

July 28, 2016



ICARC NEWSLETTER

Officers for 2016:

President - Doug Fitzsimmons K3LAB
Vice President - Ernest Clark KC3FVX
Treasurer - Terry Carnahan KB3JOD
Secretary - VACANT

Additional Board Members for 2016:

1. Dave Dzelsky N3DZ
2. Craig Bigler AB3XA
3. Jerry Kiehl WB3DUD
4. Phil Kopczyk K3PJ
5. Elmer Sorisio KB3WG
6. Larry Freeman N3LT

Local Happenings:

Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG resigned as repeater Trustee. It has been a very long run for Elmer as Trustee and he felt it time to pass the torch to someone else. He has agreed to help with problems at the repeater site for the next year or so. Elmer, please accept our heart-felt thanks for all the years of service to the club. It would have been very difficult to continue the repeater and the club without your insight and experience. You have been a valuable asset to ICARC for many years and your contributions will not be forgotten. We look forward to your continuing activities in ICARC.

Joe Rankin-KC3CDG stepped up to volunteer for the repeater trusteeship and Doug Fitzsimmons has appointed him as the new Trustee. Doug also formed a repeater committee of volunteers consisting of Joe, Doug, Terry, Craig, Dave Stiener, and Larry Freeman. Good luck to the committee.

The second test in the Cruible walk testing series was completed on July 18. The results were significant in that 75/80 m worked well from site to site separated (straight line) approximately 8.9 miles. Ten meters also worked but not as well as 75/80 m. Clearly the 10m wavelengths are scattered/absorbed more than the 75/80 m wavelengths under the foilage.

Using a 10 m hamstick on the hood of a truck did not work at all from site to site but worked sporadically when in the clear on the mobile trip from site alpha to the second site. 10 m was also tested site to site with an inverted V antenna configuration and a Vertical antenna configuration with two radials all configurations were fixed and hanging from the trees. It worked but not as well as 75/80 using the NVIS configuration. At the second site the NVIS configuration did not use poles but was hung from a tree at the antenna's apex. Interestingly, the 75/80 m hamstick worked reasonably well on the same magnetic mount as the 10m antenna when mounted on the hood of the truck. Could not use the roof because phone lines across the road kept knocking the antenna over (It was very long). However the mobile test of the 75/80 m hamstick, though incomplete, is very encouraging because site Alpha was able to hear the mobile 75/80 m com at every transmission as it traveled back to the Alpha site for the wrap-up. Unfortunately, the "motor" noise with the antenna on the hood was better than an s9 so the signal in the truck was mostly unreadable until getting very close to the Alpha site. The one-way distance traveled in the truck was approximately 25 miles so there were times when the alpha site and the mobile were considerably more than 8.9 miles separation and there were hills in between. A major issue is reducing the motor noise in the motor vehicles to be used in the final testing and the event vehicles if we decide to take the challenge. One thing we did not try was 10 m FM which would have mitigated some of the motor noise issues. We were also able to use the 31/91 repeater most of the time, however, this will not be the case during the full event. Our next step is to do a full course test with multiple vehicles. (over 70 miles)



The photo from the first test in the series (Courtesy of Terry Carnahan-KB3JOD) shows the typical setup for the NVIS (white pole) and the 2m antenna at site alpha. Doug is sitting at the table and the radios are provided by Terry C.

For the second test in the series on July 18, participants were: Terry Carnahan-KB3JOD, Doug Fitzsimmons-K3LAB, Dave Dzelsky-N3DZ, Cass Fitzgerald-KC3FLO, Dave Steiner-W3CDH (formerly KA3KFA), and Larry Freeman-N3LT.

(For the first test in the series, on July 9, participants were: Terry Carnahan-KB3JOD, Craig Bigler-AB3XA, Doug Fitzsimmons-K3LAB, and Larry Freeman-N3LT.)

It was a very long day but we all survived and had a nice early dinner at Coy's sandwich shop off Hwy 954.

Many thanks to every one who contributed to the effort. Thanks to Fred Maize-KM3M for providing one of the NVIS antennas and a couple of mobile resonator verticles and light stand for mounting things onto. Terry Carnahan provided an NVIS antenna, radios and a battery to help make the effort possible. Doug Fitzsimmons, provided the voice power to do the communication and a nice stand for mounting a 2 m antenna. Craig Bigler provided his IC 746 pro for the second during the first test in the series. Larry F. provided an IC 706 mkIIIG for the mobile and second site during the second test of the series. Cass Fitzgerald provided a 75/80 m hamstick which was used for the mobile test during the second test of the series. He also provided a new LiFe battery to operate Larry's IC 706 for the second site test of the 10 verticle and the 10 m inverted V.

There will be third test August 6, to check the mobile operations a bit more thouroughly as well as FM on 6 and 10 meters. It should be the final test before the final full test of the entire trail.

Other Stuff

ICARC held the funding raising dinner at Hoss' restaurant on July 9, 2016. The attendance was bit smaller than in the past (18 total attendees).

The Radio Merit badge operation through the repeater on July 14 was very successful. Ian Bigler-KC3DTE did a wonderful job of directing the event. Thanks to his direction all three hams were able to obtain the requisite QSO. Good work Ian, we are all very proud of you. Very significantly, Doug Fitzsimmons was a real champ in keeping each scout talking and asking questions. The biggest problem was that the wind at the repeater site was very strong and the guy-wires were moving a lot. This resulted in some of the worse noise ever experienced on the repeater. Looks like there is work still to be done in that area. Joe Rankin and Larry Freeman also stood by in case other assistance was needed. Cudos to all for a job well done.

Another group of scouts worked on their Radio Merit badge on Friday, July 20. This time there were eleven scouts. They communicated with Dave Dzelsky, N3DZ through the 146.31/91 repeater and Larry Freeman, N3LT on the designated simplex frequency associated with the Indiana County EMS two meter system. Doug Fitzsimmons, K3LAB used Dave Steiner's, W3CDH, mobile rig, in his truck, as the control operator for five of the scouts to talk to Larry on his mobile rig and Ian Bigler, KC3DTE, used his mobile rig in the family van as control operator for six scouts to contact N3DZ through the ICARC repeater. It went very well, Ian, again, did a nice job in making it all work. We want to thank all who participated including Ian's van driver, Sandy, (who is also his Mom) for putting up with us. Fun was had by all even though it may have been educational for a few (or all).

On July 26 the repeater committee had an initial meeting at Eat n' Park restaurant in preparation for the August 2, ICARC meeting to discuss various issues concerning the repeater and the repeater site. We deviated quite a bit so the meeting lasted about three hours. Much QBS at times. Doug F., Craig B., Terry C., Dave S., and Larry F., were present.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday, August 2, 2016 ICARC meets in the back room of Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant. The board meeting starts at 7:00 pm and the general meeting begins at 7:30 pm. We look forward to seeing you all there.

There is a scheduled Licensing Exam session for October, 2016. For more information contact Mr. Bill McMillen, N3QM (724) 397-2702

Email: wkmcmillen@gmail.com

Possible upgrade class sometimes this year, so stay tuned....

OTHER INFORMATION

Read about the July 5 meeting of ICARC in the meeting summary/minutes at the end of this document.

(If anyone would like to include information or write an article for the Newsletter please let Larry Freeman, N3n 1972LT, know by email at: wd4hoz@gmail.com or wlf@auxmail.iup.edu) The only caveats are: The editor reserves the right to alter the format for publication purposes. The content may also be modified contingent upon accuracy and appropriateness of the contained material. The latter would, of course, be subject to the approval of the original author.

Summary of July 5, 2016 ICARC Meeting

Attendees:

Doug Fitzsimmons-K3LAB, President	Adeline Carpentieri	Ian Bigler-KC3DTE
Craig Bigler-AB3XA	Carl Hvozda-N3PIE	Jerry Kiehl-WB3DUD
Dave Steiner-KA3KFA	Alton Strong-N3PHL	Phil Kopezyk-K3PJ
Terry Carnahan-KB3JOD, Treasurer	Fred Maize-KM3M	Paul Morris-K3VAR
Ernest Clark-KC3FVX, Vice President	Dave Dzelsky-N3DZ	Larry Freeman-N3LT
Joe Carpentieri-KA3BRH		

Guests:

The business meeting started at about 7:10 pm. Doug brought up the fact that Elmer Sorisio, KB3WG, resigned as repeater trustee. It was suggested that the replacement be a volunteer or by appointment by the president subject to acceptance by the potential appointee. Further discussion was deferred to the regular meeting.

The regular meeting was started by Doug Fitzsimmons at about 7:30 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited by all. A verbal roll call (call sign and first name) was taken for those present.

Terry provided the financial report and it was voted upon and accepted by the membership.

Dave Steiner reported on the net and indicated that there were 7 check-ins. He also brought up the scheduled fund raising event at HOSS' restaurant for July 9 at 6:00 pm and gave out a few more tickets. Dave said that the Wednesday hot dog night will start on July 10 at 6:00 pm. Everyone bring their own food he will provide the fire.

Terry and Phil talked a little about the meeting that occurred in Johnstown.

PLL tone will be added to the repeater

There was some discussion of the airport festival which netted 368 QSO's. 14 folks participated in the event with several folks making the contacts. Larry, Craig, Dave, and Fred will do Labels on SASE's at the August meeting.

There was some discussion of Field Day results and overall performance. We will report about 570 contacts including the GOTA station. A field day antenna committee was set up to check the antenna's for next year:

Dave Steiner, Terry Carnahan, and Larry Freeman.

The Crucible walk along the Laurel Highlands Trail to be held in September was discussed. It was reported that after a meeting with Dan Blevins the organizers have no expectation of successful communications after the failure of Cell and Satellite phones at last years events. On June 30 Terry, Craig, Doug, and Larry did an initial test of HF and VHF simplex between the starting site in Seward, and a site 8.9 miles (straight line) down the trail. The HF worked well but the VHF failed. Testing was done using a NVIS antenna for HF (80 m and 40 m) and a vhf/uhf J-pole up about 20 ft at each site. Tests were done in the late afternoon. It should take about 20 minutes to set the antennas up at each site, if there are no problems. (a minimum of two people are needed to set the antennas, but 3 would be better.) There is a serious need for more testing on different antenna arrangements and that is scheduled for Sunday July17 earlier in the day to be more similar to the likely operating times. It was concluded that if we do the event in September we will need at least 7 people dedicated for 3 days. More would be better.

New Business: Fall Licensing course was discussed and there was general agreement on an upgrade class.

There was also some discussion concerning assistance for Steve N3ZZS in putting up his 160 m loop antenna. Doug brought up the idea of equipment insurance but no hard decisions were made. The latter is being looked into by Terry. The question of a new 440 Mhz system was broached but it seems that the 440 Mhz is now working.

Trustee issue: It was made clear that the repeater trustee is not the “quartermaster” for the contents of the shack. Antenna sorting and transporting is a separate issue completely and is not the responsibility of the trustee. Doug asked for a volunteer to no avail. Larry pointedly said that he would not do it. He indicated that he would help whoever took the responsibility. Doug indicated that if no one stepped up he may have to put his name forward as trustee.

Dave Steiner made a motion that a letter be sent to Elmer thanking him for his years of service. Fred seconded the motion. The motion was voted upon and accepted unanimously.

Dave S. also made a motion to take the repeater off the air in the absence of a trustee. The motion was not seconded.

\$38.00 was donated to the club.

This meeting was adjourned at 9:33 PM