

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State for over 70 years

August 2020 - Issue No. 8



The SPARKS Newsletter is published monthly by the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society as a source of information about Club activities, and general news items of interest to the Amateur Radio community.

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E-mail subscriptions are provided to all regular TARS members.

News contributions and letters/emails to the editor are always welcome.

TARS regular membership is open to all licensed Amateur Radio operators for \$25.00 a year. An Associate membership is also available to those who are interested in Amateur Radio but do not currently hold a license.

Associate membership is \$25.00 a year. Student memberships are also available for \$12.50 a year.

Membership information is available at www.w9og.net

The Tri-State Amateur Radio Society meets the second Thursday of each month at the Red Cross, 29 Stockwell Rd, Evansville IN, at **7:00 p.m.**

Family and visitors are always welcome to attend.

For more information, please call or email one of the TARS officers listed in this newsletter.

Presidents Corner

No Presidents Corner for this month. John N9oL has been in the hospital and is recovering well following surgery. Wishing him the best of luck and a speedy recovery.

TARS August Meeting 2M FM Simplex Contest

In place of an August TARS club meeting we will hold a **Summer 2020 TARS 2M FM simplex contest.**

This contest helps us all be prepared in a number of ways, gets to know one another, allow for some friendly competition and try out our emergency preparedness skills.

Since this contest is limited to the 2M FM band, it does not require any fancy equipment and all can participate. The contest is just a short 3-hour timeframe. This is a great time for all local area hams to participate and join in the activity!

When: Thursday August 13 6-9 PM CDT (8/13 23:00Z – 8/14 02:00Z)

Objectives: To make as many contacts as possible, encouraging the use of 2M simplex mode, and to have fun!

The rules, log sheets and excel log file are attached with this issue of SPARKS.

See you on simplex on the 13th.

Spread this info to anyone in the area that might be interested. In the past we have had participants from Henderson and Owensboro. Anyone in an outlying area might be a sought after contact, so give it a try. You might even have a pileup trying to contact you.

FIELD DAY 2020

Field Day Club Contact standings for those members who have sent me their scores. **For those of you who still need to send me their scores, please do so as soon as possible. The cutoff day for entries will be Wednesday, August 5th**, so the results will be finalized before the August Board Meeting.

As a reminder, Top Score receives a 2020 ARRL Handbook! Next, Top Contacts for CW, Phone, Digital and most sections each receive an ARRL Field Day Ballcap and Pin.

So far, a huge shout out to Dennis WA2USA leading the points scoring with 1086 CW contacts and 4394 points! That's fantastic!

Field Day 2020
TARS Individual Results

	Total Contacts			# States/Prov	# Sections	ARRL Preliminary Total Score
	CW	Phone	Dig			
Chris KE9YK		160		37	45	470
Dave KC9UVG		59		32	33	368
Jeff AA9WJ	312				54	1598
Dennis WA2USA	1086			53	77	4394
Jerry WB9ONU			185	46	28	740
John N9oL	283			48	67	1584
Len N9QVQ		149	43		47	1006
Dave WB9JIG		99	61		49	
Rick K9EXY	143			33		1580
Chris N9JCA			113			452

Thanks to all who participated, and thanks to John N9oL for hosting the web page running the contact results on Field Day.
-Dave KC9UVG TARS 2020 Field Day Chairman

Light Up 2 Meters Night

An FM Simplex Event

Sunday, August 30, 2020 6PM to 8PM Local Time

On and around 146.52 MHz

Almost every amateur radio operator has a radio that is capable of two meter FM Simplex, it could be a handheld transceiver or an all mode fixed station with stacked vertically polarized yagis, it is the most common band/mode that can connect all amateurs. Whether you operate out in the field, from your mobile, or in your shack, Light Up 2 Meters Night is an opportunity to make new contacts, give your equipment a test, and maybe learn a thing or two about your equipment's capabilities, so join us for the fun on August 30 at 6pm local time.

Since most 2 meter FM simplex operation is local, your frequency may vary, **146.52** is a good start in most of the USA, however, most simplex activity may be on a different frequency in your local area. The event time is also local, 6PM to 8PM in the time where you are, you don't have to limit your operations to this time, especially if you are on the edge of a time zone, it is just a window to concentrate the on the air activity so that many contacts are made.

ARRL Field Day 2020 Report

ARRL Contest Program Manager Paul Bourque, N1SFE, reported this week that ARRL has received more than 8,700 online Field Day entries, and paper-only entries have started arriving too.

"As many participants chose to operate from home this year, and given the 2020 rules waivers, we have seen a tremendous increase in entries over last year's event," Bourque said. "Most of the entries received have been through the online [web app](#), and Headquarters staffers have begun processing the paper entries this week." The 2020



waivers allowed individual club members to attribute their scores to their clubs.

Participants who submitted entries online are encouraged to check the Field Day [entries received](#) page to verify that their entries are marked as complete, and that the club name entered is correct. Entries with a status of "pending" are incomplete entries that are missing one or more items, and these need to be completed for an official entry.

Share your stories and photos using the ARRL [soapbox](#) page or via social media, such as on the ARRL [Field Day Facebook group](#).

Connecting in orbit

Retired Columbus engineer works on radio power supply for space station

In July, ARISS volunteer Ed Krome, K9EK, and ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) were recognized in an article posted by The Republic, the Columbus newspaper. Ed lives in Columbus and the story told how he, as an Amateur Radio operator, got intrigued in assisting with ARISS. The writer described Krome's background as an electrical and mechanical engineer and ham radio operator for years, and after retiring, deciding to help ARISS. He was a key player in the mechanical design of the ARISS MultiVoltage Power Supply (MVPS), part of the new ham radio station waiting in the International Space Station (ISS) to be set up for ARISS radio contacts. The article explained how the all-volunteer ARISS team spent nearly four years designing, developing, building, and testing all of the new ham radio station equipment, meeting NASA's many very stringent safety requirements during four testing phases.

The writer highlighted ARISS, too, explaining that the program promotes STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics) initiatives and how the MVPS will play a large part in this since it will power the interactive experiments onboard the ISS that engage students.

When asked what he liked best about working on ARISS projects, Krome enthusiastically replied, "It's just exciting and interesting. It's a new technology, it's space-related. It's STEM, it's trying to get the next generation, or two generations from now, interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics."

The newspaper story is at:

http://www.therepublic.com/2020/07/08/connecting_in_orbit_retired_columbus_engineer_works_on_radio_power_supply_for_space_station/

International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend is on track for 2020

Registrations for this year's popular International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend (ILLW) appear to have been largely unaffected by the current COVID-19 pandemic. The event will take place this year over the August 22 - 23 weekend. By mid-July, more than 200 entries had been received, and some 400 are expected to have signed up by the event weekend. New to this year's event is Corsica at Phare d'Alistro, which for ILLW purposes carries the French number of FR0030. Two lighthouses in Ghana will be on the air for the first time, as well as Buck Island Lighthouse in the US Virgin Islands (VI0001). Germany is well in the lead with 54 entries, followed by Australia with 29 entries, and the US with 27 entries. This event is designed as a fun weekend to encourage exposure to amateur radio and lighthouses to the visiting public, and ILLW stresses that contacts should be more than just an exchange of signal reports. All participants are urged to observe local COVID-19 safety guidelines. --Thanks to Kevin Mulcahy, VK2CE

Tech Classes Move Online

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I've been teaching ham classes for more than a dozen years now. My specialty has been the one-day Tech class. In this type of class, you review all of the questions in the question pool with the students over the course of six to eight hours, and then immediately give them the test before they can forget anything. I would hold these classes three or four times a year and regularly have 20 - 30 students in each class. The pandemic, of course, has put the kibosh on these classes. The last one I taught was in January.

Frankly, I was wondering if I'd ever teach one again. A little over a month ago, however, I was approached by a fellow in Portland, Oregon about teaching an online class for some folks that he'd corralled there. After giving it some thought, I said yes.

So, now, in place of face-to-face classes, I'm teaching online Tech classes. There are pluses and minuses to this approach. One negative is that I miss the face-to-face interaction with the students. On the plus side, teaching online allows me to offer classes more frequently. My first was in June. Last week, I completed the second class, and in August, I will teach a third class.

I have had to make some changes to the format. Making people sit in front of a computer for six hours or more seemed like cruel and unusual punishment. So, instead of a one-day class, the online class consists of four, two-hour sessions, spanning two weeks:

- Session 1
 - Electrical Principles
 - Electronic Components and Circuit Diagrams
- Session 2
 - Radio Wave Characteristics
 - Antennas and Feed Lines
- Session 3
 - Amateur Radio Signals
 - Electrical Safety
 - Amateur Radio Practices and Station Setup
- Sessions 4
 - Station Equipment
 - Operating Procedures
 - Rules and Regulations

This seems to be working out pretty well. I'm using Zoom, and most people have been able to attend without too much hassle. To simulate the whiteboard that I use extensively in the face-to-face class, I'm using the Autodesk Sketchbook program (<https://www.sketchbook.com/>) and sharing my screen with the Zoom meeting attendees. To write on the "whiteboard," I'm using a Gaomon M10K2018 drawing tablet.

Sketchbook allows me to build up a document in layers, and the result is kind of a hybrid PowerPoint presentation and whiteboard. I can make layers appear when I start discussing a particular topic and then write over them. For example, when I go

over the questions that use Ohm's Law to calculate current in a circuit, I display the later with "E = I x R" and on a second layer, show how to calculate the answers to the questions

To take the test, students have to sign up for an online test session. Fortunately, several VE groups are offering online, remote testing. To sign up for one of these sessions, all students have to do is go to <https://hamstudy.org/sessions>. For the first two classes, the W5YI VEC scheduled a special test session.

I foresee teaching these classes monthly until the demand wanes. The next class will start on Monday, August 3. To register for the class, go to <https://www.kb6nu.com/product/next-online-tech-class/>. To find out when these classes will take place in the future, potential students can sign up for my mailing list by going to <https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/m6l6t4>.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not teaching ham radio classes, he likes to operate CW on the HF bands, go for long walks around Ann Arbor, MI, and volunteer for Rotary Club service projects.

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.

We are also still running a Covid-19 addition of the net on Mon and Fri nights at 8pm due to the lockdown. This net will run till the end of August and will be reevaluated at that time.

Net Operator schedule

August

- 5 N9QVQ
- 12 KB9YWQ
- 19 WB9KQF
- 26 KE9YK

September

- 2 KC9TYA
- 9 KC9UVG
- 16 N9QVQ
- 23 KB9YWQ
- 30 WB9KQF

If you would like to be a Net Control Operator for the Wednesday Night Net or learn how to run a SKYWARN net.

Contact: [Chris Lantaff KE9YK](mailto:Chris.Lantaff@KB6NU.com).

VE Testing

2020 schedule

ATTENTION!!!

The Tri-State Amateur Radio Society VE Team will hold all VE test sessions for the rest of the year at the Vanderburgh Co. EMA west side training facility, 1440 Harmony Way in Evansville. This is the building behind the old school building. Look for the tower and antennas.



Apr 25, May 30, Jun 27, Jul 25,

Aug 29, Sep 26, Dec 5

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.

Details can be found at: <http://w9og.net/ve-testing>

For more info contact: [John VanVorst N9QL](mailto:John.VanVorst@ARRL.org) c: 812.305.4100



FOR SALE

FOR SALE - 6 meter 6 element yagi antenna.

This antenna is on the ground; took it down a number of years ago with the idea of repairing a storm-broken director and replacing the rusting hardware. For multiple reasons, that never happened. I know now that it will never go back in the air at this QTH. If you are serious about 6 meters like I used to be, this antenna should do the job. I am sorry I can't provide a picture, but the current Hy-Gain Model VB-66DX is about the same.

Antenna is a Hy-Gain Model 66B with a series date of 1968. Don't remember how much I paid for it in the 60's or 70's. I have the manual with it. 1968 specs show gain of 15 db [now 10.3 dbi]; F-B ratio of 20-25 db. I can tell you that I made many contacts on 6M AM that others could not hear. If this upcoming solar cycle is as some have now predicted, being similar to cycle 19 (where I came in), it should be very interesting.

I have the broken part of the director. It is repairable. Were I putting it back up, I would change out all the hardware, preferably with stainless steel bolts, nuts, etc.

This is a "make offer" situation. Current price for the new model of this antenna is about \$300 just for information. Offer what you think it is worth to you considering the maintenance needing done and what you can afford.

Best contact is e-mail: K9PNP at ARRL dot net 73, Mitch K9PNP

Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

All Vanderburgh Co ARES/RACES in person meetings are canceled until this COVID-19 emergency has passed. On Thursday 8/20 we will hold a ZOOM meeting starting at **6:00pm**. This is an hour earlier than normal and we will see how this works out with everyone.



Watch your email for details. If you would like to participate and are not currently a Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES member contact us for the log-in information.

I would like to encourage everyone with HF capability to check-in to the Indiana ARES net held Sunday afternoon at 4pm local time on 3.900 mhz. Mark KC9TYA has done a great job bringing that net activity up, also if you have Winlink capabilities [HF or local VHF] look into logging in for Winlink Wednesdays to keep you familiar with Winlink operations. The local Winlink RMS is N9QVQ-10. The VHF frequency is 145.010 @ 1200b and Uhf 440.950 @ 9600b. There is also an RMS station in Henderson, KC4BQK-10 on the same frequencies.

If you have a hard time reliably connecting to N9QVQ-10 an available digipeater is KE9YK-2 or alias EVV, there is also a crossband gateway on KE9YK-3.

If interested contact Mark KC9TYA at KC9TYA@arrl.net for information.

Chris KE9YK

IN82RACES@gmail.com

Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer

812.453.1972

Len N9QVQ len.n9qvq@gmail.com

Vanderburgh Co ARES EC

812-963-0027

Warrick Co ARES/RACES

Meetings...

The Warrick County ARES/RACES group meets on the second Monday of each month. The meeting begins at 6:30pm and generally is completed by 9:00pm. The meetings are held on the third floor of the Court House in the EMA Conference room. Anyone needing additional information concerning meetings or location contact: Chris L. Owen at KC9CLO@gmail.com .

**** We will be holding the August 10th meeting in the EOC. For those that are not comfortable with the in person meeting, Steve (K9SRC) will get a virtual meeting set up and send instruction on how to participate before the meeting.****

HAMFEST Calendar

QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo Announces Full Lineup of Speakers

The first [QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo](#), which takes place the weekend of August 8 - 9, has confirmed what it's calling "a packed lineup of over 70 great speakers" for the ARRL-sanctioned event. Attendance is free and [registration](#) is open.



For more information or to register, visit the [QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo](#) website.

Attendance is free, and there are early bird prize incentives for registering by July 24.

More covid cancellations....

The 2020 Vette City Hamfest / ARRL KY State Convention October 3rd in Bowling Green KY has been canceled.

Central Kentucky ARRL Hamfest 08/08/2020

Lexington Is officially CANCELLED!

GREATER LOUISVILLE HAMFEST cancelled and our 60th Anniversary Moved to GLH-2021.

We want to gather together and have fun during our 60th anniversary celebration - not being concerned over the spread of a virus. Therefore, by unanimous decision of the Greater Louisville Hamfest Association, we have decided to cancel GLH-2020 and celebrate our 60th next year.

The **Huntsville Hamfest** Board of Directors has been monitoring fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly large-gathering guidance and mandates from the CDC and the State of Alabama. As our world turned upside down in March we held out hope that we could anticipate a brighter picture in August for the Hamfest. Unfortunately this is not the case and with deep sadness the **Board has voted to cancel Huntsville Hamfest 2020**. We make this decision for the safety of our Visitors, Vendors, and Volunteers.

We will be back and hope to see you back at "The World's Friendliest Hamfest"™ on **August 21 & 22, 2021**

August 8 – Angola Hamfest
Gateway Community Church – Angola, IN

August 15 - East Central Indiana Hamfest
Randolph County Fairgrounds - Winchester, IN

TARS Hamfest

Plans are still a go for Hamtober Fest 2020



John N9OL is the chairman this year and will be soon looking for commitments to help with this club event.

October 17 – Hamtober Fest

Lynnville, IN

<http://hamtoberfest.com/>

November 7, 2020 - Hoosier Hills Hamfest

NOTE DATE CHANGE

Lawrence County 4H Fairgrounds - Bedford, IN

just off of US-50, west of SR-37

<http://www.w9qyq.org/hamfest>

ARRL Central Division Convention

November 14 - 15, 2020 – Ft Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo

Allen Co War Memorial Coliseum

Ft. Wayne, IN

<http://www.acarts.com/hfmain.htm>

November 28 - Wabash Valley ARA Turkey Fest

Clay Co. Fairgrounds - Brazil, IN

www.w9uuu.org

Search the ARRL hamfest calendar for upcoming hamfests :

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/search>

Secretary Report

The secretary reports were attached as separate attachments with this SPARKS mailing.

Dave Sandine KC9UVG

August Birthdays!!!

Dennis Adams	AC9KQ	9
Rollie Cooper	KD9GUY	4
Ron Hanes	KC9OUT	22
Darlene Pfettscher	KA9AZS	15
David Sandine	KC9UVG	17
Matt Schmitt	KD9JGE	21
Randal Schoenbachler	WB9QAV	27
Mike Townsend	W9KXP	5



Treasurer Report

Budget:

June 2020 (prepared 7/1/2020)

Opening Balance:		\$4,458.49
Receipts:		
Memberships	\$52.50	
Total Receipts --->>		\$52.50
Expenditures:		
Pd Dave Julian WB9YIG for W9OG Winlinks registration	(\$24.00)	
Pd Mike Townsend W9KXP for Lynnville repeater HRI200 plus antenna parts	(\$186.49)	
Pd Phillip Stolz for Lynnville repeater antenna rework	(\$300.00)	
Pd Dave Sandine KC9UVG for Field Day prizes	(\$80.74)	
Total Expenditures--->>		(\$591.23)
Ending Balance		\$3,919.76
Red Cross Fund Balance		\$1,283.82
Funds Available to TARS		\$2,635.94
Jeff Holt AA9WJ		
TARS Treasurer		

Looking Ahead

2020

Light Up 2 Meters Night August 30th 2020

International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend (ILLW) third full weekend of August

TARS PICNIC Sep 12

Route 66 Special Event September

Jamboree-on-the-Air third full weekend in October

TARS 3rd annual Hamtober Fest Oct 17th 2020

SKYWARN Recognition Day, Saturday, December 5th, 2020

2021

Straight Key Night Jan

TARS AUCTION January

ARRL Kids Day Jan

Winter Field Day January

TARS Banquet

INQP 2021

MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June

ARRL Kids Day June

Field Day June

13 Colonies Special Event

National Night Out first Tuesday of August

Total Solar Eclipse North America April 8, 2024

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club

ARRL [Indiana Section](#)

Section Manager: **Jimmy Merry KC9RPX**

kc9rpx@arrl.net

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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

2020 Club Officers - Board members

President [John VanVorst N9OL](#)

Vice President [Max Wilkinson KD9ABT](#)

Treasurer [Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#)

Secretary [Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#)

Board of Directors

[Rick Jackson K9EXY](#) (2019-2020)

[Dennis Martin WA2USA](#) (2019-2020)

[Mike Townsend W9KXP](#) (2019-2020)

[Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) (2020-2021)

[Don Land KB9YWQ](#) (2020-2021)

[Chris Matthews N9JCA](#) (2020-2021)

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