

County Hunter News

January 1, 2016
Volume 12 Issue 1

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in ham radio county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation.

Contributions of articles, stories, letters, and pictures to the editor are welcomed, and may be included in future issues at the editor's discretion.

The County Hunter News will provide you with interesting, thought provoking articles, articles of county hunting history, or about county hunters or events, ham radio or electronics history, general ham radio interest, and provide news of upcoming operating events.

We hope you will enjoy the County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all provided credit is given to the CHNews and to the author of article.

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.W6RK.com

For information on county hunting, check out the following resources:

The USACA award is sponsored by CQ Magazine. Rules and information are here:

<http://countyhunter.com/cq.htm>

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

<http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm>

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can

find information on these awards and the rules at:

http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

<http://www.wd3p.net/ch/netproc/netproc.htm>

There is a lot more information at www.countyhunter.com . Please check it out.

Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at www.CHNewsonline.com

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

<http://pages.suddenlink.net/w4ydy/hamlinks.html#County>

Download the file to a flash card that fits in your GPS unit, turn it on, and the county lines should appear!

De N4CD, Editor (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1) N4CD Rumblings

We've reached the end of another year and look forward to 2016. What will it bring?

Looking back on 2015, we had great activity with mobiles zipping all over the country. Every state was on the air with thousands and thousands of counties. Things started off well with the largest MI Mini ever. We had a good Dayton Hamvention with many at

the County Hunter Forum and following dinner. The summer was filled with major trips by a dozen county hunters. In the fall we had a 3M get together at the 'old place' in Murphreesboro, TN.

Some milestones for 2015

Seven people finished up for first time, including W7PFZ, WY8I, DL3DXX, WE7G, KM4FO, W4IHI and SM7ZDH. All got their USCA and 'one star'.

Those finishing up the USA-CW award include: WQ7A, N5PR, NT2A, K5KDG, DL3DXX, AE3Z, WE7G, WD4OIN, and KM6HB.

Six people finished up Bingo, including K7SEN, K0PFV, NT2A, N7JFP, WY8I, K2MF.

Masters Gold went to K8ZZ, AB7NK, WD4OIN, and W4SIG.

Master Platinum was achieved by Karl, K4YT.

Joyce, N9STL and Terry, WQ7A were awarded the Mobile Diamond level.

Jim, N4JT reached the "Ran All USA" award.

Gene, K5GE and Chuck, W3CR were awarded "All Prefixes" certificates.

No one has claimed Natural Bingo yet.

Looking forward to 2016 – another MI Mini coming up - and Dayton Hamvention. We'll have the National Convention in Memphis TN hosted by Kerry, W4SIG and helpers.

Don, K3IMC, will likely finish up running all the counties – he's down to under 100 or so to go. Who else is getting set to finish? NX0X/KB0MHH have 20 states done and more trips planned. They're working on it. KB0BA/N0XYL are out on many trips.

2) Vic, SM7ZDI, sent along a photo



SM7ZDI – USCA #1254

Likely in a few months, the story of his achieving USA-CA will appear in CQ Magazine in the K1BV column. Keep an eye open for it.

3) County Hunting Weather

It seems winter has descended – out west. I -80 in Wyoming was closed for days along 380 miles due to blizzard conditions! Wow. If you've been out that way, you've seen the lights at the exits and gates that block the roads – telling you the road ahead is shut and 'exit here'. Seems somewhat irrelevant during the summer months, but in the winter time, they get used and motorists get stranded for days at a time. Meanwhile, the east half of the country is basking in record temps at times. You can attribute this to one of the strongest El Nino weather patterns in history.

At the end of December, the east half of the country is basking in 20 degree above normal temps for this time of year with 70s degrees not uncommon thanks to the super El Nino weather pattern. Who knows when it will change? It seems to be weakening. Meanwhile, the Pacific northwest is getting pounded with storm after storm and west of the Rockies iswell, enjoying winter.

When the weather is good – go mobile! There is snow predicted in Marshall County in just a few days!

The last weekend in December, the warm weather ran into a major cold front....the panhandle of TX was under blizzard warnings with 35 mph winds, gusting to 55 for two or more days and a foot or more of snow expected. Below zero windchills and zero visibility. In the Dallas area, 11 or more tornadoes, with several at EF-4 levels – wiping out a trailer park (600 trailers) and several hundred houses. 12 dead in the storms. Fortunately, it missed my town and went to southeast. The bad weather is headed due east at this point. It's not 'unusual' for xmas storms – the year I moved to TX they had one 25 miles away! It's unusual to be 'this bad'.....

So it's time to wait for better weather – no snow or ice – and go mobile! Hamfest coming up in Ft Worth in 2 1/2 weeks. Orlando, FL hamfest? Who knows?

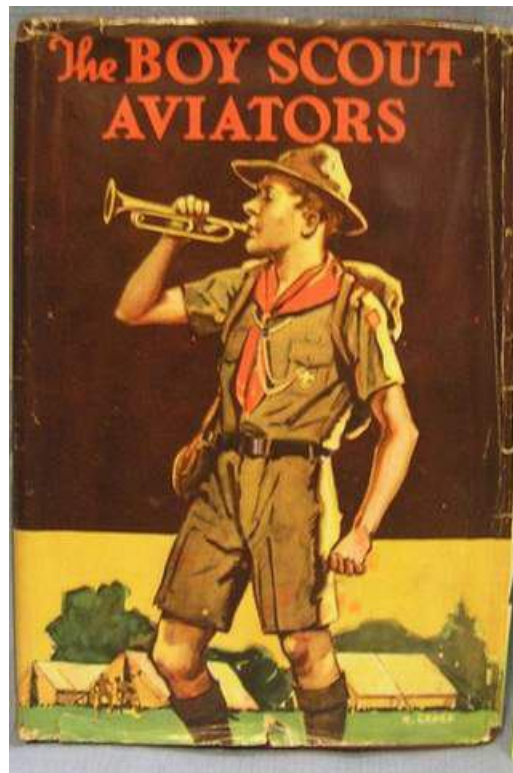
4) Year end Total for N4CD

The past year has been good for CW county hunting. With the State QSO Parties, one could work a lot of counties toward the CW (and other) awards. Starting over in March of this year, I managed to snag 2210 counties toward the next time – in just a bit over 8 months. The state QSO parties really help – if you happen to be in the right place for propagation. This year I snagged 101 of the 105 KS counties in one weekend. I missed most of the PA counties since those folks stayed down on 40M and it just doesn't work from TX to PA during most of the day – hi hi- so KS is filled in, and PA is still half empty. Maybe next year! Lots of counties to go, especially in NC, NE, PA, and a few other states. Of course, those with beams and KW's often got 'clean sweeps in the QSO Parties, and some others like N6MU, John, manage to do fantastically well with verticals and wire antennas.

So what did you do in 2015? Send in your cw totals to Dennis, KK7X, for the annual listing.

Book Review of the Month

The Boy Scout Aviators – George Durston



This month's story is a deviation from 'wireless' into other forms of signaling – including heliostats and communicating with blimps. The story starts out in the mid 1910s. Germany is now beginning to make war in Europe and it won't be long before England is involved. The Archduke has been assassinated and that's the trigger for war in Europe. England will be shortly drawn in. WW1 is about to happen in a big way. Just after this story begins, England declares war on Germany.

Harry and Dick are Boy Scouts. You'll the scouting movement started in England, then moved over to the US.

It turns out the Boy Scouts are recruited for messenger work. There's tremendous need

to coordinate all the war effort and the British don't trust their own phone lines and telegraph lines which could be tapped by German spies.

As the story progresses, we find that Harry and Dick find a strange heliograph station (morse flashes sent using reflected sun light). It could be a spy station. They set out to find the other end point – which could be from miles to tens of miles a way. A heliostat can send a narrow beam of light – hard to detect – unless you are very close to the beam. They copy down the message – it's in code and in German but they'll try to decode it later.

There's chapter after chapter of adventure - none of it with wireless – everything from cut telephone wires (by German saboteurs) to getting in trouble by false testimony of a former 'friend' who turns out to be one of the German spies

They decode the Morse message and find it's a plan to bomb a petrol storage dump. The target will be illuminated and triangulated by secret roof top lights – and a Zeppelin will come in and drop bombs on the target. They reveal the plans to authorities and it's stopped in it's tracks.

One of their friends owns an airplane (bi plane) which helps them track down the spy locations of the roof top lights.

It's a story that place in 1910s England. No wireless. Codes and Morse code. Smart kids. Not much else to report on.

You can read it on line here.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5707/pg5707-images.html>

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The backlog of 'old wireless stories' has reached zero. Oh well...it was a good run! Now I've zipped through the 19 “Jack Reacher” spy thrillers ala James Bond (but better) and off on other books for a while. If I discover some early wireless stuff it will be reported on in the County Hunter News. There's a few somewhat relevant stories I'm still hunting down.

CW Year End Stats

Now is the time to gather your 'year end' statistics for working counties on CW and forward the results to Dennis, KK7X, for tabulation of the progress of the CW county hunters toward their next award.

Each year, Dennis compiles the results by the end of January or so and we publish them here in the County Hunter News.

If you are working on first time, then you count up how many you have worked toward USA-CW.....maybe 1000 or 2000 counties....and send that total and a note saying 'first time'. If you are working on Nth time, say third time and have 100 or 1500 done, send a note saying 1500 done, third time.

Easy to do and Logger will tell you how many you have worked. A bit harder for those with paper logs, but it won't take too long to count them up and know your progress to the next level.

Mobile Activity

Paul, WD9EJK was putting them out in WI on SSB.

Jim, N4JT, was active at the end of Nov and into Dec putting them out on data modes in NC.

Jim, N9JF, has been out on CW occasionally.

N6PDB, Dennis, and Susan, WA6OCV headed cross country on a major trip of weeks

long duration. Running on SSB (20M) and data modes.

Jeff, W9MSE, took a nice trip to northwest WI on cw for the folks.

Ron, KB6UF, was putting counties out in northern CA for the folks. He will head back to LA at the beginning of 2016.

Rick, W5QP, was putting them out in AR. Into OK for a few – CW.

KB6HWD ran a few in TX.

AF5CC was noted out and about in OK and IA.

Mike, KA4RRU, ran a few in VA.

Bob, WA3QNT, was out in PA.

Kerry, W4SIG, is out mobile here and there.

K8ZZ, Ed, was out in MO.

N9AC headed south from WI to FL on a trip.

KA2LHO was noted out and about on SSB.

On the Trail of Regens

A Codar solid state six transistor regen came up for bid on UK Ebay. It's one of the few that have eluded me. So I bid on it – less the plug in – hard to find - 'Denco Green Coils' which are needed to get it to run. I was lucky (I think) and got it. Shipping was about the same as the purchase price from the UK (a killer). Now I'll be hunting for the 9pin plug in Denco coils to make it play. They are scarce. This was a 1975 vintage radio with FET front end sold in the UK only. Runs off 9v battery.



Codar made and sold a few ham radio items including a 10W QRP 'novice' type transmitter for the UK (the power limit for their novice class), and a superhet simple receiver.

On the Road with N4CD

The car had been in the garage for a couple weeks going nowhere. It was time to run some counties in the warm weather before real winter hit. Winter arrived officially on Dec 22 GMT at 0449z. In Texas, it was 70 degrees that day at the N4CD QTH. The 15 degree above normal days were set to continue a few more days before the chill, rain, and cold front would come through taking us back to normal 50s for highs at this time of year. Might as well take advantage of it while I could!

Now propagation was a different story – we just had a few days of A index over 30, K index up to 5 and 'poor' rating on all HF bands for a day or two. There is no fun being out mobile when 40M doesn't work, 30M is barely there, and you are lucky to be heard on 20M. The sun was putting on some fireworks that play havoc with the HF bands. Things looked like they were going to settle down for a few days.

After checking the K3IMC needs page, and remembering that Marshall OK would be the last county to have run them all three times for the state (after finishing them all for the second time), I decided it was time to get that one remaining county, and get that and a few others for folks with needs. Chuck, W3CR, needed a handful in OK, and Marshall and Johnston were two on his list for Mobile Diamond award. I could put out a few for the Double Diamond and Bingo Cinco award – folks now needed 'everything' again since that Bingo Cinco award started in the fall.

The Bingo Cinco Award requires that you work 'five Bingos' in a county. I have one, so that is just part of what is needed. You'll need 4 more. Many mobiles only have one – that is all you have needed in the past to start working on the Master Gold award. A while back, MARAC created Bingo II, III, etc. Logger would track it.

Marshall County is the smallest (by land area) of all the OK counties with a population of about 15,000 people. The main industry is farming - now with wheat, oats and peanuts as the main crops. You'll see lots of cows in pastures and a few sheep. The southern border is Lake Texoma – and the eastern border is also an arm of Lake Texoma – a big lake formed by a dam on the Red River that lies between Oklahoma and Texas. They had a bit of oil and natural gas as well to fuel the economy.

After breakfast, and reading the paper, and dragging another bag or two of leaves out of the pool – the giant oak tree in yard drops 50,000 leaves keeping me busy for a while in the fall – I headed out about 8:45am. This was to be a 'leisurely' trip for the day. The route was up US75 to OK, then onto smaller roads for the rest of the trip. No problems getting to OK. Ran Grayson – then across the Red River into Bryan. The river was flowing pretty well. Lots of water from the dam to the west. Sometimes out in west TX, you can barely see a trickle in the 'river' in the summer time – especially with the 'drought' we had for the past six or so years - only broken in in the last year with near record rainfall. Folks were around for contacts and I got at least 3 contacts on two or more bands (needed for Double Diamond transmit) after the first county. I had the 40M SSB antenna on the car for Chuck, W3CR who needed these and doesn't come over to CW. Maybe Joe, N5UZW would be around too.

I was happily zipping along till the turn to Marshall on 199 – then a sign saying 'Road Closed Ahead – local traffic only'. Hmmm....that wasn't good – the road to Marshall county was CLOSED. In the past month, we had had some deluges of rain- some places getting 8 inches of rain in two days. The memory cells reminded me that southern OK had more than its share of rainfall in the past months. The bridge to Marshall is only a few feet above 'flood stage' and looks like it got flooded out. There's two or three low bridges in a row to get there. I still went to few miles just to be sure – sure enough =

just before the bridges – road blocked off with signs 'road flooded ahead'. The road was only open to the Fort – a tourist attraction. I wasn't going to just sneak over the line. There was construction equipment everywhere ahead.

Back past Fort Washita – from the OK Historical site:

“Fort Washita was established in 1842 in the Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory, as the southwestern-most military post of the United States. The mission of the soldiers was to protect the recently immigrated Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians. The Southern Plains Indians to the west and non-Indian intruders posed threats to the peace and stability of the region. Troops stationed at Fort Washita on a rotational basis during the 1840s included men belonging to companies from the 2nd Dragoons, U.S. Regiment of Riflemen, and the 6th, 7th, and 5th Infantry Regiments. In the 1850s, soldiers from one battery each of the 2nd and 3rd Artillery were at the fort on frontier duty. From 1858 to the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, elements of the 1st Cavalry and 7th Infantry garrisoned the post.

On May 1, 1861, the fort was abandoned by U.S. forces and occupied the next day by Confederate troops from Texas. Southern soldiers used the post as a headquarters during the remainder of the Civil War. After the war the Chickasaw Nation received the old post grounds and buildings from the federal government. The Colbert family, prominent Chickasaws, owned the property until it was acquired in 1962 by the Oklahoma Historical Society. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places and designated as a National Historic Landmark.”

You can go inside and look around if you want. Free admission and open 9-4:30 most days. Been there and done that so I just waved as I went by.



Fort Washita, OK

I could have taken on Route 70 to get to Marshall earlier – but if you take that one, you can't head north easily – but that was 20 miles behind me. If I recall right, that has a lot higher bridge above the water – but maybe not. Who knows? You have to backtrack the 20 miles or more to get there, then another 15 miles to the county. Oh well. Time for plan B. One bridge shut – others likely open.

After checking the map, I see I can detour about 20 miles up Route 22 and across to the west, then zip south to Marshall in 3 or 4 miles. That should do it! ...put the car in gear, head up to Johnston County (run it), then head west to the town of Tishomingo where I could go south 3 or 4 miles to Marshall County. That's a major road into Marshall instead of the smaller one I was on before.

Johnston County only has 11,000 people. Dang. There are more people within a mile of my house at home than in all the county. It's definitely 'rural' and most of those people live in the one town in the county!

The clock said 11am and the stomach was rumbling. I spied a Subway and decided it was time to eat in the one town along the entire route – and only because of the detour. Stopped for a quick second breakfast (egg, ham, and veggies on flatbread). Well, at least the detour brought me to a town with a few fast food places. Most of my route you don't even see ANY fast food place. So far about 15 miles extra on the detour. I was now on the North side of Marshall County.

A few miles ahead, more bad news appeared. Route 99 south to Marshall County was CLOSED! Detour! Head further west! I checked the map. Dang. The only 'detour' I could find would be another 10 miles or more headed west to get to where you could go into Marshall County. Well, that was on the plan – to get to and run Marshall, so west I went on Plan C. If I didn't 'need' to get there, I would have just skipped it. Finally I arrive at Marshall after lots of extra miles. Well, at least it wasn't out in the real west where you can have 100 mile detours to get to the needed counties – been there and done that too! Mission accomplished after two previous failed plans didn't work. Oklahoma is the first state run toward 'third time run all counties'. I'll do the log, copy the page out of my coloring book which I use to log the 'transmit county' entries and zip it to the Marac awards custodian to get an electronic certificate, number zero. 49 states to go!

I decide to put out the county on SSB – Barry, N0KV, and Randy, AA8R, are holding down the frequency for the MARAC 20M SSB net – 14.324 - and I head there to put it

out. It's nice to hook up with some folks who only appear on SSB. N0XYL, N8MD, WY0A, N8OYY, N0DXE and others went into the log on SSB. Of course, I ran the cw bands – 20, 17(not much action), 30 (sparse activity) and 40M. You won't hear me on 14.336 unless I'm working a mobile there.

The frustration of 'getting to Marshall' was over. Zipped back 1 mile and ran Johnston on the MARAC 20M SSB. Most of the time I stop to run on SSB.

Time now to pick up a few more counties in OK – I head north again on route 48. I'm 90 minutes behind planned schedule, but heck, it's near 70 outside, sunny, and the bands are open. What's not to like? It takes another 40 minutes/miles to get out of Johnston to Coal. Next week, this area will be getting snow and ice and back to the 30s and 40s! This is all farm land out this way. There are signs for 'Horse Drawn Vehicles' – Amish farm areas – on the roads. You go miles between 'civilization' and that is often just a few buildings and one gas/convenience store. Coal County has 6000 people! Most live in one town! It's definitely 'rural' – meaning you go for miles and miles with lots of farmland, an occasional farmhouse, and not much traffic. At one or two intersections along the roads miles apart, you have a convenience type store with gas pump.

I head north up to Pontotoc (pop 38,000) – someone usually needs that for something – go 1000 feet into the county – stop and run it- then circle back through Coal and Atoka. Atoka turns out to be a LC for Pat, N0DXE. Yippee! I'm running them on 20 and 40M SSB, and the CW bands. Getting to another county would take more than an hour so I head on back home. Run Bryan OK and Grayson TX on SSB. Stopped at the TX entry visitor center and picked up new TX map. You can never have enough TX maps for planning trips here and there. Also good spot for a pit stop. Oh...4 hours without a stop. The bones ache a bit. I'm out of shape for putting out the counties! Hop in car after short visit and head on out to home.

I check the GPS lady – says I'll be home by 4pm or so. That's fine with me. Sun is down by 5:30 and as I head south toward the Metroplex, there's some rush hour traffic that appears by 5. No need to push it. I'll beat the rush hour.

Stop at the local gas station - \$1.77/gal – and fill up with 11.5 gallons of gas for 335 miles of driving – about 29 mpg with the half dozen stops for SSB runs and dead end runs – and that's it for a sunny December 23 run. Even had the a/c on in the afternoon as the sun beat down. When I stopped I put the windows down and enjoyed the outside temps. Delightful. Thoroughly enjoyed it.

I remember a few years ago I went up to OK with some other county hunters on Jan 1 on

a similar trip. It started out well, then the sleet and ice started and we were down to 15 mph and it took six hours to get back to TX safely! If you want to repeat that, wait till this coming weekend when OK will get ice and snow – as well as the TX panhandle!

I did manage to eek out enough contacts on 'other bands' to qualify for Double Diamond QSO's on the trip – but I guess not many 'need' those counties on the other bands so I barely got the 3 other contacts. 17M was not cooperating. That's going to be a tough challenge as we head into the sunspot cycle minimum. Gene, K5GE and Terry, WQ7A were around to give the 'qualifying contact'. I'm not sure anyone will ever get this award, but who knows? You never know where N4CD will wind up. See you next trip!

ARRL 10M Contest

This was one of two ARRL contests held in December. The other being the 160m contest. Not much happening from here with my vertical antenna on 10M, but if you had a good station in the 'right' part of the country, you could do well. Richard, K5NA, in the Travis TX area, worked 49 states. Many others reporting on the 3830 contest reflector had hundreds to over a thousand contacts – in many cases, the majority being Europeans.

From the 3830 reflector:

K5NA – Texas - Fixed – 1204 cw contacts 117 multiplies

This was my first serious effort as a single-op since my chemo in 2012. My stamina has been slowly coming back but may never be what it was back in early 2011. The 10M Contest was a good choice to get my feet wet again since you operate during the day-time (mostly) and you can usually get enough sleep at night.

I think the conditions were pretty average. Certainly not great nor really poor. But there were times when the band would just go away for a little while. Saturday afternoon, the band completely died very early.

There were European openings on both mornings. There were a good number of multipliers but the openings were brief without much QSO depth to them. But better than no European opening.

I worked 49 states (Missed WY and DC) and 12 VE Provinces (Missing NU and NWT). But only worked 3 XE stations. Sadly, we are not in the XE skip zone and sometimes it is a struggle to work them.

I worked 55 DX countries, 25 EU, 12 SA, 7 NA, 5 AF, 4 OC, and 2 AS. Nice surprises answering CQs were 4X, 5R, VP8, and FW.

73, Richard - K5NA

KN4Y – FL – 150 cw

All my great operating plans for a great effort shot down by reality and I ended following a PPP. Got on for short time periods so did only S&P. This contest brings back memories, it was the first band I got WAS as a Novice. Remember Novice class?

N8II – fixed – WV 1307 cw

I still had a fairly good time, but it was a more frustrating effort than expected. An outbreak of poor ops during the best conditions Saturday AM on CW did not help. With the limited openings Q's lost are never regained. I also felt like I needed more fire power, just not loud enough to work much backscatter on Sunday like I did last year. Despite loud scatter at 15Z Sunday, I was unable to generate a phone run. I missed many USA mults on SSB, got most all of the non-backscatter ones.

Conditions were better than I expected, but pretty far down from 2013-2014. By the numbers you would have expected Sunday to be better with increased SFI to 123 and lower K (1-2), but Saturday with a K of 3 and lower flux was definitely better.

We had some Es into possibly TX and definitely MN (worked 27, seemed like more) and ND/MB mid day Saturday and some more into the Canadian maritimes Sunday from 1215 until about 1330Z, but even that did not help much into EU Sunday. The band never opened well into EU all morning and I worked probably less than 10 new EU Q's on SSB and not much better on CW.

For fairly short stretches, I had some decent runs the the west Sunday especially on SSB and CA was in longer than last year (140 total Q's), but skip was long. One positive was several XE callers on CW and a couple on SSB. On CW, I missed WV!, ND, SD and AK, too many to count on phone! Between both modes was lucky to catch all VE provinces except VY0. I found VE8 loud enough on phone late Sunday probably about 10 minutes before he was gone for good. Besides top dawg CA, popular states were AZ 82 Q's, WA 73, MD 60, VA 50 (MD and VA are locals).

WX was fantastic, 72 F on Saturday! So, I was off about an hour Saturday and 90 minutes Sunday afternoon with lunch and walking with dog and XYL. I had a holiday dinner with XYL's mom Saturday PM which cost probably another slow hour of operating. By 22Z Sunday, the west coast was essentially totally gone, less than 15 minutes past sunset. We had no Es at night when we really needed it and none to FL at all which is extremely unusual.

I am really growing weary of "button pushers" on CW. If all you can do is push buttons, at least have some extras ready to go and know how to use them!

Without more Es/meteor scatter, this contest will be pretty slow at the bottom of the cycle. Thanks for reading and the Q's and see you in the tests in 2016.

73, Jeff

County Sign Database Project

No updates were done by Gary, K4EXT, to the county sign database. Maybe no one managed to get one of the missing signs?

Here's where the needs are posted:

<http://www.charchive.com/cntyneed.asp>

CW Year End Stats

Now is the time to gather your 'year end' statistics for working counties on CW and forward the results to Dennis, KK7X, for tabulation of the progress of the CW county hunters toward their next award.

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Easy to do and Logger will tell you how many you have worked. A bit harder for those with paper logs, but it won't take too long to count them up and know your progress to the next level.

Dennis@kk7x.us

Unlike the SSB folks, who really don't care how far along you are, the cw folks track their progress.....and of course, when it gets close, try to get them finished up!

FCC Catches 20M SSB Jammer

The FCC Enforcement Bureau has entered into a consent decree with a Florida radio amateur to resolve an investigation into whether the licensee violated Sections 97.113(b) and 97.119(a) of the FCC rules by transmitting one-way communications and failing to identify. As part of the deal, Thomas J. Warren, K3TW, of Lecanto, Florida, will pay a monetary penalty. The FCC issued an Order incorporating the Consent Decree on December 9 in the case, which dates back to June 2015.

“In response to complaints that an unidentified station was transmitting on an Amateur Radio frequency at 14 MHz, FCC agents determined that the transmissions were coming from Mr Warren’s residence,” the FCC said in its December 9 Order. “To settle this matter, Mr Warren admits that he failed to transmit his assigned call sign, violated the Commission’s rules, will report any noncompliance with rules governing the Amateur Radio Service, and will pay a \$3500 civil penalty.”

The Consent Decree provided a few more details of the case. The FCC recounted that, after tracking down the unidentified transmissions to Warren’s residence, Warren conceded that he had not identified at least some transmissions that he’d made that day. “The agents issued an on-scene written warning to Mr Warren regarding the violations,” the FCC said in the Consent Decree. “In his written response to the warning, Mr Warren acknowledged that he may have failed to transmit his station identification as required on June 25, 2015.”

According to the Consent Decree, Warren’s transmissions “related to an ongoing dispute with another Amateur Radio operator, whose intentional interference had allegedly disrupted communications on the American Foreign Service Net that operates weekly on 14.316 MHz.”

The FCC said the Consent Decree terminates its investigation, and that it will not use facts established during the investigation and through the effective date of the Consent Decree to institute any new proceeding or take further action against Warren regarding the matters that were the subject of the investigation.

– - - Story courtesy of ARRL Newsletter, Dec 17 issue

Jammer Part II – another one caught -

The FCC Enforcement Bureau has proposed fining William F. Crowell, W6WBJ (ex-N6AYJ), of Diamond Springs, California, \$25,000 for intentionally interfering with other Amateur Radio operators and transmitting prohibited communications, including music. FCC San Francisco District Director David K. Hartshorn released a *Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture* on December 18, detailing the allegations.

In 2008 the FCC designated his current license renewal application for hearing alleging that he had caused intentional interference, interrupted others' communications, transmitted music, and made one-way transmissions, including some containing "indecent language," the FCC said. "Deliberate interference undermines the utility of the Amateur Radio Service by preventing communications among licensed users that comply with the Commission's rules," the FCC said in its *NAL*. "Mr Crowell's deliberate interference to other users, using voice, noises, and music, directly contravenes the Amateur Radio service's fundamental purpose as a voluntary noncommercial communications service..."

The Enforcement Bureau recounted that its agents and the High Frequency Direction Finding (HFDF) Center monitored Crowell's transmissionsAs the agents and the HFDF Center listened, Crowell "repeatedly interrupted other amateurs using noises, recordings, and music, in addition to talking over amateurs affiliated with the WARFA Net, so as not allow them to transmit on the frequency," the FCC said in its *NAL*.

The FCC said on August 30, the HFDF Center again monitored Crowell "using his amateur station to engage in the same types of intentional interfering transmissions during the meeting time for the WARFA Net."

Crowell was given 30 days from the release of the *NAL* to pay the forfeiture

Source: ARRL Newsletter

Getting Folks Finished Up!

Once again, it's time to check the needs page to see who can use YOUR help. Several are working on first time with just a few to go – and counties that aren't snowed under for the winter, either. There are lots of needs in KY and GA, bunches in MS and AL, a handful in TX, AZ and in other places (VA and NC) where the winter weather usually isn't horrific and there are changes to get out mobile.

So why don't you check below and see if you can help whittle down the needs for the following listings?

Kentucky really seems to be in demand at the moment!

WA2VYA - USACA using All Modes

CO: Dolores, Ouray, San Juan

GA: Oglethorpe

IN: Fulton, Marshall, Noble

KY: Breckinridge, Carroll, Casey, Crittenden, Gallatin, Hancock, Johnson, Knott, Lawrence, Magoffin, Martin, Meade, Spencer

MT: Beaverhead, Carbon

NC: Anson, Graham

NE: Chase, Merrick, Washington

NV: Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Mineral

SC: McCormick

SD: Brown, Faulk, Hyde, Kingsbury, McPherson, Potter, Sully

TX: Chambers, Haskell, Live Oak, Orange

UT: Daggett

VA: King William

K3IMC - BINGO2 using All Modes

CA: Alpine, Plumas

GA: Dawson

KS: Graham

OH: Clinton

K3IMC - MASTER'S GOLD using All Modes

NC: Martin

NY: Queens

VA: Franklin

WA3QNT - BINGO2

CA: Mendocino

GA: Wayne

MS: Pearl River

NY: Fulton, Kings

VT: Bennington

AA4GT - USACA using CW -

FL: Lake, Sumter

GA: Lincoln, Madison, Terrell

IA: Lucaus

IN: Fulton, Randolph

KY: Fleming, Harlan, Johnson, Marion

LA: Desoto

MT: Glacier

NV: Mineral

K4PBX - USACA using SSB -

CA: Alpine, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Plumas

ID: Lemhi

KS: Harper

KY: Clinton, Johnson, Warren

ND: Eddy, Griggs, McHenry, Rolette, Sheridan, Steele

NE: Pawnee, Stanton

OR: Lake, Washington

TN: Sequatchie

TX: Mitchell, Robertson

UT: Davis

WA4UNS - USACA using CW -

GA: Chattooga, Effingham, Macon

IN: Noble, Washington

MI: Ionia

NY: Wayne

OH: Darke, Gallia, Henry, Lawrence, Medina, Miami, Shelby

SC: Chester, Florence, Horry

SD: Buffalo

VA: Pulaski
WV: Marshall

WA4UNS - 5TH using All Modes

AR: Randolph
GA: Evans, Hall, Pike, Upson
IA: Boone
KY: Jessamine, Letcher, Washington
MO: Sullivan
NC: Madison, Onslow, Scotland
NY: Hamilton
OR: Benton
PA: Sullivan
SC: Georgetown
VA: Buckingham, Gloucester, Grayson, Goochland, Powhatan, Pulaski, Russell, Smyth
WV: Boone, Lincoln

W4YDY - BINGO4 using All Modes

AL: Lauderdale, Winston
CA: Trinity
NY: Livingston
PA: Carbon
WA: Douglas
WV: Jackson

N5PR - FIVESTAR using All Modes

AZ: Santa Cruz 2)
TN: Meigs 2)
TX: Terrell 2)

DL6KVA - USACA using CW -

ID: Clearwater
LA: Evangeline
NM: Sierra
TX: Gonzales, Jackson
WV: Mingo

K7DM - 2ND using All Modes

GA: Baldwin, Fannin, Glascock, Talbot, Turner, White

ID: Camas
IL: Cass, Clay
IN: Dubois, Fayette, Ohio
KY: Jessamine, Larue, Lee, Marion, McReary, McLean, Owsley
MS: Tallahatchie
NC: Madison, Mitchell, Yancey
OH: Darke, Hardin
PA: Delaware
SC: Marion, Pickens, Williamsburg
TN: Claiborne, Fentress, Hardin, Overton, Unicoi
TX: Presidio

N7LFX - BINGO using All Modes

GA: Wayne
IA: Ida
IN: Montgomery
KY: Larue
OH: Madison
VA: Page

KC7OD - USACA using SSB -

VA: Lunenburg

W8FNW - MASTER'S GOLD using All Modes

ID: Custer, Franklin
IL: Crawford, Henderson, Randolph, Warren
KS: Chautauqua, Rawlins
MA: Suffolk
MD: Carroll
ME: Oxford
MN: Norman
MO: Putnam
MT: Glacier, Judith Basin, Liberty, McCone, Pondera, Ravalli
NV: Lincoln, White Pine
NY: Chenango
OR: Clatsop, Columbia, Douglas, Grant, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Tillamook
PA: Northumberland
TX: Armstrong, Burleson, Castro, Cottle, Limestone
VA: Amelia, Franklin, Henry, Lunenburg, Nottowa, Prince Edward

WA: Skamania, Yakima
WY: Park

W8FNW - 3RD using All Modes

GA: Effingham, Macon
ID: Franklin
IL: Crawford, Moultrie, Warren
IN: Scott
KY: Carroll, Clinton
MD: Carroll
MS: Yazoo
MT: Glacier, Judith Bason, Liberty, Mineral, Prarie
NE: Garfield, Wheller
NV: White Pine
SD: Butte, Harding

K8IW - USACA using CW -

AK: Second
AL: Sumter, Talladega
GA: Dodge
HI: Kalawao
ID: Camas, Idaho, Madison
IL: Alexander, Wayne
IN: Adams, Huntington, Jefferson, Jennings, Union
KS: Barton, Elk, Jefferson
KY: Elliott, Floyd, Grayson, Henry, Magoffin, Mason, Powell, Shelby, Trimble
MT: Daniels, Garfield, McCone, Madison, Sanders, Sweet Grass
NY: Fulton, Montgomery, Ulster
OH: Guernsey, Hardin
OR: Hood River, Sherman
UT: Tooele
VA: Dickinson, Highland, Lee, Nottaway, Surry, Wise
WA: Douglas
WV: Marshall

K8QWY - 3RD using All Modes

IN: Union
MI: Iosco
SC: Marlboro

NA8W - BINGO using SSB -

AR: Cross, Van Buren

GA: Calhoun

PA: Wyoming

KB9AIT - USACA using All Modes

AR: Ouachita, Montgomery

IA: Hardin, Shelby

KS: Linn, Cheyenne

MI: Tuscola

MN: Morrison, Waseca, Wabasha

MO: Audrain

MT: Musselshell

ND: Rolette

NY: Schuyler

OH: Ottawa

SD: Moody

WV: Wirt

WA9DLB - BINGO4 using SSB -

AL: Lawrence, Hale, Coosa, Macon, Henry

GA: Paulding

IL: Moultrie

NY: Lewis, Suffolk, Wayne

TX: Lamb

UT: Duchesne, San Juan

VA: Cumberland, Surry

W9MSE - FIVESTAR using CW -

CA: Nevada 1), Placer 1)

IL: Boone 1), Carroll 3), Dekalb 4), Dupage 1), Kane 1), Lawrence 1), McHenry 1)

WI: Buffalo 1)

W9MSE - 6TH using CW -

CO: Dolores

IA: Jackson

IL: Boone, Jo Daviess, Stark

KY: Campbell, Larue, McLean

ME: Knox, Lincoln, Somerset

MT: Deer Lodge, Granite
NC: Polk
OR: Grant, Tillamook
PA: Bradford, Northumberland, Union
SC: Georgetown
WI: Crawford, Door, Kewaunee, Oneida, Sawyer, Vilas

W9MSE - BINGO3 using CW -

AK: Third
CA: Santa Barbara
GA: Coweta, Heard
IA: Allamakee
IL: Carroll, Stephenson
KY: Taylor
ME: Aroostook, Somerset
NY: Fulton
OR: Benton, Coos, Douglas
TX: Caldwell, Gonzales, Irion, Reagan, Upton
WI: Adams, Buffalo, Door, Grant, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kewaunee, Rusk, Sawyer

NØDXE - 2ND using SSB

AL: Crenshaw, Houston
AR: Randolph
GA: Douglas, Hancock, Treutlen
KY: Callaway, Martin, Woodford
LA: Avoyelles, Grant, Jackson, Lasalle
MS: Benton, Jefferson Davis
NC: Montgomery, Stanly
ND: Burke
NH: Belknap, Grafton, Stafford
NY: Hamilton, Suffolk
PA: Lycoming, Montgomery, Northumberland
TN: Lauderdale
TX: Foard, Limestone
VA: Northumberland

WØEAR - MASTER'S PLATINUM using All Modes

CA: Butte, Plumas
KS: Cowley, Marion
MO: Howard

WØEAR - PREFIX-N using All Modes

ND: Emmons, Logan

WØEAR - BINGO4 using All Modes

MO: Ray

NC: Wayne

NE: Hooker

NV: Esmeralda

WY: Crook, Fremont, Weston

WØEAR - 8TH using All Modes

AK: Second

AR: Bradley, Columbia

GA: Bacon, Jeff Davis, Wheeler

IL: Calhoun

IN: Cass

KY: Lawrence

MO: Howard, Maries, Ray

NE: Adams, Custer. McPhearson, Nance, Thurston

PA: Sullivan

TX: Martin

UT: Sanpete

WI: Taylor

WV: Weston

KØFG - MASTER'S GOLD using All Modes

AL: Franklin

CA: Tehama

GA: Baker, Dekalb, Walton

KY: Robertson

MO: Wayne

MS: Smith

MT: Musselshell, Teton

NY: Jefferson, Niagara, Queens, St. Lawrence

OK: Alfalfa, Grant, Haskell

OR: Lincoln, Wheeler

PA: Sullivan

VT: Essex

NFØN - MASTER'S PLATINUM using All Modes

CO: Archuleta
ID: Franklin
KY: Harrison
NC: Clay, Macon
NY: Sullivan
UT: Beaver, Iron

WBØPYF - USACA using CW -

GA: Bleckley, Chattooga, Dawson, Decatur, Jefferson, Jones Lincoln, Miller, Pulaski
IA: Jackson
IL: Perry
IN: Blackford, Brown, Ohio, Ripley
KY: 14
MO: Maries
MS: Adams, Jefferson Davis, Smith, Tunica Wilkinson
NC: Ashe
NE: Burt, Chase, Sherman
TX: Jackson, Marion

WBØPYF - USACA using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 12/01/2015

KY: Trimble
MS: Jefferson Davis, Smith

NØXYL - MASTER'S GOLD using SSB -

AK: Fourth J.d.c.
ID: Bonner, Boundary, Franklin, Lemhi
MT: Garfield, Powder River, Teton
OR: Deschutes, Douglas, Lake, Tillamook, Yamhill
PA: Greene
VA: Prince Edward, Pulaski, Southhampton
WA: Skamania, Snohnomish

I see a few within a day's trip in TX....so maybe I'll work on those. Meanwhile, KY and GA are ripe for a mobile to catch a lot of needed counties if anyone wants to wander there.

WB0PYF is down to 3 to go! Others are under 10 - and we should be trying hard to get those folks finished up. There will be 'good weather' days even in January and February.

Awards Issued

USACA #1254

Vic, SM7ZDI

11.17.15

No MARAC awards were issued this month according to the MARAC home page.

Events for County Hunters

It's back to contest season and State QSO Parties with Montana leading off the way. In January, there are also RTTY and VHF contests – and counties count in all of them!

Jan 1 0000 to 2359z

ARRL Straight Key Night

CW - all bands

No specific exchange

www.arrl.org/straight-key-night

Jan 9 1800 to Jan 10 0559

North American QSO Party, CW

NA: Name, SPC. Non-NA: Name

www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf

Jan 16 1800 to 0559z Jan 17

North American QSO Party SSB

www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf

23 Jan 0000 to 2359 on Jan 24

Montana QSO Party

RS(T), county or SPC

www.fvarc.org/

Future planning – dates to keep open

April 21-23, 2016 Michigan Mini

Once again, the MI Mini will be held at the Holiday Inn in Traverse City, MI. Ed, K8ZZ, has moved to Topeka, KS, but will handle the email/reservations and Joe, W8TVT, will handle the hotel arrangements and other details. More to follow shortly.

May 20-22 2016 – Dayton Hamvention

The annual Dayton Hamvention will (most likely) be held at Hara Arena on Friday, Saturday and Sunday May 20-22. There are some financial issues with the arena that need to be resolved (potential shut down) but so far things are on track for yet another great hamvention. Put it on your calendar.

August 1-4 2016 – Annual Convention

from W4SIG, Kerry:

The dates and host hotel have been set for the 2016 MARAC National in Memphis, TN. I am so looking forward to this event!! Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. It ought to be a lot of fun for all.

Right now I am working on the events and excursions and will have more details on that soon. There is so much to do in Memphis the challenge will be how to narrow it down. In addition to being centrally located, Memphis is has a deep and rich history in

the Mississippi Delta being the “Home of the Blues” and the “Birthplace of Rock ‘n Roll”. You can bet there will be some Graceland and Elvis on the agenda, but there’s also Sun Studios, Beale Street, Gibson guitar factory, the Peabody Hotel with its duck pond in the lobby, and some of the best Barbecue and soul food your lips will ever taste!

Don’t plan on sticking to your diet. Oh, and get ready to enjoy the annual banquet while floating down the Mississippi River on a dinner cruise with live music! While more details will be coming, you can go ahead and make your hotel reservations now. The host hotel is very nice and a Hyatt property for only \$109 per night! You must make your own reservations by calling the Hyatt Place at 901-759-1174 and ask for the MARAC group rate.

This hotel has free warm breakfast and complimentary shuttle service to shopping and restaurants within a 5 mile radius, which includes two of the nicest shopping and restaurant-stocked locales in the area. We will have a large hospitality room in which to mingle throughout the days of the convention

Silent Keys

It was reported on the K3IMC web site that Joe Watkins, N5UZW has passed away December 24. Joe kept the 40M SSB net alive for years and years with a big signal. His friendly voice help recruit new county hunters and it was a pleasure to hook up with him Joe achieved many of the county hunting awards including Master Platinum and Mobile Diamond, plus tens of thousands of hours of net control time. Joe was born in 1939 according to HamCall.

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that's all folks. Short issue this month. Keep those 'mobile trip reports' coming and other stuff of interest to the other county hunters!