



ICARC NEWSLETTER

May 31, 2025

Thanks go to the ARRL
Foundation
for it's support of ICARC's
future tower and repeater
upgrades at it's remote site

Officers for 2025:

President – Craig Bigler, AB3XA
Vice President - Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK
Secretary - Larry Freeman, N3LT

Additional Board Members for 2025

1. Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF
2. Stuart Younkin-WB3FBL
3. Phil Kopczyk -K3PJ
4. Robert Zugates-KB3JOF
5. Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG

LOCAL HAPPENINGS:

Congratulations to Mr. Ian Bigler on passing the Amateur Extra class examination at the “Dayton” Hamvention on May 17, 2025 testing session sponsored by the ARRL. Ian, we also give you a hearty welcome back for the Summer. We look forward to your enthusiastic involvement in the local ham activities.

Get ready for Field Day 2025, June 28-29 by attending the ICARC meeting of June 3 and joining in the discussions of how to prepare and participate in all aspects of the event. The meeting will be held at the Eat & Park Restaurant in Indiana at 6:30 PM. It should be an exciting one.

The Field Day event will be held at **Blue Spruce Park** just North of Indiana, PA , near Creekside, PA in the large ball field area. It is sponsored by the the Indiana County Amateur Radio Club (ICARC) and the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). All Hams and non hams are welcome to participate in every aspect from antenna and station setup, to enjoying food and operations as well the dirty work of taking it all down. You don't need an Amateur Radio License to participate in any of the activities including radio operations. Learn how to get antennas in the air using local resources like trees as well as man made items like poles and ropes. There will be plenty of work and fun for everyone. It is an exciting way to spend a Summer weekend learning how to set up antennas and radios for emergency operations **In the Field!** You are guaranteed to be tired and worn out by the end of the event! Perfect for our young people who love the outdoors and learning new skills to help our communities in times of need.

Hamvention Tidbits:

According to the Hamvention officials the 2025 Hamvention set a new attendance record with over 36,800 attendees from all around the world. The event is organized and mostly run by the Dayton Area Radio Association (DARA) with support from the local officials and more than 700 volunteers.

Of course our favorite attendees came from right here in our own Club: Ian Bigler (KC3DTE), Craig Bigler (AB3XA), Dave Steiner (W3CDH), and Larry Freeman (N3LT). These guys will not only attest to the

grandness of the event, but to the grandness and quality (&quantity) of the “Health Food” that can be purchased on the grounds. Hi! Hi!

Grandest event was, of course, Ian's passing the Amateur Extra Class Examination proctored by the ARRL.

Hamvention has been held annually since 1952, except for a two-year pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. It moved from Hara Arena in Dayton to the Greene County Fairgrounds and Expo Center in 2017 near Xenia, Ohio. (Xenia had another incredible history making event originating from the F5 Tornado it experienced in 1974. If you are interested, check the following link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974_Xenia_tornado)

Last year, Hamvention claimed about 35,000 attendees which more than doubled the population of Xenia which is around 25,000 people. Turns out that this hamradio “stuff” is a huge economic boost the local communities in the area.

For a more detailed history of Hamvention check out the following link:

<https://amateurradiotoday.blogspot.com/2025/03/the-history-of-dayton-hamvention-worlds.html>

Announcements:

The fifth formal meeting of the ICARC Grant Committee was held on Tue, April 29, 2025. A Rohn 25G, guyed tower with a tower height of 50 ft was selected by the committee. Although not the top tower choice, it is equivalent in quality to the current tower, just new and is within the allotted budget. It may save significant money to be applied to other aspects of the grant. The tower components have been ordered from 3Star Inc. The repeaters are in the possession of the repeater Trustee, Elmer Sorisio who is currently working to get them programmed. The next meeting of the Grant Committee has not yet been set. The progress is somewhat slower than desired with the main hold up being the removal of the current tower. As you all know, the weather has not been as cooperative as we would want, so there is still no firm date set to get the tower down.

Another Interesting Mode of Operation on the Rise:

There is a newer, digital weak signal mode of operation that that seems to be catching on: VARAC

It is a interesting mode in that unlike FT-8 and other modes it can ALMOST be conversational in that you can communicate keyboard-keyboard by typing your message and sending it as soon as you are done typing.

There is no timed structure to the sequence. I suspect that many of you who do a good bit of FT-8 and FT-4 may be familiar with this. In any case take a look at the home page, you may find it interesting too. I've downloaded it but not yet tried it. Explore the home page at: <https://www.varac-hamradio.com/>

Reminder: If you haven't renewed your membership to ICARC for 2025 do it now! See the final page of this document for a renewal/application form. This form can also be found online at: <http://www.qsl.net/w3bmd>

Reminder: The ICARC Public Service and Information Net happens on each Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.91/146.31 Mhz. (ICARC is an ARRL affiliated club). In recent weeks it has also been repeated at approximately 8:45 PM on the new N3FLO repeater on 146.655/.055, tone of 131.8 Hz. Check it out. After the net a few operators hang around and carry on for a while on whatever topic of interest is brought up.

Reminder: The ICARC meetings are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month; next meeting is Tue, June 3, 2025, located at the Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant in the backroom at 6:30 PM. Hope to see you there. Also, in the same room, there is usually an informal breakfast each Saturday morning starting around 08:30 am. Come and join in the camaraderie, it's great fun.

Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, and Bill Robinson.
We thank you fellows very much. We can always use more.

Attention Technician and General licensees (and prospective hams), have you thought about upgrading? Do you have trouble making it to an in-person ham exam? Now you don't have that excuse. Groups holding online ham exams have greatly expanded. Some groups are having exams daily. Reportedly it is an easy process if you have a laptop, desktop or tablet with a camera and microphone. Below are websites where you can look into testing online.

<https://wm7x.net/> One of the most popular. They have videos explaining how it's done.

<https://k17aa.org/vec/remote-testing/>

<https://hamstudy.org/sessions/remote> Lists remote and in person test sessions.

From the ARRL Members Only Bulletin:

[ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® filed comments \[PDF\]](#) with the Federal Communications Commission in response to its request for public input on alleviating unnecessary regulatory burdens by deleting or modifying rules, *In the Matter of Delete, Delete, Delete*. Implementing ARRL's suggestions would promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and enhance the development of the next generation of radio amateurs.

In response to ARRL's request, over 200 members submitted suggestions that were reviewed when considering what rules should be deleted or modified. ARRL will continue to engage with members and advocate for the Amateur Radio Service.

In its filing, ARRL asked the FCC to delete or amend the following rules:

Delete the LF and VHF/UHF Symbol (Baud) Rate and Bandwidth Limitations

ARRL supports the deletion of these restrictions as proposed by the Commission in late 2023. Doing so would enhance Amateur experimentation with digital technologies.

Update and Modernize Entry Level Technician Class License Privileges

ARRL reiterated its earlier proposal for extending additional limited privileges for Technician class operators. Adopting its proposal would provide new licensees an introductory window to HF data and phone communications that are at the core of the Amateur Radio experience and serve to incentivize the next generation of technical leaders just as Novice CW HF privileges did for earlier generations of operators.

Modernize 80/75 Meter Subband Divisions

ARRL requested action on an earlier proposal that would make more efficient and intense use of the 80/75 meter band. Changes in technology and modes since band usage was last addressed have resulted in overcrowding in one band segment that would be alleviated by adoption of ARRL's proposal.

Delete and Replace Obsolete Digital Code Limitations

ARRL also asked the FCC remove provisions that refer to digital codes that today are obsolete and permit Radio Amateurs to experiment freely with new digital codes, so long as such codes are publicly documented and decodable over the air.

Implement Changes to Third Party Rules Adopted Internationally at WRC-03

Although the United States fully supported changes to the ITU Radio Regulations in 2003 that removed a treaty requirement for third-party messages, there is no record of this change having been considered and the FCC's rules were never conformed to the new provision. Being the only nation known to continue to require a formal treaty for such purposes has resulted in no new such treaties for since the treaty changed more than two decades ago. Thus ARRL asked the FCC to Implement rules that are consistent with those internationally agreed to align with the rest of the world.

Delete Amplifier Drive Limitation

ARRL requested that the Commission act favorably on a pending proposal to remove limits HF amplifier gain that add to Amateur equipment cost and impede use of new efficient amplifier technology.

Remove Non-current Personal Information in Amateur ULS records

ARRL requested that the FCC complete a rule making in which it proposed that only current licensee information to be visible in the public (ULS) database. Right now, if an amateur changes their address to a Post Office Box to shield their home address, the previous address remains visible. ARRL advocates for protecting the privacy of radio amateurs.

Delete Obsolete Identification Requirement for Special Call Signs

Users of special event call signs are required to identify with the FCC-issued responsible call sign at least once each hour. This can be confusing, especially on data and CW modes. ARRL proposed reliance on the web-based database that clearly identifies each special event call sign and authorized period of use.

Delete Obsolete Paper License Replacement Provision

The FCC no longer mails physical copies of amateur radio licenses, so ARRL suggested deleting the rule that provides for sending paper replacements as obsolete.

The [FCC notice](#) [PDF] generated a lot of interest among radio amateurs, with hundreds of Amateurs submitting comments directly to the FCC as well as responding to ARRL's request for suggestions.

The FCC deadline for filing reply comments is April 28, 2025.

It is hoped that the Commission will incorporate worthy suggestions in a future Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) later this year. At that time there will be a new opportunity for public comment on the specific rules that the Commission proposes to delete or modify.

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act Re-Introduced

Legislation Will Increase Communication Options During Natural Disasters

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Richard Blumenthal, D- Conn., and Representatives August Pfluger, R-Tex., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn. announced their joint re-introduction of legislation in the Senate and House to restore the right to Amateur Radio operators to install the antennas necessary to serve their communities. Homeowner association rules often prevent Amateur Radio operators from installing antennas at their homes even though Amateur Radio has proven to be essential in emergencies and natural disasters such as hurricanes when other means of communication fail.

“Mississippians should have access to every possible means of warning for natural disasters, including amateur radio operators. In an emergency, those warnings can mean the difference between life and death,” Senator Wicker said. “The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act would remove unnecessary roadblocks that could help keep communities safe during emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and fires.”

“When disaster strikes, amateur radio operators provide vital, often life-saving information, which shouldn’t be hindered by prohibitive rules or confusing approval processes. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act eliminates obstacles for ham radio enthusiasts, allowing them to continue their communications and serve their communities in the face of emergencies,” said Senator Blumenthal.

“Natural disasters and other emergency situations that hinder our regular lines of

communication are unfortunately unavoidable, which is why we must bolster our emergency preparedness by removing the barriers amateur radio operators often run into when installing antennas. Amateur radio plays a vital role in public safety by delivering critical information to people at all times. My district is home to dozens of amateur radio operators ready to volunteer in the event of an emergency, and I am proud to lead this legislation,” said Congressman August Pfluger.

“As we know from recent natural disasters, amateur radio operators in Connecticut can be a critical component of disaster response and emergency management. It is in our communities’ best interest that we give them the capabilities to operate at the highest level, and with the re-introduction of this bill, we’ve taken a strong step in that direction,” said Congressman Court.

Background:

The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S. 459) would require homeowner associations to accommodate the needs of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators by prohibiting the enforcement of private land use restrictions that ban, prevent, or require the approval of the installation or use of Amateur Radio station antennas. Homeowner associations have often prevented installation and use of such antennas through private land use restrictions. This has hindered voluntary training for emergency situations and blocked access to necessary communications when disaster strikes.

Among other provisions, this legislation would:

- Prohibit homeowner association rules that would prevent or ban Amateur Radio antennas;
- Specify an approval process for installing Amateur Radio antennas;
- Provide a Federal private right of action to Amateur Radio operators in disputed cases.

On behalf of America’s Amateur Radio licensees, Rick Roderick, the President of The American Radio Relay League, re-confirmed the ARRL’s full support for the passage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 and extended his thanks and appreciation to Senators Wicker and Blumenthal and Congressmen Pfluger and Courtney for their unflagging leadership of the bi-partisan effort to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

The text of the House version can be found at this link: https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Advocacy/HR1094_House_Private_Land_Use_Bill.pdf?_zs=ab8xl&_zl=9xlE3

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Other Announcements of potential interest:

From the ARRL WEB Site: Grants to Amateur Radio Organizations: The ARRL Foundation grants program awards limited funding to organizations for eligible amateur radio related projects and initiatives, particularly those with a focus on educating, licensing, and supporting Amateur Radio activities. Youth-based projects and initiatives are especially encouraged. The ARRL Foundation grants program accepts proposals on a cyclical model three times a year.

2025 Grant proposals are accepted from:

- February 1 - February 28

- June 1 - June 30
- October 1 - October 31 _____

Attention: If other ICARC members would like to contribute to this Newsletter, please contact or submit articles to the Newsletter editor, N3LT via email at n3lt@arrl.net or wd4hoz@gmail.com by the middle of each month. Preferred document format is ".doc", for editing purposes. **All submissions are subject to the approval of the editor.**

Summary minutes April 1, 2025 ICARC General Meeting

Attendance: AB3XA, K3FSE, WA3BDR, N3VFK, N3LT, N3FLO, KA2YOS, K3PJ, N3ARA, KC3ZAF, N3QM, KB3WG, W3CDH, KC3FVU, N3UDI, WB3DUD, K3VAR, K3JOF, ND3L, E.J. Park, Bill Nordby

The President (Craig Bigler) called the meeting to order at 18:30 hours local time

The President led the group with the pledge of allegiance, and then the roll call was taken as usual.

Treasurer's Report: Chris Edwards gave a report of the Club's finances to date. He also reported that the Macks have been paid the annual rent for the Rhine Rd property. The Blue Spruce Park Lodge reservation has been paid for winter Field Day, 2026 and \$50 has been donated to QSL. Net. Motion was made to accept the report which was seconded and voted upon and passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report; Larry read the minutes from the March meeting. No suggested changes.* There was a motion to accept the report, seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.

Trustee's Report: Elmer reported that all is good with the repeaters.

Old Business

The Ghost town Trail happened on March 29, and was carried out by six members of ICARC. Phil K. summarized the event which tested the propagation between various locations. There were four hf stations on 40 and 80 meters and six 2m stations involved as well as one cross band repeater. Simplex was also tested. 40 m was good. Larry reported that he had extremely high noise on 80 m at the Josephine location but 40m did very well. Cass reported relatively quiet noise conditions on 80 m at his Vintondale/? Site.

New Business:

Craig set the Fox hunt date involving Troops 29, and 11 for May17 because that was the only day that both troops could make it. Cass will check on the Woodlands Pavilion at Yellow Creek for the fox hunt.. Volunteers were sought: Elmer and Cass volunteered. John K., Phil K., and Ralph T. said they could possibly make it. Craig B, Larry F., and Bill R. will be out of town that weekend. Craig indicated that without more definite participants the event may, likely, have to be postponed to another date. Bill McMillen announced a test session on Saturday, April 19, 2025 at 10:00 AM in the Indiana County Emergency Management Agency building.

The President adjourned the meeting at 18:49

A Brief Program was presented by Larry Freeman following the general meeting: The Anatomy of a Screw Driver Antenna

Indiana County Amateur Radio Club

Membership Application

CURRENT DATE (M/D/Y): / / Membership Status(I,A,S,F): New _____ Ongoing _____

Individual Membership (I) — \$35.00 Associate/Student Membership (A, S) — \$20.00

Family Membership (F) – \$50.00 {Two voting members per family}

*** Please complete the applicable information below: ***

Name: _____ DOB: _____ (Year Optional)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: _____ FISTS: _____ ARES: _____ RACES: _____

Other: _____ DOB: _____ (Year Optional)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: _____ FISTS: _____ ARES: _____ RACES: _____

Other: _____ DOB: _____ (Year Optional)

Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL: _____ FISTS: _____ ARES: _____ RACES: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

Email: _____ Other Email: _____

Do you belong to **A.R.E.S. / R.A.C.E.S.** of another County, if so which one: _____

Is it OK to put your name onto the **R.A.C.E.S / A.R.E.S.** emergency call list? Yes _____ No _____

Are you a member of the ARRL? Yes _____ No _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form along with a check or money order payable to ICARC, to:

Indiana County Amateur Radio Club
Attn: Treasurer
PO Box 2020
Indiana, PA 15701

Date Received _____ Amount \$ _____ (Cash) (Check) (MO) Number _____

The club info & newsletter is available on our web site at: www.qsl.net/w3bmd