

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State over 75 years

September 2025 – Vol. LXXVIII, No. 9



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

September 2025

We had a very hot summer that didn't seem to let up on the heat. Now that it is getting cooler I can look to get my 5 element quad and rotor on the roof. I'll need help, but I'm excited about getting it done. The best way to get an antenna party for yourself is to schedule a time you are free and then announce it. Our guys don't climb towers or do professional work but we can get you on the air. I need to shout out to WA9BPP Albert, who I heard on the net last night. We had a lot of fun at his antenna party. Great to have you on the air again!

I am also excited about how our club has grown! We now have near 40 people attend our meetings. And at the last introductions, it seemed we had people from all experiences and ages from teens to octogenarians. Many were hams 30+ years and many were hams less than 5 years. BTW, Eddie who joined our club and has attended our meetings without a license for several months, got his General class license several weeks ago as KE9DWN. He's checked in a couple nets too. Congratz Eddie!

Getting a group to come together and share our joy of radio is what a club is all about. Sharing the magic of radio, our resources and experience is our way of advancing our hobby. It's the only hobby I'm aware of that gains us instant friends. On this thought, I also wish to thank everyone for sharing your resources. Every time I have passed my hat at a meeting, it gets filled. At the last meeting I asked if anyone wanted to contribute to the antenna party committee to get more supplies and I was overwhelmed by the response. THANK YOU.

When I was elected President, I was very humbled and thought I would give it one year. I'm retired and got the time. That year we worked on doing an inventory of the club, what does it have, and what is it. When I was elected a second time I thought "OK, one more year and they will get tired of me." The second year we focused on reforming committees. We worked at reviving a repeater committee, a shack committee, and an antenna party committee among others. This is my third term and I think the club is doing well. This year, I focused on increasing member activity. Activity is the blood supply of any club. We started a monthly fox hunt with "TARSan" the fox in February and they have been going strong. (Is there another activity we can do? Contests, trips and/or dxpeditions are current ideas) I never thought I would have a fourth term. I'm willing to do it, but it would be nice to have a real election so I can "Vote for Pedro". Please think about running for office. Or at least nominate three others. :)

Hamtober Fest time folks!!! It's time to start cleaning the shack. Please look around for items to donate for the club's tables. I really think this is one of the highlights of the Hamtober Fest. I've picked up several items from the table that were super interesting and wonderful bargains. This is our biggest source of income for the club and these donations help us make the club a better resource for local Amateur Radio. So consider donating or getting a table to sell your gear. It's going to be a big hamfest this year!!

I'm looking forward to our next meeting on 9/11 which will not be at the Red Cross. It will be at the Evansville Vanderburgh County EMA which is at the county jail facility. Hope to see you there!

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR

President TARS 2023-25

September TARS Meeting

The next TARS regular meeting is **this Thursday September 11th 7:00pm at the Vanderburgh County EMA Office.**

IMPORTANT

September meeting location and information!

The September TARS meeting will be at the Vanderburgh County EMA located at the Vanderburgh County jail, 3500 N Harlan Ave, Evansville, IN. [\[MAP LINK\]](#)
We have been asked to meet at the front door at 6:30 so we can enter as a group.

LEAVE any WEAPONS, KNIVES AND PERSONAL EFFECTS LOCKED IN YOUR VEHICLE. YOU WILL BE GOING THROUGH METAL DETECTORS AS YOU ENTER THE JAIL COMPLEX.

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 **AZZIP pizza 2121 N Green River Rd**, Evansville, IN. When leaving AZZIP for the meeting, go North on Green River Rd to Lynch and turn left (west), to Hwy 41 N, turn right (north), to St George Rd and turn left (west), and take the first road, Harlan Ave left (south) to the jail.

Contest Corner for September 2025

Since many of you are not fans of contesting, this month's Contest Corner will feature a different operating event – Route 66 on the Air. Route 66, dubbed the "Mother Road" by John Steinbeck, stretches approximately 2,448 miles, from Chicago, Illinois to Santa Monica, California, passing through eight states: Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. Similar to the Lewis and Clark Trail on the Air event, 24 stations with 1x1 callsigns from W6A up to W6Y will be operating near the original Route 66, from Santa Monica up to Chicago. This year will be a special year for the event as there will be 5 rover stations, W6S, W6T, W6V, W6W and W6Y. W6Y will be an Aeronautical Rover station operating from the air on 2meters simplex 146.490.



TARS Calendar

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 EMA Office
- 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**

October

- 1 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Herb, KB9MZH)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 2 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 8 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 9 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 – La Campirana**
TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross
- 15 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, KE9YK)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 22 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 29 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-

[Connect to the TARS Google Calendar](#)

A beautiful certificate and decal are available for participating in the event. Of course, the challenge is to work all the stations, but the decal and certificate can be had for contacting any one of the stations. A downloadable log sheet can be found at www.W6JBT.org to help keep track of your progress. The request for the certificate and decal can also be made at this site. Your log does not need to be sent in. The event will run from September 6th 0001Z up to September 14th 2359Z. See how many you can get!

73,
Mark KDOEE

National Preparedness Month: 12 Ways to Prepare

The ARRL Letter for September 4, 2025

September is [National Preparedness Month](#), and ARRL is working to arm members with knowledge and resources to be resilient in the face of disaster. Amateur radio serves as a powerful tool and national resource before and [When All Else Fails](#)®, but being prepared goes beyond radio. “Being ready to serve your community through ham radio begins with being ready yourself,” says ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV. Johnston spent 17 years as a county emergency manager before coming to lead programs such as the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®). “Having a plan and preparing yourself will improve your chances of being resilient in the face of disaster.”

ARES works closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which has shared this checklist of [12 ways to prepare](#) [PDF]:



- Sign up for alerts and warnings
- Make a plan
- Save for a rainy day
- Practice emergency drills
- Test family communication plan
- Safeguard documents
- Plan with neighbors
- Make your home safer

- Know evacuation routes
- Assemble or update supplies
- Get involved in your community
- Document and insure property

You can find more information and resources at www.ready.gov/september and at www.arrl.org/ares.



September Birthday's

W9GFS Bruce Hatfield	5
KE9BHY Isaac Damm	10
K9SRC Steve Connaughton	13
W9KXP Mike Townsend	13

Bits Of Interest

Bi-Monthly radio magazine from The Surrey Amateur Radio Communications Society (SARC), one of Canada's largest and most active emergency-oriented amateur radio organizations.

The September/October 2025 issue of [The Communicator](#) includes:

- Field Day and Cross-Border Microwave Activity
- Propagation Profile: Exploring the Gray Line in Radio Propagation
- An AM Radio Transmitter Suitable for in-home broadcast
- After 14 attempts our first circumnavigation of a pico balloon!
- And more!

Ham Radio Hacks

Interesting Amateur/Ham Radio projects and reviews.

How To Get Precise Time Outside Your Shack

- [August 20, 2025](#)

A visit to “Shine 800 AM”

The site is said to have the largest AM transmitter in the Western Hemisphere. Seeing this high-power station was worth the effort.

[Radio World](#)

Fox Hunt - September

The September foxhunt will be Sunday Sep. 21st at 1:00 pm. They have been getting a pretty good turnout for the hunt, so come on out and join the group. If you are new to foxhunting, post a message on the IO Group and look for an Elmer to hunt with.

12 Tips for Radio Transmitter Hunting from Josh KB9BAH

1. **Learn to Program Your Radio:** Learn how to program a simplex frequency, disable tone squelch, and turn off repeater offsets. And make sure your in FM mode and not digital.
2. **Disable Squelch:** Turn off squelch to detect faint signals that might not break through, allowing you to pick up weak or distant transmissions.
3. **Use a Directional Antenna:** Employ a Yagi or loop antenna, rotating it slowly to find the strongest signal direction, which points to the transmitter's location.
4. **Match Antenna Polarization:** Align your antenna's polarization (typically vertical) with the transmitter's for optimal reception. Adjust orientation to enhance signal or attenuate when close.
5. **Combine Ears and Meter:** Use your radio's signal meter but also listen carefully to identify the direction of the strongest signal, improving accuracy.
6. **Apply Signal Attenuation:** Near the transmitter, prevent receiver overload by using an attenuator or slightly detuning (offset tuning) to maintain directional clarity. You can also use the third harmonic of the transmitter frequency, found by multiplying the transmitter frequency by 3, to reduce signal strength and refine direction-finding.
7. **Avoid Reflective Surfaces:** Take bearings at least 20 feet from vehicles or large buildings to prevent signal reflections that can distort direction-finding.
8. **Make Strategic Long Moves:** If the signal is weak, move a significant distance to a new location. Use your vehicle's mobile radio signal meter to check if the signal strengthens or weakens.
9. **Triangulate Multiple Bearings:** Counter reflections by taking bearings from various locations. Use a compass

and map or an app like Sigtrax to triangulate the transmitter's position.

10. **Refine Bearings Wisely:** Recognize bearings are estimates; a few degrees of error over miles can mislead. Review bearings on a map, discard outliers from reflections or antenna backside reception, and avoid stopping for every transmission to maintain momentum.
11. **Know Your Terrain:** Study maps beforehand to understand terrain features like hills or buildings that may block or reflect signals, impacting your bearings.
12. **Start High:** Begin from an elevated vantage point to capture clearer, stronger signals and reduce obstructions from trees or structures.

Hamfest Calendar

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>

Looking Ahead

2025

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

Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

The next meeting will be Sep 18th, 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 HOIP: 102334 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

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



Secretary Report

TARS gen meeting 2025-08-14

Called to order by Scott KD4SIR at 7PM

Did introductions, everyone told how long they have been a ham.

Business mtg-

- Scott made motion to reimburse steve for antenna kits, n9ol seconded. Motion passed.
- Charlie made motion to reimburse n9ol for the raffle ticket printing. Wb9mzh seconded. Motion passed.
- Charlie made motion to reimburse n9ol for the remote control software for the repeater nodes. Wb9mzh seconded. Motion passed.

Scott talked about needing volunteers for tars office.

This Saturday 8/16 club picnic at Audubon SP Sycamore shelter. Starting at 9am, lunch at noon. Bring covered dish

Next meeting will be at the EMA main office on hwy 41. Will be on 9/11 at 7pm.

Foxhunt on 8/30 7am.

Hamtober Fest announcements

Scott discussed the whether station that was donated to the club for the red cross.

Eric kc9ep relayed good wishes to TARS from the Grantham Radio Club in England. He visited there recently and they know about TARS and sends regards.

Turned it over to Walt and Steve for the antenna build project.

John Van Vorst, N9oL, TARS Secretary

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

Treasurer Report

Tri-state Amateur Radio Society			
Financial Report for July 2025			
Amateur Radio Society Primary Account			
Opening Balance:			\$11,917.41
TARS sub-accounts			
General Fund sub-account			
Opening Bal		\$3,887.12	
Receipts:			
Membership	\$37.50		
Total Receipts --->>		\$37.50	
Expenditures:			
Field Day Food - Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH (check 1170)	(\$149.43)		
Total Expenditures--->>		(\$149.43)	
Ending Balance General Fund			\$3,775.19
Repeater Maint & Investment - Restricted Account			
Opening Balance		\$6,641.30	
Receipts:			
	\$0.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$0.00	
Expenditures:			
VIKOR St Police Tower Repair	(\$1,795.00)		
Total Expenditures--->>		(\$1,795.00)	
Ending Balance of Repeater Restrictred sub-account			\$4,846.30
Red Cross Fund - Restricted Account			
Opening Balance		\$1,388.99	
Receipts:			
For 7/29 VE Room	\$21.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$21.00	
Expenditures:			
none	\$0.00		
Total Expenditures--->>		\$0.00	
Ending Balance of Red Cross Restrictred sub-account			\$1,409.99
Ending Balance - TARS primary Checiking Account			\$10,031.48
TARS IGC (IN Gaming Commission) restricted checking account:			
Opening Balance		\$247.48	
Receipts:			
	\$0.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$0.00	
Expenditures:			
	\$0.00		
Total Expenditures--->>		\$0.00	
Ending Balance of IGC Restrictred checking account			\$247.48

Tom KD9PFH TARS Treasurer

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

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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Chris Lantaff KE9YK

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