



ICARC NEWSLETTER

June 30 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:

Field Day June 28-29 (See the article: ICARC Hosts Annual Amateur Radio Field Day at Blue Spruce Park, by Nathan Zisk in the June 30 addition of the Indiana Gazette.)

Another successful operation for the ARRL Field Day at Blue Spruce Park is now history. It was a fairly expansive operation with three stations and five available antennas. One being a vertical. There were two stations on the large ball field near the main entrance and one located across the small pond that splits the park. Full operations started a bit late due to a deluge of rain around 1:45 to about 2:30 PM so we were a bit late getting started at the two ball-field sites with EZ-up cover only. However the site across the pond was up and running at or near 2:00 PM because there was full tent cover from the deluge. Additionally, we tried something new this year in that when we hung all the wire antennas we used rope support along the full length of the antennas (Passenger Lines). The main benefit being the ability to attain greater height at the feed point for each of the dipole antennas which were used. They allowed us to cover all hf bands between 160 m and 10 m. The arrangement of the operating stations and antennas was such that there was no significant interference between the stations, even without the use of band pass filters. Operating 3A under the W3BMD call sign, there were a final total of 375 contacts logged. The logging was done via our local wireless wifi using N1MM logger software. This year the logging operation was handled by Mr. Ian Bigler who is also the ICARC webmaster. He kept it all running smoothly. There were 10 operators spread through 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. 160 meters was, for the most part, devoid of signals at our location, as was 10 m. There were a couple of rag-chewers on the upper end of the 160 m band but that was about it. There was plenty of food around and a small picnic at one of the pavilions with hot-dogs and hamburgers, where Ms. Beverly Sorisio provided some great pasta salad and fruit along with some delectable, chocolate cupcakes with a cherry filling.

In summary, contact numbers were slightly down from last year, we all worked hard, got very tired, and had much fun with a few small glitches, primarily with the off grid power sources for which, as planned, we had backup. It was a little tougher this year because we were all a year older, and a few of our setup group were tasked to help take down the old tower, which got scheduled by the contractor for June 27 setup day for Field Day operations.

June 27, 2025, Old Tower Take-down Images and Video



At the top removing hardware



Lowering the top section



Lowering the bottom section

Video Links for Tower Take-down
Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

<https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0>

https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY

<https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk>



Lowering the new Tower

Announcements:

The Sixth formal meeting of the ICARC Grant Committee was held on Tue, June 17, 2025. Discussion centered around getting the tower removal rescheduled by the contractor and reconsidering some of the approved purchases and adding others.

Note, the tower removal was later rescheduled for June 27, 2025. See photos and video links above.

The N3FLO repeater coverage is degraded due to the tower removal. It will be reestablished as soon as the new tower is commissioned.

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). In recent weeks it has also been repeated at approximately 8:45 PM on the 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, July 1 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://kl7aa.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 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 Courtney.

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.**

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