

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State over 75 years

July 2025 – Vol. LXXVIII, No. 7



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.

Material in this newsletter may be reproduced provided that TARS and the article author is properly credited.

Complimentary issues of the SPARKS Newsletter are available to amateur radio clubs on a newsletter exchange by e-mailing your request to sparks.w9og@gmail.com.

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 contact one of the TARS officers listed in this newsletter or email info@w9og.net.

Presidents Corner

July 2025

Yesterday, 03 Jul 2025, I asked at the board meeting how many members TARS has in its roles.. Can you guess how many members we have? It's 73. What a magical number for a radio club: 73.

Earlier this month a lot of us were involved in the Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air event. We had a lot of fun activating Indiana and I'm excited to hear if we beat out the other Indiana club.

Here recently we have been seeing about 30 or more people attending our meetings which is fantastic. Last weekend, at our Amateur Radio Thanksgiving aka Field Day, we had over 40 visitors attend. It was one of the best Field Days we have had in a long time. Of the visitors, there were equally an amount of new hams or those interested as there were older hams willing to share and fellowship. Food was fantastic and the bands cooperated too.

I feel very proud of our club of seventy three members to have so much attendance and involvement. Thank you for making the club a great place to meet new and old friends and share the world's best hobby ever.

Our next event will be our picnic at Audubon State Park at the Sycamore Shelter in Henderson. August 16th. I'm sure we will again have good food and fellowship along with some stations activating POTA and several foxes for us to hunt.

Oh foxes.. TARzan, our fox, has been hunted every month since we started in February. I am surprised at how much fun it is.. and what a talent it is to hunt down a radio signal. I hope we are never asked to hunt a radio signal in real life (plane down, lost person etc) but I feel confident we can do it now.

There is talk about doing a DXpedition and that our next build meeting will be baluns. Also antenna/tower work will be done on the TARS 79 Repeater System this week. Antenna parties are coming up too. We have a lot going on so don't miss out. Check out our groups.io forums for more info and see you at the next meeting!

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR
President TARS 2023-25

July TARS Meeting

The next TARS regular meeting is **Thursday July 10th 7:00pm**

The program will be by Brian Esche WB9QVR on his Dry Tortugas National Park DX Expedition.

Eat'n Before the Meet'n

We have a meetup before the regular TARS meeting for anyone that would like to join us. **We meet at 5:30**, for you to grab a bite to eat, swap stories and whatever else you like, giving us time to make it to the Red Cross for the meeting.

Come join us at Chipotle 499 N Green River Road. Next to Denny's chipotle.com

Contest Corner for July 2025

Once again, thanks to all who participated in the June Field Day. Hopefully, everyone had a good time and helped us attain a great score. Thanks again!

There are two big events held during the month of July. The first is for HF enthusiasts and that is the IARU (International Amateur Radio Union) July 12-13. It is a 24-hour contest, starting at 1200Z on Saturday and ending at 1159Z on Sunday. It generates plenty of DX activity. You will need to use our ITU zone number in the exchange. For us, that is 8. The second is for VHF enthusiasts and that is the CQ Worldwide VHF contest. The CW/SSB contest is July 5-6, and the Digital contest is July 19-20. There is no FM! Both contests are 24 hours, starting at 1200Z and ending at 1159Z. The exchange is callsign and grid location. I have tried this contest before and did not find any activity in our area. Let's hope that changes. The bands are 6 and 2 meters only. Sporadic E propagation is very likely. If possible, use a horizontally polarized antenna. Your vertically polarized antenna for FM will not be as effective on SSB/CW. If you have a beam of any type, if it is set up for vertical polarization, all you need to do is loosen the boom clamps and rotate the antenna 90 degrees for horizontal polarization. Give it a try! Let me know how you do.

GL es 73, Mark KDOEE

Desk of Jerry -WB9ONU

Well, it is July already half of the year is over. We just got done with Field Day. Hope everyone that attended had their share of operating. It was hot as normal for field day, but we all survived. I do think we can do better next year. So start thinking about 2026 Field Day.

We also had a good time back at the beginning of June with the Lewis and Clark on the Air event. I had a great time and will be waiting for next year to do better. Even with the increased solar activities we did great as a club. If you like this event. Look at the 13 Colonies Special Event. It's just like the Lewis and Clark, but after working them. Send out a QSL card and you will

TARS Calendar

July

- 2 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 3 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 9 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Herb, KB9MZH)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 10 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 – Chipotle**
TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross
- 16 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 23 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 26 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**
- 30 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-

August

- 6 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.350 +-
- 7 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 13 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 14 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 – Fazoli's**
TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross
- 16 **TARS Club Picnic - Audubon State Park**
- 20 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Herb, KB9MZH)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 23 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**
- 27 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-

[Connect to the TARS Google Calendar](#)

get some nice-looking wallpaper for your shack.

This month meeting will be presented by Brian Esche about his DX Expedition. Come and listen to Brian then you might want to go on one yourself.

Also, I am happy to say KB9RMY Nick which has a tech license has been checking into the 10 meters net on Wednesday night. Would like to see more of the techs checking into the 10-meter net.

73 for now.
Jerry - WB9ONU

Dan Weil KB9GNI SK

It is with a sad heart I report, Dan Weil, KB9GNI is a silent key as of May 31.

Dan's brother, Bob, KE9PV reported he passed suddenly and unexpectedly. Rest in peace OM!

Lewis and Clark club QSO numbers

List is sorted by total QSOs largest to smallest.

Not a bad showing at all for TARS. Many thanks to all activators for TARS - way to go!

Club	Call	State	Total QSO's
Dakota County Amateur Radio Club	N0DCA	NE	7514
Portsmouth Radio Club	N8QA	OH	4556
Clark County Amateur Radio Club	W7AIA	WA	3763
Clark County Amateur Radio Club	W9WWI	IN	3297
William Becknell Heritage Days ARC	WB0SFT	KS	3110
Souris Valley Amateur Radio Club	K0AJW	ND	2885
Triple "A" Amateur Radio Association	WW3AAA	PA	2775
Lewis and Clark Radio Club	K9HAM	IL	2604
ARRL Montana Section	W7T	MT	2469
Bullitt Amateur Radio Society	KY4KY	KY	2433
Tri-State Amateur Radio Society	W9OG	IN	2420
Central Missouri Radio Association	K0SI	MO	2295
South West Idaho Amateur Radio Club	K7SWI	ID	2048
Central Dakota Amateur Radio Club	W0ZRT	ND	1920
Sooland Amateur Radio Association	K0TFT	IA	1804
Steel City ARC	W3KWH	PA	1768
Prairie Dog Amateur Radio Club	W0OJY	SD	1616
St. Clair Amateur Radio Club	K9GXU	IL	1334
Amateur Radio Transmitting Society	W4CN	KY	1305
Oregon Tualatin Valley Amateur Radio Club	W7OTV	OR	1289
Sioux Empire ARC	W0ZWY	SD	837
Highland Amateur Radio Association	K8HO	OH	796
Collins Amateur Radio Club	W0CXX	IA	731
Logan Amateur Radio Club	W8LOG	WV	671
Pilot Knob Amateur Radio Club	KS0LV	KS	552
Missouri Outdoor Club	W0MOC	MO	542
Kittitas County Amateur Radio Club	N7KGS	WA	210
Hermiston ARC	A17HO	OR	194
Kootenai Amateur Radio Society	K7ID	ID	192
Steel City Amateur Radio Club	N3LL	WV	112
Great Falls Area Amateur Radio Club	W7M	MT	85

John N9oL

Field Day Follow-Up

Thanks for another wonderful Field Day experience. I hope you all had a good time.

Something like this happens only because of the hard work and coordination of many. Thanks to all who helped set up and take down antennas and stations. Special thanks to our station captains. You did a great job! Many thanks to Tom who again kept us well plied with food and drink. And special thanks to Brian, who worked his tail off networking and trouble shooting our logging issues throughout the event. And thanks to all the ops and those who dropped by just to say hello and check on us. You're simply the best!

In the days ahead, I will complete and submit the score. In spite of dreadful heat, middling band conditions, and some logging hiccups, we managed several hundred contacts. We also picked up a number of the bonuses, thanks to you. I will share that report when it is complete.

For now, get some rest, cool down, and keep up the hamming spirit!

73, Mark KDOEE

FOX HUNT

**The next Fox Hunt will be
Saturday July 19th. 7:00 am.**

The Fox Hunt winner for June was Josh KE9BAH.



Additional POTA Challenges

If the weather and band conditions aren't enough challenge for you POTA activation add snakes, bees and alligators. My wife (N9VDA) and I returned from a trip through Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida. Our plan was to activate some parks along the way. The biggest issue was the steamy hot weather. We would get out early, activate a park and retreat to the AC by noon. In Vicksburg MS there was a sign warning of copperheads, rattle snakes, Black Widow spiders and bees. In the Louisiana Bayou park we saw a sign warning of alligators, my wife saw one and we could hear them croaking around us. In FL we saw the sign posting about venomous snakes. Overall we had a good trip and visited our friends in FL, next time we'll go in January to avoid the heat.

WR9W

Gordon Conley



TARS Member Pictures

Bruce Hatfield W9GFS

Attention, we need your photo for the TARS membership directory but many of you have not gotten your picture taken. If you are camera shy you may submit a photo to Bruce, W9GFS at delsol1@icloud.com or Scott KD4SIR at scotthibbs@gmail.com. Otherwise we may be forced to find a mug shot to use instead. Also if there is no photo forthcoming there may be severe consequences like a giant lightning strike from above that melts your tower to the ground.

Bits of Interest

From Brian Esche WB9QVR via groups.io

Here's is a news story covering this week's YOTA camp and more specifically the ARISS contact. I am privileged to be a part (albeit a small one) if this great program.

[Young radio operators in Colorado get out of this world experience | 9news.com](#)

Antenna safety

Always check your surroundings!

This ham did not come home this day.

A North Carolina ham was electrocuted over the Independence Day weekend while either setting up or taking down the antenna for his portable station. Apparently, his antenna came in contact with overhead power lines.

Please, please be careful when putting up antennas, whether portable or permanent. Take an extra few minutes to survey the area and consider where your antenna might go as you raise it up or take it down.

<https://qrper.com/2025/07/a-tragic-reminder-safety-must-come-first-in-the-field/>

https://www.mydailyrecord.com/townnews/radio/ham-radio-enthusiast-dies-in-accident/article_05b28068-9ee0-49bb-9dc9-9af79bb073be.html

★ HAPPY ★
BIRTHDAY!

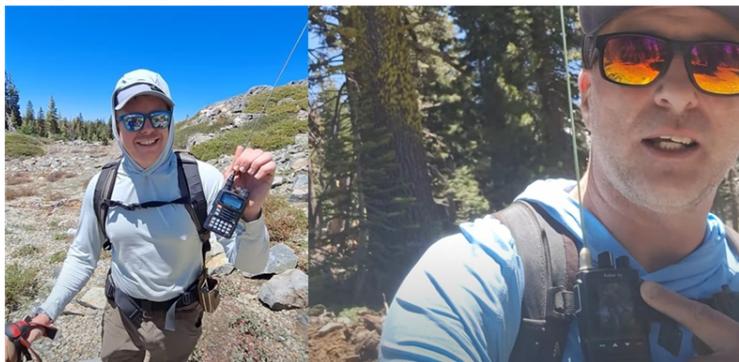
July Birthday's

KF6XA	Dave Donnelly	2
N9XXK	John McCormick	7

Ham Radio Reports Fire; Helicopter Crew Extinguishes Just in Time

From The ARRL Letter for June 19, 2025

With the help of amateur radio operators, a potential wildfire was averted in California on June 12 as several hams wound up in the right place at the right time while preparing for the 2025 ARRL June VHF Contest.



Jacob T. "Jake" Graham, KC7WXD, [left] and Robert "Bobby" Debevec, W6IWN, [right] both ARRL members from the Reno, Nevada area, hiking on the Grouse Ridge Trail in California, a section of the Tahoe National Forest.



In addition to getting ready for the contest, they had hoped to also activate several Summits on the Air (SOTA) locations. Their day of using the Amateur Radio Service for recreation was going well until they saw smoke near the Black Buttes area and had to use it for its utility value.

[Debevec captured the event on video](#) and posted it to his YouTube channel.

"I was surprised to see smoke ahead of us," said Graham. "As we got closer, it was clear there had been a lightning hit several days ago, and we could also see flames."

Wireless service is spotty in portions of the eastern Sierra, and they didn't have a cell signal, so Debevec used his handheld ham radio to report the fire on a nearby repeater. In just seconds, Dan Patterson, W6AI, responded back. He was monitoring the Nevada County Amateur Radio Club linked repeater system in Grass Valley, California, and heard the call. He took the GPS coordinates from Graham and notified the U.S. Forest Service.

"We were monitoring the U.S. Forest Service, and it only took about 10 minutes for them to dispatch a helicopter to the area," said Graham. "We watched four firefighters rappel down, followed by a pack of equipment. The pair then walked closer to the area and started talking to the crew, who thanked them for the report.

"They put out the fires but radioed for a helicopter water drop, before they left on foot, with the gear, to a nearby pickup site," added Debevec.



After the firefighters left, the winds picked up dramatically. Had that happened earlier, the outcome could have been much worse. Amateur radio serves communities before and When All Else Fails®, and having a thriving group of trained operators active in amateur radio allowed it to facilitate emergency communications that saved the day.

All photos courtesy of Bobby Debevec, W6IWN, via YouTube.

Hamfest Calendar

08/16/2025 - 08/17/2025

Huntsville Hamfest, ARRL Alabama State Convention

Location: Huntsville, AL
Type: ARRL Convention
Sponsor: Huntsville Hamfest, Inc
Website: <http://hamfest.org>

09/06/2025 - **Greater Louisville Hamfest 2025**

Location: Shepherdsville, KY
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Sponsor: Greater Louisville Hamfest Association, Inc.
Website: <http://LouisvilleHamfest.com>

10/18/25 – **7th annual Southern Indiana - Hamtober Fest**

Location: Lynnville Community Center, Lynnville, Indiana

Sponsor: TARS [Tri-State Amateur Radio Society]

Website: <https://hamtoberfest.com>



11/08/2025 - **Hoosier Hills Hamfest**

Location: Bedford, IN
Type: ARRL Hamfest
Sponsor: Hoosier Hills Ham Club
Website: <https://hoosierhillshamfest.com>

For a complete ARRL hamfest list, go to:
<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>

Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

The next meeting will be July 17th, 6:30 pm at the Vanderburgh Co. EMA west side training facility, **1440 Harmony Way**.

Anyone interested in emergency communication in Vanderburgh County is invited!

Contact us for more details.

Vanderburgh County Auxcomm

Chris KE9YK IN82RACES@gmail.com

Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer

c: 812.453.1972 Hamshack Hotline: 12604 WinLink: KE9YK



Warrick Co Auxcomm

The Warrick County Auxcomm group meets on the third Tuesday 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

VE Testing 2025

July 26 2025 - 9AM Central time

August 23 2025 - 9AM Central time

September 27 2025 - 9AM Central time

November 22 2025 - 9AM Central time

December 27 2025 - 9AM Central time

January 31 2026 - 9AM Central time

You will need to know your FRN number. If you have a license currently you have an FRN number. If you do not yet have a license you can register with the FCC and obtain an FRN number. Go to www.fcc.gov/register.

If you need help or have questions, please let me know at n9ol@arrl.net.

Examinations will start promptly 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 N9OL c: 812.305.4100



Treasurer Report

Tri-state Amateur Radio Society
Financial Report for May 2025

Amateur Radio Society Primary Account

Opening Balance: \$12,114.32

TARS sub-accounts

General Fund sub-account

Opening Bal \$4,126.03

Receipts:

Membership \$37.50

Donation - INQP Pizza \$16.00

Donation - Late to Meeting \$5.00

Total Receipts --->> \$58.50

Expenditures:

Three EWM Kits for Wartime Museum (\$165.00)

INQP Pizza (\$69.91)

Transfer to IGC account to cover Radio and Ticket purchase (\$100.00)

Total Expenditures---->> (\$334.91)

Ending Balance General Fund \$3,849.62

Repeater Maint & investment - Restricted acct

Opening Balance \$6,641.30

Receipts:

Total Receipts --->> \$0.00

Expenditures:

None \$0.00

Total Expenditures---->> \$0.00

Ending Balance of Repeater Restrictred sub-account
\$6,641.30

Red Cross Fund - Restricted Acct

Opening Balance \$1,346.99

Receipts:

Total Receipts --->> \$0.00

Expenditures:

none

Total Expenditures---->> \$0.00

Ending Balance of Red Cross Restrictred sub-account
\$1,346.99

Ending Balance - TARS primary Checiking Account
\$11,837.91

TARS IGC (IN Gaming Commission) restricted checking account:

Opening Balance \$857.38

Receipts:

Transfer from General Account \$100.00

Total Receipts --->> \$100.00

Expenditures:

(\$709.90)

Total Expenditures---->> (\$709.90)

Ending Balance of IGC Restrictred checking account
\$247.48

Tom KD9PFH TARS Treasurer

Looking Ahead

2025

TARS PICNIC August 16th, Audubon Sycamore Shelter

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

[Route 66 Special Event](#) September

[TARS 7th annual HAMTOBER FEST October 18, 2025](#)

Jamboree-on-the-Air third full weekend in October-
SKYWARN Recognition Day, First Saturday, December

2026

Straight Key Night January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC

ARRL Kids Day Jan First Saturday

[Winter Field Day January](#)

[TARS Banquet February 2026??](#)

[INQP May](#)

[Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air May 31st - June 15th 2025](#)

[MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND](#) June 7-8 2025

ARRL Kids Day June Third Saturday

[Field Day June 28-29 2025](#)

[13 Colonies Special Event](#) July

TARS @ Groups.IO



Have you heard about the TARS Groups.io email list?

You can subscribe at <https://groups.io/g/TARS> or by sending an email to TARS+subscribe@groups.io directly.

The mail list is an area where you can ask questions or get the latest information on club happenings.

For HELP on the Groups.IO site, send an email to:

TARS+help@groups.io

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.w9og@gmail.com

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club

ARRL [Indiana Section](#)

Section Manager: Bob Burns [AK9R](#)

ARRL [Central Division](#)

Division Director: Brent Walls [N9BA](#)



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 Groups.io email list: TARS@Groups.IO

TARS E-mail: info@w9og.net

2025 Club Officers - Board members

President [Scott Hibbs KD4SIR](#)

Vice President [Jerry McIntosh WB9ONU](#)

Treasurer [Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH](#)

Secretary [John VanVorst N9OL](#)

Board of Directors

[Charlie Martin WB8LDV](#) (2025-2026)

[Bruce Hatfield W9GFS](#) (2025-2026)

[Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) (2025-2026)

[Ross Cecil KC9JOV](#) (2024-2025)

[Mark Holland KD0EE](#) (2024-2025)

[Terry McCraey WB9KQF](#) (2024-2025)

SPARKS Editor:

Chris Lantaff KE9YK

E-mail: sparks.w9og@gmail.com