



**GREATER CHICAGO  
INSULATOR CLUB  
NEWSLETTER**  
Rick Soller, editor



Volume 23, Number 5  
August 2015

---

**National show report, Part2**

Meeting Key Figures

One of the benefits of attending a large show like the national is a chance to talk to key figures in the hobby. One such person I enjoyed asking questions of was Don Briel, the editor of the insulator price guide. There were two questions in particular that I had for Don.

My first question was why the listing for NIA commemoratives indicated they were “produced by John & Carol McDougald, Sedona, Arizona” even though they did not live in Sedona, Arizona when they produced most of them. I morbidly wondered if, at some point, the actual cemetery they end up in would be listed. I suspect the listing will be changed in the future.

A second question I had was why the CD 162 with the top of a CD 134 was only listed in the CD 162 section and not in the CD 134 section. Don’s response made a lot of sense. The insulator is not listed amongst other CD 134s because it has an inner skirt and CD 134s do not have inner skirts.

How Tom Nugent Started Collecting

The banquet provided a great opportunity to sit with a group of people and swap stories. I was at a great table populated by Bob, Stacy & Grant Stahr, Russ & Marge Frank, Arlen & Tina Rienstra, and Tom Nugent & his wife. By sitting next to Tom, I was able to pry out of him the story of how he started collecting.

It was 1978 (a mere 37 years ago), and Tom managed to buy four truckloads of insulators for \$500 at an auction. His wife was not very happy but he eventually managed to get his money back on the collection. Since then, he has managed to buy two to three collections a year and for 19 years, set up at the Sandwich, Illinois antique fair where he sold some and got leads on others.

One memorable lead he got was to a collection in Aurora, Illinois. The seller had a barrel of insulators and wanted \$100 for it. There was a cobalt blue piece in the barrel so Tom said, “yes!” He wasn’t able to look through the insulators when he got home and it wasn’t until much later that he found that the insulator was painted and all the insulators in the barrel were common.

Memorable Quotations

**“You remind me of Columbo”** – Marge Frank. Marge apparently marveled at my questioning of Tom Nugent about how he started collecting and my taking of copious notes on the story and made this comment which I duly recorded.

**“Some guy in Canada knows what I have in my collection better than I do”** – Russ Frank. Russ indicated that he bought some Crown Jewels at some point in the past and sold them to Riley Armstrong along with his old price guide. Riley had the Crown Jewels at the National but not the price guide and Russ wanted to get the price guide back because he had recorded in it all the insulators he owned. Riley let Russ know that the price guide was sold to some guy in Canada, thus Russ’ quotation.

“**Rainbow roots**” – Chris Hedges. At some point, Chris acquired a thick telephone cable called a “rainbow root.” This is the type of cable with hundreds of the color coded, thin wires used to carry telephone calls. They are called “rainbow roots” because of all the colors and because they are buried but are subject to being uprooted by excavation crews. As a result, before any crew digs a hole, JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) is contacted so a rainbow root, electrical line, sewer line, gas line, or cable line is not severed.

Chris made his acquisition so he could play a joke on excavation crews he knew. When they went on break, he would jump down into the hole they were digging and bury one end of the cable he had in the wall and leave the other end sticking out so when the crew returned and saw the cable, they would think they had severed a phone line and he would get a good laugh.

Tom Nugent told me a similar story about how he planted signs about a phone line being buried below. You’ll have to ask him for all the details.

“**Two would have done it**” – Marge Frank (again). Marge provided a wealth of quotable material but I’ll only print two of them here. This one came up when we were talking about one of the first nationals I saw her at and how she seemed to get very expressive after a couple drinks. I thought she had consumed quite a few drinks but Marge set me straight.

#### People’s Choice Award

I always enjoy analyzing statistics and the voting for the People’s Choice Award provided just such an opportunity. I was lucky to be present when the votes were counted and managed to save the ballots to provide this analysis.

The most important statistic to me was that 97 people voted. This indicated that a lot of people were engaged in the hobby and show enough to enjoy all the displays and reflect on them. My thinking was also that the number of people who voted constituted most of the people in the show hall at the time ballots were passed out.

The second statistic I was able to examine involved how the votes were distributed between the 12 displays competing for the award. Lis Bergman won the award for her extensive display of French insulators but, unknown to most people, is how close Russ Frank was in the voting and how far away Rick Soller was. Here is the data arranged in order from the top vote getter to the display with the fewest votes:

<b>Displayer</b>	<b>Display topic</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Lis Bergman	French insulators	24	25%
Russ Frank	Surge insulators	18	42%
Richard Case	Power insulators	15	57%
Arlen Rienstra	Lowex insulators	10	69%
Matt Grayson	Porcelain insulators	6	75%
Jason Townsend	Pole line equipment	5	80%
Kim Borgman	Hemingray 9s	5	86%
Kim Borgman	Hemingray lamps	5	91%
Curtis Erickson	Insulators from 7 continents	3	94%
Grant Stahr	Miniature insulators	3	97%
Roger Lucas	“Cartoon” characters with insulators	2	99%
Rick Soller	Hickock lightning rod insulators	1	100%

### Suggestions for Next Year

I made notes throughout the show with ideas for improving future shows. Since Bob Stahr and I will be hosting that show, I hope we are able to implement some of these ideas.

**Hello name badges.** I'm sure I knew many of the people walking around the show but only knew them through emails, ICON postings, or a meeting at a show many years ago. Name badges would have helped me put a name to a face and perhaps learn some new names.

**Two banquet lines.** I don't know why the caterer pushed against the wall the tables holding the banquet food. The banquet line would have been twice as fast if those at the banquet could have moved down both sides of the tables. Perhaps the limitation was that the serving dishes had clamshell lids that could only be accessed from one side. I don't remember if this was the case. If not, hungry people could be served much quicker. A minor point about the banquet offerings is that it would have been nice if the salad dressings were labeled.

**Banquet centerpieces.** In the past, some kind of insulator-themed centerpiece was placed on each table and some method of awarding the centerpiece at the end of the banquet was created (e.g., something on the bottom of a chair, or a star on the banquet program).

**Admissions table organization.** I worked the admissions table on Saturday and was troubled by the lack of instructors on what to do. Even when I figured it out, it was still difficult to properly charge people for entry (adult or child admission), directory purchases, raffle tickets, and NIA membership as well as keep track of admissions. I think some people were mistakenly charged for attending a second day of the show when they should not have been. I also think that some people may have walked into the show without paying since there wasn't much effort to check to see if people had an ID badge or a hand stamp when they entered. It seems there needs to be some way to double check the admissions count because I felt I may have missed tallying some admissions or double counted others. The tally sheet also needed more space to record the much larger number of admissions that occurred in the morning compared to those entering during the afternoon.

**Video coverage.** I'm not sure how necessary this is but I remember at the Franklin, Tennessee show, someone set up a web camera and people who could not attend could watch people walking by. There was also someone who walked around the show hall and stopped at each table with his camera. Perhaps the video camera could also provide some security footage in case an insulator was reported missing from a display or sales table.

**Stanchions.** I still like the club's stanchions with the Surge insulators on them. I think they are 18 years old now since I think they were made and first used at the 1997 Rosemont, Illinois national. The original ones had the base screwed into the post but hardware to connect the two with a wing nut so they could be disassembled more easily has since upgraded them. After years of use, however, the "pins" are starting to come loose and the threads do not always keep the insulators on securely so some maintenance is needed. I also think it would be great to burn the name "Surge" onto the sides of the post like original posts and create something that would hang on the stations to allow displayers to put display handouts at waist level, away from the display table. I don't like seeing viewers reaching over the ropes or bending to the floor to get a display handouts.

### Derma Shield

While at the national, someone mentioned a product called "Derma Shield" to me. It was described as a product that could be applied before an insulator hunt that would help ward off poison oak, poison ivy, and other skin irritants. I used Google to find more information about it.

According to one web site, Derma Shield forms an invisible barrier to protect the skin against most irritants while providing maximum skin protection against oil, grease and other substances for up to 4 hours. It contains lanolin, aloe vera, and Vitamin E and moisturizes while it protects. Another web site indicated DermaShield is an over-the-counter skin protectant drug product which protects injured or exposed skin surfaces from harmful or annoying stimuli.

I'm not sure how much is needed to provide protection for both arms of a person but the following are some prices:

2 ounces for \$11.49

6 ounces for \$20.89

12 ounces for \$26.69

It clearly seems that the more you purchase, the lower the per ounce cost.

There also seems to be a similar product called Gloves in a Bottle. Eight ounces of this costs \$14.49. The web site for the product makes a number of claims:

It bonds with the outer layer of skin cells to give them integrity, so it retains moisture and oils in the skin while offering a shielding property which protects from the elements that interfere with the skin's condition.

It doesn't wash off! Instead, it comes off with natural exfoliation of the skin layers and therefore remains effective for several hours.

Because this protective layer locks in moisture, it allows the condition of dry/damaged skin to be restored naturally and very effectively! It helps to relieve eczema, psoriasis, it's also used in diabetic care, and it prevents blistering in patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment.

The shielding property prevents skin allergies, dermatitis and skin irritations including resisting poisonous plants and shrubs. It is used across a huge number of industries to protect the skin – from constant handwashing / sanitizing, handling cleaning products, solvents, paints and thinners, or just to make it easier to clean up after working because paint, oil and grime will wash off the skin more readily.

In winter sales will soar because of the prevalence of dry skin conditions. In summer, it's also great for healing big bites, reducing skin-peeling after sunburn, and with the new SPF formula it makes a great skin solution for outdoor pursuits.

## **Upcoming Shows**

**August 29, 2015 (Saturday)**

**Annual North Western Insulator Club swap meet**

**Nisswa, Minnesota**

Join us on Saturday, August 29, at the home of Colin & Karen Yennie to swap, buy, sell, learn about, admire and trade stories about insulators and any related treasures. Hours are 10 to 4 and Colin will be grilling lunch-rain or shine. Address is 1126 Ebert Drive, Nisswa MN. For information, contact Colin Yennie at 507-289-1095 or Karen at 507-271-3457 or [cryennie@hotmail.com](mailto:cryennie@hotmail.com). Bring stock for an auction and we'll see you there.

**September 12, 2015 (Saturday)**

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Chicago Insulator Club “End of Summer” Picnic and Swap Meet  
Racine, Wisconsin**

15<sup>th</sup> Annual GCIC “End of Summer” picnic and swap meet. Show hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be served at noon. Please let me know if you plan to attend so enough food can be prepared. Brats, hot dogs, and various other picnic-type food is on the menu this year. Rick Soller will be holding his famous auction again. He has hundreds of insulators ready to put on the block. If you want to include something in the auction, by all means bring it with. The event will go on rain or shine. It will be held at the home of RANDY WESNER, 434 Blaine Ave., Racine, WI 53405 (262) 633-0756 Email: [randysdodge@gmail.com](mailto:randysdodge@gmail.com) Call or email if you need directions. Hope to see you there.

Note: Randy still has not perfected this swap meet and we refuse to allow him time off from his hosting duties until he gets it right or dies so when telling him how great the swap meet was, remember to add one tiny thing he can improve upon in future years.

**October 3, 2015 (Saturday)**

**North Western Insulator Club Fall Swap Meet  
River Falls, Wisconsin**

North Western Insulator Club Fall Swap Meet. Come join us for our fall swap meet in beautiful River Falls, Wisconsin on Saturday, October 3, hosted by Mike Braun. The show will be held in the Moose Lodge at 620 Clark St., River Falls. There are tables available and plenty of room for all. We'll be open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and plan for the usual awesome auction mid-day. Lunch will be available. For info, contact Mike Braun at [mbraun61@yahoo.com](mailto:mbraun61@yahoo.com) or 715-426-0887. Please RSVP by September 25 so we may plan for adequate tables and food. See you in Wisconsin!

**November 6-8, 2015 (Friday to Sunday)**

**45<sup>th</sup> Annual Mid-Ohio Show & Sale  
Springfield, Ohio**

The 45th Annual Mid-Ohio Show & Sale will be held November 6-8 at the Clark County Fairgrounds (Exit 59 off I-70), Springfield, Ohio. Friday hours are 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Saturday: 8:00 to 4:00 p.m. Sunday: 9:00 to ????. The Community Display for 2015 will feature “Lynchburg Glass.” Information is available at: [www.insulators.info/shows/springfield/](http://www.insulators.info/shows/springfield/) Contact: LOIS BLAIR 740-852-3148 or CURT BOSTER 614-301-5125; email: [cboster530@att.net](mailto:cboster530@att.net)

**July 28-31, 2016 (Thursday to Sunday)**

**47<sup>th</sup> National Insulator Association Convention, Show, & Sale  
Muncie, Indiana**

The National Insulator Association’s 47th Annual Convention and Show will be held July 28-31, 2015 at the Horizon Convention Center, 601 S. High St., Muncie, IN 47305. Muncie was the home of the Hemingray company from 1888 to 1972 and special activities are planned related to this. Show information can be found at <http://www.nia.org/national> or you can contact show hosts Bob Stahr or Rick Soller. Bob can be reached at 630-793-5345 or at [Bob@hemingray.com](mailto:Bob@hemingray.com) and Rick can be reached at (847) 782-8602 or at [Com574@clcollinois.edu](mailto:Com574@clcollinois.edu).