

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State for over 70 years



February 2018- Issue No. 2

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: SPARKS@w9og.net



President's Corner:

2018 is starting out to be a great one for the club! With the club auction, winter field day and the Christmas banquet all happening within a short period of time; as an old saying goes, we are keeping the tubes hot!

The auction had a great turnout despite the bad weather and we added a little to the club treasury. Thanks to all those who helped gather the items from the Ham Station (thanks Dan!), donated items, Ed for his auctioneering and those who just in general helped keep the show running smooth.

It was a dark and dreary day as a few brave souls geared up for Winter Field Day at Wesselman's Park. The rain was constant and the mud deep as antennas were driven into the ground and hung from the trees.

By one count, Dave WB9YIG had launched more lines than the total of the last three summer field days, resulting in the establishment of one mystery and one end fed antennas. But radios were brought out, stations assembled, mesh links established and contacts were made. Fuel for the intrepid forces was provided by ham& bean soup and cornbread (Chris KE9YK) meatballs (Dave KC9UVG) and brownies (Rick K9EXY). Len N9QVQ manned the digital station and Jeff AA9WJ was off in the corner pounding the brass. John and Mike stopped by after passing their Tech and General tickets at the Red Cross VE session and were able to get on the air and make their first QSOs. But the fun had to come to an end and we dismantled the stations, loaded up the vehicles and left with lists of what to bring next time!

The Christmas Banquet is being held this year again at the Log INN in Warrenton, IN, just down the road east off of Highway 41 North at the Hucks Truck Stop. Looks like we are expecting around 40 or so members and their guests this year so it should be a great turnout.

While the date is still far away, we need plenty of volunteers to help with the **October Swap Meet**. We will have more information at the February dinner meeting so stay tuned.

Please contact me or any of the board members if you have any suggestions for future activities or forums. We are off to a great start this year so let's keep the momentum going!
73 Dave KC9UVG

Last call, Dues time! Please use the attached form which you can mail in with your dues or bring to a meeting. This keeps your personal information up-to-date and helps to insure you receive SPARKS in a timely manner. If you have any special topics for a meeting program you would like to see or are willing to present a program, please be sure to indicate this in the space provided.

One man's opinion

For several decades the ARRL Official Observer Program has been in operation and assisted, or provided the FCC with information for those errant hams. Official Observers mail notification cards to radio amateurs for not identifying at ten minute intervals, out of band operation, splatter, key clicks, chirp, distorted audio and the list does indeed present an impressive amount of topics.



I have been involved in the program for decades and have always sent friendly advice notices to those in minor infractions of good operating practice. An OO, has no authority over other radio amateurs, we cannot terminate a person's license, confiscate the equipment, or enforce the rules of Part 97. All we do is send a friendly notice, it is up to the person receiving the notice to take action, or continue his, or her errant ways.

If this be the case, then we gather information to present to the FCC for enforcement, in effect we have done our job. Another example might be the Volunteer Examiners program, if you are a VE, you can give exams, fill out the CSCE, but we do not issue licenses. That is the responsibility of the government and only the government, our job is finished.

Around the middle of 2017 the league announced it was planning to revamp the OO program and no new applications would be taken until the new program is in place. It was also rumored about those holding appointments may have to be retested. However, in six months time we have heard nothing from the league, seen nothing, or has our SCM regarding the changes.

Just recently, to update my article I did receive a list of questions about how I felt about the program, I unloaded my feelings and I am sure my replies were pretty much the same as others in the program. Often, we spend hours chasing a problem, monitoring the offender, forwarding information and then it goes nowhere, and nothing gets done as to enforcement.

An issue or two ago QST said the changes were in the works, but what changes, how is this going to affect an already rather useless program? It will not work if any information forwarded gets lost in the shuffle, or the FCC simply ignores it.

In the past the league has only offered a lot of shuck and jive when it comes to passing information up the line to the FCC for enforcement. It has long since been a somewhat humorous feeling among other OO's when this occurs. Many have sent tapes catching offenders and have them dead to rights with their violations, but somewhere along the line someone dropped the ball. There were statements by other OO's who claimed it was not the second Thursday of the week when their tapes arrived at ARRL. Or, it was the wrong brand of tape, or the wrong logo on the tape, or the CD's sent were not the right brand. A Long list of excuses and roadblocks, therefore little of nothing gets done.

When asking for assistance in a matter of blatant violations the advice you get from the league is you send the notice, you deal with the phone calls of those who resent the program. You answer all mail, including flame mails, you take the risk of local retaliation. But, we are on your side, but do not want to be involved, but wait it is our program, but we are with you. How many times have we heard politicians say the same thing, or give us the shuck and jive?

I had one instance of a ham contacting me from Eastern Kentucky about a repeater problem of intentional unidentified interference. I offered him a two page list of suggestions about catching the violator. What he expected and he voiced his opinion about it to the league and to the Kentucky SCM that really all he got was advice. He expected a whole team of people to invade the town where he was located, find the problem, haul the offender off to jail. We do not have that authority to do so. Thing is in cases of this sort, we cannot hear the repeater and even if we did, we cannot hear the offender on the input frequency. Of course, even if we did and forwarded the information up the line it will die due to disinterested parties.

The average range of most repeaters is about 50 miles, beyond that, well unless you have some good antennas, distant machines you cannot hear. Only thing we have to rely upon is recordings from the owners of repeaters and many times these are not good, or lack readable audio quality. It is a no win situation at times and anyone expecting a whole team of people to solve one problem is dreaming. The OO liaison at the league sent me a letter of commendation for going the extra mile, but agreed with me that this was all we can do in these type of situations.

Another example I knew about also occurred in Eastern Kentucky, seems like some unlicensed clown knew how to use an HT of some sort and was broadcasting false distress calls on the local repeater. In fact he was broadcasting attack warnings by North Korea on a regular basis, this of course was reported to the higher authorities. Know what happened? Nothing!

No monitoring truck sent, no agents ever appeared, the offender is still appearing on the repeater now and then and the local crowd is making an effort to find him. I heard nothing more about this problem since nothing got down from the FCC, we all were wasting our time. Perhaps, the repeater owners took the matter to the local police departments and had the person arrested, we can hope.

In the last year I had discussed with one of my OO's the possibility of me stepping down and getting out

of the program, it really has not been effective, the main problem is lack of enforcement from the F.C.C. Why spend hours monitoring, recording, sending in tapes, or CD, memory sticks and have nothing done. A real bad example of non-enforcement are the antics that happen on 3.843Khz, 7.200 Khz, 14.313 Khz, all we get from the commission is they are aware of it. Of course nothing happens and has not for several years, these frequencies are the cesspool of ham radio, anything goes, what a poor example these guys are in producing a positive image for ham radio.

I have decided to stay until the end of 2018, it depends on what the changes are in the program and if indeed anything will get done regarding enforcement? My guess is it will be the same old shuck and jive, just in a new suit, so my feelings at this time are why bother any longer?

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

February Meeting LOG INN

The February club meeting will be the **annual TARS banquet**, February 8th at the Log Inn. If you have your reservations, **Please arrive by 6:00 pm** so that your choice of meat can be ordered, followed by a short business meeting and award presentations before our food is served family style.

The Log Inn is fully handicap accessible using the entrance on the east side of building. [\[MAP\]](#)



Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

The next Vanderburgh county ARES/RACES meeting **February 15th**, 7:00 pm at the VC West side EMA Training Center (WEMA) [1430 Harmony Way](#).



Anyone interested in emergency communication in Vanderburgh County is invited.
Chris Lantaff KE9YK
Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer
in82races@gmail.com c: 812.453.1972

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.

Net Operator schedule

FEB	7	KC9UVG
	14	N9QVQ
	21	WB9KQF
	28	KB9YWQ
MAR	7	KC9UVG
	14	N9QVQ
	21	KE9YK
	28	KB9YWQ

Warrick County ARES/RACES:

WARRICK COUNTY ARES/RACES...

Everyone in the Tri-State is aware of just how cold it has been. This may have slowed down some of the projects ongoing in Warrick County, but some projects are moving forward.

Comm Trailer:

The Comm trailer is at a stage of needing to have fixtures put in place. The work has been postponed until warmer weather allows for painting and fabricating of additional cabinets. Completion of the retrofit is projected for mid 2018. Again, thanks to everyone that has helped with the work being done.

Warrick County ARES/RACES Repeater:

The Warrick County ARES/RACES repeater has been upgraded to the Yaesu DR2 system. The repeater now has Fusion and Digital Capabilities.

Mesh/AREDN:

Planning of the Mesh/AREDN system is ongoing at each monthly meeting. Discussion continues concerning the goals and capabilities of the system and the role it will provide during emergency situations. The emphasis at this time is what types of communications are wanted to be demonstrated. The demonstration to be set up will be from the courthouse to Boonville City Park. The demonstration is tentatively scheduled for February 24 pending weather.

Geostationary Amateur Satellite:

Members of the Boonville ARES/RACES group listened to a portion of a "Ham Radio Workbench" podcast. The podcast was on the topic of the "AMSAT Phase 4B" program. The speaker is Michelle Thompson (W5NYV) and gives great information concerning the planned Geostationary Amateur Satellite.

73's

Chris L Owen (KC9CLO)
Public Information Officer
Warrick County ARES/RACES group



VE Testing

2018 Schedule

January 27

February 24

March **No testing**

April 28

May 26

June 30

July 28

August 25

September 29

October 20

November **No testing**

December 29



All TARS ARRL examination sessions are 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. For more info contact:

[John VanVorst N9OL](mailto:John.VanVorst@N9OL) c: 812.305.4100



February Birthdays

Donald Land	KB9YWQ	10th
Ron Lile	K0RL	9th
Keith L. MaCurdy	KC9GNM	10th
Larry Rudolph	KB9KVX	2nd
John D. Small	W9FHA	14th
Jerry Washburne	WD9GXI	9th

FACEBOOK Musings from Bob N9XAW

They call them boat anchors. An expression for older tube type radios from another time. Our LST radio room is full of them. They are big, heavy and bulky. They are full of vacuum tubes and other components. They use individual components not integrated circuits and miniature parts.

They fall under the jurisdiction of Murphy's Law.

1. Although we have lots of spare parts, the one you need will not be one of them
2. The defective part will be buried under layers of other parts or wiring making it almost impossible to test or replace it.
3. If the drawing gives a value for a certain part, the radio itself will have a different value in its place
4. The probability of finding a needed part on EBay is inversely proportional to how bad you need it.
5. Critical areas of the schematic diagrams will be blurred and hard to read the values of the components.
6. If a radio has problems while in operation, it will not duplicate the problem after you remove it and carry it to the test bench.
7. The possibility of getting the daylights shocked out of you is inversely proportional to how careful you are when working on them
8. The part you suspected and replaced is not the problem.
9. You suddenly remember tubes are hot just after you try to remove one to test it.
10. You can probably think of many more.

Your input is important.

Sparks is **YOUR** information source for club activities and local Amateur radio information. In each issue we ask for submissions from club members. Tell us about your station, projects you have made or are making, anything interesting the TARS membership might be interested in.

Submission deadline is the 25th of the month.

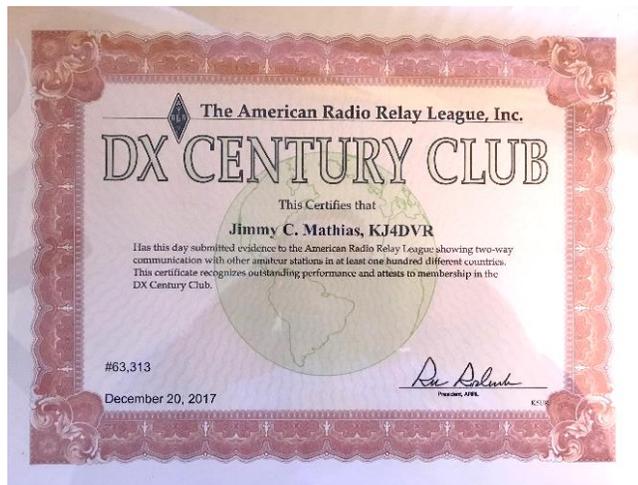
Most any document format is acceptable.

Photos or graphics of your subject are welcome.

Send your article to: sparks@w9oq.net

Contacts

Congrats to Jimmy KJ4DVR, on his first DXCC certificate and 100 countries. He joins the elite bunch in Henderson as a full-fledged DX hound.
-Bill K4LRX



If you have anything to share, recent contacts, awards, projects or anything of club interest contact sparks@w9og.net.

SKYWARN Spotter training

It's that time again.

Weather spotter classes have been scheduled for the area.

Feb 20, 5:00 pm Owensboro

Feb 22, 6:00 pm Evansville, Red Cross

Mar 5 6:00 pm NWS webinar

Mar 10 9:00 am Mt Vernon

Elite Spotter Workshop

Apr 3, 5:00 pm Owensboro

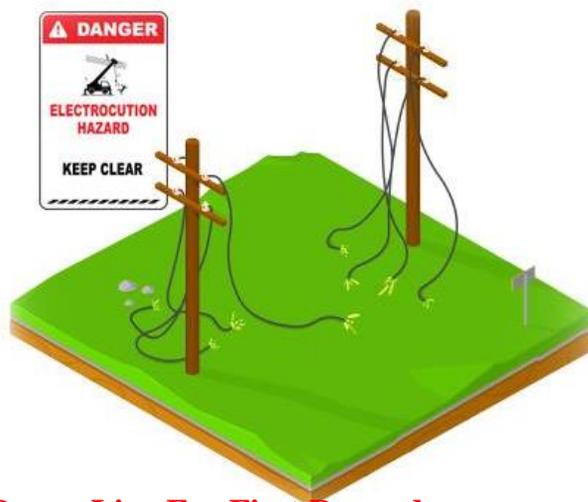
Apr 9, 6:00 pm Evansville, Red Cross

All classes now require registration, are free of charge, open to everyone and last 2 to 2.5 hours.

For details, listing of all available classes, latest schedules and to register visit:

www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining

Questions? Email Ricky.Shanklin@noaa.gov



Power Line For First Reponders & Weather Spotters

Hosted by [Green River Area Skywarn Spotters](#)

Sunday, March 18 at 1 PM - 4 PM

Henderson County Fair Grounds

383 Sam Ball Way, Henderson, Kentucky 42420

Secretary Report

January 2018 Board Meeting

Members in attendance were Chris ke9yk, Mark kc9tya, Jeff, Max kd9abt, Don kb9yqw, Raymond w9khp, Rick k9exy, Terry wb9kqf, and Len n9qvq.

The treasurer reminded the board that the names of the new signatories needed to be given to the bank and that those names had been chosen by the club. Those individuals were Dave, Max, and Jeff.

Business then moved to the secretaries report. There was no secretaries report for December 2017 because the board meeting had been cancelled.

Next on the agenda was the treasurer report. It was accepted as read.

Committee reports were next on the agenda. The board was told that nominations were still open for the vacant board seat which needed to be filled as Max took over the position of vice president for the 2018 calendar year. So far Randal wb9qav, and Chris N9jca both showed interest in filling the position.

Next order of business went to the Christmas party to be held at the log inn. The date will be February 8th at 6 o'clock pm. Dues need to be paid by the February 1st board meeting.

Reservations must be paid by the Feb. board meeting. Door prizes will be the 2018 ARRL Handbook and a one year membership. The winner of the McCutchan award will also be named at that time.

The next order of business was the repeater committee. The board asked about the progress of the new fusion repeater. It is still in the works. Next the board was informed that Ed Folz has again agreed to be the auctioneer for the January auction.

Winter field day will be January 27 at Wesselman Park. Setup will be at 9am Saturday and operate as a 3A station. It will last until dark or cold. Rick volunteered to lead the effort.

The topic of old business was brought to the floor. First on that agenda was the purchase of the club logo tee shirts. There was no new information so it was agreed to find out more by the January regular meeting. Next it was requested that I name the officers and board members present at the board meetings to confirm that a quorum was in attendance. It was also brought to the boards attention of adding conference calls to aid in members no able to attend. This was tabled for the time being. Talk was taken as to give new hams a one year membership to the club. This too was tabled until such a time the bylaws could be changed to add this to the constitution.

Comments were addressed as to whether or not to host a tail gate type of ham fest. The availability to have it a Lynnville was taken. Raymond stepped up and volunteered to find out the details.

Next was summer field day. It will be held on June 23 and 24th. Setup would be on the Friday evening before the event. PIO Max is to work on the details of publicity for the event.

Chris n9jca will work on the club inventory.

The meeting was adjourned after a brief discussion as to next weeks auction.

Don Land

TARS Secretary

January 2018 Regular Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Max, kd9abt, the vice president. Introductions were given.

The first order of business was the election of a board member to fill the open seat. Dennis, Randall, and Chris were the nominees. After a secret ballot was counted Dennis was elected to fill the open seat.

Max read the minutes of the secretaries report. It was accepted as read. Next Jeff read the treasurers report and it too was accepted as read.

The topic of the banquet was taken. The location will be the Log Inn. The date will be February 8, 2018. The reservations must be paid by the February 1st board meeting. Also the dues must be paid in full by the board meeting in February. Field day will be January 27th at Wesselman Park from 9 am till dark or to cold.

The tee shirts will be available for the Feb. board meeting.

New business was to seek help for dissemination of Dave Vogels ham equipment. Contact Mark Len, or Dave Jullian.

The next new business was for help with the October tail gate on the 27th. Contact Raymond w9khp.

Next was the auction.

After the auction the meeting was adjourned.

Don Land

TARS Secretary

Treasurer Report

December 2017 (prepared 1/1/2018)

Opening Balance: 3448.15

Receipts:

Memberships \$307.50
Banquet Reservations \$132.00
Total Receipts --->> \$439.50

Expenditures:

Pd to Postmaster for yearly PO Box rental fee (\$90.00)
Don Land KB9YWQ for 2ea.
Baofeng door prizes (\$50.00)

Total Expenditures-- (\$140.00)

Ending Balance \$3,747.65

Red Cross Available Funds \$987.07

Order for 35 T-Shirts at a total of \$540 was placed on December 19, 2017

Jeff Holt AA9WJ
TARS Treasurer



Thank You to Donut Bank for furnishing donuts at the January TARS meeting.

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club
ARRL [Indiana Section](#)
Section Manager: Brent Walls N9BA
bwalls@arrl.org



TARS mailing address:

TARS
P.O. Box 4521
Evansville, IN 47724

Don't forget to check out our web page

www.w9og.net

Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TARSw9og>

TARS E-mail: info@w9og.net

2018 Club Officers and Board members

President [Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#)

Vice President [Max Wilkinson KD9ABT](#)

Treasurer [Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#)

Secretary [Don Land KB9YWQ](#)

Board of Directors

[Raymond Edge W9KHP](#) (2017-2018)

[Rick Jackson K9EXY](#) (2017-2018)

[Dennis Martin WA2USA](#) (2018)

[Mark Thienes KC9TYA](#) (2018-2019)

[Len Schmitt N9QVQ](#) (2018-2019)

[Terry McCraey WB9KQF](#) (2018-2019)

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Chris Lantaff KE9YK

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