

SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State for over 70 years



November 2018 - Issue No. 11

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

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

Please feel to submit articles or suggestions to

Editor: SPARKS@w9og.net



President's Corner:

In November, we will be having an election! Unlike another election that is going on, there will be no relentless TV commercials, no signs scattered around in the yards and no politicians pontificating of how great things will be run under their careful scrutiny. This one will be just for the members of TARS as we elect new officers and board members for 2019!

In the November issue of Sparks, there will be a ballot sheet with the list of candidates for the open positions. If you can't attend the November meeting, please follow the instructions on your ballot and send it to the TARS PO Box so that it arrives before the **before the November 8th** meeting. Otherwise, bring it to the November meeting.

Hope to see you all there.

Dave KC9UVG

Calling All Past McCutchan Award recipients!

If you have anyone you would like to nominate for the McCutchan Award, please write a short paragraph explaining your nomination and send it to one of the McCutchan Award Committee. [Dave Julian WB9YIG](#), [Mark Thienes KC9TYA](#) or [Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#).

Beyond the Baofeng

This is going to be a continuing article aimed towards the newcomers but hopefully everyone can take some inspiration with it.

This month's article is mostly pulled [plagiarized] from a Facebook discussion I thought interesting.

The Baofeng yes or no discussion/argument is not about the radios but a clear example of history repeating itself. Any clearer you couldn't get.

Until the 60's or early 70's, almost all ham radios were made in the US. Then the Japanese products started trickling in, cheaper than US products, first with Lafayette's receivers (ads said: imported) then with the Yaesu FT-101 series then with the rest. They had more features, used semiconductors and were cheaper.

Many US companies didn't fear the imports, didn't have the knowledge to switch to semiconductors from tubes and kept producing their old transceivers. Alas, reality was different. Within a few years Hallicrafters, Hammarlund, National, HeathKit, Swan, Galaxy et al all but disappeared.

When you buy a Baofeng radio, you are buying a product that not only costs lower than competitive products but also makes it easy for you to kill the competition.

But the competition is the one that invests heavily in R&D and makes possible the creation of such wonderful radios like the Icom 7300, the Yaesu 991 and others. These \$30 per radio companies, are real bad in R&D. R&D is a swear word. It doesn't make a profit. They would rather spend as little as they can in R&D and just produce.

So if you want to buy Baofeng, go ahead and get one. But also save some money and get a decent radio, an Icom, Yaesu, Kenwood or Elecraft. Have fun with a cheap \$30 radio, but invest in the future of ham radio. Let's ensure history doesn't repeat itself.

It's not about elitism but, rather, about being aware of potential technical issues.

While the Baofengs do work, at times the quality control is questionable and the biggest issue is having

poor reception due to the minimal front end filtering. Many also suffer from spurious emissions and the factory antenna leaves much to be desired.

While we are at it, did the FCC make Baofeng radios illegal? Short answer, NO! The original UV5R was part 90 certified but delivered and marketed in a way that didn't meet the certification regulations. They are perfectly legal for use on amateur radio frequencies.

BTW, I own Baofeng, Icom and Alinco 2-meter/70cm radios.

Baofeng has a spot... low radio density repeater areas. But its poor selectivity makes them unsuited for frequency dense areas and possibly unreliable for emergency communications.

Like I tell new hams, it's the world's best \$30 dual bander.

Eat'n Before the Meet'n



November 12th Eating Before the Meeting will be at [Mission BBQ](#) 1530 N Green River Rd.

Drop by for good food, socializing, "story tell'n" and whatever else comes to mind.

Join the group at 5:30, or whenever you can make it. Check in on 146.79 if you need directions or just get bored on your drive in.

Everyone is welcome to join us.

If you have any suggestions on where you would like for us to meet,

contact: [Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) c:812.499.3729

FCC may trim some big AMs

From Tom Taylor Now newsletter

<http://tomtaylornow.com/>

Monday, October 8, 2018



Are the protected night signals of monster 50,000-watt AMs “an anachronism?”

And is the FCC poised to do something that will frustrate late-night DX’ers? The Commission tries again to balance the role of Class A signals like KMOX St. Louis/1120, designed to serve listeners hundreds of miles away, with the desires of local AMs. The “skywave” debate is decades-old – but particularly urgent now, given the rising noise floor from all kinds of interference. The Commission just issued a “Second further notice of proposed rulemaking,” noting the rise of “FM stations, satellite radio and other media.” The first notice drew “a voluminous and diverse set of comments,” with some pointing out that “AM skywave service is sporadic and unreliable, often subject to overwhelming environmental interference, and unlikely to consist of programming tailored to the needs of distant communities.” But then there are questions about hurricane and other weather/safety warnings. In this notice, the Commission has ideas about changes to daytime, “critical hours” operation after sunrise and before sunset, and “nighttime hours.” One observer tells this NOW Newsletter says that cutting through the thicket of details, “It’s clear that there will be a further reduction in protection to the clear channel Class A stations, particularly at night. The main questions are how much protection they will retain.”

If you’re following the AM skywave debate, read on...

If not, you might want to skip to the next story. But since this is so important to the Class A stations, here’s a quick summary of the FCC’s latest proposed rulemaking. First, during daytime hours (except critical hours, for those who have that restriction), Class A’s would be “protected to their 0.5 mV/m daytime groundwave contour, from both co-channel and first-adjacent-channel stations.” (For KMOX St. Louis, to keep using that example, that would mean only that much protection from 1110 and 1130 plus its own 1120 frequency.) Then for those critical hours, they’d get either “no protection from other AM stations” – called alternative 1 – or “protection to

their 0.5 mV/m contour.” And at night, the most tricky part of this balancing act, alternative 1 is “no overlap between a Class A’s 0.5 mV/m nighttime groundwave contour and any interfering AM station’s 0.025 mV/m 10% skywave contour.” That would be calculated using “the single-station method.” Alternative 2 is being “protected from other AM stations in the same manner as Class B AM stations are protected – interference may not be increased above the greater of the 0.5 mV/m nighttime groundwave contour, or the 50% exclusion of RSS night-time interference-free level (NIF), calculated using the multiple station method.” This proposed rulemaking had several tech-savvy NOW readers chattering over the weekend, and you can read it [here](#).

Link to the original source [here](#).

Imaging the Earth from Lunar orbit

Planetary Society • October 15, 2018

Earlier this week, on October 10, radio amateurs all around the world worked together to get the Chinese Longjiang-2 spacecraft to take an image of the Earth and the far side of the Moon. Radio commands were generated by MingChuan Wei in China, transmitted to the spacecraft by Reinhard Kuehn in Germany after which they were received by the spacecraft in lunar orbit. In turn, the spacecraft transmitted the image back to Earth, where it was picked up by radio amateurs in Germany, Latvia, North America and the Netherlands.



MingChuan Wei, Harbin Institute of Technology

For the full article and info on how you can receive the signals go to the article [link](#).

Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

The next Vanderburgh county ARES/RACES meeting **November 15th**, 7:00 pm at the Vand Co. West side EMA Training Center (WEMA) [1430 Harmony Way](#). Anyone interested in emergency communication in Vanderburgh County is invited.



Chris Lantaff KE9YK
Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer
in82races@gmail.com c: 812.453.1972

WARRICK COUNTY ARES/RACES

October 2018 Update

Simulated Emergency Test (SET):

The announcement has been made, there will be no state wide SET scheduled for this year. The next Simulated Emergency Test will be scheduled for September or October 2019.

In an effort to test equipment and have the members of the Warrick County ARES group exposed to a simulated emergency, we are going to plan something local on Sat. Nov 17th. More information will be given at the November 12th meeting.

Trailer Recap:

The work on the trailer is ongoing. Several of the punch list items are nearing completion. The AC wiring is completed, Dc wiring is nearly completed. NMO Mounts have been installed on the trailer and an access port has been installed to allow access of antenna cables besides the NMO mounts. The desk and upper cabinets are 90% completed and are functional.

The ARES group had a discussion with Dave Woolen about the next steps for the trailer. Dave indicated he had some funds and was wondering the size of generator we would need. After discussing the pros and cons of different size generators a conclusion was made that a 11KW generator is much larger than we need. We estimated a 4 to 5 KW would be sufficient. There was discussion of getting 2 smaller Honda generators that could be paired. Dave is looking into

this option. There was also discussion of a good deal available on a FT891HF radio. R&L has it currently for about \$570.

The trailer is functional and will be at the Hamtoberfest.

We would like to have someone from Warrick ARES/RACES at the trailer throughout Hamtoberfest. The event will be on 10/27/2018.

Discussion of deployment procedures:

Basic points

- If you hear of the possibility of severe weather in the area monitor the news reports of damage as it approaches the area.
- Because most storms will come through Vanderburgh county, monitor the 146.790 (- pl 88.5) repeater for a weather net. This will give you real time information on damage that may be caused by the storms. If the net ends as the storms enter Warrick County or if there is no net, you can start one or take over as net control. (In the past few years the net has continued until the storms were out of Warrick county)
- If you hear of damage, start gathering your go kit. If it is not already a part of your go kit, make a list of last minute items that you might need to get such as prescription meds, fresh batteries, snacks and water. (Yes, if you get deployed somewhere you need to be self sufficient for at least the first 8 to 12 hours.) Check your radios and make sure they are ready to go.
- Once the storm passes make sure your property and family are safe and secure. You're not going to be much help if you are worrying about your family or property when you're deployed.
- **YOU DO NOT SELF DEPLOY!!!** Monitor the Boonville repeater for instructions. (147.075 / +pl 88.5) We will use that repeater (or the output frequency simplex if the repeater is down) for instructions, and assignments.
- For most storms we won't be requested. Don't be surprised if there is no activity other than normal traffic. If we are needed you will need to be ready to go. These steps will help you to be prepared and allow us to communicate assignments.

- If you are deployed be flexible. You may or may not be on the radio. You may be asked to supply other types of communication support or you may simply be used as an extra set of hands in support of other operations. Remember we are there to help.
- Weather events are the most likely disaster in this area but we could be activated for other disasters as well. Chemical spills from trains, trucks, or barges that require evacuations and earthquakes are only a few of the scenarios that come to mind.

Chris L Owen (KC9CLO)
Public Information Officer
Warrick County ARES/RACES group

Tri-State Emergency Net

8:00 p.m. Wednesday nights on 146.79 pl 88.5

If you haven't checked into the Tri-State Emergency Net, please take a few minutes at 8:00 p.m. Wednesday evenings on 146.79 and get updated on what is happening, the latest club information, calendar of upcoming events, topics of general interest and from time to time good old-fashioned rag chewing.

Net Operator schedule

November

7	KC9UVG
14	N9QVQ
21	KE9YK
28	KB9YWQ

December

5	KC9UVG
12	KC9TYA
19	N9QVQ
26	KB9YWQ



Reminder we are still in thunderstorm/tornado season, remember to monitor the weather net on the TARS 146.79 repeater anytime there is a severe weather watch/warning issued from the Paducah NWS for Vanderburgh or surrounding counties. Anytime severe weather is anticipated we try to have a stand-by net up and once a warning or severe weather is reported we go into a SKYWARN net and relay weather reports to the NWS in Paducah.

Winter Weather Workshops 2018

NWS Paducah, KY

Each of these 4 workshops will include a variety of winter weather topics. Please see preliminary agenda online. All workshops will run from 900 a.m. until Noon CST.



***** Online registration is required. *****

<https://www.weather.gov/pah/winterweatherworkshop2018>

November 8, 2018 - **Cape Girardeau MO:** Glen Convocation Center Southeast Missouri State University River Campus 518 S Fountain St.

November 13, 2018 - **Mt. Vernon IL:** Mt. Vernon Convention and Visitors Bureau 200 Potomac Blvd

November 15, 2018 - Evansville IN:
American Red Cross 29 South Stockwell Rd

November 20, 2018 - **Grand Rivers KY:** Community Center 155 W. Cumberland Ave

For information on SKYWARN training go to:
<https://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining>

SKYWARN Recognition Day



December 1, 2017, from 0000z to 2400z

SKYWARN™ Recognition Day was developed in 1999 by the National Weather Service and the American Radio Relay League. It celebrates the contributions that SKYWARN™ volunteers make to the NWS mission, the protection of life and property. Amateur radio operators comprise a large percentage of the SKYWARN™ volunteers across the country. The Amateur radio operators also provide vital communication between the NWS and emergency management if normal communications become inoperative. During the SKYWARN™ Special Event operators will visit NWS offices and contact other radio operators across the world.

Details and participating stations can be found at <https://www.weather.gov/crh/skywarnrecognition> or on the ARRL site at <http://www.arrl.org/skywarn-recognition-day>

November Birthdays

Due to a clerical error the October birthdays in last month SPARKS were wrong. Sorry for any inconvenience.

October:

Ed Folz	K9HVI	6th
Chris Matthews	N9JCA	23rd
Terry McCraey	WB9KQF	10th
Mark Thienes	KC9TYA	11th

November:

Michael Dassell	KD9LAM	10th
Jeffrey Holt	AA9WJ	30th
Michael Keller	KD9LWC	21st
Jean Kissel	K9JKL	9th
Marc Meikle	W9XQ	22nd
Gerald Schoenbachler	KC9NOY	7th
Garlan (Willie) Wilson	WD9FHA	29th

If your birthday doesn't get listed please make sure we have it on file by filling out the membership application when renewing.

This also helps to make sure we have your current contact information.

VE Testing

2018 Schedule

November **No testing**

December 29



All examinations will be administered at the American Red Cross, Evansville Chapter, located at 29 S. Stockwell Road, Evansville Indiana 47714. Examinations will start at 9:00 AM Central time.

We have no pre-registration, and examinations are administered on a walk-in basis.

All the details can be found at:

<http://w9og.net/ve-testing>

Or for more info contact:

[John VanVorst N9QL](mailto:John.VanVorst@arrl.org) c: 812.305.4100



Secretary Report

TARS BOARD MEETING 10/4/18

Present – Max KD9ABT, Len N9QVQ, Dennis WA2USA, Mark KC9TYA, Rick K9EXY, Jeff AA9WJ.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Max KD9ABT at 705pm. Secretary's Report was read by Mark KC9TYA and accepted. Jeff AA9WJ read the Treasurer's report which was accepted.

Next weeks meeting is at the Vanderburgh County EMA. Directions have been posted in SPARKS. Eating before the meeting will be at El Patron in North Park behind CVS Pharmacy. We'll meet at 645pm at the Vanderburgh County Jail so that we can enter the EMA as a group.

Our first annual Hamtoberfest will be October 27th at the Community Center in Lynnville, Indiana. We have received a certificate of insurance from our food vendor (The Fry Guy). Table sales are going well, with one vendor requesting 9 tables. At this point we had approximately 18 out of 33 tables spoken for. There will be at least one VE test session to be held at the Lynnville Fire Department. A foxhunt will be put on by Dennis WA2USA and Mark KC9TYA starting at 11 am. Currently they intend to base the winner on lowest mileage to document finding all 3 of the "foxes". Chris KE9YK and Rick K9EXY will man the sign in/Door prize table. We have several donations for door prizes, including Weather Radios from the Warrick EMA and from several of the vendors. Many volunteers are needed to help with this endeavor. We'll set up tables on Friday from 5-7pm. We'll also need a group of people to be at the Community Center at 5am, so that folks can start setting up. Warrick County ARES/RACES will bring in their new Communications trailer to use for our talk-in-frequency. Who knows, they may even rig it for HF for the talk-in as well as 2m. We are trying to get a card checker for ARRL awards. WD9FHA Willie is donating several items for the club to sell including a 2 m beam<Ham IV rotor a, 10-15-20m Thunderbird beam and a 45 ft tower. Some members will stop by and pick up some of these items the day before the hamfest. One or more tables will be reserved for items that club members want to sell or donate the proceeds to the club. We could use more volunteers so we can let people at lease get up and move around. Let's make a good impression for the club on those who come and have some fun. If you can help

or want more information email

hamtoberfest@w9og.net .

Old Business- Red Cross has approved TARS erecting a small Storage barn if it is wooden with a gable roof and painted white to match the ones they currently have. This project will possibly have to wait until spring unless we can find someone willing to donate either a barn or funds to buy a kit and volunteers to build it.

Nominations Committee reports the following individuals willing to run.

President- John Van Vorst N9OL

Vice President – Max Wilkerson KD9ABT

Treasurer – Jeff Holt AA9WJ

Secretary – No one has volunteered yet

3 open board positions – Don Land KB9YWQ, Dave Sandine KC9UVG, Chris Matthews N9JCA , Mike Townsend W9KXP, Dennis Martin WA2USA.

New Business – Max KD9ABT would like to send invitations to come to a TARS meeting to area non-members with a license to see if we can stir up interest. He will try to get an estimate of the costs involved and report back to the board.

Board Meeting was adjourned at 820pm.

Minutes submitted by Len N9QVQ in the absence of a Secretary

Treasurer Report

(prepared 10/1/2018)

Opening Balance: \$2,828.45

Receipts:

Memberships and donations \$12.00

VE room rental \$7.00

Total Receipts --->> \$19.00

Expenditures:

None \$0.00

Total Expenditures--->> \$0.00

Ending Balance \$2,847.45

Red Cross Fund \$982.82

Jeff Holt AA9WJ

TARS Treasurer

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



Looking Ahead

2018

SKYWARN Recognition Day Dec 1

2019

Straight Key Night Jan 1

ARRL Kids Day Jan

Winter Field Day January 26/27

TARS Banquet Feb

INQP May 4 - 5

MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June

ARRL Kids Day June

Field Day June 22-23

13 Colonies Special Event Jul 1-Jul 8, 1300Z-0400Z

National Night Out Aug 6

International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend (ILLW) Third full weekend of August 16-17

Route 66 Special Event September 7-15

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

SKYWARN Recognition Day Dec 7 2019

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club

ARRL [Indiana Section](#)

Section Manager: **Jimmy Merry KC9RPX**

kc9rpx@arrl.net



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

2018 Club Officers and Board members

President [Dave Sandine KC9UUG](#)

Vice President [Max Wilkinson KD9ABT](#)

Treasurer [Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#)

Secretary **OPEN**

Board of Directors

[Raymond Edge W9KHP](#) (2017-2018)

[Rick Jackson K9EXY](#) (2017-2018)

[Dennis Martin WA2USA](#) (2018)

[Mark Thienes KC9TYA](#) (2018-2019)

[Len Schmitt N9QVQ](#) (2018-2019)

[Terry McCraey WB9KQF](#) (2018-2019)

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