

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State over 75 years

August 2025 – Vol. LXXVIII, 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 contact one of the TARS officers listed in this newsletter or email info@w9og.net.

Presidents Corner

August 2025

I'm looking forward to our picnic on August 16th at Kentucky's Audubon State Park at the Sycamore Shelter. Should be a lot of fun!

At the next meeting we will have a tape measure yagi build to help with our monthly fox hunts. Please get on groups.io to let the guys know if you want to build one. Also check out groups.io to know when the next hunt is. The last fox hunt had around 12 hunters and most of us went out for breakfast afterwards. I am having a lot of fun with these hunts.

I say this all the time but I love how active our club is. We are getting a few new hams as well. Please monitor the TARS 79 Repeater System as many hams start with a standard non-digital HT (or a really cool Baofeng) so please listen and let us know when you are monitoring. I have a habit of turning down my radio sometimes and forget that it is turned down so send me a text if you haven't heard me lately.

On Sunday Aug 3rd at 1pm, we are going to have Al's WA9BPP antenna party. Looking forward to getting him back on the air. He's a great guy and needs the help.

Please get involved in the club. More hands make light work just like our antenna parties. Consider running for office, if you see something you think should be worked on, or if you think you can help the club please speak up.

And lastly, don't forget that we are considered a charity. Donate. Money allows the club to buy items that help build the future of the hobby in this area. I am reminded a lot that the little work we do to get on the air for fun, can also be used when it isn't so fun. So Donate.

See you at the meeting!

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR
President TARS 2023-25



TARS PICNIC

AUGUST 16th

Sycamore Shelter,

Audubon State Park in Henderson, Ky.

July TARS Meeting

The next TARS regular meeting is **Thursday August 14th 7:00pm**
The program will be a hands-on build of a 3-element tape measure 2m yagi antenna, that is great for fox hunting.

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 [Penn Station](#) 137 N Burkhardt Rd, Evansville, in front of the east side Walmart.

Contest Corner for August 2025

August is not a big month on the contest calendar, but there is some activity worth checking out. Our neighboring state, Ohio, has their QSO party on August 23-24. If you have antennas for 40 & 80 meters, this might be a fun activity. Colorado and Kansas have their QSO parties August 30-31. Lastly, U.S. Islands QSO party is also August 30-31. If chasing islands appeals to you, here's your opportunity. Many of these islands are also parks so for POTA hunters there's a chance to add to your totals with some rare activations.

The dog days of summer are upon us, and we should not miss this opportunity to check out our outdoor antennas. At least once per year check your guy ropes for proper tension and condition, and redo all your waterproof connections. Put up that antenna you've been wanting to install. And be sure to check your station ground. It's amazing how all that loosens up over time!

With the Fall season, propagation dramatically improves on the HF bands. A little August preparation and you'll be good to go!
73,
Mark KDOEE

Desk of Jerry -WB9ONU

I want to give a big thanks to Brian for his presentation of his DX Expedition to the Dry Tortugas National Park. I found it very interesting and was wondering if either our club or some of the members could do a DX Expedition. If anyone wants to present their idea of a DX Expedition let us know.

Since it's been extremely hot in July, I hope instead of doing outside activities everyone was able to get on the air and have fun with their hobby. The 13 Colonies contest was the 1st week of the month. This was followed by the IARU contest. We did have a Fox Hunt. Then YOTA was July

TARS Calendar

August

- 6 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 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 – Penn Station**
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 +-

September

- 3 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 4 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 10 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 11 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 – AZZIP Pizza**
TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross
- 17 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 24 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 27 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**

[Connect to the TARS Google Calendar](#)

25 - 27th. So, everyone had plenty of activity on amateur radio to keep them indoors.

So, Walt and Steve are doing the August presentation. They having a 2-meter Yagi antenna that can be use for Fox Hunting. They are still taking orders so Contact them if you are interested.

Also, for August is TARS annual picnic. It will be held at Audubon State Park In Kentucky. Starting time will be around 9 a.m.. It will be at the Sycamore shelter house. We will have POTA and I heard TARSan might even show up. If he shows up, we may have search for him so bring your gear for foxhunting. So, plan on attending also bring your spouse and kids,

Also, it's getting to be that time of year again to start thinking of running for office. If you been a paid member of the club for a year you are eligible to run. Think of running for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and 3 Board Member positions. I believe new office members could keep the progress of the club going in the right direction. So step up and run for office. It's not that hard or much work, plus other members are there to help.

73 for now.

Jerry - WB9ONU

TARS PICNIC

It's that time of the year for TARS Picnic. So if you haven't marked your calendar, it will be August 16th. At the [Sycamore Shelter, Audubon State Park in Henderson, Ky.](#) Starting at 9 a.m. we will start showing up. We will starting eating around 12 p.m. Tars will provide the hamburgers, brots, and eating utensils, and **everyone is expected to bring a dish of their favorite picnic food to share.** Between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. you can work a POTA station or maybe do a foxhunt in the park.

So bring a covered dish, your favorite drink, your better half, yourself and have some fun. Google Map [\[LINK\]](#)

Jerry -wb9onu

This Ain't POTA!



The old man still has it!

This was taken at Sniktau Mountain off of Loveland Pass at 13,230 ft +/- 1.8 miles with 1350 vertical feet of elevation. It was way more than I usually do when I'm in Colorado for the first few days of arrival. Going this high is not recommended.

It's better to start off at lower elevations to get acclimated, which I will do later next week.

Dennis - WA2USA/0

FOX HUNT

Great turn out today. I think we had 11 or 12 total hunting. Congrats John, N9OL and Eddie for finding the Fox first and Jeff, AA9WL and daughter at a close second, although they were first in the parking lot. Josh KE9BAH

**The next Fox Hunt will be
Saturday August 30th. 7:00 am.**

The Fox Hunt winner for July was John N9OL with co hunter



Eddie Gerlach, who is working to get licensed.

Mike Lowe W9NAF SK

Silent Key July 16th.

Mike was a regular on the W9ILS system.

He will be greatly missed.



Voice of America Museum

From Brian Esche WB9QVR via groups.io

You know you're an old timer in the hobby when your Novice station (paid for with lawn mowing money) is in a literal museum. :)



The Voice of America Museum is something that every ham should see. I've been there at least three times and each time I tour the facility I learn something new. In addition to featuring VOA and commercial radio broadcast equipment and stories, there is an area dedicated to Amateur Radio with lots of older gear on display. Of particular note is the very large collection of Drake gear which was for the most part manufactured in nearby Miamisburg Ohio (a suburb of Dayton). If you're ever in the Cincinnati area you should definitely visit the museum. They recently refurbished their already extensive ham shack as well and I'm sure they would be happy to allow you to operate WC8VOA while you're there!

Bits of Interest

Gray Line: The Twilight Zone of Radio Propagation

Imagine for a moment that you're sitting in your ham shack, coffee in one hand and microphone in the other. It's either just before sunrise or just after sunset, and suddenly—boom!—you're talking to someone halfway around the world who sounds like he's right next to you. No sunspots, no fancy **beam antenna**, no EME wizardry.

What just happened? Welcome to the weird and wonderful world of gray line propagation—also known as the magical twilight zone of HF radio. [\[Full Story\]](#)

International Dog Day Special Event is August 26

International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend is August 16-17

2025 ROUTE 66 SPECIAL EVENT SEPTEMBER 6-14

The TARS History Hole

I scanned in some missing sparks from Al WA9BPP (he had about 10) and it brought me down the TARS History Hole.. I took an inventory of the sparks that I am missing. I am also compiling a list of the past presidents of TARS (all the officers really). Here is a list of what I am missing:

Missing and Needed Sparks Newsletters (some may not be published)

1950 - 1957
1959 - 1964
1968 - Feb 1974
Apr 1974 - Jan 1976
Apr 1976 - Aug 1976
Oct 1976 - Feb 1983
1985 Jun & Aug
1987 Jan, Apr - Jul, and Dec
1988 Jan, Feb, Apr, Jun, Sep and Nov
1989 Jan, Feb, Apr
1990 Jan, Mar and Nov
1997 Sep, Nov, and Dec
1998 Jan - Mar & May - Dec
1999 Jan, Feb, Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Oct and Dec
2000 Jan - May, Aug, and Oct - Dec
Dec 2003 - 2004
2005 Jan - Apr, May, Jun
2006 Mar and Nov
2007 Jul - Nov
Feb 2008 - Sep 2017

On the past presidents:

I have the presidents from 1947 - 1967 (I'm missing almost all the officers)

I am missing 1968 to 1982.

I'm missing 2004, 2009, and 2011.

It's so cool to be in a club with such a long history. I hope it hasn't been lost. This history can be filled in with missing sparks. Please look around, please.



July Birthday's

KF6XA	Dave Donnelly	2
N9XXK	John McCormick	7



W9CHA Radio Station operated by Benjamin Biederwolf in his basement on S. Bedford Ave., circa 1930s; WPA Dance held at the Community Center, photo dated 1936.
Courtesy Willard Library Archives

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 AUGUST 21ST, 6:30 pm at the Vanderburgh Co. EMA west side training facility, [1440 Harmony Way](#).

We will have hands on training, sending and receiving ICS 213 forms via WinLink.



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

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



Treasurer Report

Tri-state Amateur Radio Society Financial Report for June 2025				
Amateur Radio Society Primary Account Opening Balance:				\$11,837.91
TARS sub-accounts				
General Fund sub-account				
Opening Bal		\$3,849.62		
Receipts:				
Membership	\$37.50			
Field Day Shirts	\$125.00			
Total Receipts --->>		\$162.50		
Expenditures:				
Reimburse KD9PFH for Field Day Shirts	(\$125.00)			
Total Expenditures-->>		(\$125.00)		
Ending Balance General Fund				\$3,887.12
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:				
For 6/7 VE Room	\$42.00			
Total Receipts --->>		\$42.00		
Expenditures:				
none				
Total Expenditures-->>		\$0.00		
Ending Balance of Red Cross Restrictred sub-account				\$1,388.99
Ending Balance TARS primary Checiking Account				\$11,917.41
TARS IGC (IN Gaming Commission) restricted checking account:				
Opening Balance		\$247.48		
Receipts:				
Transfer from General Account				
Total Receipts ---->>		\$0.00		
Expenditures:				
Total Expenditures-->>		\$0.00		
Ending Balance of IGC Restrictred checking account				\$247.48

Tom KD9PFH TARS Treasurer

Secretary Report

Tri-State Amateur radio Society Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Date: 06/05/2025

Meeting called to order by __Scott KD4SIR__ at 06:33PM CST.

Board Members/Officers Present:

- Scott Hibbs KD4SIR, President
- Jerry McCintosh WB9ONU, Vice President
- Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH Treasurer
- John Van Vorst N9oL, Secretary
- Mark Holland KD0EE, Dir (2024-25)
- Ross Cecil KC9JOV, Dir (2024-25)
- Terry WB9KQF, Dir (2024-25)
- Charlie Martin WB8LDV Dir (2025-26)
- Herb KB9MZH, Dir (2025-26)
- Bruce Hatfield, Dir (2025-26)
- Dave KC9UVG
- Dave wb9yig
- Chris ke9yk
- Dave Sandine KC9UVG
- Josh Gibson KE9BAH

Reading of officer reports:

Treasurers Report Report ending 5/31/2025 read by Tom kd9pfh – Motion to accept by Charlie wb8ldv seconded by Bruce w9gfs .Report was accepted.

Secretary’s Report – Minutes from 5/01/2025 meeting read by John Van Vorst, N9oL –.

Discussed old business-

Antenna party at Ross went well.

Fox hunts have been going well. Next fox hunt will be 6/21.

10-meter nets- going well with 8-10 check-ins each week. Need to push new hams to join us.

WW2 5K event- went great and will likely do it again next year.

Hamvention flea market booth went well, had lots of visitors.

Shack committee – nothing to report.

ISS contact- Bruce discussed possible ISS contact assistance which would take place in 2027 if accepted by NASA.

Hamtoberfest-

- Raffle radios were purchased under budget.
- N9oL to get raffle tickets ready by end of June.
- Website has been edited and updated.

Photo directory – Scott asked Bruce to send photos.

Repeater Committee – no changes since last meeting

Community Service – WW2 Museum radio displays.

- Scott reced the morse code units and will work on them.
-

Field Day –

- Number of stations – 4 plus GOTA – class 4F
- Location of stations – layout was finalized.
- Budget for food/supplies- Charlie wb8ldv motion, Terry wb9kqf second that budget be set at \$150. Motion passed.

Lewis and Clark

- Well underway.
- The lctota website has had some problems but nothing major

Future meetings-

- June- field day preparation and POTA
- July- Dry Tortugas DXpedition trip

New Business

New banner purchase – Scott would like to get new banner that included ‘Evansville Indiana’ smaller sized to be able to hang off a

table. Discussed different options. Scott to get pricing for further discussion.

KE9YK needs operator info from the station logs for Winter Field Day and INQP.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM CST.

TARS gen meeting 2025-06-12

Called to order by Jerry wb9onu at 7PM

Intros-

Summer Field Day remarks by Mark kd0ee – shared presentation on FD planning

- Will have setup time Friday evening
- June 28 1PM.-29 4PM
- Emergency preparedness exercise and a social event!!
- Read the purpose of field day
- Our club objective
 - o Have fun
 - o Keep it simple!! Do things we know
 - o Keep it safe. Will have safety officer
 - o Promote community awareness of ham radio
 - o Achieve respectable score
- Will be held here at Red Cross, and class 4F. Exchange will be 4F IN
 - o 1 CW stations – N9oL camper and the shed
 - o 1 digital FT8
 - o 2 SSB – 1 in the barn, 1 at the SE corner of the RC bldg
 - o GOTA Get On The Air station located in the RC radio room
 - o Tom kd9pfh food/hospitality
 - o safety officer
- Bonuses
 - o Publicity
 - o Info table
 - o Invite elected official
 - o Invite rep from service agency
 - o Alternate power at least 5 qso's
 - o W1aw FD message
 - o Message to section manager
 - o Safety Officer
 - o Youth participation
- Antennas
 - o Station captains need to plan for the station equipment and antennas

Josh KE9BAH did presentation on Parks On The Air POTA

TARS gen meeting 2025-07-10

Called to order by Scott KD4SIR at 7PM

Scott discussed the CW kits to be used at the EVV War Museum. Those kits were distributed to members for assembly.

Scott mentioned that the Red Cross desires to have a weather station and monitor system in the Red Cross and asked for suggestions and input. Nick with the EMA stated that the EMA may

have a system that can be installed at the Red Cross for their use and that he will investigate that.

Mark KD0EE led a de-brief discussion on Field Day, and reviewed the TARS score submission.

Discussed the July Fox Hunt.

Jerry Purcell kc9zar discussed changed to the ILS network, and the REQUIREMENT that all users of a repeater connected to ILS must use TX DG-ID of 11.

Discussed upcoming meeting dates-

- 7/19 Fox hunt starting at 7am
- 8/3 Antenna party for Albert WA9BPP
- 8/16 TARS picnic at Audubon State Park Sycamore Shelter
- 10/18 Hamtoberfest in Lynnville IN

Brian WB9QVR then gave a fantastic presentation and slide show on his POTA activation in the Dry Tortugas.

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 6-14

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 June

MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June

ARRL Kids Day June Third Saturday

Field Day June

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)

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