Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 9, Issue 6

June 2021

President's Corner

With the Covid restrictions being lifted for vaccinated people, we need a place that we can hold a meeting. Please send any ideas you have to me.

mailto:w3ml.john@gmail.com

July might be the month we can get together again.

Work some DX! 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 <u>kd9hl@arrl.net</u> 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. <u>kd9hl@arrl.net</u>

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

<u>Webmaster</u>

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

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: <u>w3ml.john@gmail.com</u>

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NWIDX Club Member DXCC Challenge Scorecard A Reminder

Get Your Latest Contacts into the ARRL by June 27

We plan on publishing the annual listing of our member's standing in the ARRL DX Challenge Award in the July Newsletter. Members are urged to submit to the ARRL's DX Desk any contacts that they may have that have not yet been accepted by the ARRL. This can be done either through the Log Book of The World process or via a formal QSL Card submission via our card checker "Contact Steve Mollman-KD9HL (email KD9HL@arrl.net)".

NOTE: Just because you have confirmations listed in your LOTW account does not mean that the DX Desk has accepted them for award credit. In the words of the ARRL, those contacts are "pending". You must make formal application for the award credit.

Members are urged to have their applications in the ARRL's hands before June 27, 2021 to ensure that there is time to process the application for the June 30, 2021 Scorecard cut-off.

The DXCC Challenge Award is earned by working and confirming at least 1,000 DXCC band-points on any Amateur bands, 160 through 6 meters (except 60 meters). A band point is earned by working and confirming a current DX entity in any mode on a single band. (You only get one point per entity per band regardless of the mode. Working a DX entity multiple times via different modes on the same band does not give you more points-you only get one. Deleted entities do not count for this award. Only stations with over 1000 DXCC band-points are listed by the ARRL.

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It Was Bound to Happen Remote Stations and Cheating on the DXCC

An Opinion by Steve Mollman - KD9HL

First a little background. I have been chasing DX for nearly fifty years. I still vividly remember my first DX contact, Seventy-five watts into a 10-meter dipole at 25 feet with a YU in the old Yugoslavia. What a thrill it was. Even though I was never able to shake a QSL card loose from that operator, I was bitten by the DX bug and it was the beginning of a long saga that has resulted in being on the DXCC Honor Roll, becoming an ARRL DXCC Card Checker, a Volunteer Examiner, acting as an "Elmer" to other Hams and most of all, the opportunity to talk with amateur operators from around the world.

All of this was accomplished with a home station that was better than some and not as powerful as others. A typical setup. Patience, perseverance and self-respect governed. The same as most who chase DX.

Early on, I realized that NO ONE really cared whether I had worked one DX entity or 350 entities. Sure, others would pat you on the back and say "great" but it really only mattered to myself. Even today it is a great feeling when a new one or a rare DX is worked with a station I assembled.

As part of my duties as an ARRL DXCC Card Checker is to monitor the Card Checker's e-mail forum. This forum is a tool used by the Card Checkers to pass on information, ask questions, offer suggestions, etc. A nice little roundtable.

Recently, Jose Ribeiro-CT1EEB, one of the two Card Checkers in Portugal, unleashed an e-mail bomb:

Good morning all,

I got a problem here.

A well-known DXer from my own country is cheating DXCC by using remote stations everywhere in the world and not signing with the correct callsign. If using a remote in Japan he should use JA/CT1xxx but he is using the callsign like if he were in Portugal (CT1xxx).

Last known QSO he made was XX9ET in 50 Mhz at 03:00 UTC, that's in the middle of the night here and literally not possible.

I know that as card checkers our task is to check QSL cards, not act as DXCC officers, but...He is applying for this cheated QSOs by LoTW so there's nothing I can do to refuse the QSO.

Any thoughts about this would be welcomed.

73 Jose CT1EEB Portugal DXCC QSL card checker

So, the cat is out of the bag and the DXCC system of verification, integrity and honesty is being compromised. When the ARRL allowed the use of remote stations a few years ago, they basically threw up their hands and said "we don't know how to control this but hopefully the Ham DX population will self-govern and everything will be okay". That seems to have been wishful thinking.

Since there are no QSL Cards involved in this scam, the local DXCC Card Checker isn't in a position to monitor or question the bogus contact. The ARRL can do something though. It would probably require extensive and expensive computer programing to create an algorithm that would red-flag LOTW contacts that are suspicious. Once a contact is red flagged, the submitter should then have to prove by other means that the QSO was valid. Cumbersome-yes! Workable-maybe/maybe not!

Shame on those who would cheat and compromise the DXCC system. They are fooling nobody but themselves!

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ARRL WEEKLY DX

<u>5/28/21</u>

By

Jerry Hess, W9KTP

TONGA, A3. Masa, JAORQV will be QRV as A35JP from Tongatapu Island, IOTA OC-049, from May 30 to the end of October. Activity will be on 80 to 6 meters using CW, SSB and FT8. He also plans to visit other islands in IOTA groups OC-191, OC-123, OC-064, and OC-169 during this time. QSL to home call.

ESTONIA, **ES**. Operators Ed, ES2TT and Sergei, ES1LL will be QRV as ES2TT/8 and ES1LL/8, respectively, on May 29 and 30. Activity will be on 40, 30 and 20 meters using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL to home calls.

ST. BARTHELEMY, FJ. Phil, K2LIO is QRV as FJ/K2LIO until around August 5. Activity is on the HF bands. QSL to home call.

MARTINIQUE, FM. Marius, ON4RU is QRV as FM/OQ3R until June 5. Activity is on 160 to 10 meters using CW. This includes being active as TO3F in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL direct to home call.

HUNGARY, HA. A group of operators will be QRV as HG21TISZA in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest as a Multi Op entry, and the upcoming Tisza Cup contest. QSL via LoTW.

HAITI, HH. Peter, JK1UWY is QRV as HH2JA and is here for the next three years. Activity is on 80 to 6 meters using CW, SSB and FT8. QSL via LoTW.

PANAMA, HP. Special event station HP200I will be QRV from June 1 to November 30 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Panama's independence. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters using SSB and various digital modes. QSL via HP1DAV.

VATICAN, HV. Vatican station HV0A will be QRV in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL via IK0FVC.

AUSTRIA, OE. Operator HB9RB will be QRV as C7A from the United Nations Amateur Radio Contest DX Club station in Vienna during the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL via UA3A.

FINLAND, OH. Olli, OH0XX will be QRV as OG60BBM in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL to home call.

CZECH REPUBLIC, OK. Olda, OK1YM will be QRV with special call sign OL57ZW in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL to home call.

ARUBA, P4. John, W2GD is QRV as P44W. Activity is on all bands as time permits. This includes being active in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL via N2MM. In addition, look for AE6Y and KK9A to be QRV as P49Y and P40A, respectively, in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL via operators' instructions.

CANADA, VE. Lali, VE3NE is QRV with special call sign VX31IGY until June 27 to celebrate the first flight of NASA's helicopter on Mars. This includes being an entry in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL to home call.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND, VK9X. Steve, VK6SJ is QRV as VK9XX until June 11. Activity will generally be around 1100 to 1500z and 2200 to 0000z daily on the HF bands and possibly 6 meters using FT8 and some SSB. QSL via EB7DX.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, VP5. Operators K4BAI, K4QPL, KR4R and K2SX are QRV as VP5/home calls from Providenciales, IOTA NA-002, until June 1. They will be active as VP5M as a Multi Op entry in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL via operators' instructions.

NEW ZEALAND, ZL. Jacky, ZL3CW will be QRV with special call ZL25NZ in the CQ World Wide WPX CW contest. QSL to home call.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The CQ World Wide WPX CW Contest, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, Feld Hell Sprint and Day of the YLs Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this upcoming weekend. The OK1WC Memorial, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test and QCX CW Challenge are scheduled for May 31. The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest and QCX CW Challenge are scheduled for June 1.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, CWops Mini-CWT CW Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for June 2. Please see May QST, page 71, June QST, page 72, and the ARRL and WA7BNM contest web sites for details.

73's and gud DX, Jerry

From Tom, W8FIB Technology in our lifetimes

Everyday communication we take for granted- check out this video from 1979 that will put today's technology into perspective:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vix6TMnj9vY

Long-time ham operators appreciate the technology that takes place behind the scenes for a cell phone call. And for how far we have come with audio recordings, be sure to check out this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Tx6TYnPat8

Why Can't I Work Monaco?

By Steve Mollman-KD9HL



3A-Monaco, a tiny city/state surrounded by France and the Mediterranean Sea that on Club Log's most wanted list is #157-worldwide, #64-North America East Coast and #18-North America West Coast. Why is it so difficult to make and confirm a contact with this entity?

Monaco is TINY! It consists of just 499 Acres or just about the size of the average American farm (444 acres). (1) Besides being small it is limited by the sea (one side) and France on the other sides. The immediate French landmass is all mountains which block signals to everywhere except to Southeast over the Mediterranean.



A Panoramic View of Monaco



A Satellite View of Monaco

At last count there were only 28 licensed Hams in the Principality of which only a few are active. Not many out of a population of about 38000 people. There are only about 8300 native Monegasques. The rest of the population are citizens of other countries. Monaco does honor the European Union CEPT Amateur Radio Agreement which allows reciprocal licenses. The US, while not a member of CEPT, has agreements that allow American Extra, Advance and General Class licensees' permission to operate. (3)

Monaco has some of the most restrictive amateur radio operating regulations in Europe. First off power is limited to 100 watts. Antennas are forbidden by law although small verticals and stealth antennas seem to be tolerated by the authorities. (2) Because of the dense urban population, the local noise levels are very high often reaching S9!

So with restrictive topography, minimal antennas, low power, high noise levels and very few operators, the deck is stacked against making a good contact with a Monaco station. You can't hear him and he can't hear you. Don't give up-many hams have been successful! If you hear a 3A on the air give it a try. On May7 17, 2021, 3A2MW was heard working the US East Coast on 17 meters using FT8 with a signal of -19 in Northern Indiana. Of course the old DX'ers adage applies: Work first and worry later!

(1) https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/fnlo0220.pdf

According to the US Department of Agriculture, small family **farms average** 231 **acres**; large family farms average 1,421 **acres** and the very large farm average acreage is 2,086.

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http://www.legimonaco.mc/305/legismclois.nsf/db3b0488a44ebcf9c12574c7002a8e84/87bead638c39108ac1257bd5002de639!OpenDocument After using Google Translate to convert this document from French to English, even after 50+ years of exposure to legalese, I had difficulty making sense of this one.

^{(3) &}lt;u>http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Reciprocal%20operating%20forms/Feb%202020%20International%20Operating.pdf</u>

NOTICE: 3A/IW1RBI is on now through this weekend. Running at least one station on FT8 24-hours a day.

Good luck hearing them here in the Black Hole of Northern Indiana. Two of us have not.

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Handy Hint Dielectric Lubricants

By Steve Mollman - KD9HL

Dielectric-A material that allows an electric field to pass through it.

Do you wonder if you need a good dielectric lubricant but have heard "stories" about the stuff? Here are some of the myths and the facts.

Myth #1: The lubricant attracts dirt. Fact: Magnets attract. Lubricants don't. The lubricant creates an environmental barrier that keeps dirt, dust and moisture away from the contact surfaces.

Myth #2: Lubricants interfere with conductivity. Fact: A contact lubricant fills the valleys of the contact surface while protecting the metal from oxidation and is squeezed out of those rough surfaces allowing current to flow.

Myth #3: Lubricants don't prevent corrosion. Fact: The lubricant acts as an environmental seal on the contacts preventing exposure to oxygen, corrosive chemicals and other aggressive substances.

Myth #4: Lubricants don't significantly lower insertion force. Fact: The thin film of a good lubricant can reduce insertion force on multi-pin connectors by as much as 80%.

<u>Myth #5: Fretting corrosion can't be curtailed. Fact: Fretting is the g</u>radually wearing a way of something by rubbing. A lubricant minimizes metal to metal contact wear while protecting the surfaces from oxidation.

Myth #6: Gold plated contacts don't need a lubricant. Fact: The plating is microscopically thin and porous. A thin film of lubricant will seal those pores and guards against scratches and substrata oxidation (blooming).

As information, listed are a few dielectric products. No endorsement is intended.

<u>DeoxIT® D-Series contact cleaner</u> is a product that dissolves oxides and sulfides that form on metal surfaces. This restores the contact's integrity and leaves a thin microscopic layer that protects the metal. While not marketed as a dielectric lubricant, the manufacturer claims special additives improve conductivity and prevent dissolved oxides from re-attaching, keeping them in suspension and allowing them to be easily dispersed by the mechanical action of the contact. No claim is made of water proofing.

<u>CRC Electrical Silicone Lubricant</u>. The manufacturer doesn't say much about their product other than it's "specially formulated to lubricate, waterproof and protect electrical components…helps prevent corrosion to electrical equipment located in wet or harsh environments."

<u>Permatex Dielectric Grease</u> is a silicone dielectric-compound with dielectric and lubricating properties. The compound is supposed to prevent voltage leakage around any electrical connector. The compound is a good lubricant on rubber, plastic and ceramic surfaces and it also has good high temperature properties.

<u>AGS CP-4 Electrical Connector Protector</u> claims to provide a moisture-proof barrier for electrical connections and wiring. Locks out weather, salt, and dirt, even in severe outdoor conditions. Applications include plugs, sockets, connectors, bulbs.

<u>WD-40</u>[®]. A special word about standard WD-40[®]. The WD-40[®] manufacturer says "WD 40[®] is *not recommended* to be used over electrical contacts. If you want to lubricate in the vicinity of electronics then you can use it but only if you can insure that you keep windings and electrical contacts and terminals away from WD-40. Specialty wiring should not be exposed to WD-40."

For motors, stuck switches, controls, and other long-lasting lubricant needs, they recommend using **WD-40 Specialist Spray & Stay Gel Lubricant**[®]. It is not supposed to run or drip.

Where does one use these lubricants? Metal Connections, Batteries, Light Bulbs, Switches and Relays, Jacks and Plugs, Harnesses, Grounding Blocks, RCA jacks, XLRs, USB, HDMI, Ethernet, etc.

Where to buy. Try the usual sources such as Amazon, Lowes, Home Depot and auto parts stores.

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<u>"CHEAP AND EASY"</u> COAX TRIMMING

By

Jerry Hess, W9KTP

Over the many years that I've been attaching PL-259's connectors to RG-8/RG-213 coax, I've often thought there had to be an easier way than using a pen knife or utility knife. It takes a lot of care to remove the jacket without nicking the braid and/or gouging the dielectric when removing

the braid. Currently there are commercial devices that do this but they range from \$25 to over \$75 and are only designed for the standard method for attaching PL-259's. More about that in a later article.

After several attempts I came up with the following device that uses a single utility knife blade and two pieces of wood. The wood is 3/8" thick scrap pieces of ash I had available. Any hardwood or maybe plywood would work. I'm not sure a soft wood like pine would hold the blade tightly (but you can try it).



Construction is fairly simple. You will want to make a pair of cutters. First cut the pieces as shown in the drawing. You'll need four pieces. The $\frac{3}{4}$ " height is important since you want the blade upper edge to extend beyond at the top of the wood for adjustment. Next, tape the two pieces together and drill the two holes for the 6-32 bolts. I chose 11/64" bit for easy bolt clearance. Then, mark the position for the cutting opening. I clamped the assembly in a bench vice and filed the opening with a rat tail file. The coax should fit firmly in the opening with about 1/16" space for the blade. Remove the tape and insert 1" 6-32 bolts through the holes with a #6 lock wash under the

bolt head and a #6 flat washer under a wing nut. Slide a utility knife blade between the wood until it protrudes about 1/16" into the opening. Tighten the wing nuts and test the cutting depth. Adjust the blade height as needed. This probably will take a few tries.



Using the cutters is not difficult but I found I had to make the cuts with the blade side facing up and hold the coax so it could not shift sideways. Otherwise, the cut tended to cut a spiral instead of circle. Rotate the coax slowly and don't try to make the cut all in one pass. CAUTION: I put a scrap piece of rubber under the device so the cutter adjustment is not changed when pressure is applied. An old mouse pad or a piece of cardboard would work also. I also recommend that you make the 'jacket+braid' cut first since the jacket will hold the braid from shifting while cutting.

I included the standard wire stripper in my picture since I use it to remove the dielectric around the #10/#13 AWG center conductor in RG-8/RG-213. No need for another homebrew cutter. Using the #10/#12 wire stripper, gently squeeze down on the dielectric and release, rotate the stripper partially around the dielectric and squeeze down again and release and possibly a third time. Then after the last squeeze, rotate the stripper around the conductor a few times and pull the dielectric off.

After using the two cutters and wire stripper you should have a nice clean cable like the example in the picture with no nicks or gouges ready for installation. After the blade begins to wear, just loosening the wing nuts and slide the blade latterly. I glanced at the table in the ARRL Handbook and noticed that several other cables could be adapted to this device. I plan to build one for RG-8X and I'll include it in a later month's issue. It really won't take long to make you own set of cutters and I look forward to your comments.

73's,

Jerry

More Links sent in from members and emails received.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/post-pandemic-travel-for-ham-radio-fans-as-far-away-as-possible-11620312400?st=vb0vgz9a268gjgk&reflink=article_copyURL_share

I didn't realize that we were using "19th century" technology. Wow! I never realized my Elecraft was really a Spark Gap transmitter in disguise. Maybe it isn't, as Spark Gaps came into use in the early 20th century.

Steve KD9HL

Tom, W8FIB CW Technique for Phone Ops

This might present a challenge for those using code readers!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9V10TZm5LA

A really great article on ham radio!

https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/connecting-with-strangers-over-ham-radio-cleared-my-family-s-static/ar-AAKg9SM?ocid=Peregrine

David, N9KT

The CW portion of the Unassisted Challenge is coming up this weekend (during CQ WPX CW) and is open to all single-ops who do not use spotting assistance. A list of available plaques is at <u>https://unassisted.org/plaque-sponsors/</u>. Remember that entrants must submit their log to *both* CQ WPX and <u>https://unassisted.org/logs/</u>.

The Unassisted Challenge was started by N6MJ & KI6RRN to be a replacement for the now-eliminated single-op unassisted categories in CQ WPX SSB & CW. Full details are available at <u>www.unassisted.org</u> and send any questions or comments to <u>unassistedchallenge@gmail.com</u>

Please forward to your friends and clubs!

73, Axel KI6RRN & Dan N6MJ

From Tom W8FIB



Last weekend Jurgen N9RD and some friends installed a new Six Meter Beam.





He is going to be burning up the atmosphere more now with that new antenna.

I have received more stuff from K9QA SK's shack. There is a listing on the <u>http://www.w9joz.org/forsale.htm</u>

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.



http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/



W3ML

DX



