

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State over 75 years

April 2023 – Vol. LXXVI, No. 4



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

April 2023

At the last meeting, a new in box KENWOOD TS-590SG was sitting on a chair in our radio room. A note was left stating it was an anonymous gift to the club. Regularly selling for \$1,900.00, this is an outstanding gift and a beautiful addition to our shack. Look up this rig and get familiar with it, I'd love to see everyone operate it, not just at field day. Generosity like this brings abounding joy to the club, and I hope to extend a heartfelt thanks to the person or persons who donated it.

Our next meeting will be in the smaller meeting room at the Red Cross. It will still hold about 30 people but it will be in a smaller space. Mark KD0EE will give a multimedia presentation on Amateur Radio Contesting. Yesterday we looked at the smaller room and discussed his presentation and I'm really looking forward to it. For those of you that don't know, Mark is an avid and top contester so his knowledge will be very valuable.

Big thanks to Jerry WB9ONU and Chris KE9YK for our last club meeting presentation. It was an eye-opening experience and a lot was learned about weather spotting and emergency communications. Duane K3LWD and I recorded the meeting and I hope to have it edited for YouTube soon. It will be announced in our groups.io web page when available.

Our summer antenna building project is the 5-element cubical quad 2M antenna. Mark KD0EE built his with spare parts and was shown at the January meeting. N9PDL and myself were very impressed that the antenna could hit repeaters 50 miles away from just above his rooftop. KD0EE and myself have been shopping for booms, and have found this to be the biggest expense with rising prices. We wanted to avoid wood booms so that the antennas would last longer. We have set the cost at \$30 but it could be cheaper, and if so, the funds saved will be donated back to TARS. This building project is currently slated for the July meeting. At the next meeting, I will have a sign up for those interested in building it, so bring your \$30.

As for activities, I hope you join Jerry WB9ONU for his POTA activations on March 25 at Angel Mound State Park and April 1st at Bluegrass Fish & Wildlife. If you need help with your shack or putting up an antenna our antenna committee needs the exercise. INQP is approaching next and hope to see you there.

No subject in Amateur Radio is an old subject. Something is new even with old technology. If you are knowledgeable or learning an aspect of Amateur Radio, please consider sharing it with us as a presentation. Show us what you are learning or know. Don't forget to bring something small to share at the next meeting because our joy is your shared participation!

Scott Hibbs KD4SIR
President TARS 2023

April TARS Meeting

The next TARS regular meeting is Thursday April 13th 7:00 pm at the Red Cross, 29 S Stockwell Rd, Evansville.

The meeting program will be presented by Mark, KD0EE, on contesting.

Eat'n Before the Meet'n

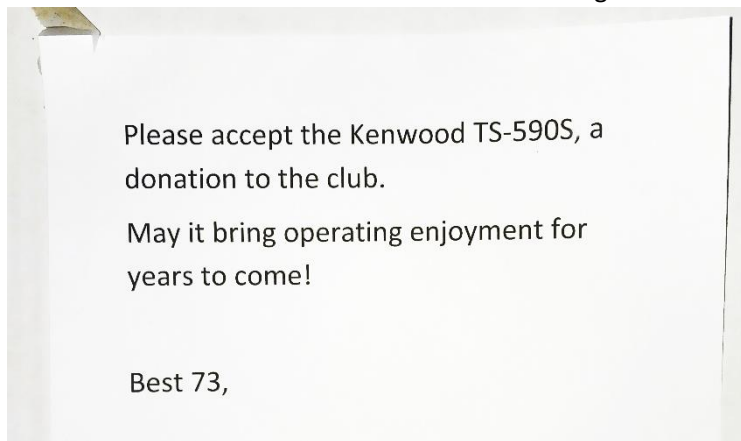
We will have a meetup before the regular TARS meeting for anyone that would like to join us. We will meet at 5:30, for you to grab a bite to eat, swap stories and whatever else you like, giving us time to make it to the Red Cross for the meeting.

Come out and join us at **ARBY's, 5:30pm**

Arby's is located at 6100 E Lloyd Expy, Evansville, in front of Best Buy. The Arby's brand purpose is Inspiring Smiles Through Delightful Experiences™. Arby's delivers on its purpose by celebrating the art of Meatcraft® with a variety of high-quality proteins and innovative, crave-able sides, such as Curly Fries and Jamocha shakes. Arby's Fast Crafted® restaurant services feature a unique blend of quick-serve speed combined with the quality and made-for-you care of fast casual.

Thank You for TS-590SG

TARS had an anonymous donor to the radio room project of a Kenwood TS590SG rig. The rig with this note attached was left in the radio room sometime before the March meeting.



McCutchan Award

Congratulations to Rick Jackson K9EXY on receiving the McCutchan award.

This award was established in 1977 by Ellis Carson, VP2KC, in memory of his friend, John McCutchan, W9MOK. When Mr. Carson became a silent key, the award program was taken over by TARS. The award reads "The strength and progress of Amateur Radio is vested in the hearts and minds of dedicated Amateur radio operators who voluntarily give of their time and knowledge". Rick is a long time TARS member and has been active behind the scenes, served as TARS officer and chaired and served on many committees. Rick is always happy to help out in any way he can.

TARS Calendar

April

- 5 Tri-State Emergency Net (Bruce, W9GFS)
- 6 **TARS Board meeting 6:30**
- 12 Tri-State Emergency Net (Herby, KB9MZH)
- 13 **TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross**
- 19 Tri-State Emergency Net (Don, KB9YWQ)
- 26 Tri-State Emergency Net (Mark, KC9TYA)
- 29 **VE Testing 9:00 am Red Cross**

May

- 3 Tri-State Emergency Net (Chris, KE9YK)
- 4 **TARS Board meeting 6:30 (ZOOM)**
- 6 **INQP – Setup 8:00am FOP Camp**
- 10 Tri-State Emergency Net (Dave, KC9UVG)
- 11 **TARS Club Meeting 7:00pm Red Cross**
- 17 Tri-State Emergency Net (Terry, WB9KQF)
- 24 Tri-State Emergency Net (Walt, WB4ZUT)
- 27 **VE Testing 9:00 am Red Cross**
- 31 Tri-State Emergency Net (Herby, KB9MZH)

June

- 3-18 **Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air**
- 24-25 **Field Day Red Cross**

October

- 14 **HAMTOBER FEST 7am – Noon, Lynnville**



Rick Jackson K9EXY

CQ CQ for the Indiana QSO Party 2023

Duane Vanderpool, K3LWD

The INQP is coming up on Saturday, May 6th and it's just around the corner. The party will be located at the FOP, 5417 N Happe Rd (<https://goo.gl/maps/1Mn7HvAyxWLW4Jy69>), and runs from 10am-10pm central time. Everyone is welcome, members and non-members alike, so please spread the word and join us for a day of contacts and camaraderie.

We will have 1 CW station and 1 SSB station, but we do not have any station captains yet. If you'd like to be a station captain, please let us know. We can certainly use your help.

"What about food?" you ask. Well, as I have learned at the March meeting, you can't have a party without food! Embracing the season, we will have grilled hamburgers and hot dogs for lunch and, oh, I can already smell them cooking. Club members are invited to bring a side dish of your choosing to share.

Please plan on joining us for the 2023 INQP and be a part of the second biggest club event of the year. We look forward to seeing you there.

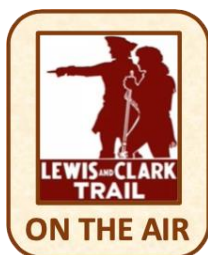
Duane, K3LWD

Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air

Mark your calendars for 6/3 - 6/18/2023!

Info for the LCTOTA this year. TARS will be an Indiana club that will activate LCTOTA stations. Mark your calendars! **If you are interested in participating as an activator, please send an email to N9OL@arrl.net** with your name and email address.

Check out www.LCTOTA.org for more information.



Date: June 3rd, 0000 UTC to June 18th 2400 UTC

Operating Hours: 24 hrs/day for duration of the event

Simple Rules: Contact one club in each of the 16 states on the historic Lewis and Clark Trail. Operating modes include SSB Phone, FM Phone, CW, and FT8. Any combination of modes towards working all 16 states is allowed. A schedule for planned operations for each state will be posted on this web site.

Beyond the Baofeng

Chris Lantaff, KE9YK

Have you ever wondered where or who the other are hams that live around you?

Here is a website that will map out hams in the U.S.

Just select the type of input, callsign, grid square, zip code or street address and it will display on a map.

<https://haminfo.tetranz.com/map>

CLUB SHACK Upgrades!

John VanVorst, N9OL

What's better than 1 Kenwood HF rig? 2 Kenwood HF rigs!!! For those not at the meeting on Thursday here is some news.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the club now has a new addition to our shack- a Kenwood TS-590SG!! This is a superb radio and as you can see from the pics it looks mighty fine on our HF radio station desk. It works great- I put it through some paces today. It was hard work but someone had to do it HiHi.



Anyway, I pulled the power supplies out from under the desk riser and they are sitting to each side of the riser. This allows better ventilation for the supplies, and provides more space on the desk for accessories and such.

I also assembled a short pigtail for the power connector on the 590 which has power poles on it the same as is on the TS-2000. This allows quick connect and disconnect of the power.

So the shack is ready to go! Remember when using the club HF radios in the radio room-

- connect the power supply power poles to the radio you want to use

- connect the antenna for the radio to antenna 1 on the radio
- the antenna switches on the wall allow you to select the rig and the antenna you want to use
- when you are done DISCONNECT THE POWER AND ANTENNA CONNECTOR FROM THE RADIOS.

Also, the computer does not require a password to log in and there is a shortcut on the desktop of the computer to display the operating manual for each of the radios- the TS-2000 and the TS-590SG

Stay tuned in the coming months for additional upgrades to our radio room. But it is fully functional now!!

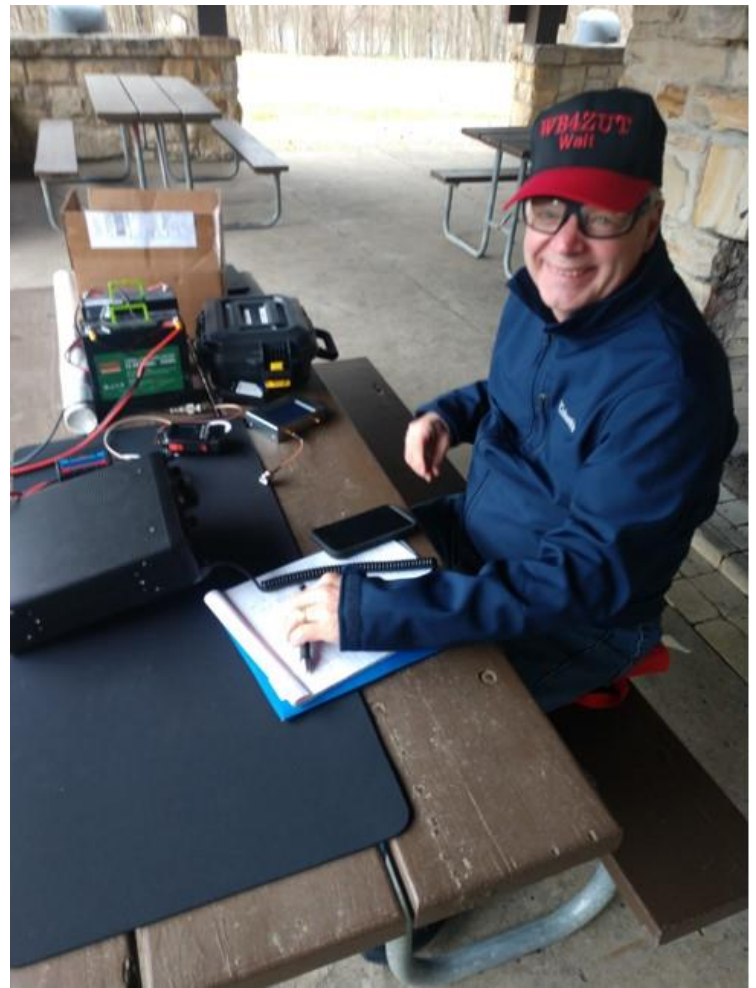
March 25th POTA Event

Here are some pictures from the POTA event on March 25 at Audubon State Park. WB4ZUT – Walt showed early and was rocking it by time I got there at 9:30 am. He had all of his new toys that he got since the first Pota event on March 4.

Walt was working SSB and I was doing digital FT8. We were there till 12:30. Walt had to quit; he was working so many stations that his power pole failed. The final score was Walt made 65 QSO.

If you get a chance, we will try another Pota coming this Saturday April 1 at Angel Mounds State Park. Anyone is welcome to come out and join in on the fun or learn something new about our hobby.

Jerry – wb9onu



Editor Note: You can tell by that grin; POTA has a new addict!



World Amateur Radio Day is April 18

The ARRL Letter for March 30, 2023

In less than a month, 2023 World Amateur Radio Day (WARD) will be celebrated, literally, around the world!

WARD is held on April 18 every year and is celebrated by radio amateurs and their national associations which are organized as member-societies of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU). It was on this day in 1925 that the IARU was formed in Paris. American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Co-Founder Hiram Percy Maxim was its first president.



The IARU [announced previously](#) that Human Security for All (HS4A) will be this year's World Amateur Radio Day theme. The day is being celebrated with a 2-week operating event occurring April 11 - 25. Special event stations will be operating from around the world, making two-way radio contacts to call attention to the HS4A campaign. The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security describes 'human security' as "a more powerful, lasting approach to the most difficult deficits in peace and development," such as poverty, war, and natural disasters.

ARRL encourages all radio amateurs to take to the airwaves for WARD, to enjoy our global friendship with other amateurs, and to show our skills and capabilities to the public.

More information about 2023 World Amateur Radio Day is available at

www.arrl.org/world-amateur-radio-day and www.iaru.org/on-the-air/world-amateur-radio-day.

Amateur Radio Activity Honors African American Heritage

The ARRL Letter for March 30, 2023

Parks on the Air® (POTA) sites that honor African American heritage are the focus of a casual operating event organized by the OMIK Amateur Radio Association, Inc (OMIK). The [OMIK POTA Challenge 2023](#) will run from April 1 to December 31.



OMIK was founded in 1952 by black amateur radio operators. While it is still a predominately African-American organization, today it represents a multi-racial, multi-cultural organization with members from the US and around the globe. OMIK is an ARRL Affiliated Club.

The group hopes to attract at least 750 radio contacts for the program by the end of the year. All modes permitted by the POTA program are eligible. OMIK members are encouraged to activate sites using the OMIK club call sign, K0MIK. The club's call sign must be reserved at least a week in advance.

The group has a list of suggested sites that are known to have a significant role in African American history. They hope that at

least five unique national parks will be activated as part of the event, contributing to a total of at least 10 successful activations.

[Parks on the Air](#) is a movement to get radio amateurs to set up portable operations in recognized park locations. It promotes a culture of operators who make as many contacts as possible from and with such locations.

Lightning Protection Basics for the HF Station

By Walt Mahoney, KC1DON, The ARRL Letter March 9, 2023

With spring (hopefully) just around the corner, late winter is a great time to evaluate our station lightning protection arrangements prior to lightning season. This short article is not a comprehensive review of the subject, but does suggest some basic protective measures we can all take. The suggestions are based on my experiences as an AM broadcast engineer, and later in my career with industrial plant control systems. Two comprehensive resources are *Grounding and Bonding for the Radio Amateur* (2nd Ed., ARRL), and a three-part series, "Lightning Protection for the Amateur Radio Station," by Ron Block, KB2UYT (now NR2B), which was published in the June, July, and August 2002 issues of *QST*. The later articles are available for free online at <http://www.arrl.org/lightning-protection>.

Lightning as a natural phenomenon is usually (~90% of the time) a downward negative electric discharge, with the earth as the anode. The length of the discharge is usually 1 second or less, and the potential can vary between 40 and 120 kV. Once the arc is established, the rise time to peak current is about 0.3 seconds, during which time the peak current flow can be from 5 to over 200 kA. If we consider the time integral of the lightning current over the entire flash duration, the energy released is something on the order of 10 billion watts. The key takeaway with this amount of energy is, we don't need to take a direct hit to cause harm to people or damage equipment. A lightning strike will induce hazardous voltages in nearby conductors through induction or via any reasonably conductive material.

I am assuming that nobody will be operating their station when lightning is anywhere in the vicinity, and all equipment is de-energized and grounded per recommendations in the *ARRL Handbook*. Even in this condition, the two routes that damaging amounts of energy can be coupled to a transceiver are via the power supply and the antenna connections, with the antenna connection being far more vulnerable. These two routes require different protection strategies.

On the power input side, obviously the best protection is to unplug the power supply from the branch circuit. I realize this isn't a practical solution for everyone, and we may not even be at our operating location when the storm arrives. The next best thing in this case is to use a quality surge protected power strip having an on/off switch. The quality and effectiveness of these surge protective devices (SPDs) vary greatly, and as always one "gets what they paid for." I recommend the Tripp Lite "Isobar" power strips.

Look for units that are circuit breaker protected and provide a minimum of 900 joule protection, and be aware that some imported power strips offer zero surge protection beyond a simple fuse. Our most common transceiver configuration now uses an outboard 14 V dc power supply. Obtain a broadband ferrite ring and wind as many turns as can comfortably fit of the dc transceiver cable through the ferrite. It's important to wind the positive and negative conductors together, and locate the ferrite as close as possible to the transceiver.

Protecting the antenna connection is a little more challenging. As a kid I would unscrew the feed line PL-259 and stick it in a pickle jar, which sort of worked. In modern times we have coax antenna switches, and it goes without saying your transceiver should always be switched to a dummy load of an appropriate power rating when not in use. The dummy load is highly recommended to avoid transmitting into an open circuit when one inevitably forgets to throw the switch. Some switch manufacturers such as Alpha-Delta and Daiwa also incorporate gas discharge tube (GDT) surge protection. Look for a switch that grounds all unused connections, and be sure to ground the switch body itself. 450-ohm ladder line can be protected by old-time knife switches, which are getting scarce. The second step is to add a GDT- type lighting arrestor which will shunt current to ground when the gas ionizes at a given voltage. As with SPDs, not all GDT arrestors are suitable for amateur use. Ideally, we want a device having a low let-through energy and minimal insertion losses. As part of my professional work with industrial radio modems, I found the Polyphaser IS-NEMP series offers the happy combination of low VSWR from 1.8 MHz through low-band VHF and a very fast-acting GDT. The housing and connectors are built to mil-spec standards. Again, there are less expensive arrestors of dubious provenance available through online sources. I caution some of these will demonstrate much greater VSWR than is advertised.

ARRL International DX Contest a Success

The ARRL Letter March 9, 2023

Last weekend (March 4 - 5, 2023) was the phone segment of the ARRL

International DX Contest.

Although the deadline to submit logs is 2359Z on March 12, preliminary numbers already show an increase in submissions compared to the same period last year. Conditions were favorable for much of the



Some of the operators hitting the airwaves for the 2023 ARRL International DX Contest included ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA (foreground) from PJ4G, "Radio Mountain Bonaire."

world, and many operators took to social media to talk about their wins.

Italian ham Chris Diemoz, IX1CKN, wrote in to express his gratitude for the contest, saying, "I haven't come back to the US since 2001, but... I [count last] Sunday afternoon [as] a true trip to the States, from east to west." Diemoz made 80 contacts in the US.



From his parked car in Ozein, Italy, Diemoz operated during the contest using QRP power from a Xiegu G90 transceiver and an Outback-1899 HF antenna. He enjoyed making a lot of contacts on 10 and 15 meters, which are opening due to Solar Cycle 25. He made a video with some of his QSOs and posted it to YouTube. Click on the screenshot above or [click here to view the YouTube video](#).

N3FJP - HamDash - The Better, Stronger, Faster Version of Club Score Processor!

You're probably wondering what HamDash is all about. In short, HamDash is a new club (or individual) platform for enjoying contests with your friends and club members, as you each operate from home. HamDash is vastly improved over our existing Club Score Processor program. It displays real time scores throughout the contest and updates as you enter each QSO. It displays fun status graphics, a ticker of calls being worked and a leader board that can be easily filtered just for your buddies or club!

HamDash can be enabled in one click! Your friends or club no longer need web hosting space and you don't have to configure and run our legacy Club Score Processor software anymore! It couldn't be easier for a seasoned contester or first timer to join in the fun with HamDash!

I've always loved contesting, but before I created Club Score Processor, I really missed sharing the experience on contest weekends. I've written at length how contesting virtually together, using Club Score Processor as a team and seeing our buddy's scores and achievements in real time has really reinvigorated our local club. ARRL even published my article on it in August 2016! There's lots more on that here:

<http://www.n3fjp.com/clubscore.html>

And here: <http://www.n3fjp.com/help/clubcontesting.html>

One of our goals has been to provide Club Score Processor functionality with a one click solution and no user supplied web space required. We believe that we have achieved it with HamDash! Now, any individual or club can easily join in the HamDash fun!

Hamfest Calendar

05/19/2023 - 05/21/2023

[Dayton Hamvention, ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention](#)

Location: Xenia, OH

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Dayton Amateur Radio Association

Website: <http://Hamvention.org>

06/17/2023 - Knoxville Hamfest and Electronics Convention - ARRL Tennessee State Convention

Location: Knoxville, TN

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Radio Amateur Club of Knoxville

Website: <http://WWW.W4BBB.ORG>

08/19/2023 - 08/20/2023

Huntsville Hamfest, ARRL Alabama State Convention

Location: Huntsville, AL

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Huntsville Hamfest Association

Website: <http://hamfest.org>

09/09/2023 - Greater Louisville Hamfest 2023

Location: Shepherdsville, KY

Sponsor: Greater Louisville Hamfest Association

Website: <http://LouisvilleHamfest.com>

10/14/2023 - **Hamtober Fest**

Location: Lynnville, IN

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Tri State Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://hamtoberfest.com>

For a complete ARRL hamfest list, go to:

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>



April Birthdays!!!

KD4SIR	Scott Hibbs	1
K3LWD	Duane Vanderpool	6
KD9UAZ	Jim Block	11
WB4ZUT	Walter Egenmaier	22
KD9VON	Jeff Crawford	26
KD9CHH	Mary Sandine	28
WA2USA	Dennis Martin	28

Brag Rag

Herby KB9MZH now has his shack set up.

Thanks to the guys that had helped to get his antenna up (see Feb 2023 SPARKS) and Scott KD4SIR for helping to get his computer hooked up.



For SALE

I own too many radios! --said no ham, ever. :)

Unfortunately, however, that is the case for me. I own 3 IC-7300s among other HF radios, and I've chosen to sell one of the 7300s. This rig is unblemished, has never been mobile, and comes from a non-smoking home. It's also MARS/SHARES ready, so if you're interested in either, this is a perfect radio for you. It also works well with WinLink with a single CAT cable.

Local pick up price is \$825.00

I also have an MFJ-939I tuner with the needed cable to the 7300. Local pick up price for the tuner and cable is \$150.00. (Must be sold with the radio unless radio sells without it.)

I have the original boxes and everything that originally came both with the 7300 and with the 939I.

This is a remarkable radio and tuner in like new condition. First one with cash gets it!

Ken, K9KDJ
812-518-0536
k9kdj.ham@gmail.com

VE Testing 2023

April 29 2023 - 9AM Central time
May 27 2023 - 9AM Central time
June 17 2023 - 9AM Central time
July 29 2023 - 9AM Central time
August 26 2023 - 9AM Central time
September 30 2023 - 9AM Central time
November 4 2023 - 9AM Central time
December 9 2023 - 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@arrl.net) c: 812.305.4100



A Brief History of Amateur Radio EmComm Organization

The ARRL Letter for March 15, 2023

In the early days, amateur radio and hams were considered irritations and nuisances to the "real" communicators -- the commercial sector and the military. We were almost outlawed, and ultimately relegated to the "useless" frequencies of "200 meters and down." That was until it was demonstrated that we could actually be of use as a service. In 1913, college students/hams in Michigan and Ohio passed disaster messages when other means of communications were down in the aftermath of severe storms and flooding in that part of the country. A Department of Commerce bulletin followed, proposing a dedicated communications network of radio amateurs to serve during disasters. Five special licenses were reportedly issued. A magazine article noted that amateurs were now considered to be essential auxiliary assets of the national public welfare.

ARRL was formed in 1914, and disaster response communications as provided by radio amateurs became organized and useful. In 1920, amateur radio was used to help recover a stolen car, of all things! Soon, the use of amateur radio for natural disasters that we traditionally think of now emerged with hams active in responding to deadly flooding in New Mexico and an ice storm in Minnesota.

More organization followed, with a memorandum of understanding emerging with the American railroad system for amateur radio support when the railroad's wire lines were down: There was an ARRL Railroad Emergency Service Committee. There was even a Q-signal designated: QRR, a kind of land SOS. More reports of disaster response communications provided by amateurs appeared in *QST*, much as they do there and here in this newsletter today. A major New England flood had amateurs supplying the only efficient means of communications from the devastated areas to the outside world, prompting the chairman of the Federal Radio Commission to say the future of radio depended on the amateurs.

Hams worked with the Burgess Battery Company for emergency radio power. Many of us old-timers, including myself, used those batteries when we were kids for our electrical experiments and kits. They looked like tall, thick candle columns! We learned our electrical principles from them. More organization followed, and traffic handling was recommended as the best way to gain discipline and proficiency to prepare for the efficiency and effectiveness needed in response communications situations. ARRL Field Day was started to prepare amateurs for portable operation, as was necessary in disaster situations when commercial power and means of communications were down. In 1935, the ARRL Emergency Corps was formed with the goal of having an Amateur Radio Emergency Station in every community -- a goal that remains just as urgent today as it did then! To wit, just look at today's emphasis on the neighborhood and community as "first responder" and on self-reliance in the post-disaster survival chain. More "served agencies" emerged as

potential partners, including the Red Cross. In 1936, major flooding across a 14-state region served as the ARRL Emergency Corps' first major testing, serving well, and solidifying amateur radio's status as a critical disaster response communications asset and public service. Communications operating protocols and the appointment of Emergency Coordinators followed. Technical advances supported this evolution. Spark-gap transmitters gave way to the vacuum tube, making portable operations more viable. Articles on portable transmitters and receivers appeared in *QST*. Exploration and experimentation in the VHF region also spurred more development of portable equipment. The development of the variable frequency oscillator, or VFO -- something that modern generations of hams take for granted -- was at the time a liberating breakthrough offering more versatility and flexibility, and of course more efficiency in meeting the demands of a disaster response communications situation.

World War II meant a shutdown of amateur radio, but many hams joined the War Emergency Radio Service, which did provide some communications during the war period for natural disasters. After the war, ARRL reconstituted its disaster response communications programs and networks, and the first Simulated Emergency Test was run in 1946. The Cold War followed, and the government formed the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) for civil defense (CD) purposes. It served as the forerunner of the modern emergency management model that we know so well today.

Throughout the 1960s and later up to today, the role, procedures, protocols, equipment, and techniques of amateur radio in public service, disaster, and emergency communications continue to evolve, ebb and flow. This evolution is fueled by advances in Amateur Radio technology and its application, lessons learned from each and every incident that involves amateur communications support. - *Rick Palm, K1CE, based on an excellent article titled "QRR: The Beginnings of Amateur Radio Emergency Communications" by Gil McElroy, VE3PKD, that appeared in the September 2007 issue of QST*

Tips for New ARES Operators

The ARRL Letter March 9, 2023

Most hams new to public service operating begin their efforts on the air through a local 2-meter FM repeater. Area hams tend to congregate there for sundry activities: traffic and ARES nets, swap nets, weather spotter nets, club meetings, training nets, and informal chats, discussions, and weather report exchanges. You will quickly learn their protocols, courtesies, and nuances of repeater and net operating, which, along with simplex (i.e., direct communication without repeaters) operation, form the bedrock of public service operating. Listen at first, and don't transmit until you feel that you have a basic idea of the above. It could take listening to several nets over the course of many evenings before you feel comfortable transmitting and checking in.

To do it, you'll need a radio, of course! Start with a simple-to-operate 2-meter/70-cm FM handheld with a short, flexible rubber-coated antenna, or better yet, a simple "whip" antenna that will yield more gain. The marketplace has a plethora of choices available from many manufacturers, and most are advertised in *QST*. Browse the ads, and check out *QST*'s Product Review, which regularly features reviews of handhelds. Search for past reviews on ARRL's website -- www.arrl.org/product-review -- and ask local hams for their recommendations; try other hams' handheld radios.

You will be taking your radio into the field for public events, emergencies and disasters, so portability is a critical, needed feature. You will have to operate "off the grid," that is, away from commercial mains, so you will need alternative power sources such as batteries, portable generators, and solar panels. The same goes for antennas: you will want to find a balance between getting antenna gain sufficient to initiate and maintain communications from potentially remote locations, and the ability to easily transport and erect them in the field. Keep power output as low as possible: Just a watt or two should be enough power to talk across your neighborhood or community on simplex and through your local repeater. Higher power output translates to faster battery discharge and depletion. Most handhelds come with a basic rechargeable battery pack and "wall wart" battery charger, but have as options larger capacity battery packs, and higher-power desk "drop-in" chargers that will charge your batteries faster (although faster charging rates tend to reduce the life of the battery). Buy a second battery pack to use when you're charging your first battery. Buy the optional alkaline battery holder as a backup in the event your standard rechargeable battery pack(s) fail(s). The use of batteries for handhelds and other types of radios was addressed in the Public Service column in the March 2015 issue of *QST*. The use of portable generators is discussed in the Public Service column in the October 2015 issue of *QST*. For enhancing your reception and transmitted signal, forego higher power in favor of a better antenna instead. Consider purchasing a telescoping 5/8 wave whip antenna that replaces the rubber-coated shorty antenna that your radio came bundled with, which will give you higher gain, and hence, wider coverage for your signals and better "copy" on weak or distant stations. (Don't toss out the flexible rubber antenna, however: it's useful for close-in communications). - *Originally written by K1CE for The ARRL Operating Manual.*

Amateur Radio Included in FEMA Guide for National Emergency Preparedness

The ARRL Letter for March 23, 2023

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has released a final version (March 2023) of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Functional Guidance. The guidance, which provides a framework for communications resources within incident management, officially includes support from amateur

radio operators. The expanded Communications Unit (COMU) structure now includes the Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) role, which covers personnel from services that provide communications support to emergency management, public safety, and other government agencies. This includes amateur radio.

NIMS guides government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other emergencies. "This is a major step in the recognition of the need and usefulness of amateur radio and other communications services in our national preparedness," said Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, Director of Emergency Management for [ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio](https://www.arrl.org/)®. "It also gives official guidance to pave the way for future training and education of volunteers in ARRL's [Amateur Radio Emergency Service](https://www.arrl.org/emergency-service)® (ARES®)," Johnston added.

The NIMS ICT guide (PDF) is available at <https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema-ict-functional-guidance.pdf>.



When operating on the SKYWARN Net on the TARS 149.790 repeater, The National Weather Service requests only those reports of severe weather that involve one or more of the following phenomena:

- **Tornadoes, funnel clouds, or wall clouds, particularly persistent rotating wall clouds.**
- **Hail of any size**
- **Wind Gusts of 40 mph or greater.**
- **Flooding of streams, creeks, rivers, roads, or streets.**
- **Measured precipitation of more than 1 inch per hour**
- **Any damage by wind or lightning. Downed trees, large branches, or power lines.**
- **ANY INJURIES.**
- **Please call Net Control when leaving the net.**

When calling net control with a report, be sure to identify yourself and your exact location including city AND state, nearest town, road or intersection and report the following:

WHAT you have seen

WHERE you saw it (the exact or best estimated location of the event)

WHEN you saw it

WHAT DIRECTION the event was traveling

Monitor the 146.79 repeater and LISTEN to the NET CONTROL and follow their instructions for checking in.

ELITE SPOTTER TRAINING (ADVANCED SPOTTER)

IMPORTANT: The basic spotter training is a prerequisite to taking the Elite Spotter Training Class.

These classes last between 3 and 4 hours.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 12, 2023 - 6:00 pm CDT

Evansville, IN (Vanderburgh County) American Red Cross 29 S. Stockwell Rd.

TUESDAY APRIL 18, 2023 - 6:00 pm CDT

Owensboro, KY (Daviess County) EOC 221 Allen St

ELITE SPOTTER TRAINING - WEBINARS

TUESDAY APRIL 11 - 6:00 pm CDT: [Click here to register](#)

Other Classes are available!

For more Information, full list of classes and registration:

<https://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining>

Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

We have held off on any regular meetings for a bit and will be devoting more time to working on the many projects that we have going. We are always looking for new operators interested in joining and participating.

Anyone interested in emergency communication in Vanderburgh County is invited to contact us for more details.

Vanderburgh County Auxcomm

Chris KE9YK IN82RACES@gmail.com

Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer

812.453.1972 Hamshack Hotline 12604 WinLink KE9YK



Warrick Co ARES/RACES

The Warrick County ARES/RACES group meets on the second Monday 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

Secretary Report

TARS Board Meeting 3/2/2023

Zoom meeting called to order at 6:30 by Scott KD4SIR

Members present, Scott KD4SIR, Tom KD9PFH, Chris KE9YK, Charlie WB8LDV, Jerry WB9ONU, Dennis WA2USA, Brian WB9QVR, Dave KCOUVG, Herby KB9MZH and Duane K3LWD

- Secretary Report Chris KE9YK, accepted
- Treasurer Report Tom KD9PFH ending balance of \$8,358.83 Accepted

Indiana gaming commission now requires a separate gaming account. We have created an account and deposited funds to cover the raffle radio. Dennis will purchase radio.

- Amazon SMILE will be ending. Most likely TARS will have 2 more payments.
- Discussion on club banner. Herby KB9MZH made a motion to add EST. 1947 to banner. Second by Charlie WB8LDV. Motion passed.
- Discussion on club brochures. Should be some located in radio room and also use club QSL cards for new people.
- Election committee discussion: Constitution and bylaws.
- Hamtober Fest - Oct 14th 7am to Noon in Lynnville: FT 891 on order. Chris is working to update website and flier.
- Field Day, Brian WB9QVR – Would like to see some newer members volunteer to be station captains to make it a learning opportunity. Plan to operate as class 4F with CW, 2 SSB, Digital and a GOTA station.
- INQP May 6th – Duane K3LWD volunteered to be chairman. Location discussion: Club will have water and pot luck for food?
- Picnic September 16th – Jerry WB9ONU chairman. Motion by Tom KD9PFH to rent Mesker shelter #15. Second by Duane K3LWD. Motion Passed.
- Mentioned the passing of 2 former members. Terry Brooks AA9MM (SK) and Steve Doty KA9OKH (SK)
- Future Meetings

Mar 9: ARES / RACES / SKYWARN

Apr: Mark KD0EE contesting

May: INQP

Meeting: Lewis & Clark Trail OTA – John

Meeting adjourned 8:00pm

Respectfully

Chris Lantaff KE9YK, TARS Secretary

submitted

TARS Regular meeting 3/9/2023

Meeting called to order by Scott KD4SIR, 7:00 pm at the Red Cross

We had introductions from everyone with 23 in attendance and 4 on ZOOM online.

- Announcements of the passing of Terry Brooks, AA9MM and Steve Doty, KA9OKH.
- Announced a donation of a TS-590SG to TARS by an anonymous donor.
- Distributed certificates left from last month and certificates for the Winter Field Day Operators.
- Treasurers report: Tom KD9PFH, with an ending balance of \$8358.83
- Secretaries report: Chris KE9YK
- Scott had a few announcements on the repeaters and Herbie's banner mod of the EST. 1947.
- Activities discussion: Antenna committee

- John N9OL discussed the Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air, June 3 – 18 activity and ask anyone interested in working as a W9OG event station to sign up on the list passed around or contact him via email.
- Jerry WB9ONU talked about his upcoming POTA activities for TARS.
- Duane K3LWD discussed INQP, May 6, locations and what food people would like.
- Field Day, June 24-25. Brian discussed FD and would like to have a FD antenna committee. WB9QVR, N9OL, K3LWD, KD9PFH and WB9YIG will meet to go over antenna planning.
- Hamtober Fest: Oct 14th at Lynnville community: Dennis WA2USA has the FT-891 on order from DX Engineering.
- Picnic: Jerry WB9ONU has Mesker shelter #15 reserved for September 16th. More info soon.
- Discussed meeting ideas????
- Meeting Program: Discussion on ARES / RACES and SKYWARN.
- Meeting ended at 8:55 pm

Respectfully submitted

Chris Lantaff KE9YK – TARS secretary

Treasurer Report

Financial Report for

February 2023 (prepared 2/28/23)

Opening Balance: \$8,218.95

Receipts:

Memberships \$147.50

Ve Testing January \$21.00

Ve Testing February \$28.00

Don Land KB9YWQ Donation \$2.50

Amazon Smile \$38.86

Winter Field Day Deposit Return \$25.00

Total Receipts --->> \$262.86

Expenditures:

Web Hosting - Hamtober Fest Chris Lantaff (\$40.98)

Banquet, Golden Corall Tip (\$82.00)

Total Expenditures---->> (\$122.98)

Ending Balance \$8,358.83

Red Cross Funds \$1,444.82

Funds Available to TARS \$6,914.01

Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH

TARS Treasurer



Looking Ahead

INQP 2023 May 6th

MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June

Lewis and Clark Trail On The Air June 3-18 2023

ARRL Kids Day June Third Saturday

Field Day June 24-25

[13 Colonies Special Event](#) July

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

TARS PICNIC September 16th

[Route 66 Special Event](#) September 11-19

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

TARS 4th annual Hamtober Fest 2022

SKYWARN Recognition Day, First Saturday, December

2024

Straight Key Night January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC

ARRL Kids Day Jan First Saturday

Winter Field Day January

TARS Banquet February

[Total Solar Eclipse North America April 8, 2024](#)

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.net

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club

ARRL [Indiana Section](#)

Section Manager: Bob Burns [AK9R](#)



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 E-mail: info@w9og.net

2023 Club Officers - Board members

President [Scott Hibbs KD4SIR](#)

Vice President [Jerry McIntosh WB9ONU](#)

Treasurer [Tom Hilgeman KD9PFH](#)

Secretary [Chris Lantaff KE9YK](#)

Board of Directors

[Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) (2022-2023)

[Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#) (2022-2023)

[Duane Vanderpool K3LWD](#) (2023)

[Charlie Martin WB8LDV](#) (2023-2024)

[Brian Esche WB9QVR](#) (2023-2024)

[Walter Egenmaier WB4ZUT](#) (2023-2024)

SPARKS Editor:

Chris Lantaff KE9YK

E-mail: sparks.w9og@gmail.com