



## ICARC NEWSLETTER

June 30 2024

Welcome to Field Day (2024)  
The GOTA Station invites you in



### Officers for 2024:

President – Craig Bigler, AB3XA  
Vice President - Dylon Curtis KC3WMN  
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK  
Secretary - Chris Edwards, N3VFK

### Additional Board Members for 2024

1. John Kalicicki KA2YOS
2. David Steiner W3CDH
3. Phil Kopczyk K3PJ
4. Cass Fitzgerald, N3FLO
5. Elmer Sorisio, KB3WG
6. Larry Freeman N3LT

### LOCAL HAPPENINGS:

Field Day, June 22-23, 2024

Claimed contacts: 399. Great Job by everyone. Thanks to the following folks we had more than adequate help at the site for setup and take down, food prep and presentation: Craig Bigler, Ian Bigler, Sandy Bigler, Dave Dzelsky, Cass Fitzgerald (N3FLO), Phil Kopczyk (K3PJ), Walt Ligas, Bill McMillen, Bill Robinson (KC3ZAF), Elmer Sorisio, Stu Youngkin, Robert Zugates, Larry Freeman. Several of these folks and their Spouses brought covered dishes and/or deserts and for that a hearty thanks is offered along with our heartfelt gratitude for your support of ICARC.

We also offer our thanks to the top officials of the Indiana County Emergency Management Agency for the transport and use of two of their field generators for the event. ICARC is very grateful for their continued support.

W3BMD Radio Operators: Stu Youngkin (WB3FBL), Walt Ligas (WA3BDR), Elmer Sorisio (KB3WG), Ian Bigler KC3DTE), Craig Bigler (AB3XA), Bill McMillen (N3QM), Paul Morris (K3VAR), Dave Dzelsky (N3DZ), Larry Freeman (N3LT).

It should be pointed out that Stu, Walt, and Paul were the CW (MORSE CODE) operators with 86 contacts and also Ian, Craig, and Elmer made 149 digital contacts. The two modes totaled to 235 contacts. The phone contacts totaled to 164 with all but 47 being made by Stu. This is the best showing for FD that we've had for years.

### GOTA Station KB3JOF

The GOTA coach and radio operators: Robert Zugates (KB3JOF, GOTA Coach ) Operators: Bill Robinson (New ham KC3ZAF), EJ Park, Jonathan Krishart. EJ was successful at making two contacts; his first two ever.

There were also three other visitors, Jerry Kiehl (W3BMD), Fred Fish (N3KMA) and Tom Brew (K3WS). Fred brought Mr John Krishart who has shown some interest in ham radio to the point of working the GOTA

station for a while. Jerry and Tom were there providing much needed moral support and Tom took many great photos; several of which are shown on the following page.

## SEVERAL FIRSTS FOR ICARC THIS FIELD DAY:

It is the first time combined CW and Digital contacts outnumbered the Phone contacts.

The first time in many years that ICARC provided a GOTA station for new and non hams who want to try hf communications for the first time in a contest setting.

The first time there was a station setup 600 or so feet across the pond at Blue spruce.

The first time such a long range wireless network for computer logging was attempted. Until this point we had only tried about 200 ft maximum separation between any stations, and that was our very first attempt in the mid 1990's with a wired network. Kudos to Mr. Ian Bigler (KC3DTE for making this come together and function properly.)

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The picnic/covered dish on Saturday was a welcome break with lots of great food. The weather (temperature) was brutal on Friday and part of Saturday for set up but got better as the day progressed into evening with light breezes. It was great at the shaded Pavillion 4 with all the fresh oxygen provided by the trees and breezes. It was difficult to get back to work.

The GOTA setup was located near the edge of the ball field close to the main road through the park. It was Coached by Robert Zugates using his call KB3JOF, and was a bit of a thankless job for Robert to take. Just so you know, the GOTA coach is not allowed to operate the GOTA station which is torture for a ham at field day but Robert went above and beyond the call of duty to fulfill the mission. He deserves much thanks for that. Also the station is considered independent of the main operation of W3BMD and it uses the same report as the main station (3A WPA). GOTA points are donated to the main operation as bonus points. It operated most of the day and into the night. The antenna for this site was a G5RV dipole which did not perform as well as we had hoped. The operators, Bill Robinson, EJ Park, and John Krishart were very patient and stayed with it for a long while when, finally, EJ was able to make two contacts.

The station across the pond operated all day Saturday and throughout much of the night into Sunday with breaks for some sleep. It was a very active station manned by Elmer, Ian, and Craig. It was a highly productive endeavor and produced a significant share of the total contacts. The primary antenna used for this site was a vertical that performed very well. There was also an off-center fed 160 m dipole available for it to use if needed. It's not clear how many contacts were made using the latter.

The two W3BMD stations on the ball field both used 160 m off-center fed dipoles angled at about 70 degrees relative to each other with their short length sections separated by sufficient distance. Both stations were using band pass filters to prevent cross band interference.

The station, on the east side of the ball field, setup and initially manned by Stu and later joined by Paul and Walt was also very productive. It was up and running full tilt by 2:00 PM, which is the official starting time the event. Stu made the lions share of the phone contacts fairly early and when Paul and Walt joined him they started to work CW and all three made every CW contact that was to be made (86). Walt and Stu continued to work the station for several hours after Paul was done. Stu kept it going most of the night, taking a sleep break. In terms of total contacts, like the digital station across the pond, this was exceedingly productive.

The other W3BMD station, on the South edge of the ball field, did not get completely set up until about 2:45 PM and no one started operating it until a bit over an hour later. This was the only station that used a manual tuner and that turned out to be somewhat of a detriment. The 160m off-center fed dipole used on this station was difficult to tune with the manual tuner but it was able to tune all the way down to 1.800 Mhz with some effort. The original intent for this station was to operate CW on the 160 m band but unfortunately, the band was completely dead until after midnight when it was shut down until Sunday

morning. The station restarted around 9:00 AM and worked until about 11:30 AM. Over the time it operated, Dave Dzelsky, Bill McMillen, and Larry Freeman were able to work 47 phone contacts on most of the bands except 160 m. The other bands opened up nicely after about 9:00 pm Saturday, but there were many dupes.

Everything was fairly well shut down and buttoned up by the time the rain came a bit after noon time on Sunday. It was a bit of an early shutdown but some severe weather predicted.

All in all it was a successful, eventful, tiring and fun operation!

Take a look at the great array of photos below provided by Tom Brew (K3WS)

Station on the South edge of the field.



Station on the East edge of field.



GOTA EZ-UP viewed from across the pond



The EMA generator across the pond.



Craig and Stu on 40 m



It is a hot day under the EZ up (Sat)



Robert Z, Bill R., Tom B. at GOTA



GOTA station (Robert Z. and Bill R.)



County EMA Generator



Now take a look at the photos provided by Ian, and Craig Bigler looking South across the Pond to the Ball field. They are spectacular. There are a couple of nigh shots there to admire.



Photos below by Ian and Craig Bigler:

Station across the pond looking South  
(photo by Craig Bigler AB3XA)



Elmer Working digital across pond  
(photo by Ian Bigler KC3DTE)



Elmer & Craig at digital station  
(photo by Ian Bigler KC3DTE)



Night time shot from across the pond  
(photo by Ian Bigler KC3DTE) Note the  
county tower with red lights glowing on the hill.



Night is coming; from across the pond.  
(photo by Ian Bigler KC3DTE)



Somebody's making digital contacts  
(photo by Ian Bigler KC3DTE)



**Reminder:** The ICARC Public Service and Information Net will continue on Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.91/146.31 Mhz. (ICARC is an ARRL affiliated club)

**Reminder:** ICARC meeting are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month: June 4, \*July 2, August 6, 2024 at the Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant in the backroom at 6:30 PM. Hope to see you there. **The .**

**\* Moved to July 9, 6:30 PM at new, temporary, location of 603 Sportsman's Club Rd, Shelocta, Pa**

### OTHER HAM RADIO NEWS OF INTEREST:

Phil announced on the ICARC net Monday night that ham volunteers are being sought to assist in communications for the Ironstone 100K race. Phil has assisted with this in the past. It starts at Canoe Creek State Park, east of Altoona Saturday at 2:00 PM July 13, and finishes at Greenwood Furnace State Park near McAlevy's Fort, PA by 1:00 PM Sunday July 14. Kevin Lear, W3XOX is in charge of Amateur radio communications. Some of the Check stations are fine with HTs, while others need high power or cross-linked equipment to hit repeaters. If any of you are interested, Kevin's contact email from QRZ.com is [W3XOX@hotmail.com](mailto:W3XOX@hotmail.com).

The following is from Chris, N3VFK who got it from the June 2024 QST. He, rightly, points out that this will be a good signal to test for propagation to South America. See if you can find it.

The Belize amateur radio club has established a new cw 10 meter beacon. It is on 28.258 Mhz with the call sign V31HQ/B. This should help with checking on propagation to Central & South America. See if you can hear it. Signal reports can be sent to [beacon@barc.bz](mailto:beacon@barc.bz) if interested.

A reminder from Phil (and others):

**Somerset County Hamfest** takes place this Sunday July 7, 2024. The Western Pennsylvania Repeater Council (WPRC) will be holding its meeting at the Hamfest at 1:00 PM. If any of you are going to this hamfest, it might be worthwhile to attend/set in on this meeting and ask if there is a 2 meter frequency pair available for ICARC to use. I keep thinking 146.655 would be a good choice, as a non-Ham may now own the repeater hardware, but not the frequency.

**According to the ARRL Member Bulletin LoTW is now back up and running as of 12:00 PM this past Monday, July 1, 2024**

**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](mailto:n3lt@arrl.net) by the middle of each month. Preferred document format is .pdf. All submissions are subject to approval for publication by the editor.