

Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 9, Issue 7

July 2021

President's Corner

I don't know about you, but I am very disappointed in 6 meters. Been really dead for DX up here in the Black Hole of the Northwest.

Please be safe and stay well.

73

John W3ML

Good DXing!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 President Speaks
- 2- Member News/DX News

"Working the World from the Black Hole"

NWI DX Club Website

<http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/>



Don't forget Steve Mollman is our QSL Card Checker.

DXCC Card Checking is available by appointment and may be available at meetings. E-Mail kd9hl@arrl.net for an appointment or to make other arrangements.

Reminder, the NWIDX Club has a club call W9NWI.

The call is available to members for use during contests, special events, Field Day, etc. To schedule dates for its use, contact the trustee, Steve Mollman – KD9HL. kd9hl@arri.net

QSL cards are available.

Notice:

Articles in the Northwest Indiana DX Club Newsletter (except for those separately copyrighted) may be reprinted, provided proper credit is given.

Still Needed ***Help Wanted*** ***Webmaster***

The club is in urgent need of a Webmaster to manage our website:
<http://nwidxclub.weebly.com>.

Normal workload is less than five minutes per month.

If you have the skills needed, please contact the club president, John Poindexter-W3ML at his e-mail address: w3ml.john@gmail.com



NWIDX Club Members DXCC Challenge Award

Scorecard

(as of June 30, 2021)

1	AG9S	JIM SJOBERG, JR	2984
2	N9FN	DAVE CHASEY	2502
3	K9FN	DAVID BUNTE	2269
4	AJ9C	MIKE KASRICH	2261
5	W8FIB	TOM RUGGLES	1721
6	KD9HL	STEVE MOLLMAN	1600
7	W3ML	JOHN POINDEXTER	1431
8	W9UM	NICHOLAS COMINOS	1412
9	N9RD	JUERGEN NITTNER	1399
10	K9SUH	KEN REISING	1356
11	N9DA	JOHN SIKORA	1149
12	N9DD	THOMAS FRISZ	1084
13	N7GVV	JAMES RAISLER	1012

The above totals were abstracted the ARRL DXCC Standings Lists. <http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-standings>
 The ARRL DXCC Challenge award is available to applicants who reach 1,000 band points on the bands of 160 through 6-Meters. This includes only current entities. Deleted entities do not count towards this award. All contacts must be made after November 15, 1945. Once you reach the 1,000-entity/band point level, you are entered into the Challenge listing automatically. An application to request the DXCC Challenge listing is not required. This award is endorsable in levels of 500. There is no certificate for this award but a special plaque is available from the ARRL.

The maximum possible points as of June 30, 2021 was 3390 points (10 bands X 339 eligible entities). The current world high point holder is EA8AK with 3264 points and the current USA high point holder is W4DR with 3187 points.



“CHEAP AND EASY”
COAX TRIMMING VERSION 2
By
Jerry Hess, W9KTP

The first version of “Cheap and Easy” worked fairly well, but did have two short comings. First, I discovered when trimming some very old RG/8, the jacket was very hard and difficult to cut and took considerable effort to penetrate. Second, it was very awkward to use the device on long

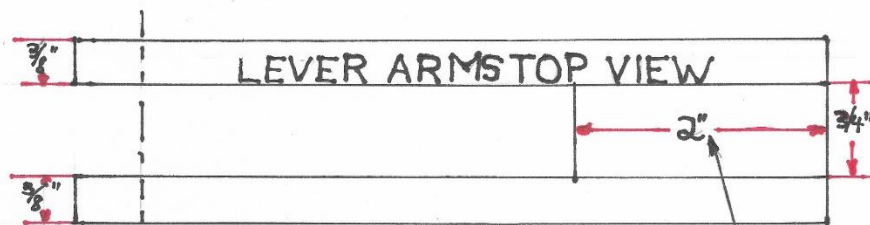
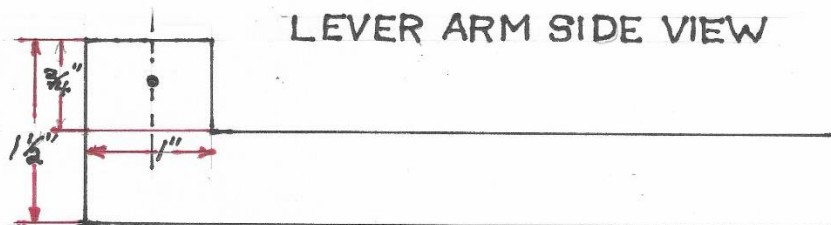
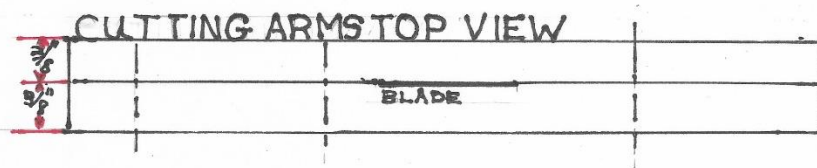
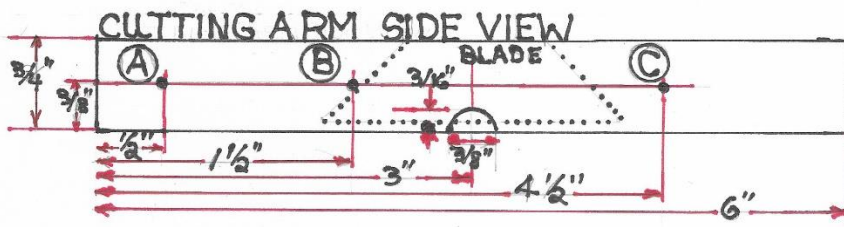
pieces of coax. This new version solves those problems and makes the job of trimming coax almost foolproof. Both new cutters are shown in the picture below. By adding a lever arm to the cutter, the device acts like a pair of pliers. An additional two inches were added to increase the force too.



Each unit is constructed from four pieces of ash (or any hardwood) as noted in the drawing below. The bolts at position B and C are 1" long 6-32 bolts with #6 lock washers under the bolt head and a #6 flat washer under a 6-32 wing nut. The bolt at position A is a 2" long 6-32 bolt with a #6 lock washer under the bolt head, a #6 flat washer under a lock nut. The lock nut is visible on the arm of the "braid only" unit. The lock nut is tightened firmly so the arm stays in place as the device is rotated around the coax.

Using the device is easy. Turn it bottom facing up and align the cutting blade to the desired position on the coax. Squeeze the lever firmly and rotate the device about 180 degrees around the coax. Reach around the coax from the opposite direction and complete the circle of the coax. Repeat a few times, keeping pressure on the lever.

CHEAP + EASY COAX TRIMMING VERSION 2



BLOCK 3/4" x 3/4" x 2"

HOLE A, B, C 1/16", SEE TEXT FOR HARDWARE

That should do it. I've made several coax trimmings with this device with no nicks. It takes only 5 minutes to be ready to install the PL-259.

73's,
Jerry

Congratulations

Congratulations to Carl Luetzelschwab-K9LA on winning the *QST* Cover Plaque Award for his article “Solar 25 is Finally Here” that was published in the April 2021 issue.

Congratulations to Chuck Hill-KC9OYE for his 1st Place finish in Porter County-Single Operator Low Power category of this year’s Indiana QSO Party.

Congratulations to Linda Metz-KC8PKY for her 1st Place finish in Starke County-Single Operator Low Power category of this year’s Indiana QSO Party.

Congratulations to Jürgen Nittner for his 1st Place finish in Porter County-Single Operator High Power category of this year’s Indiana QSO Party.

Congratulations to Allen Jones-W9DZ for his 1st Place finish in Laporte County-Single Operator High Power category of this year’s Indiana QSO Party.

Congratulations to Dave Chasey-N9FN for winning the “Top Scoring Indiana Portable” plaque in this year’s Indiana QSO Party.

<Ω>

3Y0J Bouvet Island DXpedition Team Hasn't Given Up



The Daily DX has reported that the 3Y0J DXpedition team is still hoping to have a go at the island in 2023. The DXpedition team had planned to travel to Bouvet via the RV *Braveheart*, owned by Nigel Jolly, K6NRJ.

"Since the cancellation of 3Y0J, we have been working closely with Nigel Jolly to form a new plan, with a new owner of *Braveheart* and a revised payment plan that enables Nigel Jolly to continue managing *Braveheart* and will keep it available for DXpeditions for years to come," said the announcement from DXpedition co-leader Paul Ewing, N6PSE.

"We are working out the details of this plan and hope to have some very positive news very soon. We have not given up!" The Intrepid-DX Group announced earlier this month that it has canceled its long-anticipated DXpedition to Bouvet. Jolly told the DXpedition that the *Braveheart* was being sold and he was canceling its contract for the 3Y0J voyage.

From the ARRL Letter of June 24, 2022 <Ω>

Lessons Learned from Sleuthing a Shack Noise Problem

By Al Dewey-KØAD

It all began one Thursday night this fall. I decided to get on for the Thursday Night CW Sprint. This is a short 30-minute, low power contest every Thursday evening in which you work as many stations as you can on 20, 40, 80, and 160. I often hear Ron, NØAT during the event and usually work him for a few QSOs. When working Ron on 160, I noticed that I heard him all over the band and there appeared to be noise spikes on his signal. I didn't think much of it but when I got on the next week, I noticed the same thing. I contacted Ron and he said he noticed the very same thing with my signal! We decided the best thing was to find a local who could give both of us signal checks at the same time. Hans, KØHB agreed to take a listen. To my dismay, Hans said he heard the noise on my signal but not on Ron's. Confusing me even more was the fact that I saw the noise on BOTH Ron's and Han's signal. I concluded that the problem had to be at my end. But what could it be? I did some more checking at my end and found that all the other bands were clean on my Flex 6600m. The problem was unique to 160 using my Inverted L. I also did not notice the problem when using a dummy load on 160.



Flex 6600M Band Scope shot of my transmitted signal on 160 M prior to resolving noise problem



Flex 6600M Band Scope shot after resolving noise problem

I opened a ticket with Flex to see if this might be a known problem with the Flex. When I explained that the problem only occurred on 160 when using my Inverted L, they suggested I disconnect everything from the Flex except the power supply and a direct run of coax to the base of the inverted L. I did that and the problem remained. They suggested I connect a 1:1 Balun at the base of the antenna and ground the coax at the point it comes into the house.

So, I tried a 160M choke at the base of the antenna as well as another choke in the ground wire. None of this helped at all. I was beginning to think it must be something other than RF. Several people suggested I try a different rig. Truth be told, I don't have a backup HF radio anymore. I sold both of them to fund the purchase of the Flex 6600M. So NØAT loaned me a neat little Yaesu FT 817 radio that we have used in the past on Field Day for satellite work. After figuring out how to put it on 160 CW, I called Ron for a signal check. Sure enough, Ron was seeing spikes on the signal from the 817 similar to those being put out my Flex. This helped reassure me that it was not my Flex which was a relief. Kirk, NØKK happened to mention my issue to Gary Grivna, KØGX. Gary mentioned to Kirk that he has seen that kind of noise on a signal as a result of faulty LED lighting in the house. That got me to thinking whether I might have something in the house causing the problem. I have always believed the easiest way to check this was to put my radio on a car battery and cut all power to the house.

So that's what I did and, sure enough, the problem went away! So, one by one, I flipped circuit breakers back on waiting for the noise to reappear. Sure enough, when I activated the circuit to the room where I have my shack, the noise was back. I went around the room and, one by one, unplugged things waiting for the noise to disappear. This included TVs, routers, LED lamps, etc. Finally, I got to my radio desk and started unplugging things one at a time. Way back in the corner under my desk was a small wall wart which powered a USB hub I added recently. I got on my back, reached behind the desk, and unplugged it. I got back up, looked at the radio, and the noise was 90% gone! I plugged it back in and back came the noise. I was elated. As it turns out, I really didn't need it anyway because things plugged into my USB Hub were bus

powered. So that wall wart became history. There was still a little noise left so I kept un-plugging things. When I unplugged a small switching power supply that I used to power some shack accessories, the rest of the noise disappeared. I simply moved those things over to the main supply, which had plenty of capacity, and the rest of the noise was gone.



The Culprit!

So what did I learn from this? The biggest thing is that noise sources can affect both receive AND transmit. I had never seen that at my QTH. This is why I thought sure it had to be RF related. One theory was that when my Flex was transmitting through my 160M in-verted L, it was causing some other wire or metal object in the area to radiate some way causing the distortion / spikes. That seemed to make sense. Also, I have heard many stories of wall wart power supplies causing all kinds of problems but never thought much about it. Now that I have been a victim of a really bad one, I will always be suspicious of them –especially the cheapie ones imported from China.

Finally, a special thanks to NØAT, NØKK, KØHB, WØZQ and Tim at the Flex Help Desk for all the advice and suggestions they made which ultimately helped me sleuth this problem.

Al Dewey-K0AD was first licensed in 1961 as KN9DHN in Munster, Indiana. He presently resides in Plymouth, MN



Reprinted with the kind permission of the Twin Cities DX Association's Newsletter "The Gray Line Report".

Link sent in by Tom W8FIB

Is our sun going into hibernation?

<https://www.space.com/is-our-sun-going-into-hibernation?catid=science>

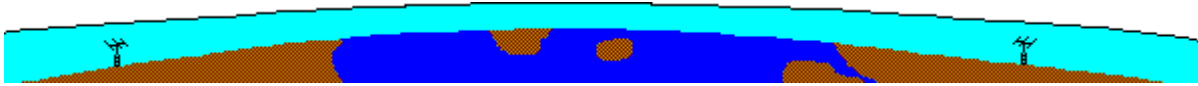
This is from YouTube.

Here is a tour of the historic WLW AM monster broadcast transmitter facility located in Mason Ohio.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbHjewIoTiY>

If you have ham items for sale, email me a list along with prices and contact information. I will put it in the next newsletter.

I want to thank those that have been sending in articles for the newsletter. All items are appreciated.



Until Next Time,

73

John

W3ML

<http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/>



DX

