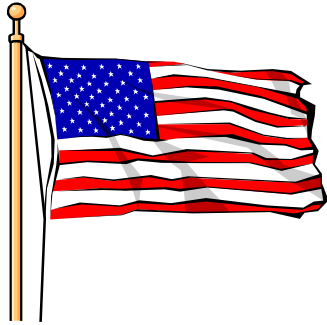


Sparks



Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society
February, 2003--Vol. LVII, No. 2

TARS Website: <http://www.w9og.org>
Club repeaters: 146.79 and 147.15

Say "Hello" at the weekly Tri-State Emergency Net, 8:00pm Wednesdays on 146.79

The President's Corner



At the January Club Meeting we had 22 people come in, and we ended up making 12 2meter loops. We were able to check them out with an SWR meter and they all showed less than 1:3. If anyone would like a 'kit', I will have some leftovers with me at the February meeting. Photos of the activities are on the next page.

The February meeting, by the way, will be the Annual Auction Night. Ed Folz, K9HVI, will be the auctioneer. Ed can sell anything, so bring whatever is taking up too much space in your shack-radio or computer stuff.

We will need your votes again, as last month we forgot to elect someone to fill the vacancy on the TARS

Board. We will do this in Club Business before the Auction.

The March Meeting will be a presentation by either Kathy or Trish from the Red Cross. And for the April Meeting, we are looking forward to having the ARRL Indiana Section Manager, Jim Sellers (K9ZBM), as the guest speaker.

Do you remember the thrill of getting your 1st QSL Card? Jason KC9CVL, an 8th grader from Posy JR/SR High, has been active on the IRLP Node and will be getting 2 QSL Cards. One is from a South African node, and the other is from the Antarctica node. Give IRLP a try on 146.410 simplex, CTSS tone 136.5, and enter 9200 on the DTMF pad to get the Indianapolis reflector. You might be pleasantly surprised.

We now have a Remote for the 146.79 at Griffin Indiana, and it is helping to broaden the wide area coverage for the repeater. A word of thanks goes to all of the people involved in making this happen.

See you at the February Meeting.

__ ... __ N9JCA Chris

Calendar

FEBRUARY

- 5 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 6 TARS Board meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 12 Tri-State Emergency Net (Leonard, N9QVQ)
- 13 TARS club meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm;
annual TARS auction
- 19 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 22 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, Red Cross Bldg.;
bring photocopy of current license, any previous
exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$12.00;
contact Terry, AA9MM for additional informa-
tion (812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigeom.net).
- 26 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)

MARCH

- 5 Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, N9JCA)
- 6 TARS Board meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 12 Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, N9JCA)
- 13 TARS club meeting, Red Cross Bldg., 7:00pm
- 19 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 26 Tri-State Emergency Net (Norm, W9AU)
- 29 ARRL exam session, 9:00am, Red Cross Bldg.;
bring photocopy of current license, any previous
exam credits, two forms of ID, and \$12.00;
contact Terry, AA9MM for additional information
(812-401-9632 or tbrooks@sigeom.net).

TARS Meeting, January 9, 2003

We had a busy meeting on January 9. Chris, N9JCA, brought supplies and members brought feedlines and a few tools. By the end of the evening there



were 12 functional (low SWR!) 2meter loops! The photos tell it all. (I couldn't identify everyone shown, and some people were in the background. Sorry if I left your name out of the captions or if I gave your name and call sign to someone else.)



Chris (KE9YK, left foreground) shapes his loop while Herb (KB9MZH, right foreground) trims a feedline. In the background, Willie (WD9FHA, purple shirt) and Dan (KB9GNI, blue shirt) twist some wire; Bob (N9XAW, behind Willie) walks by.



Mark (N9PDL, foreground) and Noah (KB9BUG, white shirt) put the finishing touches on their loops. Dave, WB9YIG is standing in the background on the right. (Sorry, I'm uncertain who the middle figure at the table is, or who is next to Dave.)

← Loop master Chris (N9JCA, standing in front of the blackboard) supervises Glenn's (N9WYO, striped sweater) work. Bill, K4LRX (right foreground) surveys the situation, while Joanne (KB9LXZ) is busy next to him.

New Attempt to Enact Indiana Amateur Antenna Bill

An Amateur Radio antenna bill has been introduced in the Indiana State Senate. State Sen Rose Ann Antich is the sponsor of Senate Bill 109, "Regulation of Amateur Radio Antennas." The bill parallels PRB-1 but also specifies a minimum regulatory height of 75 feet for amateur antennas.

"I believe this legislation deserves the support of all Indiana amateurs," said Indiana ARRL Section Manager James Sellers, K9ZBM, who urged everyone in the section to contact their state lawmakers and get behind the bill. "We need to get this bill passed by both the Indiana Senate and House and onto the governor's desk!" Sellers said. "Do it today!"

A 2001 effort to get a similar Amateur Radio antenna bill through the Indiana General Assembly failed. Antich also introduced the Senate version of that legislation.

SB 109 would create a new chapter to the Indiana Code, Chapter 5.2, Regulation of Amateur Radio Antennas. The measure declares that if a municipality or county adopts an ordinance, resolution or order involving the placement, screening or height of an Amateur Radio antenna that's based on health, safety or aesthetics, the measure must "reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communications" and "represent the minimal regulation practicable to accomplish the municipality's or county's legitimate purpose."



Such a local ordinance, resolution or order also could not restrict the height of an Amateur Radio antenna to less than 75 feet above ground level. The bill would not prohibit a municipality or county from taking action to protect or preserve historical or architectural districts established under state or federal law.

The legislation got its first reading January 7 and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs and Interstate Cooperation. No hearings have been scheduled.

A copy of the proposed legislation is available on the Indiana General Assembly Web site. If approved by both houses of the Indiana General Assembly, the measure would become effective July 1.

So far 16 states have incorporated the essence of PRB-1 into their laws, but only a handful--Oregon, Virginia, Alaska and Wyoming--include minimum regulatory height limits in their Amateur Radio antenna laws based on PRB-1. Amateur Radio antenna bills are pending in several other states. Utah's Amateur Radio antenna bill appears to be on the fast track. Just 11 days after its introduction (January 20), the bill made it through the Utah House of Representatives. The vote January 31 was 65 to 8 (with two members not voting). Sponsored by Rep Neal B. Hendrickson, House Bill 79, "Regulation of Amateur Radio Antennas," received a favorable recommendation from the House standing committee on political subdivisions earlier this month. HB 79 would prohibit municipalities and counties in Utah from enacting ordinances that fail to comply with the limited federal preemption. [text modified from ARRL Letter, published on-line by the American Radio Relay League]

Heads up, everybody! Please write or e-mail your state representative and senator in support of this bill. This is an easy bill for our elected officials to ignore, because they may believe that supporting it will make some constituents mad at them. We hams have to make ourselves heard--make our elected representatives realize how many of us (and we're all voters!) support the bill. Last time such a bill was introduced it did not even make it out of committee. We need to urge our legislators to move on it this time.

It won't take a lengthy letter or e-mail from you. We just need to make some "noise." Send a few lines voicing your support. You should contact the representative and senator from your House District and

from your Senate District. To get you started, I have listed representatives and senators in the areas where TARS members live. It may be hard to figure out which districts you live in by the descriptions below, but you can find out for yourself at these websites: House Districts are shown at http://www.in.gov/legislative/legislators/house_district_map.html. Senate Districts are shown at http://www.in.gov/legislative/legislators/senate_district_map.html.

These websites also have enlarged maps that show streets, in case you can't tell for sure from the state map. If you are not on the Internet, contact me. I will look you up. You can use the websites to e-mail your representative and senator. If you send a letter by regular mail, write your representative or senator c/o these addresses:

House of Representatives

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Senate

Indiana State Senate
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

House Districts and Representatives:

64. most of Gibson County--**John Frenz**
74. Warrick County except for the northwestern and southwestern corners--**Russ Stilwell**
75. south-central Gibson County, most of Vanderburgh County outside the city, part of Evansville between the Lloyd Expressway and Pigeon Creek, and northwestern Warrick County--**Dennis Avery**
76. all of Posey County, the southwestern corner of Gibson County, and southwestern Vanderburgh County--**Jonathan Weinzapfel**
77. downtown Evansville south of the Lloyd--**Brian Hasler**
78. roughly the eastern half of Vanderburgh County north of Pigeon Creek--**Vaneta Becker**

Senate Districts and Senators:

47. central and eastern Warrick County--**Richard D. Young, Jr.**
48. Gibson County except for the southwest corner--**Tim Neese**
49. Posey County, southwestern Gibson County, northwestern Vanderburgh County, and the southern part of Evansville--**Larry Lutz**

50. Vanderburgh County except for the northwestern corner and the southern part of the city of Evansville--**Greg Server**

Please voice your support!

73 *Norm* W9AU

Texas Amateurs Aid in Shuttle Debris Recovery, Cataloging

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and SKYWARN volunteers in Nacogdoches, Texas, have been assisting local emergency management officials and NASA to locate and catalog debris from the Columbia shuttle. The shuttle and its crew of seven, including three hams, were lost over Texas February 1. ARES and SKYWARN volunteers from the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club have been surveying the area in and around Nacogdoches looking for shuttle debris. Public Information Officer Tim Lewallen, KD5ING, of the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club said amateurs have been accompanying officials from both NASA and the EPA to expedite the search and clean up of area schools. "Usually we just get the coordinates, take a photo and move on to the next site," Lewallen said, "and someone from NASA will come along and pick up the piece later."

He said the club had additional volunteers lined up for duty, with amateurs coming from East Texas, Houston and Dallas. The ARES and SKYWARN volunteers have been working with emergency officials from Nacogdoches County, Texas Rangers, NASA, Texas Department of Public Safety, EPA and the National Guard. The ARES and SKYWARN volunteers also were following up on NASA-provided telemetry and radar information that indicates where debris might be found, Lewallen said. The search area includes densely forested areas.

The Columbia crew, headed by Commander Rick Husband, included Pilot Willie McCool and Mission Specialists Kalpana "KC" Chawla, KD5ESI; David Brown, KC5ZTC; Laurel Clark, KC5ZSU, Michael Anderson, and Payload Specialist Ian Ramon. [This report modified from The ARRL Letter, published on-line by the American Radio Relay League.]

One Man's Opinion

Once a month I read the F.C.C. letters on the ARRL website to see what Riley Hollingsworth has done to bring the "Enforcement Hammer" down on those who have blatantly disobeyed the Amateur rules and regulations. Two such letters caught my eye about the usage of a two meter channel, namely 146.52.

Riley had cited a pair of Ohio hams for prolonged use of this channel due to the belief these fellows were somehow in violation of an obscure rule in Part 97. Now here's the rest of the story. Shortly after Mr. Hollingsworth sent his letters, he realised he had made a mistake. Yes, he admitted the fact, and rescinded his notices.

He did this because Part 97 of our rules and regulations provide no rule, paragraph, subparagraph, or comments other than the ARRL band plan is voluntary and not mandatory. In addition, 146.52 is not a calling frequency as some have erroneously labeled this channel; it has a designation by the ARRL band plan as The National Simplex Channel! This statement appears in the repeater handbooks; the FCC rule books simply designate it as "Simplex Channels" and still other sources call it a "Simplex Calling Channel"!

To recall early history of the two meter band--and this goes back about three and one half decades--you had two basic frequencies everyone used. One was 146.52 and other 146.94. The idea was simple, one frequency for a local repeater if that community had one. If not, you used the 52 simplex channel.

Additionally, 52 found usage for mobiles travelling around the country. Remember that in the early days there were very few two-meter repeaters. A large number of radios from the 60's era used for ham radio amounted to recycled taxi cab units, mostly the GE monsters with two channels available. Some areas in the Northeast used 52 for an emergency alert channel with a tone squelch; if a signal appeared on someone's radio, they needed help.

As time progressed, usage of 52 dwindled due to more communities obtaining available channels for their repeaters; the concept of using 52 simplex faded into the annals of amateur radio history. Another fact was recently recounted in World Radio magazine. The author embarked on a cross-country journey, staying mostly on 52 simplex. To his dismay, very little to zero activity surfaced over many hundreds of miles, giving a strong indication that usage of this channel has diminished greatly.

Recently in our tri-state area a group of hams using this channel for Sunday night gatherings, news, information, Amateur Radio Newsline broadcasts and in general a rag chewing net has surfaced. Are these fellows doing anything wrong? Of course not! As long as they identify their stations at ten minute intervals, keep the language clean and operate with Good Engineering Practice, no one should have a complaint about their activities.

The only thing I question about the 52 group's operation is the amount of time they spend on the channel. An hour is sufficient for most QSOs. However, this group occupies the channel for some time during the course of the evening, with various forms of information passed around over about three hours.

Other than the lengthy time factor, I find nothing objectionable or that violates any section of FCC rules and regulations. Neither has Riley Hollingsworth, and of course his rulings are the ones that count.

The frequency in question is not a sacred, "forbidden use for anything" channel, nor do clubs, groups, individuals, nets, weather nets, newcomers, old timers, Extra Class, Official Observers, ARRL members, Races members, or anyone else have exclusive rights to it.

Mr. Hollingsworth has given the ruling in this matter: the operators in question violated no rules or regulations, and used FM simplex as designated by the ARRL band plan. The controversial issue about 52 simplex begs to be resolved. In fact, if we use the channel wisely and with discretion, then we are using it correctly.

This is of course "One Man's Opinion!"

73 **Bill** K4LRX

Member News

February Birthdays: 2 Larry KB9KVX; 14 John W9FHA; 19 Clifford W9CM; 25 Genny WD9HUN.

Treasurer's Report

ARRL Memberships: TARS will receive \$15 for any new (or rejoining after 2 year lapse) membership to the ARRL that is processed through the club. Contact the club Treasurer for forms and additional information.

[Note: the Treasurer's report and Secretary's report are not included with complimentary issues of **Sparks**.]

Secretary's Report

TARS Elmers

Tom Dickerson, KA9NOO, 985-5854: General stuff

Chris Matthews, N9JCA, 867-7456: APRS, IRLP, computers

Norm King, W9AU, 963-5872: RACES, antennas, contests

Mark Parker, N9NYF, 422-7586: Digital modes, computers

John Small, W9FHA, 867-7058: Antennas (no climbing), kit building, QRP, general and portable operations, contesting

Hal Wilson, WB9FNN, 867-3151: General stuff

Dave Wood, W9AJR, 867-1200: CW (Dave says, "Know code!")

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Chris Matthews, N9JCA
867-7456; n9jca@arrl.net

VICE PRESIDENT Bill Hilyerd, K4LRX
270-826-2687; k4lrx@aol.com; billh@wevv.com

TREASURER Susie Schmitt, KC9CLZ
426-2003; susanmaries@juno.com

SECRETARY Bev Wilson, KB9PAE
853-7296; wd9fha@adelphia.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Herb Alvey, KB9MZH--477-2756 (AlveyHtoolman2@aol.com); **Chris Lantaff, KE9YK--473-5382** (clantaff@sigecom.net); **Mark Parker, N9NYF--422-7586** (mparker@evansville.net); **Leonard Schmitt, N9QVQ--426-2003** (lradio@evansville.net); **Willie Wilson, WD9FHA--853-7296** (wd9fha@adelphia.net); one position vacant.

Red Cross Liaison: Dan Weil, KB9GNI--491-2565
(dbweil@sigecom.net)

RACES Officer: Norm King, W9AU--963-5872
(w9au@insightbb.com)

Sparks is published monthly as the newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society, P.O. Box 4521, Evansville, IN 47724; **Editor: Norm King, W9AU;** 9334 Motz Rd., Evansville, IN 47720; 963-5872; w9au@insightbb.com.

TARS Website:
<http://www.w9og.org>