



GREATER CHICAGO INSULATOR CLUB NEWSLETTER

Nedra Adams-Soller, Acting Editor

Volume 29, Number 4
April 1, 2021



March 32nd Issue!

Rick Soller was not able to write and send out this issue for reasons that will be clear for those who read the story found later in the newsletter, but I expect the issue will be resolved soon. Until then, I, **Nedra Adams-Soller**, am taking over the role of editing the newsletter. Meanwhile, incredible events are unfolding for club members that are reported in this newsletter. All these stories are true to the best of my knowledge.

I have been involved in the hobby since about 1989 when I first met Rick. Despite this, I am a lifetime member of the National Insulator Association, and a member of other clubs such as the Western Reserve Insulator Club, even though I own no insulators.

I don't plan on editing this newsletter very long. If Rick gets involved in a trial, I'll have to sell his insulators at an estate sale to pay for the lawyers. Since I only have a vague idea of what any of them are worth, I'll trust club members to attend and offer what they think they are worth.

Rick is supposed to retire in about a year, so I hope he gets a chance to enjoy it. He has been selling more and more of his collection so I know he wants to downsize now rather than make me deal with it all if he should be unable to do so. He always said **Riley Armstrong** would be who he would want to see buy his collection.

Bob Stahr Collection Confiscated

Recently, a collector on Facebook asked how railroad companies react to collectors walking on their right of way to acquire insulators that are up on poles but no longer have wires attached. Most of the comments were benign with suggestions that permission be obtained from the railroad or to move off the track quickly if there is an oncoming train. One respondent, however, referred to such activities as stealing and threatened to turn in anyone engaging in such activities. Unfortunately, **Bob Stahr** was one of the participants in the discussion and indicated that most of his collection came from people hunting along the tracks and that he, in fact, had recently done that very same thing.

A few days later, the Illinois state police knocked on his door and served a warrant to search his house. The warrant indicated that the Facebook poster followed through with her threats. I would give her name, but I don't want to be sued for libel. Upon finding his insulator collection, the police confiscated it and arrested Bob for receiving stolen goods. They further indicted that other charges might be forthcoming. If convicted, the collection would be sold at a police auction. Bob has hired the law firm of Dewey, Kidyew, Forsure, and Howe.

If Bob is convicted, and the collection sold, we hope club members can collaborate during the sale to buy it for a token amount and return it to Bob. We would do the same for anyone else in the same situation.

Wyatt Johnson's Mom Throws His Collection Out

In a shocking development for one of our younger club members, **Wyatt Johnson's** mom has thrown out his insulator collection. In an ironic twist, she kept his old baseball cards and comic books, claiming that she has read multiple stories that cards, and comics are worth money.

Wyatt is in a funk over the matter. He was out hunting insulators in Port Washington at the time and returned to find his collection missing and the trash picked up already. In addition, his mother didn't even talk to him before she acted.

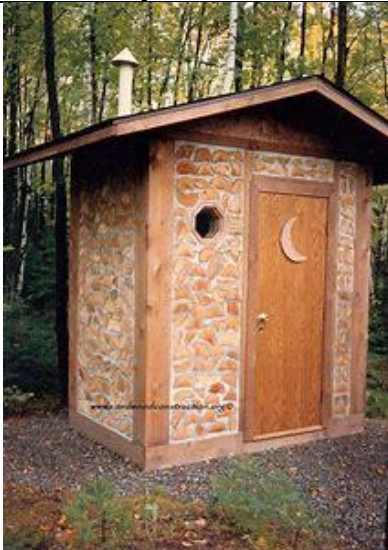
A call to his mother revealed her multiple motivations. In a telephone call, she disclosed, that she didn't like the riff-raff associated with the hobby. She had read that the club president had recently been arrested, for example. In addition, she didn't like all the space that the collection occupied. Just recently, she stated, "Wyatt came home with a van load of insulators that are all over the place!"

Wyatt has learned that the collection was taken to a particular landfill. He indicated most of the insulators were in boxes, and his mother threw the boxes in the trash without dumping them out of the boxes, so he surmises that most of the insulators are still intact. He hopes a few club members might help him in the search. There was a rotten banana in one box so that should aid in tracking the collection down by smell.

Is Curtis Erickson a BRIC HEAD?

With declining membership in the Huron Valley Bottle & Insulator Club, there are rumors that the club will expand the interests and geographic area of the club to increase membership. The new club will supposedly include rock collectors and specifically include the area around Detroit plus include members all the way south to Erie, Michigan. To reflect these changes, the new club will be called the **B**ottle, **R**ock, **I**nsulator **C**lub of **H**uron, **E**rie, and **A**rea around **D**etroit or "BRIC HEAD" for short.

To date, we don't know if well-known collectors from the area such as Curtis Erickson and Jack Snyder are BRIC HEADS. If anyone has information, please let the editor know.



It is not known if being a BRIC HEAD would rub off on the family of Curtis or if his parent's upbringing would affect his becoming a BRIC HEAD, maybe even the BRIC HEAD president. If the expansion doesn't work, plans are to further broaden the mission of the club and be renamed the **S**tamps, **T**oys, **I**nsulators, **C**oins, **K**nickknacks of the **U**pper **P**eninsula, **T**oledo, **H**uron, **E**rie area **A**ssociation.

Collectors who wish to be a BRIC HEAD should send a white-glazed foreign porcelain insulator along with a note explaining why they want to be a BRIC HEAD to Curtis who can forward the membership application to the appropriate person. Collectors who wish to submit memberships of other people may do so with the same process.

In anticipation of interest in a club patch, the image to the left has already been approved for the patch. The moon on the door will be replaced by various cutouts of bottles, rocks, and insulators as well as the name of the club. The club also anticipates this will be the design of their clubhouse, with plans to eventually add a second floor.

Rick Soller Indicted for Shipping Illegal Items

Apparently, it is illegal to send “sex toys” from the United States to Canada. Rick Soller was recently indicted for doing just this when he sent a CD 317 Chambers insulator to another collector in Guelph, Ontario. The insulator was opened by Canadian customs officers who erroneously identified it as a sex toy rather than a lightning rod insulator. The officers filed a report but were unable to conduct an arrest so logged a warrant in their system in case they could lay their hands on the “criminal.” Rick happened to be crossing the border to ship some insulators to Canadian collectors and customs agents arrested him at the border. He now awaits justice in Windsor. Calls to his Canadian “friends” for assistance have gone unanswered.

Ephraim Wins Lottery!

It is the kind of dream every collector has--winning the lottery and being able to buy any insulator for your collection that you want. **Ephraim Podgorski** had just that dream come true. An uncle of his gave him a Mega Millions lottery ticket and it turned out to be the only winning number for the \$93,000,000 February 29th drawing. Since he was not old enough to claim the prize, he had his mother turn the ticket in and collect a lump sum payment of almost \$48 million.

Knowing how much Ephraim likes insulator collecting, the mother negotiated with **Tommy Bolack** to buy his collection, move it to Michigan, Indiana, and create an insulator museum by buying the Michigan City Antique Mall and converting it. The plan is to make the museum free to the public and have a large space to host insulator and other collectible shows. The insulators won't be shipped, however, until after the national show in Farmington, New Mexico because Tommy wants to show them off one more time before passing them on to a younger collector.

	<p>Ephraim indicated that he also wants to take over the newsletter and make the material much better than the crap previously published. He says he can afford to print the newsletter on high quality paper and in color. Also, he has lots of stories to write about regarding the interesting insulators he has added to his collection so far.</p> <p>Once the museum is built, the first event he plans to hold there is a national show. He hopes club members can help him plan to have the show in Michigan City in 2023. With plenty of money from the lottery, he plans to provide tables at the show for free and pay for the banquet</p> <p>Already Ephraim has added some incredible pieces to his collection. On the left are some pictures of some of the one-of-a-kind insulators he has added (sold by Larry S. Veneziano).</p>
---	--

Upcoming Shows

Saturday, April 10, 2021

Wheaton, Illinois

The DuPage Collectors Expo will be held Saturday, April 10th at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, Illinois. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Items for sale & trade include insulators, lightning rod items & weathervanes, telephone & telegraph items, bottles, jars, etc. For information, contact Bob Stahr at bob@heminggray.com (630) 793-5345 or Rick Soller at com574@clcollinois.edu (847) 782-8602.

Friday, April 30 & Saturday, May 1, 2021

Columbia City, Indiana

Free Admission, Free appraisals, Free air too! at the annual Columbia City, Indiana Insulator, Fruit Jar, Bottle & Collectibles show to be held at the Whitley County 4H Center, 581 Squawbuck Road, Columbia City, IN on April 30th - May 1st. Plenty of parking, RVs welcome (no hookups) Friday dealer setup 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, Public 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM, Pizza 5:00 PM, BRING SOMETHING FOR THE SHOW & TELL at 5:30 PM, Saturday Dealer setup 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM, Public 8:00 AM until the last dealer leaves. First dealer table \$28, 2/\$48, 3/\$60, 4/\$75, 5/\$80, 6/\$85. For discounts on local hotels or for more info email Gene Hawkins at: gene.hawkins@mchsi.com or call (574) 377-0171.

Saturday, May 22, 2021

Bovey, Minnesota

The North Western Insulator Club Spring Sale and Swap Meet will be in northern Minnesota at the home of Rick and Mary Augustyn, 34879 Scenic Hwy, Bovey, Minnesota 55709. Hours are 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Rick and Mary have plenty of room to spread out so we can follow COVID precautions and catch up with old and new friends. Please bring your own tables and chairs and we will be outdoors but will have protection from any spring showers. Please RSVP to Rick and Mary at augies9ers@gmail.com or 952-240-3960. We'll see you in May! [Editor's note: Bovey, MN is located, it is 202 miles north of Minneapolis (3 hours and 23 minutes).]

Saturday, June 5, 2021

Tama, Iowa

The 23rd Hawkeye State Insulator Swap Meet will be held on Saturday, June 5th at the Tama Civic Center from 8:00 AM-3:00 PM. The Civic Center is located at 305 Siegel St. in downtown Tama, IA. Dealers planning on attending can start setting up at 7:00 AM. The event is at no cost to those attending and lunch will be provided close to noon.. There will be an auction scheduled with part of the proceeds going to support this and future events. Donations towards this event are welcome. We look forward to hosting you and provide some Hawkeye hospitality here in the Midwest. For any additional information and table reservation, please feel free to contact DAVE SHAW at (641) 484-5463 or e-mail at dashaw@mchsi.com.