



ICARC NEWSLETTER

August 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:

Activities at the remote site on Rhine Rd

August 6, 2025

Forms for the concrete fabricated for the holes on site.



August 15, 2025

Several of us worked at the site today with the main goal of getting the rock out of the first hole and putting the forms in the holes. Bill McMillen is operating the skid loader with a jack-hammer attachment. He handily got rid of the rock in very little time. There were five of us at the site working on the project Bill McMillen-N3QM, David Steiner-W3CDH, Deryl Mack-KC3YZW, Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG, Larry Freeman-N3LT. A few photos follow to give you a sense of the required effort. In the middle photo Dave is getting ready to climb into the hole to get it formed. The big rock is gone and the hole size is about right so Dave has to form the one end only, as shown in the upper right hand photo. The photo at the bottom left shows the form in the hole near the wood-line



August 16, 2025: First Hot Dog night of the season

A great evening of fun eating hotdogs and brats and other pic nic food like salsa & chips and very good potato salad. Also, had fun with 13 others playing with an air cannon launching radishes and later watching for meteors. See the photo below:



August 21 & 22, 2025

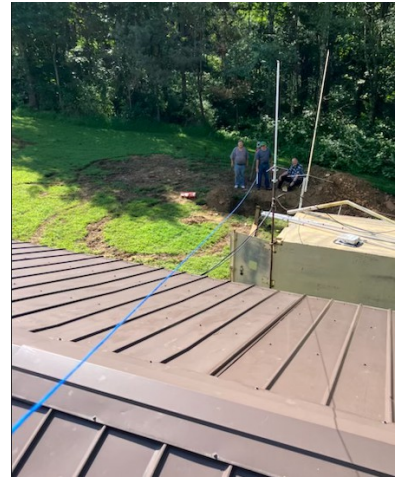
Several of us met on the site on Thursday the 21st to check the locations of the exit markings and alignment for putting in the anchor rods. Everything looked good so we proceeded to Friday the 22nd when Dave Steiner-W3CDH drove his backhoe to the site and it was used to place the cages into the holes. That saved much time and physical labor. Thank You Dave!!

The following photos from Mike Kosalko show alignment checks from different views. (On site: Bill McMillen, Dave Steiner, Mike Kosalko, Dave Dzelsky, Deryl Mack, Larry Freeman)

That's about right, I think!



Wow! That's a long way down!



N3DZ: I'm SO happy that I'm not in that hole!



N3LT: oops! I broke my hammer!



Hopefully, this gives you some sense of the effort put into this day by all. In addition, just for fun, a couple of us stayed on and put some support under the door beam of the storage shed to make it close a bit easier.

It was a productive day!

August 26, 2025: (Photos courtesy of Mike Kosalko)(Wet concrete was copiously jiggled with a “snake vibrator” to remove any voids.)
Concrete Pouring Day



August 30, 2025

Our “Last Saturday” event started this day on site at roughly 10:00 am. Our goal was to get the ground rods for the support lines driven into the ground. There were several on site: Craig Bigler-AB3XA, Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO, Mike Kosalko-N3ARA, Ian Bigler-KC3DTE, Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG, Deryl Mack-KC3YZW, Robert Zugates-KB3JOF and Larry Freeman-N3LT. Most of us stood around and watched as Craig and Mike used an electric hammer drill and a rod pounding bit to make short work of the job. After that was done the repeater receive antenna was raised from about 8 ft to approximately 20 ft and that definitely improved its ability to detect signals from a distance. I can now key it up from my home West of Indiana; a big improvement. See the following photos, courtesy of Cass Fitzgerald



That's a perfect position for the ladder! Now, can we stop?



Positioning the ladder for driving another grnd Rod.

I hope this fibre glass holds!

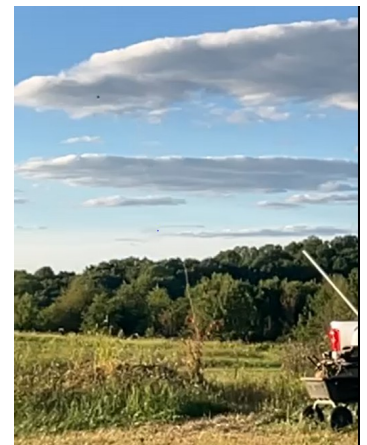


Raising the Repeater Receiver Antenna

August 30 6:30 PM and Beyond

Location: The Bigler's large field near their house

Goal: Range testing Ian's Air Cannon made for launching a 14 oz weight, of potatoes, apples, pill containers ..etc.



The basic arrangement is shown in the first photo (taken prior to 08/30). For the test the launcher is mounted in the bed of the Bigler's truck and you can clearly see the barrel. The second two photos from August 30, show consecutive frames of a slow motion video (240 fps). The “bullet” in this shot was a small cloth bag containing beads with a total weight of 14 oz and a 1/8 inch, 150 foot, tether line attached. I think this shot had a range of about 270 ft. This shot used a pressure of about 75 PSI. There was another shot that went over 300 ft for which I don't have the video. The longest shot before dark, was an untethered Pill bottle, filled with water, which traveled over 720 ft using a pressure of about 105 PSI. The highlight of the fun happened after dark when Ian started pushing chemical “glow sticks” into potatoes and launching them. He used red white and blue. The red and white were much more visible than blue. This madness carried on until well after 9:30 PM. If you will, try to imagine 4, relatively sensible adults, (Mom, Dad, Ian, and the author) playing in a field with a DIY air cannon launching various items into the great chasm of the sky! I don't think it is possible to have more fun than we had that afternoon and evening. Sometimes you just need to do things for fun. As most of you who read this are ham operators, I know you can imagine many practical uses for such a device to get lines over tall trees for antennas or possibly over small ponds in order to hang an end fed antenna over the water. The possibilities are almost endless!

Announcements:

Remember the upcoming ICARC meeting on Sept 2, 2025, 6:30 pm at the Indiana, PA Eat 'n Park Restaurant.

The Seventh formal meeting of the ICARC Grant Committee was held on Tue, August 26, 2025.

At the August meeting of ICARC, the “Hot Dog Night” event of the past was reinstated to occur every **First & Third Saturday of each month**. So mark your calendar for Saturday September 6. It will start at 6:00 pm at 325 Rhine Rd., the location of our remote repeater site.

For future reference: Anyone providing direct photographs to the newsletter editor to be published should submit them in .PNG or .JPG format. Do NOT use the HEIC format introduced by Apple for its iPhones. Super high resolution is not needed for the newsletter. None of my current, outdated, computer applications support the HEIC format.

As you know the old tower is down and we are in the process to installing the new tower. The video links for the tower take down are given below:

Links for Tower Take-down

Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

<https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0>

https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY

<https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk>

The secondary repeater coverage is degraded due to the tower removal activity. It will be reestablished as soon as possible.

Another Interesting Mode of Operation on the Rise:

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

Reminder: The ICARC meetings are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month; next meeting is Tue, September 2, 2025, located at the Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant in the backroom at 6:30 PM. Hope to see you there. Maybe you can catch us there once in a while for breakfast on Saturday morning starting around 08:30

Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, Bill Robinson and Ralph Timblin. 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://kl7aa.org/vex/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 Sub band 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.**

Minutes of July 1, 2025 ICARC General Meeting

Attendance: AB3XA, N3FLO, KC3DTE, N3DZ, N3VFK, N3LT, KA2YOS, K3PJ, N3ARA, N3QM, KB3WG, W3CDH, N3DZ, N3UDI, K3VAR

The Vice President (Cass Fitzgerald) called the meeting to order at 18:35 hours local time. The Pledge of allegiance was skipped due to a room change, there was no flag present.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer, Chris Edwards reported on the General fund budget and also the Maintenance fund budget and gave a report of the Club's finances to date. He also reported a \$55.30 REA bill. A motion was made to accept the report and it was voted upon and accepted unanimously.

Trustee's Report: the Repeater Trustee, Elmer, pointed out that The W3BMD repeater is working OK. He also pointed out that the N3FLO repeater is not functioning properly, possibly due to a blown final. He will check this out. No vote was taken on approval.

Secretary's Report: There were no June minutes available. No report given,

Cass gave a report on Field Day with a few pros and cons.

Pros: Antenna configuration at Blue Spruce worked well this year, producing minimal cross-talk using the "messenger" line for all antennas. He also provided a number of pros and cons concerning the event.

Cons: The county light tower generators failed and could not be used. A club member's generator had to be used and it worked well. There were not enough operators to man 3 stations for 24 hours.

Suggestions from Cass:

Never use the EMA equipment again, it is not maintained.

Must have a setup-take down plan.

Must have an operator schedule for each station.

Get rid of the GOTA station. It had 0 contacts and logged 0 time on the air.

Run 2A, we don't have the people to operate 3A.

Ian Bigler reported tentatively 361 logged contacts and 10 operators. The logged contacts number may change slightly in the final analysis.

Ian also passed around some results of a survey that he performed via the web by sending each member the link to a questionnaire that asked the membership to indicate what activities that each would like to see the club doing. There were 20 respondents out of 30 members.

He and Dave Steiner also passed around the June 30 article in the Indiana Gazette, by Nathan Zisk, highlighting the ICARC Field Day event that occurred June 28-29 at Blue Spruce Park.

Craig Bigler pointed out that all the antenna ropes (several hundred feet) and radio equipment used, came from two or three members and that very little club equipment other than a table and an antenna came from the club. He also indicated that most of the setup was done by the same few members.

Larry Freeman suggested that the general membership should be contemplating the slate of new officers for next year. Larry indicated that he would not be running for Secretary for the coming year.

Bill McMillen requested a report on the tower situation.

There was a brief report by Larry indicating that the tower is now down and that the site is being cleaned up. Although no vote was taken or motion made there appears to be a general feeling amongst membership that the old tower should be repurposed instead of being scrapped.

Someone suggested that on the agenda for next month (August) there should be an item related to the club disposing of all the hardware in the new fireproof file cabinet and other junked radio equipment.

No Board of Directors meeting was called for by any officer or member at large.

The vice president called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Such motion was made; it was Seconded; voted upon and passed. The Vice President adjourned the meeting at 7:12 PM.