



# The Indianapolis Radio Club Newsletter

Founded 1914

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## *May 2024 Newsletter*

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### **Upcoming IRC Meetings and Events:**

**June 8:** Club POTA activation. 3:00 pm at Fort Harrison St. Park Visitor Center.

**June 14:** Annual Auction. 7:30 PM at Salvation Army EDS Facility.

**July 27:** Second annual "Picnic and POTA" at Fort Harrison State Park at Noon.

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### **Highlights from the May Meeting:**

Meeting called to order via Zoom at 7:30 by Club President, David Spoelstra, N9KT. There were 33 in attendance.

Jeff Hammer, N9NIC talked a little about this year's W9JP Field Day, coming up on June 22 & 23. *[More info in this newsletter.]*

Next month's meeting is the annual auction. It's a good time to clean out your shack of stuff you no longer need and re-stock it with stuff that other folks no longer need.

Next, David introduced Bill Brown, WB9ELK. Bill started "Spaceport Indiana" with a friend in the early 2000's. He teamed up with Chuck Christ, W9IH on High Altitude Balloon (HAB) launches. Bill has made several launches from the IN State Fairgrounds. Showed a video of a launch from Columbus, IN. That video can be seen at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_tje-R6hIQ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tje-R6hIQ0). Bill then went to his slide show. He had some interesting photos, especially of the Minion payload. Bill talked about pico balloons that look similar to mylar party balloons and are much less expensive to launch. Pico balloons will do an ounce or less payload. Bill sells Skytracker modules that handle

tracking via APRS at <https://elktronics.com/>. Some of these pico balloons have gone around the world over 6 times! Since 2001, Bill has hosted the “Great Plains Super Launch”. The last one, last June, was in Huntsville, AL. There were around 50 people from around the world that launched 7 or 8 weather balloons and several pico balloons at once. Balloons aloft can be tracked at <https://amateur.sondehub.org/>. There is lots of cool info on this site, as well as some handy tools, including one that will predict the landing site of a weather balloon. Todd, KN4TPG launched 8 Pico balloons from Antarctica. One is still flying after 9 months. Todd received a \$20K grant to travel to Antarctica, furthering his meteorological studies, to launch a super pressure pico balloon from Antarctica. Bill showed his WG-220 scale (available [here](#)) that he uses for weighing payload and calculating balloon lift. Bill said the next [Super Launch](#) is coming up August 1-2, in Colorado. [Bill’s YouTube channel](#) has lots of interesting videos related to High Altitude Balloons. The meeting adjourned to balloon chat at 9:15.

This meeting was recorded, and the complete recording is available [here](#).

## **Ham Radio News:**

### **HAMVENTION IS THIS WEEKEND!**

The “Dayton” Hamvention runs this Friday, May 17 through Sunday, May 19, just a couple hours east of Indianapolis in Xenia, OH. From humble beginnings in 1952 at the Biltmore Hotel in downtown Dayton, Hamvention has grown to the world’s largest amateur radio gathering, attracting hams from around the globe. There are over 50 forums over the three day run of the show in 4 rooms. Topics range from tips on successful clubs (I’ll be attending that one), High Altitude Balloons (moderated by our May presenter, WB8ELK), DXing tips, POTA, and all sorts of other topics. There are hourly prize drawings, with additional “bonus prizes”. There are 6 buildings of commercial exhibitors and vendors, in addition to hundreds of flea market vendors outside. Advance ticket sales have ended, but tickets are available for \$30 at the gate. Your ticket will get you in all three days. For more information, go to the Hamvention website at <https://hamvention.org/>.

## HELP OUT WITH INDIANAPOLIS RADIO CLUB FIELD DAY

As Indianapolis Radio Club Field Day Coordinator, Jeff Hammer, N9NIC says, Field Day is only weeks away and it's time to decide where you want to go and what you want to do.

The Indianapolis Radio Club needs your support as we conduct a very public Field Day at the Speedway Municipal Center at 5300 Crawfordsville Rd, Speedway, IN. Take a look at the sign up options here (there are plenty of different opportunities):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050544AAA722A13-48472962-field>

Here is an informational slide Jeff put together. Please help if you can!



### IRC Field Day - Key Points

- **Sign Up Here:**  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050544AAA722A13-48472962-field>
- Bring a Travel Trailer/RV– Room for 5!
- 8am Jun 22, 2024– 6pm Jun 23, 2024
- Speedway Municipal Center, 5300 Crawfordsville Rd
- Restrooms available
- Bring food/drink, some will be provided
- Visit the St. Christopher Festival
- NO - selling or distributing goods or food to public
- NO – fires or generators
- YES – Battery & solar
- All antennas self-supporting
- Traditional Field Day Operations
- Plus Earthquake Exercise with EOC
- 1 HF Station (W9JP), 2 if a bunch volunteer!
- VHF/UHF Station (W9JP)
- GOTA Station (TBD)
- 1 Traffic Station (W9JP/W9JS)
- As many other stations as we want using individual call signs (let's show off Amateur Radio!)
- Any operator can participate in earthquake exercise on VHF/UHF
- Special VHF Frequencies for Indiana (Hancock County already on board)
  - 2 meter FM: 146.490
  - 6 meter FM: 52.540
  - 6 meter SSB: 50.300

## MFJ CEASES PRODUCTION, SHUTTING DOWN

MFJ Enterprises, Inc founder Martin F. Jue, K5FLU, announced that as of May 17, 2024, the company will cease on-site production at their Starkville, Mississippi, facility. Ameritron, Hy-Gain, Cushcraft, Mirage, and Vectronics brand products will be affected by the shutdown. Jue cited his retirement (he turned 80 this year), as well as the hit his

business took from COVID, as factors that led to his decision. The full story can be found at <https://www.arrl.org/news/mfj-ceasing-on-site-production>

## **INDIANAPOLIS RADIO CLUB POTA EVENT NEWS**

The Indianapolis Radio Club held another Parks On The Air (POTA) activation at Fort Harrison State Park on Saturday, April 27. We had a whopping 27 folks attend! Of those, 13 operated (including a lady that just came by to see what was going on) and made 142 contacts using 2 HF stations. This many contacts was not bad considering band conditions were not the best. Thanks to Gordon and Ellen Brock (KD9RUE and KD9RUD) for supplying their enclosed tent, as there was a persistent stiff breeze all day.

We don't have a POTA activation scheduled for May, but will have our next one on Saturday, June 8. This one will be a little later, after the testing session gets out. We will try to be on the air with at least 2 HF stations by 3:00 pm. We will be at the same location, in front of the Visitor Center at Fort Harrison State Park. Remember, there is a \$7 per vehicle admission charge to the park, unless you have an annual pass.

As on any club activation, everyone will use the club's call (W9JP), but anyone that is registered in the POTA systems will get credit for contacts they make. If you're new to the POTA program or new to HF this is a great chance to get some experience. If you are currently a Technician, or not even licensed, come on out. There will be control operators to help you out.

## **SECOND ANNUAL "PICNIC AND POTA" COMING UP JULY 27!**

After a great time at our First Annual "Picnic and POTA" last year, we are doing it again! This year's event will be on Saturday, July 27, at the same place as last year, the Cherry Tree Shelter, in Fort Harrison State Park. The club will furnish hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, condiments, plates and utensils, water, and ice for drinks. If you would like, bring a side dish to share and a non-alcoholic drink. That's the "Picnic" part, for the "POTA" part, we will have 2 HF stations on the air, just like we do for our "quasi-monthly" POTA operating events.

Remember, there is a \$7 per vehicle park admission fee unless you have an annual park pass. Watch your email for more information and sign-up forms.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT THE IRC

You can support the Indianapolis Radio Club in any, or all, of these four ways:

1. Join the club. Your annual membership dues (\$20 for an individual, \$30 for a family (in the same household), or \$10 for a student, with valid ID) help support the club in its mission to promote our hobby by sponsoring monthly VE testing sessions, reaching out to new licensees, and welcoming them to the hobby. The easiest way to join is to go to <https://tinyurl.com/irc-dues-payment> and complete the process through PayPal.
2. Pay your ARRL membership dues through the IRC, utilizing the Club Commission program. The club will get a \$5 commission for renewals, or a \$20 commission for new memberships. Fill out the form available at <https://tinyurl.com/ARRL-membership-form> and send it, along with payment, to club treasurer, KJ9B. Or fill out one of the forms at an in-person meeting.
3. Join the Kroger Community Rewards program (it's free!) by going to <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards> and designating the Indianapolis Radio Club as the charity you want to support. The club then gets a quarterly donation from Kroger based on a percentage of the amount spent by those supporting the club.
4. If applicable, donate part or all of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to the Indianapolis Radio Club, a 501(c)(3) charity.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact Ken Bandy, KJ9B, at [treasurer@indyradioclub.org](mailto:treasurer@indyradioclub.org).

## 2024-2025 IRC SEASON PRESENTATIONS

The 2024-25 season for the Indianapolis Radio Club is coming together. Currently, here are some of the presentations we have on the books:

- Eric Swartz, WA6HHQ, Co-Founder of Elecraft
- Don Kirk, WD8DSB talking about tracking down and identifying RFI sources
- Steve Van Frank, W9TN talking about space weather
- Mike Sercer, WA9FDO talking about his experiences in Armed Forces Radio
- Annual favorite, Dave Arland talking about the latest from CES
- Other possible interesting presentations such as portable stations, as well as VHF/UHF antennas, and another radio manufacturer.

## **UPCOMING CENTRAL INDIANA TESTING SESSIONS (check with sponsor before planning to attend)**

Anderson IN 46016-2238

Sponsor: Anderson Repeater Club

Date: May 21 2024

Time: 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: Jeffrey L. Dyer

(317) 775-3415

Email: k9dyr@arrl.net

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Madison County EMA EOC

200 N Delaware St

Anderson IN 46016-2238

Website: <http://www.andersonrepeater.club/>

Gas City IN 46933-1155

Sponsor: GCARC

Date: May 28 2024

Time: 5:00 PM (No Walk-ins / Register or Call ahead)

Contact: Mitchell D. Miller

(765) 661-5893

Email: mitchmiller55@gmail.com

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: EMA Building

3921 S Garthwaite Rd

Pre-register only, contact ahead

Gas City IN 46933-1155

Website: <https://www.grantarc.net/>

Bloomington IN 47401-5337

Sponsor: Bloomington ARC Inc

Date: Jun 01 2024

Time: 12:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: William F. Wootton

(812) 876-8689

Email: KC9ACL@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: First United Church - Call or email ahead due to COVID-19

2420 E 3rd St  
Register at 11:30am  
Testing at 12 NOON  
Bloomington IN 47401-5337

Indianapolis IN 46218-2169  
Sponsor: Indianapolis Radio club W9JP  
Date: Jun 08 2024  
Time: 12:00 PM (No Walk-ins / Register or Call ahead)  
Contact: James K. Rinehart  
(317) 721-1458  
Email: testing@indyradioclub.org  
VEC: ARRL/VEC  
Location: Salvation Army EDS Training Facility  
4020 Georgetown Rd  
Indianapolis IN 46218-2169

Lafayette IN 47901-1141  
Sponsor: Tippecanoe County VE Team  
Date: Jun 12 2024  
Time: 6:00 PM (No Walk-ins / Register or Call ahead)  
Contact: Elizabeth M. Flowers  
Email: tippecanoeveteam@gmail.com  
VEC: LAUREL VEC  
Location: The Bindery Artist Studios  
Pre-Registration Required  
Visit Website to Pre-Register  
511 Ferry St  
Lafayette IN 47901-1141  
Website: <https://www.tcvet.info/>

Franklin IN 46131-9733  
Sponsor: Mid State Amateur Radio Club  
Date: Jun 15 2024  
Time: 9:30 AM (No Walk-ins / Register or Call ahead)  
Contact: Jacqueline M. Frederick  
Email: vetestingmarc@yahoo.com

VEC: LAUREL VEC  
Location: Johnson County REMC  
750 International Dr  
Franklin IN 46131-9733

## **FEEL FREE TO SHARE OUR NEWSLETTER**

If you belong to any other radio groups, please feel free to share our newsletter with them. They can also sign up to be on our mailing list by filling out the form available at [http://mail.indyradioclub.org/mailman/listinfo/ircnews\\_indyradioclub.org](http://mail.indyradioclub.org/mailman/listinfo/ircnews_indyradioclub.org).

## **SEND ME YOUR HAM RADIO NEWS**

If anyone has any items for the newsletter, please send them to Ken Bandy at [kj9b@arrl.net](mailto:kj9b@arrl.net)

## **Signals from the Past:**

**From the May, 2004 *Amachewer*:**

IRC April Program:

"new digital modes & Equipment for PSK "

Presented by - Hank - K9LZJ & Mike - K9JRI

This was a leading edge technology presentation.

- They brought several different types of Computer software for Amateur digital PSK, SSTV & other modes. They demonstrated this new software along with the several kinds of available amateur hardware, including Radios interface units and equipment. A lot of the attendees were able to get some hands on time with this very interesting gear at Program's end..

Thanks to Hank - K9LZJ & Mike - K9JRI for this very interesting and fun presentation..

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## Upcoming Area Radio Events:

- “Dayton” Hamvention: May 17 - 19. Details at <https://hamvention.org/>
- W9JP POTA operating event: June 8, 3:00 pm, at Fort Harrison State Park, in front of Visitor’s Center.
- Monroe County Hamfest: June 8, 8:00 am to noon. Details at <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/monroe-county-in-hamfest-1>
- W9JP Field Day: June 22 and 23, at Speedway Municipal Center. Contact Jeff Hammer, N9NIC for more info.
- Indy Radio Club 2nd annual “Picnic and POTA” pitch-in: July 27, Noon to 4:00 or so, at Fort Harrison State Park, Cherry Tree Shelter.

## 2024 Officers:

- President: David Spoelstra, N9KT – [president@indyradioclub.org](mailto:president@indyradioclub.org)
- Vice Pres.: Dave Miller, K9RTT - [vp@indyradioclub.org](mailto:vp@indyradioclub.org)
- Secretary/Treasurer: Ken Bandy, KJ9B - [secretary@indyradioclub.org](mailto:secretary@indyradioclub.org)
- Dir. at large: Jim Rinehart, K9RU – [board@indyradioclub.org](mailto:board@indyradioclub.org)
- Dir. at large: Kyle Bandy, KC9GLR - [board@indyradioclub.org](mailto:board@indyradioclub.org)
- Dir. at large: Kevin Colbert, KD9MNB - [board@indyradioclub.org](mailto:board@indyradioclub.org)
- W9JP Trustee: Jay Kraus, W9TC - [w9jp.trustee@indyradioclub.org](mailto:w9jp.trustee@indyradioclub.org)

**To Pay Dues or Donate to the club, go to**  
<https://tinyurl.com/irc-dues-payment>

Or Scan this QR Code with your smartphone:

