nature.

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society
December 2016-Issue No. 12

TARS Website: <http://www.w9og.net> Club repeaters: 146.79 and 147.15
Say “Hello” at the weekly Tri-State Emergency Net, 8:00pm Wednesdays on 146.79

Please feel to submit articles or suggestions to
Editor: ftg2pointer@gmail.com

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President’s Corner:

In the waning days of my term as TARS President, I want to say a huge THANK YOU to all the officers and board members that have served with me over the years, as well as all the members that contribute to and participate in all that the club has done the past 5 years. As I look back over the past 5 years I am proud of all that TARS has done and accomplished- solid Field Day operations, special event stations, assisting with communications for the Marathon event, storm response, supporting the District 10 EMA, etc. There are several of us taking a break from the board but that doesn’t mean we are

going anywhere! I am excited to be a member of TARS and intend to support and participate in everything that the club does in the future.

In the coming weeks, our new club leadership will be striving to learn what draws members to TARS, and to determine whether the club is meeting expectations of members and doing the right things to attract new members. Please reflect on that and provide feedback. TARS has existed since 1947 and has a rich history of service to hams and to the community. We want to make sure that remains the focus, that the club is doing the right things to serve the ham community and the community we all live in.

This coming new year will be another exciting one with lots of activities already being planned. Antenna design and building sessions, Winter Field Day, ARRL Field Day are all great things coming up and we need to invite hams- especially newer hams- to these club activities and to meetings. Winter Field Day is the last weekend in January. No matter what the weather is like we always have a great time. Wesselman's park shelter, roaring fire in the fireplace, antennas built and hung from trees, lots of visiting and discussion, and of course firing up the radios. Its a lot of fun and hopefully we can get lots of folks to join in the fun this year. Winter Field Day is growing in popularity- last year there were LOTS of stations throughout the country calling 'CQ Winter Field Day' and we had a blast! Plan to come out and bring folks with you!

One more thought before I close. We now have more than several digital-capable repeaters in our area, and digital radio is becoming very popular. Yaesu Fusion C4FM digital radios can be purchased at a very reasonable price and work very well. Soon there will be repeaters capable of allowing you to access the Wires-X network to communicate around the world. We also have a DMR repeater in the area east of Evansville, and there are inexpensive radio options available for that as well. Plenty to experiment with and I guarantee once you go digital you will love it. So consider taking a look at digital.

OK that's it for now. After 35 years in Ham radio, I am still as excited about the hobby as ever, and excited to be a part of TARS. See you at the next meeting!

www.w9og.net

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Just a reminder that tomorrow is the TARS December 8th meeting, 7:00 pm at Red Cross.

The **QLF contest planned for the meeting has been canceled** and will happen in the spring, but everyone is still invited to bring a desert or snack for a pitch in year end celebration.

TARS will provide drinks, plates and tableware. Ideas might include cookies, brownies, cheeseball, snack mix or anything you would like to share.

The December 8th Eating Before the Meeting will be 5:30 at Pangea 111 S Green River Road .

Website: <http://www.tastepangea.com>

Drop by for food, socializing, "story tell'n" and whatever else comes to mind. Join the group at 5:30, or whenever you can make it. Check in on 146.79 if you need directions or just bored on your drive in.

Everyone is welcome to join us.

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Chris Lantaff KE9YK

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One man's opinion

If one tunes the ham bands these days you may hear some conversations that may burn your ears, the content of the various ramblings on certain frequencies leave much to be desired. So where are the trouble spots, let's begin with 3.843 Khz around nine in the evening. This is an anything goes

gathering, it may delight us with some music played by a ham operator and emitting an approving "Yowsir" after an up beat song.

The frequency may erupt in a barrage of profane language and in effect seeing how vile they can be in one evening. Another such den of miscreants form on 7.200 mostly in the afternoon, plus we have those wonderful examples of how not to act on the air on 14.313 known as the "Zoo" of ham radio. This has also drawn in one station outside the U.S that has constantly harassed other stations on Frequency.

Anyone who is not a ham radio op and listens on those frequencies may be turned away from the hobby simply for the sake of common decency. To be honest about this I would have been one of those people had this type of language was present when I first entered ham radio.

Many complaints have arisen concerning the mentioned channels, yet only now and then do we have any enforcement action. So, what does the FCC say about profanity in Part 97, we have the latest from the league. Part 97, subpart 4 states the following:

(4) Music using a phone emission except as specifically provided elsewhere in this section; communications intended to facilitate a criminal act; messages encoded for the purpose of obscuring the meaning, except as otherwise provided herein; obscene or indecent words or language; or false or deceptive messages, signals or identification.

There we have it, Part 97 in black and white, FCC rules, yet why is the last part of Part 4 totally ignored, or the FCC looks the other way regarding vile and profane speech?

We have first amendment rights, and this gives us freedom of speech, we can express ourselves any way we see fit. So, if indeed the conversation is vile profanity, it cannot be restricted on the grounds of the First Amendment. So let's explore this and see how it is defined.

Freedom of speech is the right to articulate one's opinions and ideas without fear of government retaliation or censorship, or societal sanction. The term freedom of expression is sometimes used synonymously, but includes any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used.

The right to freedom of expression is recognized as a human right under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recognized in international human rights law in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Article 19 of the ICCPR states "everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference" and "everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice". Article 19 additionally states

that the exercise of these rights carries "special duties and responsibilities" and may "therefore be subject to certain restrictions" when necessary for respect of the rights or reputation of others" or "for the protection of national security or of public order (order public), or of public health or morals".

Freedom of speech and expression are not absolute, and common limitations to freedom of speech relate to libel, slander, obscenity, pornography, sedition, incitement, fighting words, classified information, copyright violation, trade secrets, non-disclosure agreements, the right to privacy, the right to be forgotten, public security, and perjury. Justifications for such include the harm principle, proposed by John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty*, which suggests that: "the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others." The idea of the "offense principle" is also used in the justification of speech limitations, describing the restriction on forms of expression deemed offensive to society, considering factors such as extent, duration, motives of the speaker, and ease with which it could be avoided. With the evolution of the digital age, application of the freedom of speech becomes more controversial as new means of communication and restrictions arise, for example the Golden Shield Project, an initiative by Chinese government's Ministry of Public Security that filters potentially unfavorable data from foreign countries.

The next time you listen in on the above mentioned frequencies you may find the

language offensive, it may not be according to your moral standards, however these individuals are indeed pushing the envelope and are hiding under the law of the land.

You have three options to pursue, first you can waste your time and money writing letters to the FCC, that will go nowhere. You can report these persons, ask your OOC and the OO network to listen, but that is all that will happen. Or, you can turn off your radio, or you can change frequencies to another conversation. It might be interesting to note that in the list of violations every month the FCC publishes none have ever been issued regarding Part 97 subpart 4 of the sentence about profane and obscene language.

What most are cited for are failure to ID Properly, out of band, operating out of your license class limitations. Check it out for yourself, No NAL listed has ever been issued for Language.

Be if offensive to your standards may not be the standards others follow, the point is if 97.114 subpart 4 cannot be enforced, then why is it still on the rules and regulations? Should we drop this and not worry about it, should we hope those offenders will somehow come to their senses and stop? I do not think that will happen now, or in the future.

And that my friends is "One Man's Opinion" Bill, K4LRX



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Bill,

Most of those operators moved up from the Citizen's Band (children's band) It is all they know.

It's like listening to CB all over again. Vulgar language, threats, childish activities, deliberate violations, no rules and juvenile behavior. When one hides behind a microphone they get awfully brave. You are correct, simply tune away from them and let them continue to keep to themselves.

When the FCC switched to frequency enforcement to frequency selling, the rules went out the window.

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Need Input

Our club has an award that is given to a ham that has demonstrated excellence in the hobby. It is called the McCutchen Award.

Once a year members are considered and a recipient is decided upon. It doesn't take earth shattering dedication or inventing something, just more than just attending meetings. Doing something more for the club and the hobby is required.

This coming Thursday at the regular meeting we will take suggestions from the members if they have someone in mind that deserves

special recognition. It is not a popularity contest.

Here are the winners of the McCutchan Award in the past:

977 Frank L. Hirt
1977 Harold A. Wilson
1978 Michael A. Townsend
1979 Edward J. Woods
1980 Earl J. Green
1981 Lambert B. Howard
1982 M. Elvin Reed
1983 Blanche Elpers
1984 Robert Bengert
1985 James F. Shoptaugh
1986 Charles Sartore
1987 George Utley
1988 Martin Hensley
1989 Lisa Clements
1990 Ralph Waldo
1991 Paul Rice
1993 Charles Apfelstadt
1994 Terry L. Brooks
1994 Keith Phillips
1995 Gordon Conley
1996 Bill Cook
1997 Bill Hilyerd
1998 Joe Salee
1999 In Memorium - Charles Apfelstadt
2000 Mark Parker
2001 Norm King
2001 Joanne Alexendrovich
2002 Chris Lantaff
2003 Chris Matthews
2004 Leonard Schmitt
2005 Bob Pointer
2007 John Van Vorst
2008 Terry McCrarey
2009 John Marley
2010 Jeff Thomas

At the meeting you simply put the name of an individual you think deserves recognition and possibly a brief statement about them. An individual can only receive the award once so if their name is on the above list they can not qualify.

Think hard and let us know.

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It's that time of year again

It's dues time again.

A new year is almost upon us. If you haven't yet paid dues for 2017, it's time. We have a new Treasurer starting this year. Be kind to him and mail in your dues. Or make out a separate check for dues and put it in an envelope with your completed membership form. Be sure you include your **email address** and **name/call sign** at least on the form. The form should be attached to SPARKS. I redesigned it so it could be edited to show the correct year. BUT you'll have to print it (or get one from Jeff) and fill this one in by hand. If someone has a professional version of Adobe, they are welcome to change it in so you can type the information in.

The membership form is the ONLY sure way we can be sure to get your correct email address in the books AND submit any changes to Bob N9XAW and Chris KE9YK so that you will receive your copy of SPARKS.

As I said, be nice to your new Treasurer. It's hard to keep the books straight when someone gives you 1 check for both their dues and auction items. Or for their meal and dues at the TARS banquet. All of it has to be accounted for separately, so give him a separate check for dues.

Thanks,

Len N9QVQ

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Discussion Junction:

The Senate is considering the *Amateur Radio Parity Act*

The Parity Act will provide important protection for amateur radio installations in housing that is covered by CC&R's (covenants, conditions and restrictions). CC&R's are present in the purchase contract of most new housing starts in new subdivisions.

Although PRB-1 provides an amateur the protection of a reasonable accommodation for the installation of antennas by government actors such as zoning boards, the existence of a CC&R in a land contract can preclude the installation of amateur antennas, even on a larger lot !

Opponents say that they paid good money to move into a nice area and they consider outside antennas as ugly intrusions into their beautiful neighborhoods. Some of these areas do not even allow those small satellite TV antennas or outdoor television antennas. (it's underground cable or nothing).

These restrictions affect many aging hams who move into retirement homes (often out of necessity) only to find they can no longer enjoy their lifetime hobby.

Some of these CC&R restrictions can be pretty aggressive, not only to hams but all residents. (no toys allowed left in the front yard, grass not allowed over 4" with no bare spots or crabgrass showing, limits to holiday decorations and so forth)

One example cited by an opponent said: Your neighborhood has a rule that you cannot raise farm animals on your property. Billy Bob wants special permission to raise chickens next door to your home. He says

raising chickens is his hobby and it allow him to relax and besides, if there is a disaster, he can feed the neighbors fresh meat and eggs.

One of our club members moved into a nice area with a fenced in back yard. He set up his radios in a spare bedroom. He put up a small vertical in the back yard that could not be seen unless you looked over the fence. It did not take long before neighbors started to blame his station for everything from television interference to making the cake fall in the oven.

So, how do you feel about it?

Defenders say hams should be allowed to erect outdoor antennas, opponents say they read and understood the contract before moving into the area and want special privileges (which would offend current residents)

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Parts is Parts

The topic of antenna building came up at our last board meeting. I am sure everyone has tried to (or did) build an antenna. It is probably the last frontier where we can have hands on creations of our own making using tools that fit our hands (wire cutters, saws, screwdrivers, soldering guns etc) and that you don't need a magnifying glass or tweezers to work on.

There are several books and articles with how-to instructions on making all kinds of antennas. For the brave ones, there are many software programs that allow us to design our own dream antenna.

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Brag File

Many of you are or have been working on a project or two. Some have enjoyed operating outdoors, from parks or other places of interest. Take a few minutes to jot down a few words about it so the rest of us can follow along. Have you made any antenna projects lately? How did it work? This is your chance to show your works or help others decide to do the same thing or not. Liven up your Sparks issue with personal stories or projects. If you made an antenna that worked, you can make fun of N9XAW, who has made several antennas, only one of which ever worked enough to get out of the park.

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Hamfest Calendar

www.w9qyq.org

This is not a complete list, more for Indiana can be found on the IN ARRL section website.

<http://www.inarrrl.org/hamfest.html>

And all the ARRL hamfests can be found on the ARRL website.

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>

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The other day I thought I would do some rag chewing on my trusty Yaesu 897 on base. I fired it up and started on the 20M band. As I tuned around listening for a possible CQ I could not find a clear frequency anywhere on the band. Everyone was getting 59 – QRZ . No one was actually having a conversation lasting longer than a few seconds to give location information and what contest they were participating in.

(exception – MidCars and Maritime Mobile Network).

40M was about the same.

I did manage to throw out a CQ a few times, only to be answered by someone giving me a 59-on some QSO party. All he wanted from me was a signal report and where I was located. So much for conversation.

I refuse to participate in 75M nets. I don't like to wait 30 minutes for it to come back to me for my turn (no patience) and I sure don't like using or listening to VOX.

I counted 36 contests in November alone. QST has pages of contest results ad infinitum.

I used to escape to 17M to find hams to talk with. No luck this time. Special event stations are apparently exempt from the no-contest rule on this band. And my Spanish is not that good to join the few QSOs I did hear.

I used to think old men were grouches. Now I are one.

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Your input is important

For many years the club has given an award to an outstanding ham or to someone who helped the club “above and beyond”. We are taking nominations during November and December.

Do you know someone who has done an outstanding job of promoting ham radio or the club?

If so, take a few minutes and write a short paragraph or two about someone you feel should be recognized for their efforts or contributions to ham radio in general or the club. Submit your ideas to

ftg2pointer@gmail.com or you can fill out a form at the next club meeting. All entries will be reviewed and the award given at the TARS banquet.

Vanderburgh Co. RACES/ARES



Interested in helping our community?

All ARES/RACES members and any Amateur interested in emergency communications are encouraged to participate

For ARES/RACES announcements you can join the Emergency Comms yahoo group at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/emergency_comms/join

Contact Chris KE9YK or John WB9EFH for more information on how you can help out.

Chris KE9YK

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A simple question:

At our next regular meeting we will open a little bit differently. Ham radio is about communication, so to this end, when you introduce yourself and give your call sign, think of an answer to the question “What made you decide to get your ham radio license?”

Each of us had a reason for doing all that studying and exam taking, so there must have been a reason.

The follow up question might be “And did ham radio live up to your expectations?” And finally “What can your club do or what would you like to do to make it more

interesting and exciting?”

Hopefully this will let us know a little more about your club members.
(Thanks to Chris N9JCA)

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Eat'n Before the Meet'n

November 10th Eating Before the Meeting will be 5:30 at Schlotzsky's Deli 301 North Green River Road.

Drop by for food, socializing, "story tell'n" and whatever else comes to mind. Join the group at 5:30, or whenever you can make it. Check in on 146.79 if you need directions or just bored on your drive in.

Everyone is welcome to join us.

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interest and from time to time good old-fashioned rag chewing.

If you are not SKYWARN trained we will have training opportunities available in the spring.

Or for those wishing to take some basic spotter classes online, or take refresher courses on the material presented by the NWS, MetEd offers an alternate way to achieve your training.

[Role of Skywarn Spotter](#)

http://www.meted.ucar.edu/training_module.php?id=817#.VQrsP3sYEsI

[Skywarn Spotter Convective Basics](#)

http://www.meted.ucar.edu/training_module.php?id=816#.VQrsZXsYEsI

Once you have completed this training, you may contact ricky.shanklin@noaa.gov or christine.wielgos@noaa.gov for instructions on making spotter reports.

More information can be found on the [Paducah NWS page](#).

<http://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining>

If you are interested in being a net control op contact Chris (ke9yk @ arrl. Net).

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Call for Elmers

Len pointed out that we have several Extra Class licensed hams in our club. We also have new hams getting their technician license at almost every VE exam session.

These new hams often are overwhelmed. What radio to buy? What kind of antenna works best for my situation? Stuck on a particular area of the General Class question pool? Would like to try digital modes but don't know where to start?

All this and more is available from the club's Elmers (all you smart people). At one time we had a list of Elmers and their area of expertise published in Sparks. Many of those have moved on and are not available. Now is your chance to help others. Be an Elmer !

The pay is great and the rewards are many.

Send me an email to add you to our list of available Elmers. List any particular areas you can help with (rules, theory, getting on the air etc.) along with contact information.

Be a hero, be an Elmer.

Also, any time you have a question, problem or just need information

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Tri-State Emergency Net

8:00 p.m. Wednesday nights on 146.79 pl 88.5

If you haven't checked into the **Tri-State Emergency Net**, please take a few minutes at 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday evenings on 146.79 and get updated on what is happening, the latest club information, calendar of upcoming events, topics of general interest and from time to time good old-fashioned rag chewing.

A big thank you to Don KB9YWQ for running several SKYWARN nets and for everyone who checked in during the latest weather events. Remember to tune into the 146.79 repeater during severe weather to make your SKYWARN reports and follow what is happening with the weather.

If you are not SKYWARN trained we will have training opportunities available in the spring.

Or for those wishing to take some basic spotter classes online, or take refresher courses on the material presented by the NWS, MetEd offers an alternate way to achieve your training.

[Role of Skywarn Spotter](#)

[Skywarn Spotter Convective Basics](#)

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<http://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining>

If you are interested in being a net control op

contact Chris (ke9yk @ arrl. Net).

Net operators WANTED

If you look at back issues of Sparks you will see this column in every issue. Our net operators do a great job of managing the Wednesday night net and weather nets when required.

If you look at the list of net control operators you notice that the list doesn't change much from month to month. Despite repeated requests for assistance, it falls on deaf ears. "Let somebody else do it" is not a good way to run a club.

Nets take only a few minutes out of your week. They also provide valuable experience in running nets and getting to know club members.

If our hams are ever called upon to assist in a community project or disaster we will need more than one or two net control operators. Many say they would help out in a time of need, but when called upon would have to say "sure I can help, but show me exactly what to do, how to do it and stay with me while I do it".

It comes down to the Boy Scout Motto; BE PREPARED.

Come on and give a hand. You might find it is fun.

If you are interested in being a control operator contact Chris KE9YK@arrl.net 626-0069. Next time there is a weather event check in on the TARS 146.79 repeater and see what is going on.

Many thanks to our award winning Net Control operators.



You provide a valuable service to the club and the community. We often fail to thank you enough for your service. Keep up the good work.

On the Wednesday night net you can hear the latest club information, calendar of upcoming events, topics of general interest and good old-fashioned rag chewing.

If you would like to help run the net please Help is always appreciated and it is fun.

Net controls: Please forward a list of your check-ins to KE9YK@arrl.net thanks.

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VE Test information



Test dates:

1/31/2015	7/25/2015
2/28/2015	8/29/2015
3 none	9/26/2015
4/25/2015	10 none
5/30/2015	11/28/2015
6/27/2015	12/26/2015

All ARRL examination sessions will be held at the Evansville Chapter of the American Red Cross. The ARC is located at 29 S. Stockwell Road, at the intersection of Stockwell Road and Lloyd Expressway. Sessions start promptly at 9:00 AM, Evansville time.

Those candidates wishing to earn their first Amateur Radio License, or upgrade their present valid license, need to bring the following:

1. Their original signed and valid FCC Amateur Radio License.
2. Any previously earned CSCE.
3. One copy of the license *and* CSCE.
4. Two forms of Identification, one bearing a recent photograph.
5. The current ARRL testing fee of \$15.00. You "must" have your Social Security number or EIN with you

Don't forget to check out our web page

www.w9og.net

2016 Club Officers and Board members

President [John VanVorst N9OL](mailto:JohnVanVorst@w9og.net) 812.305.4100

Vice President [Chris Matthews N9JCA](mailto:ChrisMatthews@w9og.net) 812.205.6490

Treasurer [Leonard Schmitt N9QVQ](mailto:LeonardSchmitt@w9og.net) 812.963.0027

Secretary [Ron Hanes KC9OUT](mailto:RonHanes@w9og.net) 812-568-1168

Board of Directors

[Stevan Wells KC9SOE](mailto:StevanWells@w9og.net) 812.473.5918 (2015-16)

[Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) 812.589.5235 (2015-16)
[Steve Connaughton K9SRC](#) 812.480.1395 (2015-16)
[Bob Pointer N9XAW](#) 812.425.2118 (2016-2017)
[Mark Thienes KC9TYA](#) 812.963.6455 (2016-2017)
[Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#) 812.858.2968 (2016-2017)

TARS is an **ARRL** affiliated club

ARRL Indiana Section

Section Manager: Joseph D Lawrence, K9RFZ k9rfz@arrl.org

Tars mailing address:

TARS

P.O. Box 4521

Evansville, IN 47724

Sparks editor: [Bob Pointer N9XAW](#)