

# SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

**Serving the Tri-State for over 70 years**



December 2018 - 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: [SPARKS@w9og.net](mailto:SPARKS@w9og.net)



## **President's Corner:**

Great news! For field day 2018, TARS placed second in our category up from third in 2017! Thanks to all who participated this year, it was a great club effort. Let's keep the momentum going for 2019!

Congratulations to all the new officers and board members for 2019. We appreciate your willingness to raise your hands up and volunteer to run and look forward to your service in the New Year.

As this is my last entry into the President's Corner, I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who worked to make the club so successful this year.

Dave KC9UVG

## **Dues Time**

Just a reminder its DUES time once again. The 2019 member application was attached with this SPARKS e-mail. Please fill out the application and submit it with your payment to verify we have all of your current information.

## Congratulations to your newly elected officers for 2019

**President** John VanVorst N9OL, **Vice President** Max Wilkinson KD9ABT, **Secretary** Dave Sandine KC9UVG, **Treasurer** Jeff Holt AA9WJ. The **Board of Directors** for 2019-2020 Mike Townsend W9KXP, Rick Jackson K9EXY and Dennis Martin WA2USA. A special election held to fill the vacancy of Terry McCrarey WB9KQF for one year, elected Herb Alvey KB9MZH for 2019 and the continuing board members Mark Thienes KC9TYA and Len Schmitt N9QVQ.

I want to thank all the members that stepped up to run for an office this year. It is nice to see so many interested in the operation of TARS.

The races were very close and required a runoff for the special election, which also came down to a narrow margin.

Just because you are not serving as an officer, remember that there are many opportunities for your input and assistance during operating events, picnic, Field Day, Hamfest and meeting programs.

Lets keep TARS moving forward for another successful year.

## CONGRATULATIONS to W9OG #2 in the nation for 4F Field Day 2018

A huge pat on the back to all of the station captains and all who participated in Field Day for TARS.



## Eat'n Before the Meet'n



December 13<sup>th</sup> Eating Before the Meeting will be at [Cicis Pizza](#) 101, N Green River Rd.

Cicis is an Italian chain offering buffets with an array of specialty pizzas, plus simple pastas & salads.

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 get bored on your drive in.

Everyone is welcome to join us.

If you have any suggestions on where you would like for us to meet,

contact: [Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) c:812.499.3729

## Winter Field Day January 26/27

Mark your calendars now. TARS will be participating in Winter Field Day. The last few years we have operated from Wesselman Park. If you are interested in helping out we could use a chairman for the event. Chris KE9YK will have his almost world famous bean soup and cornbread for lunch, you are welcome to bring something to share if you wish. Watch for more details to come at the December meeting and in the January SPARKS. You never know what weather to expect. We have had everything from FYBO cold to rain and mud and shorts and t-shirt weather. For rules and more info on WFD visit

<https://www.winterfieldday.com> .

Throwback pictures from the very first Winter Field Day in 2007. It was a wet miserable day with few contacts but we did have FUN and FOOD!



Mud and water everywhere.



Scouts from BSA Troop 301 and John N9OL



Brian WB9QVR, Bob N9XAW, Danny WB9RIM

## Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

The next Vanderburgh county ARES/RACES meeting **Jan 17th**, 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.

We have generally skipped meeting in December because of Christmas celebrations, but if the opportunity arises for a workday an e-mail will be sent with as much notice as possible.

Chris Lantaff KE9YK  
Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer  
[in82races@gmail.com](mailto:in82races@gmail.com) c: 812.453.1972

## WARRICK COUNTY ARES/RACES

### November 2018 Update

Meeting Presentation:

The meeting presentation was given by Steve Connaughton (K9SRC). The topic of the meeting was "The Mission of the Emergency Communicator" and "Go Kits". The basic information came from the web site "[http://www.bay-net.org/docs/personal\\_go\\_kit.pdf](http://www.bay-net.org/docs/personal_go_kit.pdf)".

A lot of good information is presented in the PDF file and well worth the read. The opening statement puts the reason we are Amateur Radio Operators into perspective...

"As a volunteer Emergency Communicator, your mission is to get every message you handle to its intended recipient—quickly, accurately, and with a minimum of fuss. Achieving this goal requires that you employ your operational and technical skills at the highest level possible. This means being adequately prepared to handle an emergency communication assignment, so that you can keep focused on the job at hand and avoid unnecessary distractions.

Being prepared for an emcomm assignment involves a wide range of considerations, including radio equipment, power sources, clothing and personal gear, food and water, information and specialized

training. Having your Go-Kit planned-out and assembled ahead of time will help you be prepared when the call-out comes. It is important to think through each probable assignment you might be faced with and plan your GoKit to meet the situations you might encounter.”

(Dan O’Connor, KE7HLR)

Trailer Recap:

The Aux emComm trailer made its debut at the Hamtoberfest on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Antennas were deployed for UHF/VHF and HF. Radios were activated and several contacts were made by New and Not so New Operators. It was a good experience and thanks to all that helped.

During the activation, a long list of items was made for “Needed” and Wish For” items. The work on the trailer is ongoing and volunteers are needed to continue the work on misc items. Anyone wishing to help with the work will need to contact Steve Connaughton (K9SRC) at sconnaug@gmail to make arrangements to have the trailer unlocked.

The next planned event for an activation of the trailer will be Winter Field Day. (January 26<sup>th</sup>) Everyone is invited to come out and see the progress that has taken place with the trailer.

Digging and Penetrating the ground:

A side discussion took place at the meeting concerning digging and penetrating the ground while working around the home. The discussion was about what one should do if they plan to work in the backyard and several examples were given of the possible outcome. The most important thing to remember is always call for a site survey if you plan to dig or drive something into the ground. The number to call is 811.

Some good examples were given of possible events. Driving a Ground Rod into the ground and hitting a gas line. The process of the gas going through the soil removes the Mercaptan and the smell is gone. The gas travels through the soil and enters the house. This allow makes for a bad situation for the occupants of the house.

Another example dealt with the cutting of telecom and electrical lines. Just because they should be buried at a depth to meet code doesn’t mean they are. Cutting through one of the lines can cause a lot of problems and possibly death.

Everyone thinks they know where the utilities are located on their property. Call to make sure. It doesn’t cost anything and it is easy to dial 811.

Happy Holidays.

It is the holiday season and we tend to get distracted during the routine activities that take place during this time of the year. Stay focused and be safe.

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

## Changes Coming to FT8

For those of you active with the FT8 mode, change is in the wind. There is a new version 2.0 which is not compatible with the current version 1.9. The recommended changeover date for everyone to use only version 2.0 is Dec. 10th. Until then, if you are using version 1.9, you are encouraged to use audio frequencies below 2000 Hz for your QSOs. If you are already using version 2.0, then use audio frequencies above 2000 Hz. Also make sure your radio’s SSB filter bandwidth is set to 2.5 KHz wide or more so you will give yourself at least 500 Hz of space to operate version 2.0. However, be careful not to interfere with JT65 users when operating above 2000 Hz.

The reason that FT8 versions 1.9 and 2.0 are incompatible with each other is that 2.0’s protocol conveys 77-bit payloads and 1.9 conveys only 75-bit payloads. The decoding expectation programmed into the two versions when they receive their data is why they can’t decode each other.

A couple neat things about the new version 2.0 is that it is more DXpedition and contest capable, it allows for more information to be exchanged and it allows more flexibility for callsign formats. I also read that its decoding capability is even slightly more sensitive than 1.9. Even Field Day operation is included in 2.0 so we will definitely have to look into that!

**Note Dec. 10th in your calendar** and be sure to update your WSJT-X to version 2.0 by then and if you also use JTAlert-X to help you with your logging, you will need to update that to JTAlert-X version 2.0 as well.

## California Fires Spark Amateur Radio Emergency Service Activations

From The ARRL Letter for November 15, 2018

Amateur Radio volunteers have been active or are standing by on several fronts as wildfires continue to rage in large sections of California.



**Sacramento Valley ARES volunteer Neil Bossard, N6CNY, is among those active in Northern California. [Photo courtesy of Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT]**

### **Camp Fire**

In Butte County, in northern California, the Camp Fire, the state's deadliest wildfire, triggered a call up of Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES<sup>®</sup>) members for communication support. A small wildfire that started in a mountainous area of Butte County quickly grew, due to high winds. Eventually more than 25,000 people were evacuated. As multiple shelters opened to assist evacuees, five [Sacramento Valley ARES](#) groups were called out to support communication between the Red Cross Disaster Operations Center (DOC) and the shelters.

The uncontrolled wildfire eventually consumed the town of Paradise, a town of some 27,000 residents. As of November 14, the Camp Fire covered some 145,000 acres (35% contained), killed more than 40 people, and destroyed nearly 8,000 structures. Utilizing mutual assistance, more than 20 ARES members from five ARES groups are supporting the shelters. ARES members have also been tasked by Red Cross to shadow Red Cross delivery vehicles to provide communication in the mountain areas to the shelters.

ARES communication at the shelters has been carried out using voice, *Winlink*, and email to pass shelter counts, and tactical messages between the shelter and the Red Cross Disaster Operations Center and Cal Office of Emergency Services.

The Red Cross is supporting ARES at the shelters with hot spots and backup radios.

Working 12-hour shifts, Sacramento Valley Section District Emergency Coordinator 3 Michael Joseph, KK6ZGB, has been staffing the Red Cross radio station as net control for the DOC, passing messages and tracking ARES personnel. Sacramento ARES members have been pitching in as needed. Joseph also has been coordinating ARES deployments as needed.

Visit the ARRL [Sacramento Valley Section Facebook](#) page or [Twitter account](#) for more information. -- Thanks to Sacramento Valley Section Emergency Coordinator Greg Kruckewitt, KG6SJT

## Hamtober Fest a SUCCESS

The TARS Hamtober Fest was declared a success.

While we didn't have a complete count since there wasn't a charge for attending, we did have at least 200 unique visitors that signed up for the door prizes. John N9OL made a motion to hold Hamtober Fest again in 2019 and the vote passed.



## Needed! 10X12 Storage Barn for Club Equipment

As you may know, TARS has invested much time and a few shekels to improve our radio station here at the Red Cross enabling the radio room to be usable for members' enjoyment as well as making it accommodating for use during an emergency. If you haven't visited the radio room lately you need to stop by and take a look, or take the time before or after a club meeting to see the progress that has been made. We also have a new HF antenna at the Red Cross that was installed in June that performs very well and is a lot of fun. The issue that remains is the radio room is also the only secure place to store club equipment and supplies and these items take up a lot of room.

Additionally, TARS has equipment and supplies in a number of locations, some secure and some not secure, and over the years club equipment has been lost track of due to a lack of control and management. A big benefit of being a member of a club is to have access to equipment and supplies on a shared basis, but that requires that we know where the equipment is and that it is stored in a secure location. A major part of the club's mission is to be ready to provide assistance in emergencies, and to do that we have to know where club equipment and supplies are and have quick access to it.

TARS has gotten approval from the Red Cross to place a yard barn on the back lot of the Red Cross facility. A 10X12 yard barn will provide much needed space to store club items and supplies, freeing up space in our crowded radio room, and will enable us to get all club equipment and supplies under lock and key in one central location. This is so important to the club's purpose and mission, and will enhance the value of club membership for all of us.

However as you may know, yard barns can be expensive and our current budget does not have the reserves to purchase one. Therefore, we are looking for anyone who may have a yard barn in decent shape and willing to donate it to the club. Do you have contacts with area businesses or individuals that would be willing to donate one to the club? We can move it, paint it, repair it, etc. Remember, we are a non-profit organization and any donations are

tax deductible. So please help us find a 10X12 yard barn, and consider donating some money toward the purchase, move, paint/repairs, whatever will be needed to get this done.

## 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

### December

5	KC9UVG
12	KC9TYA
19	N9QVQ
26	KB9YWQ

### January

2	WB9KQF
9	KC9TYA
16	KE9YK
23	KC9UVG
30	N9QVQ

### February

6	KB9YWQ
13	WB9KQF
20	KC9TYA
27	KE9YK



As of this writing no SKYWARN spotter classes have been scheduled in Evansville. Stay aware of any classes scheduled online at <https://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining> and monitor the Wed night net on the 146.790 repeater for any future announcements.

## Contacts:

Hey guys let's see some of your latest contacts. Scan them or take a picture with your phone and send them to sparks@w9og.net. Do you have a project you are working on or have finished that you would like to share with the club? Have you worked any contests lately? What was your experience like?

## VE Testing

December 29 2018

### 2019 Schedule coming soon

All examinations will be administered at the American Red Cross, Evansville Chapter, located at 29 S. Stockwell Road, Evansville Indiana 47714. Examinations will start at **9:00 AM Central time.**

We have no pre-registration, and examinations are administered on a walk-in basis.

All the details can be found at:

<http://w9og.net/ve-testing>

Or for more info contact:

[John VanVorst N9OL](#) c: 812.305.4100



Are you looking to upgrade? There are many good online resources for learning everything you need to know to pass the license test. A very good resource is KB6NU's [No-Nonsense Study Guides](#).

Others are [ARRL Exam Practice](#)

[HamTestOnline](#)

[AA9PW FCC Exam Practice](#)

[HamExam.org](#)

[QRZ.com Hamtest](#)

There are also many apps available for iOS and Android phones.

## December Birthdays

Herb Alvey	KB9MZH	12th
Andy Barnes	W5KZJ	23rd
William (Alan) Jr Dale	W9ZPP	23rd
Gene R. Flick	KC9SYL	25th
Terry Hammers	N9XXH	5th
Mark Holland	KD0EE	19th
Bob Kissel	K9BKL	26th
John Marley	WB9EFH	20th
Dan Mitchell	N9APA	16th
Chris Owen	KC9CLO	24th
Donald Utley	KD9KLJ	29th
John Van Vorst	N9OL	9th
Steve Viers	KM4ZII	27th
Don Wade	W9ADE	13th

If your birthday doesn't get listed please make sure we have it on file by filling out the membership application when renewing. This also helps to make sure we have your current contact information.



"The book says you can get a good ground by connecting your equipment to a water pipe."

## Secretary Report

### TARS Regular Meeting 11/8/18

The meeting was called to order by Dave (KC9UVG) at 7:06pm and started with introductions.

Bill Cunnane (KK7XT), recently relocated from Montana, was a first-time visitor.

The secretary's report was accepted as published in Sparks. Len (N9QVQ) read the treasurer's report and it was accepted with an ending balance of \$4,104.70. The Red Cross portion was \$1,010.82.

There was a short discussion of Hamtoberfest with many favorable comments. It was reported that 103 people had signed in and it was estimated that there were as many as 200 unique visitors. John (N9OL) made a motion to hold this event again next year, and the motion passed. The vendors for the most part were happy with the business they did. The food vendor did indicate that they would not be returning, and it was suggested that a vendor be sought for next year that would set up sooner and possibly have breakfast related items.

The election slate for officers was accepted by acclimation since there were no contested positions. The officers for 2019 will be: President – John Van Vorst N9OL, Vice President – Max Wilkinson KD9ABT, Treasurer – Jeff Holt AA9WJ, and Secretary - Dave Sandine KC9UVG,

A ballot was passed out containing these 7 nominees for board positions: Herb Alvey KB9MZH, Rick Jackson K9EXY, Don Land KB9YWQ, Dennis Martin WA2USA, Chris Mathews N9JCA, Randall Shoenbachler WB9QAV, and Mike Townsend W9KXP. Board members elected for 2 year positions starting in 2019 were: Mike Townsend W9KXP, Rick Jackson K9EXY, and Dennis Martin WA2USA.

A special election was held to fill a vacated board seat with one year remaining. Herb Alvey KB9MZH was elected to fill that position. Cards were also passed out to allow members to nominate an individual who has gone over and above in service to the ham community or TARS for consideration of being a McCutchan award recipient. Mark (KC9TYA) and Dave (WB9YIG) have agreed to lead the selection process.

The Red Cross will allow TARS to have an outdoor shed for equipment storage as long as it matches

other buildings currently in place. A committee has been formed consisting of Mark (KC9TYA), Rick (K9EXY), and Dennis (WA2USA) to investigate the feasibility of buying verses building.

The December meeting topic is still to be determined. January will be the annual club auction. February will be the TARS banquet to be held at the Log Inn on Thursday February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in place of the regular meeting night which falls on Valentine's Day this year. The member's share of cost for the meal is yet to be determined. Upcoming meeting presentations include a visit to Central dispatch, and Basic Radio Principles by Tom Washburn WB9ZFN. Other future ideas suggested were an FM 2M Simplex contest by zip code similar to one we did in the past, home brew keys, participating in National Night Out, ARRL Kids Day, and working with area scout groups with a radio setup and operations during their Jamboree.

Winter field day will be on January 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. It has been held in the past at Wesselma's Park. Station captains will be needed to coordinate radios and antennas along with their setup for this event. Jerry (WB9ONU) volunteered to be a digital station captain. Chris (KE9YK) will again be bringing his famous bean soup.

Dennis (WA2USA) donated a logbook with artwork by Herb (KB9MZH) to be used to record contacts in our Red Cross radio room. Jeff (AA9WJ) donated a wireless router to be setup for radio room activity. Dennis (WA2USA) and Dave (WB9YIG) are working on uploading old club contacts to LOTW to submit for Worked All States awards. Dave (WB9YIG) also reported that the UPS that handles receivers, voter, and basic transmitter functions for the 146.790 repeater while the generator is coming online, is back in service.

Chris (KE9YK) would like to see the club do a little more operating during the coming year with small groups participating in activities like POTA. Dennis (WA2USA) explained working WFF and POTA as an activator.

A motion was made by Ron (KC9OUT) and seconded by Charlie (WB8LDV) that TARS buy various adapters

for the Red Cross projector that could be used by meeting presenters to be able to link to their electronic devices. Motion passed.

After a short break, Mike Brewster (KC9BUH) gave a great presentation on using ZoomSpot to work various digital modes such as System Fusion, P25, DMR, and D-Star.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06pm  
Minutes submitted by Ron Hanes (KC9OUT)

## Treasurer Report

October 2018 (prepared 11/1/18)

Opening Balance:	\$2,847.45
Receipts:	
Memberships plus donations	\$124.50
VE room rental	\$28.00
TARS Hamfest sales	\$600.00
Hamfest table rental	\$290.00
Hamfest donations	\$296.75
Total Receipts --->>	\$1,339.25
Expenditures:	
WEMA insurance endorsement	(\$74.00)
Total Expenditures--->>	(\$74.00)
Ending Balance	\$4,112.70
Red Cross balance	\$1,010.82

Jeff Holt AA9WJ  
TARS Treasurer

## 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 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

**Most any document format is acceptable.**

**Photos or graphics of your subject are welcome.**

**Send your article to: [sparks@w9og.net](mailto:sparks@w9og.net)**

## Looking Ahead

Straight Key Night Jan 1  
ARRL Kids Day January first Saturday  
**Winter Field Day January 26/27**  
**TARS Banquet Feb**  
**INQP May 4 - 5**  
MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June  
ARRL Kids Day June the third Saturday  
**Field Day June 22-23**  
13 Colonies Special Event Jul 1-Jul 8, 1300Z-0400Z  
National Night Out Aug 6  
International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend (ILLW) Third full weekend of August 16-17  
Route 66 Special Event September 7-15  
Jamboree-on-the-Air Third full weekend in October  
SKYWARN Recognition Day Dec 7 2019

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club  
ARRL [Indiana Section](#)  
Section Manager: **Jimmy Merry KC9RPX**  
[kc9rpx@arrl.net](mailto:kc9rpx@arrl.net)

### TARS mailing address:

TARS  
P.O. Box 4521  
Evansville, IN 47724

### Don't forget to check out our web page

[www.w9og.net](http://www.w9og.net)

### Facebook Group

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

TARS E-mail: [info@w9og.net](mailto:info@w9og.net)



## 2018 Club Officers and Board members

President [Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#)

Vice President [Max Wilkinson KD9ABT](#)

Treasurer [Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#)

Secretary **OPEN**

### 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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