

# SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

**Serving the Tri-State over 75 years**

December 2025 – Vol. LXXVIII, No. 12



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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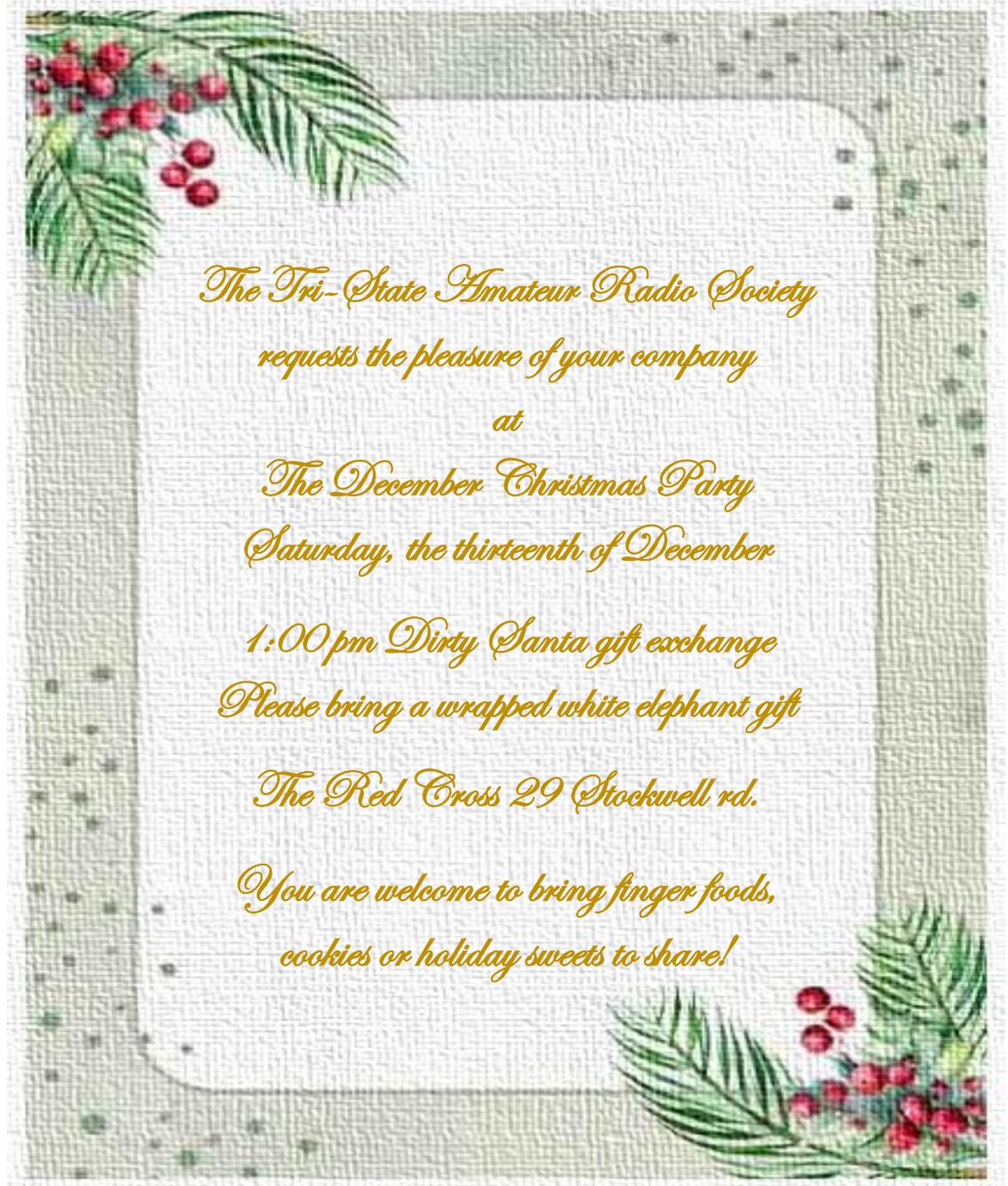
E-mail subscriptions are provided to all regular TARS members. News contributions and letters/emails to the editor are always welcome.

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](http://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](mailto:info@w9og.net).



*The Tri-State Amateur Radio Society  
requests the pleasure of your company*

*at*

*The December Christmas Party  
Saturday, the thirteenth of December*

*1:00 pm Dirty Santa gift exchange*

*Please bring a wrapped white elephant gift*

*The Red Cross 29 Stockwell rd.*

*You are welcome to bring finger foods,  
cookies or holiday sweets to share!*

**There is NO regular Thursday night meeting for December!  
The meeting is the Christmas party Saturday December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm!**

## Presidents Corner

December 2025

Happy Holidays Everyone!!

I am always surprised to write the December article finding the whole year behind us. What a fantastic year. In my past December articles, I usually listed all the activities we do or have done. But I think I will highlight the biggest change this year was a new mascot to our club: TARSan the Fox. We started the monthly fox hunts in February. I have been amazed at how well attended they have been with about 10 participants each time. I've traveled the majority of Vanderburgh County and parts of Warrick County too where at one point I think the fox hunt turned into finding the missing man; me!

I want to thank everyone for a really nice election. The choices were very hard to pick between. Big thanks to those leaving the board. Don't go far, we still need you.

We need activities and participation. If you have any ideas, please let us know. We are so lucky to have a large set of hams who are subject matter experts on a lot of various topics. So, if you have a topic you want covered at a meeting, please let Jerry or I know. If you are willing to give a presentation let us know too. It seems this year attendance has been increasing too. Talking about attendance and participation: This Saturday a bunch of hams are meeting at the red cross to discuss where to go on a DXpedition of sorts next year. Stay tuned to groups.io for details.

Saturday the 13th we are having our Christmas Party. Bring something to eat, a \$15 wrapped white elephant gift for the Dirty Santa game and something Amateur Radio related to share. Should be a fantastic time.

The January meeting we will discuss SOTA and POTA. Please bring your gear that you use for this purpose to show it off. I actually thought this was a phase in Amateur Radio, that it would pass like the work all walmarts idea. But I actually hunt parks for quick contacts when I don't want to log since they log them for me. I told Jerry today, I might activate Harmonie State Park next year. Me, outside with nature. Can you imagine? :)

I truly appreciate every one of you for making this club a fun gathering of learning, sharing and laughter in our hobby. May you and your family find joy this season and a blessed new year to come.

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR  
President TARS 2023-26



## TARS Calendar

### December

- 3 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, KE9YK)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 4 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 10 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 11 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 Cici's Pizza**
- 13 **TARS Christmas Party (SATURDAY) 1:00pm**
- 17 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 24 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 27 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**
- 31 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-

### January

- 7 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 8 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 14 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, KE9YK)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 15 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30**  
**TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross**  
**POTA show and tell**
- 21 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 24 **Winter Field Day at the Red Cross**
- 28 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)  
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
- 31 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**

### Dec. TARS Meeting – SATURDAY - 12/13/25

The next TARS meeting is **Saturday** Dec. 13<sup>h</sup>, 1:00 pm at the Red Cross. We will have a **DIRTY SANTA / WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE, with a maximum \$15 gift limit along with a SHOW-N-TELL Holiday meeting with refreshments.** Bring your favorite holiday treats/cookies etc. to share and a drink if you wish. The club will have coffee and some drinks. If you have something you want to bring along for showing off, we are going to have a Station Accessories show and tell!

**For the DIRTY SANTA / WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE, Wrap your gift without a to-or-from label.**

Here's a tricky wrapping tip:

The more interesting the wrapping, the more excitement there is to choose a certain gift early on. Try wrapping the package in several layers of paper or different size boxes to make it appear like an elaborate gift when it's actually something small. You can also try wrapping the gift to look like a different object, just to throw someone off.

Come on out and join us for a fun time!

Everyone that brings a White Elephant gift will get a ticket to be drawn for your turn to select a gift from the pile or STEAL a gift from someone that has already opened a gift!



### Basic Dirty Santa Rules:

- The game begins once #1 selects a gift from the pile (after much thought and deliberation, of course), opens it, and shows it to everyone.
- The person who drew #2 then goes and has the option to steal #1's gift (aka "Dirty Santa") or pick a different gift from the pile. This continues with each person having the chance to steal or choose a wrapped gift.
- A gift can be stolen no more than three times. The host should keep a tally of each gift and announce once a gift is "dead" and can no longer be stolen.
- A gift can also only be stolen once per turn. For example, if person #17's gift was stolen, and they steal from person #5, then person #5 cannot steal the gift that was taken from #17.
- If your gift is stolen, you can't steal it right back. You can steal another gift or choose from the pile.
- When all the gifts have been opened, the person who drew #1 has the option to steal a gift (since they did not have any gifts to steal initially). If they choose not to steal and keep the gift they have, the game is over. If they decide to steal, then the game continues until someone decides to keep their gift.

### Desk of Jerry - WB9ONU

Desk of Jerry - WB9ONU

I would like to see more members on the 10 Meters Ragchew Net. This is an excellent step for all of the Tech's in the club. It's gives you a reason to get a HF rig. Also, you have a chance to work other HF station all around the world. You don't need a new fancy HF rig an older HF rig that works will also work and they are cheaper. So start thinking about the 10 meters ragchew net. Also, any member that has a old hf radio that they don't used or need any more consider offering it to TARS or to techs in the club so they might try HF.

Coming in December will be TARS annual Christmas party. The TARS XMAS will be on Dec. 13th at the Red Cross starting at 1 p.m.

Coming in January would like for everyone that works POTA to bring your POTA setup so everyone can see what you use. Hopefully Josh will explain POTA. This meeting is more or less a show and tell meeting. To let members that never have work POTA to give it a try.

February meeting will be the TARS Banquet. More info in the January Sparks.

So going to ask everyone what they would like to see at each meeting. Also, what activity would you like the club participate. Write down your ideas and bring the paper either to the December meeting. This is after all your club.

I am working on something new for all members of TARS. At this time, I need to get the permission of the Tars Board and Officers. Will talk about it at the December Christmas Party.

So 73 for now.

Jerry - WB9ONU

### TARS Officers and Board for 2026

Congratulations to the 2026 elected Officers and Board members. The club appreciates everyone that stepped up to run for a position and looks forward to an exciting 2026.

#### 2026 Club Officers - Board members

**President** [Scott Hibbs KD4SIR](#)

**Vice President** [Jerry McIntosh WB9ONU](#)

**Treasurer** [Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH](#)

**Secretary** [John VanVorst N9OL](#)

#### Board of Directors

[Mark Holland KD0EE](#) (2026-2027)

[Josh Gibson KE9BAH](#) (2026-2027)

[Steve Brewster KO9O](#) (2026-2027)

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

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

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

### Eat'n before the Meet'n

Herby still plans to meet at Cici's Pizza for eating, even though we don't have the regular meeting this Thursday.

If you want to join Herby and the group, come on out at 5:30pm on Thursday 12/11 at Cici's pizza, 101B N Green River Rd Ste 115, Evansville. Weather permitting.





## SANTA NET

### Let Kids Talk with Santa Over Ham Radio

Ho! Ho! Ho!

#### Santa's on Ham Radio

Share the magic of Ham Radio and Santa Claus with your children, grandchildren, and neighborhood kids.

The Santa Net is held every evening between Thanksgiving and Christmas on 3.916 MHz at 7:00PM Central Time (check-ins open 1/2 hour before). [www.CQSanta.com](http://www.CQSanta.com).

## Winter Field Day January 24-25, 2026

Winter Field Day (WFD) is a communications exercise. WFD is held on the last full weekend in January. WFD can be worked from the comfort of your home or in a remote location. You can participate by yourself or get your friends, family, or whole club involved. Winter Field Day is open to participants worldwide. Amateur radio operators may use frequencies on the HF, VHF, or UHF bands and are free to use any mode that can faithfully transmit the required exchange intact. Similar to the ARRL Field Day, bonus points are earned in several ways, including using non-commercial power sources, operating from remote locations, satellite contacts, and more."



More info at: <https://winterfieldday.org/>

**[TARS WFD operation will be at the Red Cross this year, Jan 24th! Watch for more information in the January addition of SPARKS]**

## Beyond the Baofeng

By Chris Lantaff [KE9YK](http://www.qsl.net/kk4obi/EFHW%20Sloping.html)

As per the discussion last month by Brian WB9QVR. This site discusses the far field radiation patterns produced by each harmonic of an End Fed Half Wave antenna in sloping form.

<https://www.qsl.net/kk4obi/EFHW%20Sloping.html>

This is a very interesting site on radiation patterns of dipole antennas and their response to many configurations.

## KO9O Antenna Party

Here are two photos from the skyloop installation at the QTH of Steve Ko9o



Helping out were:

Dennis WA2USA, Brian WB9QVR, Mark KD0EE, Allen KE9CCS, Josh KE9BAH and behind the camera, Dave KF6XA.

## WANTED - WANTED - WANTED

**The Antenna Committee is getting lazy and fat.**

If you need help with your shack or an antenna install, please reach out to Scott, KD4SIR @ [scotthibbs@gmail.com](mailto:scotthibbs@gmail.com) or Jerry, WB9ONU @ [wb9onu@hotmail.com](mailto:wb9onu@hotmail.com) or speak up at a meeting. A dozen or so hams are ready and waiting to help.

## Bits of interest

### ARRL 10 Meter Contest - Dec. 13 and 14

Brian Esche WB9QVR via [groups.io](https://groups.io)

Hey Technician Class operators (or 10-meter fans of any class): The ARRL 10-meter Contest is December 13 and 14! Yeah, I know many of you have no interest in contesting – and that’s perfectly fine. But think about this – assuming that the propagation gods smile on 10 meters that weekend, the increased traffic is a GREAT opportunity to work some elusive states – or perhaps work all states in one weekend – as well as plenty of DX! Want to find out how well your home-brew 10-meter antenna works? There’s no better way to find out than making plenty of contacts. Also, if you don’t already have a 10-meter antenna of some sort, it’s easy and inexpensive to build that wire antenna design you’ve always wanted to try! Of course, since Techs can operate phone (and CW) on 10 meters, it’s a great time for them to take advantage of those privileges.

The exchange for the 10-meter contest is simple: RS(T) and your state. That’s it. Simply hand out that info to each station you contact and they will give to you a signal report and their state or province (DX stations will provide RS(T) and a sequential serial number of that particular contact). More info about the contest can be found at the link below.

One thing – if you don’t normally use computer logging or if you normally use a general-purpose computer log, you’ll want to use one specifically designed for the contest so it can track duplicate contacts and other info. N1MM is an excellent program and is free. N3FJP has a version for this contest which is simple to use but does require an \$8.99 registration fee (although you might want to consider purchasing the entire suite of their products for \$59.99 as you’ll likely want to use some of their other products such as ALog). Of course, you can use paper logging as well but it’s a bit more difficult to track dupes using that method.

So get on the air December 13 and 14 and enjoy lighting up those 10-meter frequencies! Good luck!

<https://www.arrl.org/10-meter>

### SOTA Videos

Dennis Martin WA2USA via [groups.io](https://groups.io)

I thought some of you might like this video of a SOTA activation in Colorado.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5X6Pbc1KOM>

The mountain is called Wander Ridge with an elevation of 12,800 feet and change.

I have been to this hill many times and it is one of my favorites. It always seems to be windy and thank goodness there is a stone shelter at the top.

Mike and his wife Laurel made a visit to the hill this past August. Mike is new to SOTA and enjoys operating VHF. Note the 2-meter yagi, the views, and a few snow patches.

Operating 2 meters is a challenge and Mike does a nice job putting Qs in his log.

Wander Ridge is fairly easy to get to with access off the Continental Divide trail.

Mike and Laurel are both West Point grads and retired from the Army.

PS - I added another video. This one Mike and Laurel to South Peak at 12,000 plus feet off of Weston Pass. More wind and elevation with some huffing and puffing. I know the feeling since I've been to this one as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFMBdZt4ngc&list=PLBEFQbfOLgXhEMVBJ98ZrwFeKJPwppaCy&index=3>

### W9OG makes AMSAT Journal

W9OG got a mention in the AMSAT Journal along with a couple of pictures of the Satellite set-up.

We actually placed 8th nationally in the AMSAT Field Day! 73//Dave WB9YIG



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## December Birthday's

KD9PFH	Tom Hilgeman	1
WB9QVR	Brian Esche	1
N9XXH	Terry Hammers	5
N9OL	John Van Vorst	9
KD9NCP	Rodney Witherspoon	10
KB9MZH	Herb Alvey	12
KDOEE	Mark Holland	19
KC9HWQ	Chris Politano	20
KC9SYL	Gene Flick	25

## VE Testing 2025

**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](http://www.fcc.gov/register).

If you need help or have questions, please let me know at [n9ol@arri.net](mailto:n9ol@arri.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



## Vanderburgh Co. AUXCOMM

The next meeting will be Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm at the Vanderburgh Co. EMA west side training facility, [1440 Harmony Way](http://1440HarmonyWay.com).

Anyone interested in emergency communication in Vanderburgh County is invited!

Contact us for more details.

Vanderburgh County Auxcomm

Chris KE9YK [IN82RACES@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:KC9CLO@gmail.com)

## Treasurer Report

Tri-state Amateur Radio Society			
Financial Report for October 2025			
<b>Amateur Radio Society Primary Account</b>			
<b>Opening Balance:</b>			<b>\$10,038.29</b>
<b>TARS sub-accounts</b>			
<b>General Fund sub-account</b>			
Opening Bal		\$3,816.73	
Receipts:			
Membership	\$55.00		
HamtoberFest Donations - Kitchen	\$173.45		
HamtoberFest Donations - Front Table	\$253.00		
HamtoberFest TARS Sales	\$450.00		
HamtoberFest Tables Sold	\$315.00		
HamtoberFest Biscuits and Gravy	\$123.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$1,369.45	
Expenditures:			
Biscuits and Gravy	(\$49.68)		
Donuts	(\$82.45)		
Creamer, Cups, Cutlery, and Airtop	(\$101.62)		
Total Expenditures--->>		(\$233.75)	\$62.00
<b>Ending Balance General Fund</b>			<b>\$4,952.43</b>
<b>Repeater Maint &amp; investment - Restricted acct</b>			
<b>Opening Balance</b>		\$4,804.57	
<b>Receipts:</b>		\$0.00	
<b>Expenditures:</b>		\$0.00	
<b>Ending Balance of Repeater Restrictd sub-account</b>			<b>\$4,804.57</b>
<b>Red Cross Fund - Restricted Acct</b>			
<b>Opening Balance</b>		\$1,416.99	
<b>Receipts:</b>			
ForAugust VE Room	\$35.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$35.00	
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
None	\$0.00		
Total Expenditures--->>		\$0.00	
<b>Ending Balance of Red Cross Restrictd sub-account</b>			<b>\$1,451.99</b>
<b>Ending Balance - TARS primary Checiking Account</b>			
			<b>\$11,208.99</b>
<b>TARS IGC (IN Gaming Commission) restricted checking account:</b>			
<b>Opening Balance</b>		\$196.12	
<b>Receipts:</b>			
Raffle Ticket Sales	\$1,320.00		
Total Receipts --->>		\$1,320.00	
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
None	\$0.00		
Total Expenditures--->>		\$0.00	
<b>Ending Balance of IGC Restrictd checking account</b>			<b>\$1,516.12</b>

Tom KD9PFH TARS Treasurer

## Looking Ahead

2026

Straight Key Night January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC

ARRL Kids Day Jan First Saturday

**Winter Field Day January** at Red Cross **Jan 24**

**TARS Banquet February 2026??**

**INQP May 2026: May 2-3**

**Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air**

**MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND** June

ARRL Kids Day June Third Saturday

**Field Day June**

**13 Colonies Special Event** July

**TARS PICNIC ???**

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

**Route 66 Special Event** September

**TARS 8<sup>th</sup> annual HAMTOBER FEST October, 2026**

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

SKYWARN Recognition Day, First Saturday, December

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 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@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.w9og.net)

**Facebook Group**

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

**TARS Groups.io email list:** [TARS@Groups.IO](mailto:TARS@Groups.IO)

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

## 2025 Club Officers - Board members

**President** [Scott Hibbs KD4SIR](#)

**Vice President** [Jerry McIntosh WB9ONU](#)

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[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](mailto:sparks.w9og@gmail.com)

