

# SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society

Serving the Tri-State for over 70 years

October 2020 - Issue No. 10



The SPARKS Newsletter is published monthly by the Tri-State Amateur Radio Society as a source of information about Club activities, and general news items of interest to the Amateur Radio community.

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E-mail subscriptions are provided to all regular TARS members.

News contributions and letters/emails to the editor are always welcome.

TARS regular membership is open to all licensed Amateur Radio operators for \$25.00 a year. An Associate membership is also available to those who are interested in Amateur Radio but do not currently hold a license.

Associate membership is \$25.00 a year. Student memberships are also available for \$12.50 a year.

Membership information is available at [www.w9og.net](http://www.w9og.net)

The Tri-State Amateur Radio Society meets the second Thursday of each month at the Red Cross, 29 Stockwell Rd, Evansville IN, at 7:00 p.m.

Family and visitors are always welcome to attend.

For more information, please call or email one of the TARS officers listed in this newsletter.

## Officer Elections

It's election time once again and we are looking for volunteers.

We will take nominations during the Sep and Oct meetings and also solicit nominations via mail to the club PO box or send an e-mail to [elections@w9og.net](mailto:elections@w9og.net)

The Offices open for election are

President	John N9OL
Vice Pres	Max Wilkinson KD9ABT
Treasurer	Jeff Holt AA9WJ
Secretary	Dave Sandine KC9UVG

Board of Directors

3 POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION

- Rick Jackson K9EXY (2019-2020)
- Dennis Martin WA2USA (2019-2020)
- Mike Townsend W9KXP (2019-2020)

The only requirement is that you are a current TARS member in good standing and have been a TARS member for at least 1 full year.

If you are interested in serving or would like to learn more, contact the election committee.



**TARS General Club Meeting this Thursday, 10-8-2020, 7:00 pm. On ZOOM.**

**The ZOOM meeting link is in the email this SPARKS was attached to.**

The ZOOM meetings have been working out pretty well but I am looking forward to some face to face meetings.

The meeting program will cover SKYWARN weather nets.

We have recently updated our SKYWARN Manual and will have it posted on the TARS web site under the files section.

## FALL SKYWARN SPOTTER TRAINING WEBINARS:

[Click on class below for registration link:](#)

### [OCTOBER 27, 2020 CLASS](#)

These classes are free of charge and are open to anyone who has an interest in severe weather and/or public service.

The objective of the training is to provide the knowledge to identify and report key severe weather features.

**What is a Skywarn Spotter?**

SKYWARN SPOTTERS ARE VOLUNTEERS TRAINED BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WHO HELP KEEP THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES SAFE BY PROVIDING THE NWS WITH TIMELY AND ACCURATE REPORTS OF HAZARDOUS WEATHER.

**Become an official Skywarn Spotter:**

- Register/attend a National Weather Service Spotter training class.
- This free class lasts 2-2 1/2 hrs.
- Class materials are provided.
- Topics covered include detailed information on storm types, identifying potential severe weather features, & reporting procedures to the NWS.

[www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining](http://www.weather.gov/pah/spottertraining)

## Hams Provide Situational Awareness as Severe Weather Hits Maryland-DC Section

The ARRL Letter for September 10, 2020

Amateur radio volunteers provided the ARRL Maryland-DC Section with situational awareness and breaking information on September 3, as severe weather, including at least one tornado, hit the region around the nation's capital. ARRL Maryland-DC Section Manager Marty Pittinger, KB3MXM, said Section staff and



hams across Maryland joined a Section-wide EchoLink \*WASH\_DC\* node and linked repeaters to report situational awareness as the eastern half of the state and Washington, DC, were hit hard.

"Hams began reporting severe weather, sharing local situations across several 2-meter SKYWARN® nets -- including W3ICF/R near Frederick, Maryland, and KA2JAI/R in Anne Arundel County," Pittinger said. "These repeaters were also linked through \*WASH\_DC\* to extend reach of critical information." For more than 3 hours, nets reported on wind damage, power outages, flooding, and the impact to traffic across six Maryland counties. Several Maryland county emergency management agencies were at heightened activation levels; Section-wide ARES® was in monitoring-mode, and no ARES activations were requested by served agencies. Bill Feidt, NG3K, in Kensington, said his town was under a tornado watch for several hours.

"At one point, it went to a warning -- 'a tornado is headed your way,'" said Feidt. "I suspect the cell that we were warned about was a rotating wall cloud and a funnel never

reached the ground, since there was little appreciable damage in our immediate area. But that system was definitely a nail-biter."

The storms traveled more than 80 miles across Maryland

with one passing north of DC, spawning a brief tornado in Edgemere, not far from the US Naval Academy. Another storm crossed over Baltimore. Earlier that day, the Maryland-DC Section and ARES leadership collaborated to plan a course of action. Section Emergency Coordinator Jim Montgomery, WB3KAS, notified ARES teams of approaching storms. Section leadership released information via social media and email.



**Most of the severe weather took place within a 5-square-mile area that included DC and Baltimore.**

"The timeliness, wide-area coverage, interoperability with selected VHF and UHF repeaters, coupled with numerous hams in affected areas, provided the best ground-truth," Pittinger said.

## Venerable AO-7 Satellite Approaching a Return to Full Solar Illumination

The ARRL Letter for September 24, 2020

AMSAT-OSCAR 7 (AO-7), the oldest amateur radio satellite still in operation, is nearing a return to full illumination by the sun, which should take place around September 25 and continue until around December 26. AMSAT's vice president of operations Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, says that during this period, AO-7 likely will



switch between modes A (2 meters up/10 meters down) and B (70 centimeters up/2 meters down) every 24 hours. He reminded users to use only the minimum necessary power and to avoid "ditting" to find their

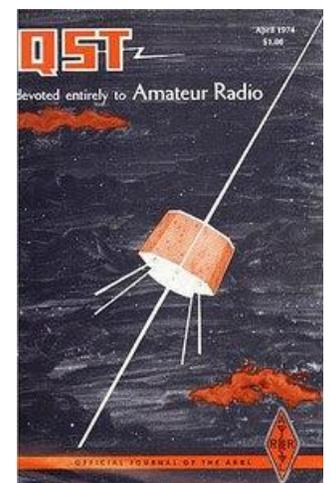
signals in the passband, which can bounce the entire passband up and down and sometimes even cause the transponder to reset to mode A.

"Try to find yourself with very low power, or on SSB, or best, with full Doppler control," Glasbrenner said. "If you have to use high power to find yourself, your receive antenna and system probably needs improvement."

Last May, the nearly 46-year-old AO-7 made possible a contact between Argentina and South Africa -- a distance of more than 4,300 miles. Both stations were aiming just 2° or 3° above the horizon. AO-7 only works when it's receiving direct sunlight and shuts down when in eclipse.

Launched in 1974, AO-7 surprised the amateur satellite community by suddenly coming back to life in 2002 after being dormant for nearly 30 years and periodically re-emerging. AMSAT considers AO-7 "semi-operational." Theory is that AO-7 initially went dark after several years of operation when a battery shorted, and it returned to operation when the short circuit opened. With no working batteries, AO-7 now only functions when it's receiving direct sunlight, and it shuts down when in eclipse.

Built by a multinational team under AMSAT's direction, AO-7 carries a non-inverting Mode A transponder (145.850 - 950 MHz up/29.400 - 500 MHz down) and an inverting Mode B (432.180 - 120 MHz up/145.920 - 980 MHz down) linear transponder. AO-7 has beacons on 29.502 and



145.975 MHz, used in conjunction with Mode A and Mode B/C (low-power mode B), respectively. A 435.100 MHz beacon has an intermittent problem, sometimes switching between 400 mW and 10 mW.

## Ham Radio Wireless Network Camera Detects Washington Wildfire

The ARRL Letter for September 10, 2020

Nigel Vander Houwen, K7NVH, reported on September 8 that some **HamWAN** users in the Puget Sound region of Washington, who were viewing the network's camera feeds, spotted a large brush fire.



"They reported it to the DNR [Department of Natural Resources], which thanked them for the first report they'd gotten on the fire, and they've sent a team to try and keep it small and under control," Vander Houwen said. "It's estimated currently at around 50 acres, southeast of Enumclaw, along Highway 410." The fire was not said to be threatening any homes. State Route 410 was reported closed between Enumclaw and Greenwater, and drivers heading to Mount Rainier National Park were advised to take another route.

HamWAN is a nonprofit organization developing best practices for high-speed amateur radio data networks. It runs the Puget Sound Data Ring. So far, HamWAN networks have been used for such applications as low-latency repeater linking (including DMR), real-time video feeds, APRS internet gateways (I-gates), providing redundant internet access to emergency operations centers, and more.

Amateur radio licensees in the HamWAN service area can connect directly to the network with a modest investment in equipment and no recurring costs. The HamWAN Puget Sound Data Ring has cells deployed at numerous wide-coverage sites, interconnected with 5 GHz radios. The HamWAN technical team has been installing remotely controllable cameras at HamWAN link sites, and one of these was used for the wildfire report.

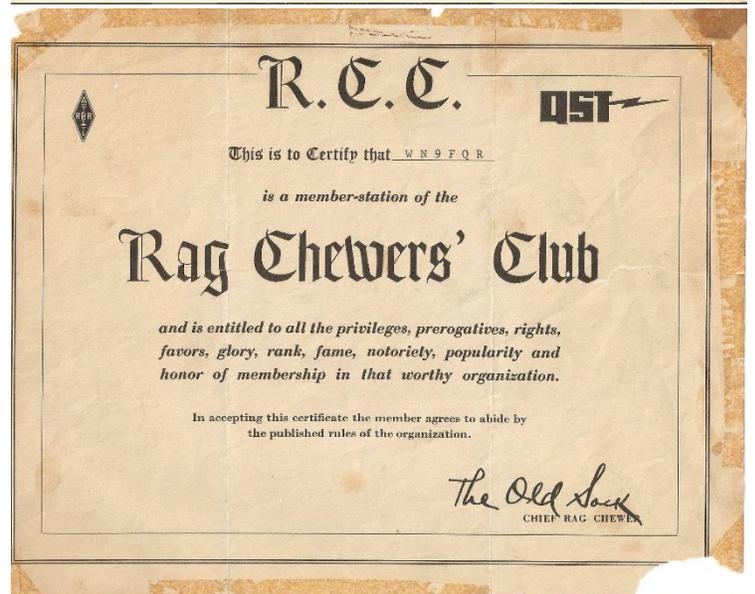
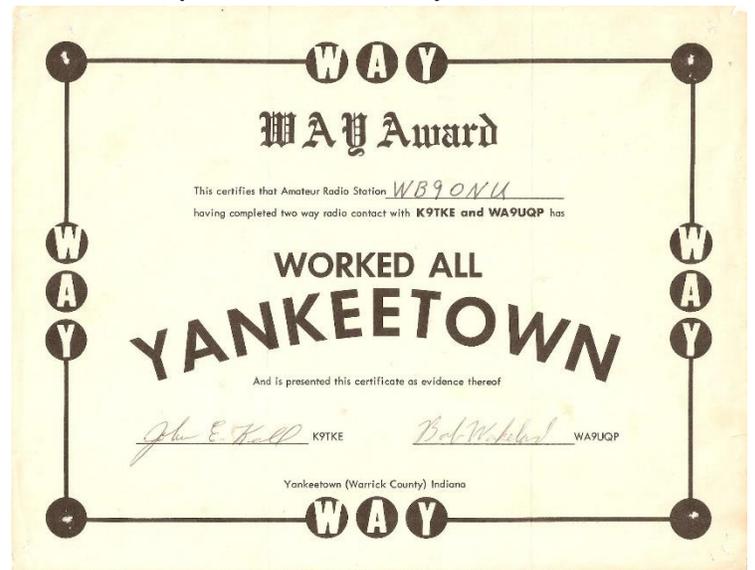
## Brag Rag

Do you have something you would like to submit for the Brag Rag? Send your QSLs, special event certificates, awards, interesting photos, projects etc. to sparks@w9og.net to have them included in your newsletter.

## Congratulations Chris KE9YK!



## Here are a couple of oldies from Jerry WB9ONU.



## 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.

**We are still running a Covid-19 edition of the net on Mon nights at 8pm.**

## Net Operator schedule

### October

7	KE9YK
14	KC9TYA
21	KC9UVG
28	N9QVQ

### November

4	KB9YWQ
11	WB9KQF
18	KE9YK
25	KC9TYA

If you would like to be a Net Control Operator for the Wednesday Night Net or learn how to run a SKYWARN net.

Contact: [Chris Lantaff KE9YK](mailto:Chris.Lantaff@arrl.net).

## VE Testing

### ATTENTION!!!

The Tri-State Amateur Radio Society VE Team will hold all VE test sessions for the rest of the year at the Vanderburgh Co. EMA west side training facility, 1440 Harmony Way in Evansville. This is the building behind the old school building. Look for the tower and antennas.



### Next test session:

12/5/2020 at 9AM

Location: West Side EMA Training Facility  
1440 Harmony Way  
Evansville IN

You will need to know your FRN number. If you have a license currently you have an FRN number. If you do not yet have a license you can register with the FCC and obtain an FRN number. Go to [www.fcc.gov/register](http://www.fcc.gov/register).

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

Examinations will start 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



## Monthly TAILGATE

### COMPLETE DMR SETUP

1 - Radioddity GD-77 running the OpenGD77 software (much better than stock software) (Programmed and including the codeplug)

1 - External Microphone

1 - External drop-in charger

4 - Batteries

1 - Hotspot

This is all about 5 months old. Pristine condition and works with no issues. From non-smoking home.

TOTAL: \$195.00

I'll gladly program call sign, DMR ID, and other info to make it plug and play, if desired.

Ken [K9KDJ.HAM@gmail.com](mailto:K9KDJ.HAM@gmail.com)

### Titan Gap DX antenna for sale

Here's a link to what they look like –

<https://images.app.goo.gl/NFvgiVorH9J9aVLx8>

Antenna is complete and was working, but not as well on some bands as others. I strongly recommend that this antenna be well guyed since it has a tendency to bow in a strong wind.

I have printed a clean copy of the assembly manual and an original user manual.

Price is \$100 firm

Len Schmitt [N9QVQ](mailto:N9QVQ)

If you have something you would like to list for sale in the Monthly TAILGATE, send an e-mail to [sparks@w9og.net](mailto:sparks@w9og.net) with all information on the item, pictures are helpful and your contact info.

## Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES

All Vanderburgh Co ARES/RACES in person meetings are canceled until this COVID-19 emergency has passed and are currently using ZOOM. Our meetings are the third Thursday of the month starting at **6:00pm**.

Watch your email for details. If you would like to participate and are not currently a Vanderburgh Co. ARES/RACES member contact us for the log-in information.



We are also starting an ARES/RACES net at 8:00pm Tuesdays on the 146.790 repeater.

### Vanderburgh County Auxcomm

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

Vanderburgh Co RACES Officer

812.453.1972

Len N9QVQ [len.n9qvq@gmail.com](mailto:len.n9qvq@gmail.com)

Vanderburgh Co ARES EC

812-963-0027

## Warrick Co ARES/RACES

Meetings...

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](mailto:KC9CLO@gmail.com) .

## HAMFEST Calendar

### TARS Hamtober Fest 2020 CANCELED

October 17 - Shelbyville Tail-gate at the Shelby Co Fairgrounds

7 AM Set-up. Event time 8AM to 12 PM

\*\*\*\*

November 7, 2020 - **Hoosier Hills Hamfest**

Lawrence County 4H Fairgrounds - Bedford, IN

just off of US-50, west of SR-37

Gates open at 6 am for vendors, and 8 am for the public.

<http://www.w9qyq.org/hamfest>

\*\*\*\*

November 28 - Wabash Valley ARA Turkey Fest

Brazil – Clay Co. Fairgrounds

[www.w9uuu.org](http://www.w9uuu.org)

Search the ARRL hamfest calendar for upcoming hamfests :

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/search>

## Octoberber Birthdays!!!

Ed Folz	K9HVI	6th
Kenneth Johnson	K9KDJ	26th
Chris Matthews	N9JCA	23rd
Terry McCrary	WB9KQF	10th
Thomas Pingry	KD9PFJ	28th
Mark Thienes	KC9TYA	11th



## Secretary Report

The secretary reports were attached as separate attachments with this SPARKS mailing.

Dave Sandine KC9UVG

## Treasurer Report

Budget:

August 2020 (prepared 9/1/2020 )

Opening Balance: \$3,897.76

Receipts:

Memberships \$12.50

Lynnville Park refund \$375.00

Total Receipts --->> \$387.50

Expenditures:

None \$0.00

Total Expenditures--->> \$0.00

Ending Balance \$4,285.26

Red Cross Funds \$1,283.82

Funds available to TARS \$3,001.44

Jeff Holt AA9WJ

TARS Treasurer



## Looking Ahead

### 2020

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

**TARS 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Hamtober Fest Oct 17th 2020**

SKYWARN Recognition Day, Saturday, December 5th, 2020

### 2021

Straight Key Night Jan

**TARS AUCTION January**

ARRL Kids Day Jan

**Winter Field Day January**

**TARS Banquet**

**INQP 2021**

MUSEUM SHIPS WEEKEND June

ARRL Kids Day June

**Field Day June**

[13 Colonies Special Event](#)

National Night Out first Tuesday of August

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

Light Up 2 Meters Night August

TARS PICNIC Sep

Route 66 Special Event September

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

TARS is an [ARRL](#) affiliated club

ARRL [Indiana Section](#)

Section Manager: **Jimmy Merry KC9RPX**

[kc9rpx@arrl.net](mailto: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](http://www.w9og.net)

**Facebook Group**

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

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



## **2020 Club Officers - Board members**

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

**Vice President** [Max Wilkinson KD9ABT](#)

**Treasurer** [Jeff Holt AA9WJ](#)

**Secretary** [Dave Sandine KC9UVG](#)

**Board of Directors**

[Rick Jackson K9EXY](#) (2019-2020)

[Dennis Martin WA2USA](#) (2019-2020)

[Mike Townsend W9KXP](#) (2019-2020)

[Herb Alvey KB9MZH](#) (2020-2021)

[Don Land KB9YWQ](#) (2020-2021)

[Chris Matthews N9JCA](#) (2020-2021)

**SPARKS Editor:**

Chris Lantaff KE9YK

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