

W9JOZ

Volume 10, Issue 7

July 2020

Next Meeting is on the Air

Greeting fellow amateurs,

I have had several discussions with library staff and we don't know when the meeting room will be available. At least not for July.

Meeting room availability at the library is not known for future meetings.

So I will try to hold a net on the repeater at the usual time 7 PM for our monthly meeting. Last month I missed it due to a emergency, I apologize. Stay safe and well.

Dave
Kc8obh



Meetings are at the Henry F. Schricker Library on the third Thursday of each month, with the exception of December.

The library is located on west Culver Road, two blocks west of Highway 35.



Are you on the air?

Library Door locks at 7:00 p.m. so if you are late, knock loud.

Don't forget Dues are due for 2020.

Still \$12.00

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Events

Fox Hunts are the 2nd Sunday. See webpage for details

Birthdays

30th - Don, WA9KRT

31st - Greg, W8GND

If your birthday has not been listed, it is because I do not have the date for it. If you would like it to be included in a newsletter, please email me the date. Thanks w3ml@w3ml.com

The following Hams have not paid their 2020 Dues. Please either send the dues to John Poindexter W3ML at 204 S. Main St. Knox, IN 46534 or send an email to <mailto:w9joz@w9joz.org> requesting to be removed from the roster. Thanks.

K9ILU

KC9LHM

KC9PM

KD9U

KE9ML

W9AL

WA9KRT

W9INS

W9SWP

KD9IHY

W3GTC

W9GND

KD9HNE

KD9MVW

Starke County Amateur Radio Club Weekly 2 Meter Net will be on each Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Central time.

DAY OF WEEK: Saturday 8:00 p.m. Central time
HOST: KN9OX Repeater
FREQUENCY: 145.410 - 600
PL TONE: 131.8

New Items Listed

See all the For Sale Items at

<http://www.w9joz.org/forsale.htm>

There are a lot of them there. Updated regularly.



See the For Sale Page on the Club website. If you have items to sell email me a list with prices and contact information.

Securing PowerPole connectors

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In preparation for this year's Field Day, I made a bunch of cables with PowerPole connectors to connect the solar panel, charge controller and batteries that I used. If you're not familiar with PowerPoles, you might want to [check out this YouTube video](#). They're really great connectors, and have become the DC connector of choice for many hams.

When I make up PowerPole cables, I normally don't bother trying to secure the two halves together, especially if you're using some decently heavy gauge wire. They fit together pretty tightly, and don't come apart easily. Even so, I think securing them together is a good idea. You can buy a little roll pin to insert between the red and black housings that is supposed to prevent them from coming apart, but many folks complain that the pin has a tendency to fall out. This not only defeats the purpose, but could also damage your equipment.



PowerPoles have become ubiquitous in amateur radio stations.

Securing them is the right thing to do, though, and I recently came across some great suggestions on how to do this in the daily digest that I receive from the [Elecraft-KX mailing list](#). Here are the best tips from the thread, [Securing Anderson Power Poles](#):

- Rudy K8SWD: You can thermally bond the red and black housings with a soldering iron like you are making little welds on both sides. Permanent (mostly) but it works better than the roll pins. Just clean the tip really good before soldering!
- Dave K0CDA: [Anderson] also make connectors that are thermally bonded together in pairs. They do NOT come apart.
- Don W3FPR: I use a drop of Super Glue on the junction of the plastic pieces. Warning – that glue grabs quickly, so slide the 2 pieces only enough to start the assembly, then apply the drop of glue and quickly finish sliding them together. I have never had ones prepared like that come apart, and I don't use roll pins. I will say one more thing – use only the genuine APPs. I have seen some knockoffs that do not mate well.
- Greg KC9NRO: Take a hot soldering iron. Wipe the tip with sponge. Run the tip down both side of APP bonding the black and red sides together. Clean soldering iron tip and apply some solder to tip. That's how I roll. Never comes apart
- Mike AI4NS: PVC cement will soften the plastic enough to bond them together. You can also get plastic welding rods, such as [Daindy Plastic Welding Rods](#). Chuck a rod in a Dremel and weld them together. I have made plastic boxes and panels using this method.
- Jack WD4E: Snip the cotton end off a Q-tip, cutting at an angle. Insert into hole made for roll pin, cut off excess, save remainder of Q-tip for next requirement.
- Troy K4JDA: 2.5mm screws work well, stay in, and are easily removable.

I posted these suggestions to [my blog](#) and got a few more great suggestions:

- *Tom KB8UUZ*: Fat tooth picks also work great. Jam it in, break it off.
- *Bruce NONHP*: I use MEK (Methyl Ethyl Ketone) replacement to clean my circuit boards after soldering. A single drop of MEK on the junction between the two halves of the PowerPole shell will fuse them. It can be broken with a sharp tap but not accidentally. It will set and dry in seconds and should be applied after the shell pieces are put together.

I think these are all great suggestions. I think that I'm going to try the cotton swab method. While reading them, another thought occurred to me. I haven't tried this yet, but I'm thinking a little drop of hot glue on the roll-pin hole might work, too.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the “No Nonsense” amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the

ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not thinking up new ways to keep his PowerPoles together, he likes to teach ham radio classes and operate CW on the HF bands.

Links

Here are some links that have floated through in emails.

Amateur Radio Guide to Digital Mobile Radio 2nd Edition

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eiaYNR65RJJanxnVbXdrWBs4cNG50mqn1/view>

Musical Tesla Coils

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fstnVzw7Vbw&feature=youtu.be&t=63>

Changing a Light Bulb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1BgZlZRfT8&feature=youtu.be>

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE MAP There is a cool little tool that was recently pointed out to me that lets you search for ham radio operators. You can search by callsign, grid square, zip code, or street address. It's handy to see where other hams are in your area, or if you drive by a house that has a big antenna farm, and wonder who it is. Point your browser to <https://haminfo.tetranz.com/map> to give it a try.

From an old email:

Tower Climbing

“The club has been informed that Bowman Electronics in Valparaiso will do tower climbing and antenna repair. Give them a call at: (219) 462-7933 or stop and see them at: 504 Marquette St, Valparaiso, IN 46383” - *From the Lake County Amateur Radio Club “Short Skip Newsletter”*

Handy Hint

By Steve Mollman-KD9HL

SWR Meter and Power Levels

Dr. Gianfranco Scasciafratti I-I0YZ/K8OQ, the founder and President of **the manufacturer of SPE Expert Amps**, offers this advice on SWR Meters:

“Each SWR meter has a minimum power level below which the measurement obtained is false.

This is due to the threshold of the reflected power diode, the aim is to reduce this power as much as possible. Below the diode threshold the meter does not see any reflected power and thinks that the match is perfect, but increasing the power (during transmission) one will notice that the match is not correct. So with low power be careful!

I tell you this because a customer blew the MOSFET on his remoted SPE Expert 1.5K amplifier three times in one week blaming the ATU, but we found that he matched using 5W while 30W is recommended in the manual.”

This is one reason that when initially tuning an antenna with very low power the match looks perfect but when you increase to operating power the SWR increases. Since most SWR meters and antenna tuners don't specify what power to use, try increasing the set-up power in **SMALL INCREMENTS** until the “sweet” spot is found.

A note from the editor: **!!! CAUTION !!!** High power along with high SWR can cause arcing across a tuner's variable capacitor' plates and damage to other circuitry in the system. Therefore it is incumbent to **ALWAYS** start this process at a low power.

◀73's and Good DX ▶

Editor Note: It is a good thing to make sure the meter is set to the correct power setting. Mine quit working when I hit it with 1000 watts on the 300 watt setting. Way to go John!

This went into effect on July 1, 2020

Indiana Hands-Free Driving Law Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this law needed?

Across the U.S., including Indiana, serious traffic crashes and fatalities have sharply increased in recent years due in large part to distracted driving. Requiring drivers to put smartphones and other devices away and focus on driving is proven to reduce crashes and deaths. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, states that have passed hands-free driving laws have seen a nearly 20 percent decrease in traffic deaths in the two years after passing the law.

Hasn't Indiana had such a law in place for several years? Is this really a new law?

In 2011, Indiana passed a law that prohibited texting while driving. The 2011 law did not address holding a mobile device for other purposes. The texting while driving law presented enforcement challenges for police officers and did not achieve a reduction in crashes caused by distracted driving. The new law is more comprehensive, prohibiting drivers from having a mobile device in hand while their vehicles are moving.

Can I still talk on my phone while driving?

Yes, as long as you are doing so hands-free. You may use a speakerphone, Bluetooth technology, earpiece, headphone or other device that allows for hands-free communication.

Can I hold my phone while driving to dial a number or answer/end a call?

No. Your cell phone should not be in your hands while driving any time your vehicle is moving. The only exception is to call 911 in an emergency. While your vehicle is moving, you should use voice commands to dial your phone or answer/end calls. If you are not able to use voice commands and need to make or receive a call you should pull off the road safely at an appropriate location and bring your vehicle to a complete stop before holding your phone.

My vehicle doesn't have Bluetooth capability. How can I use my phone while driving and not violate the law?

Many retailers offer Bluetooth adapters that can allow smartphones to be used hands-free in vehicles that do not have Bluetooth technology built in.

Can I stop on the shoulder of the road to hold my phone to make a call, text, etc.?

Parking on the shoulder of an interstate is only permitted in an emergency and while it is legal to park on the shoulder in some areas on U.S. highways, state roads and local/county roads, it's not always safe to do so. If you need to use your phone and can't operate it hands free, find a safe place to pull off the road completely, such as a gas station or convenience store.

I rely on my phone for navigation and use apps like Google maps and Waze. How does the law impact using your phone for directions?

Drivers may use mobile devices for turn-by-turn GPS navigation, including apps such as Google Maps and Waze provided they are using the devices hands-free while their vehicles are moving. Mounts and brackets may make it easier to view map applications on mobile devices while maintaining focus on driving.

Can I listen to music, podcasts and streaming audio while driving?

Yes. As long as the mobile device being used to play music or other audio is being used in a hands-free manner.

Does the law only apply to phones?

No. The hands-free law applies to electronic communications devices which includes cell phones, tablets and smart-watches. However, smart watches may be used while driving as a conventional watch to check time. Amateur radio, two-way radio and citizens band (CB) may be used under the hands-free law, but drivers are required to do so in a safe manner.

Why aren't other potential distractions such as car stereos, infotainment systems, eating while driving, etc. included in the hands-free law?

Drivers should strive to keep everyone safe by avoiding all types of distractions while driving. With that said, holding a smartphone or tablet while driving is a significant factor in crashes caused by distracted driving. In addition to the new hands-free law, many other traffic laws in Indiana code require drivers to operate vehicles safely and responsibly.

What is the penalty for a driver caught with a phone in hand while driving?

Holding a phone or other mobile device in hand while driving, with the exception of an emergency, may result in a Class C infraction and subject a driver to a fine.. Points may also be assessed against the driver's license. Since the law is new in Indiana, Indiana State Police and local law enforcement will be emphasizing education and enforcement during the initial period the law is in effect. Police will offer warnings and educate drivers on the new law. Points against drivers' licenses will not be assessed until July 2021 at the earliest.

If you have something for the newsletter, please send it to me before the 20th of the month.

See you at a meeting.

Sometime in the Future

73

John, W3ML

