

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State over 75 years

February 2026 – Vol. LXXIX, No. 2



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

February 2026

My favorite season is Winter. I love having days off being snowed in with family. Winter is the best season that gives random days off to play. The science behind the weather is extremely unknown, so I'm always warned about the worst weather only to be let down by weather that never happens. Sirens always signal maybes. Unfortunately, the weather canceled our Winter Field Day. They moved up the Thunderbolts Hockey game to 3PM so I had limited time anyway. The restaurants were closing when we found food on the way home about 6:30pm when the roads were just slowing down. But I got my snow!! I also got a head cold or flu from shoveling the driveway.

The next event that we got going on is our banquet at the Golden Corral on our meeting night. We will meet at 5:30pm. After a short meeting we will have our awards. Please be there and bring your spouses. Should be a lot of fun.

We started our monthly fox hunts a year ago last February and I wondered then if it was going to make it a couple months. I've been really surprised by the turn out and I've really loved my long drives throughout Vanderburgh and surrounding counties!

I'm excited about the future like FreeDV replacing SSB. But, I have spent the last 15 days or so playing with something called Claude Code. It is revolutionary. It is a different form of AI where it is basically like hiring a programmer. I support a couple Amateur Radio projects on Github like Morse Runner Community Edition but I also have a repository for FLog_Enhanced. I forked a program called FLog which is a field day logger going all the way back to 1984 that uses a distributed database. I learned Python so I could add enhancements like always knowing who is on which radio and band. But my skills are limited. I didn't know how to integrate Morse Code. Claude Code did it in minutes. When I exhausted programs I knew to integrate with, I asked. Claude Code suggested I integrate with N3FJP as a client as well as a server. Which means you can log with N3FJP and my program as a client can log along with it in the background. As a server, any program that works with N3FJP can now work with FLog_Enhanced. I didn't even know this was possible and now I need testers to see if it works. Claude Code is a lot of fun and only limited by my imagination. This is essentially computers programming computers. Don't think about that in terms of Asimov or Skynet, but in terms of the innovation we are about to see!

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR
President TARS 2023-26

REMINDER: your 2026 Dues are now past due!

It's time to renew your dues!

A 2026 membership form is included with this mailing of SPARKS. You may mail the form with your due's payment to the address on the form, or bring it to the meeting.

Please fill out the form as it lets us update our records and make sure your information is correct.

Once again, we would like to have a membership roster in the March issue of SPARKS, so get your dues in A.S.A.P. THANKS!

February Meeting – Banquet 5:30 pm

The February 12th meeting will be our annual banquet, to be held at Golden Corral, 130 Cross Pointe Blvd, Evansville.

TARS has the meeting room reserved to start at 5:30 pm.

This will be dutch treat, so just pay as you enter as usual and come to the meeting room to join us. TARS will pay the tip for the wait staff.

The buffet regular price is \$18.99, and if you want a drink other than water, it will be an additional \$2.99. Hope to see you all there.



Desk of Jerry - WB9ONU

Well TARS Winter Field Day was canceled back in January 24 and 25 at the American Red Cross. Instead, we actually had a possibility of a real disaster. I hope everyone managed to stay safe and warm.

We have next year to get ready for Winter Field Day 2027. So do we have anyone that will be the 1st to get a WORK ALL TARS OFFICERS AWARD. I have so far worked 5 of the TARS OFFICERS. Remember you can work any officers before or after our 2 meters and 10 meters net. I will post on tars@groups.io when I will be on 2 meters and what frequency.

February will be TARS Banquet at the Golden Corral on Feb 12. So come and eat and bring your other half and tell them it's for Valentine. Take credit for any and all brownie points.

Hope to see you at the meeting or hear you on the band.

73 & 88
Jerry WB9ONU

TARS Calendar

February

- 4 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
5 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 ZOOM**
- 11 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
12 **TARS Banquet 5:30 Golden Corral**
- 18 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
25 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, KE9YK)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
28 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**

March

- 4 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Jerry, WB9ONU)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
5 **TARS Board meeting 6:30**
- 7-15 Novice Rig Roundup
- 11 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
12 **Eat'n Before the Meet'n 5:30 CiCi's Pizza**
TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross
- 18 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
25 8pm Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
8:30pm Ten-meter RAG CHEW net 28.355 +-
28 **VE Testing 9am Red Cross**

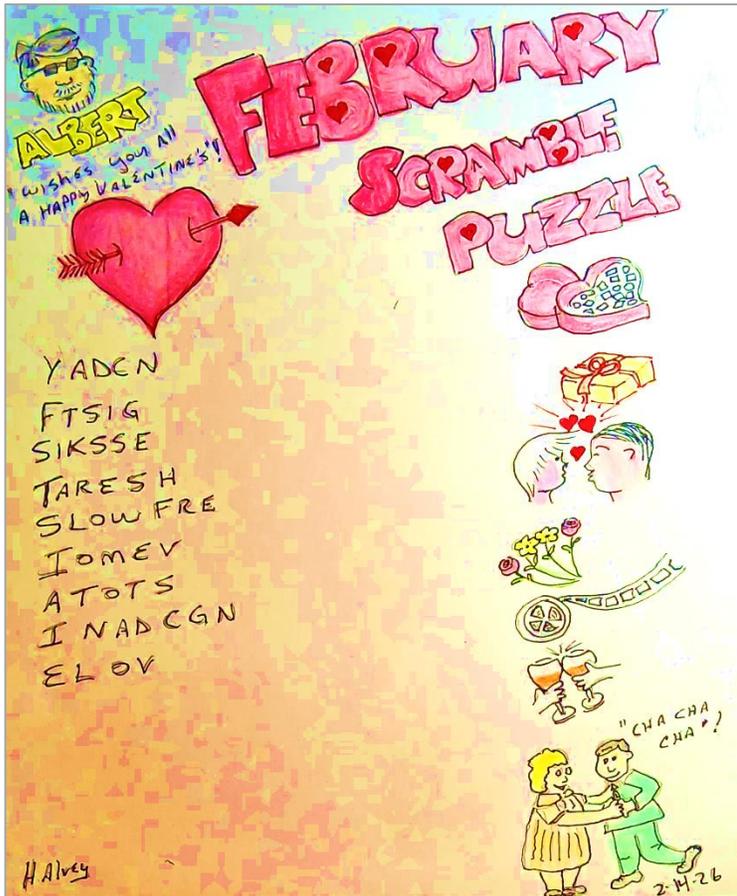
Fox Hunt

The first fox hunt of the year saw a fantastic turnout, especially considering the cold weather! We had seven hunters participate. Eddie (KD9DWN) did an excellent job hiding in the Bosse Field north parking lot. While it may not have been intentional, he blended in perfectly among the parked cars, making for a great challenge.

I managed to take the win again, which means I'll be the fox for next month's hunt. After that, I plan on offering "ride-alongs" for anyone who wants some extra help or coaching. Our next hunt is scheduled for **Saturday, February 21st, at 1:00 PM.**

The fox will be hiding somewhere within Vanderburgh County and broadcasting on 145.300. Come out and join the fun!

Josh - KE9BAH



★ HAPPY ★ BIRTHDAY!

February Birthday's

N9EMH	Rick Dennis	8
AD9GX	Rob Flavin	13
W9FHA	John D. Small	14
W9CFI	Chris Lemon	21
AB9JK	Terry Stuckey	24

2026 WORK ALL TARS OFFICERS

Jerry WB9ONU has created a contest to encourage TARS members to get on the air!

A sheet to track your progress is attached to this issue of SPARKS.

The WORK ALL TARS OFFICERS AWARD

Rules:

- **No Net Contacts.** All contacts are to be made anytime other than a net. **You may work an officer before or after a net, but not during.**
- WATO award starts over each January 1st, since there may be new officers.
- A sheet is provided to make it easy for you to keep track of which officers you have worked during the year.
- Once your sheet is filled, turn it in at a club meeting.

VE Testing 2026

February 28 2026 - 9AM Central time

March 28 2026 - 9AM Central time

April 25 2026 - 9AM Central time

June 13 2026 - 9AM Central time

July 25 2026 - 9AM Central time

August 29 2026 - 9AM Central time

September 26 2026 - 9AM Central time

December 5 2026 - 9AM Central time

January 30 2027 - 9AM Central time

You must PRE-REGISTER for these sessions at www.Hamstudy.org

The Tristate Amateur Radio Society (TARS) is pleased to provide ARRL amateur radio testing throughout the year. These sessions are IN-PERSON sessions- unless noted next to the session date below- are held at the Evansville Indiana Red Cross facility at 29 S Stockwell Rd in Evansville. Test sessions begin at 9AM CENTRAL TIME (local Evansville IN time).

Testing fee is \$15 cash. If you are under 18 years of age the fee is \$5.

Exams will be administered online- to take a test you must bring your own device- laptop, tablet, smart phone, etc- whatever you

Bits of interest

Novice Rig Roundup 2026

Runs From March 7, 00:00 UTC Through March 15, 23:59 UTC

Novice Rig Roundup (NRR) is an annual 9-day operating event celebrating the old Novice type equipment, and operating restrictions, of over 60 years ago. Each March we put our nostalgic stations on the air to make contacts with each other, and anyone else that cares to join in. NRR is focused on the days of 75 watts input at the plate and crystal controlled transmitters - however, ALL stations are welcome. More info at: <https://www.novicerigroundup.org/>

HamClock Project to Sunset June 2026

January 29, 2026

A message posted to the HamClock website earlier today announced that the HamClock project will no longer receive updates. The message stated that while the project has ended, HamClock devices should continue to operate until June 2026, at which point it's expected data will no longer be pushed to the application. Elwood Downey (WB00EW), become a silent key on January 29th, 2026.

There is a group currently working to set up a new system to push the necessary data out to the HamClock community.

Stay tuned for more!

feel comfortable using to take the exam. The testing team will have a couple devices to let you use if you do not have a device or if you have technical issues with yours. But it is HIGHLY recommended you bring your own.

Please register IN ADVANCE for this session. We will do our best to accommodate walk-ins who haven't registered. If you have not pre-registered please arrive 30 minutes early so we can help you get registered for the exam session.

To pre-register for this exam session go to www.Hamstudy.org You must also obtain your FRN number from the FCC in order to register at Hamstudy.org. See the instructions Hamstudy.org for getting your FRN from the FCC or The FCC Cores User Account and Registration page is at

<https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do?csrfToken=> .

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

Examinations will start promptly at 9:00 AM Central time.

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 Feb 19th, 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

Treasurer Report

Tri-state Amateur Radio Society			
Financial Report for			
January 2026			
Amateur Radio Society Primary Account			
Opening Balance:			\$10,975.84
TARS sub-accounts			
General Fund sub-account			
Opening Bal		\$4,684.28	
Receipts:			
	Membership	\$395.00	
	Donations	\$7.50	
Total Receipts --->>			
		\$402.50	
Expenditures:			
	Hamtober Fest Domain	(\$56.98)	
	W9OG Domain and Hosting for 2 yrs.	(\$213.37)	
Total Expenditures--->>			
		(\$270.35)	
Ending Balance General Fund			\$4,816.43
Repeater Maint & investment - Restricted account			
Opening Balance		\$4,804.57	
Receipts:			
None		\$0.00	
Total Receipts --->>			
		\$0.00	
Expenditures:			
None		\$0.00	
Total Expenditures--->>			
		\$0.00	
Ending Balance of Repeater Restrictred sub-account			\$4,804.57
Red Cross Fund - Restricted Acct			
Opening Balance		\$1,486.99	
Receipts:			
for 12/27/25		\$14.00	
Total Receipts --->>			
		\$14.00	
Expenditures:			
none		\$0.00	
Total Expenditures--->>			
		\$0.00	
Ending Balance of Red Cross Restrictred sub-account			\$1,500.99
Ending Balance - TARS primary Checiking Account			
			\$11,121.99
TARS IGC (IN Gaming Commission) restricted checking account:			
Opening Balance		\$1,516.12	
Receipts:			
none		\$0.00	
Total Receipts --->>			
		\$0.00	
Expenditures:			
		\$0.00	
Total Expenditures--->>			
		\$0.00	
Ending Balance of IGC Restrictred checking account			\$1,516.12

Tom KD9PFH TARS Treasurer

Secretary Reports

See report attached with this email.

Looking Ahead

2026

TARS Banquet February 12th 2026

INQP 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 8th annual HAMTOBER FEST October, 2026

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

SKYWARN Recognition Day, First Saturday, December

Straight Key Night January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC

ARRL Kids Day Jan First Saturday

Winter Field Day January at Red Cross

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 encouraged and 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

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)

SPARKS Editor:

Chris Lantaff KE9YK

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