

County Hunter News

April 1, 2005
Volume 1, Issue 4

Welcome to Issue 4 of the County Hunter News, a monthly on-line publication for all county hunters, with an orientation toward CW operation. We thank Dennis, KK7X, who has provided us web space to bring you each edition of the CHN. Please visit his site, www.countyhunter.com and explore the many pages and pictures located there.

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 attempt to provide you with interesting, thought provoking articles, articles of county hunting history, or about county hunters or events, or provide news of upcoming events.

We hope you will enjoy the new County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all (except to MARAC, Inc, or Officers/Directors of MARAC) provided credit is given.

De N4CD

Notes from the Editor

In this issue, breaking news on April 1, 2005. Then news about the cancellation of the 3M Convention in the fall. Possibly another convention will be hosted in the fall by others, but Bill KM4W has decided that with the hotel hassles and the problems of hosting another convention, that there will be no more 3M get together. He also noted the rising cost of rooms, and the increased cost of travel, which impact the budgets of many retired county hunters.

Also in this issue, "On the Road" with N4CD and some interesting columns from county hunters about their adventures in county hunting.

A special article for CW county hunters on changes in spotting of cw mobile runs included, plus some interesting stats from Risto, W6RK.

Breaking News

Just a few days ago, on April 1, 2005, a major news story broke. This will affect all county hunters working on various awards, and all should take note. You may not have seen it yet appear in QST, the ARRL Newsletter, the MARAC RoadRunner, or other publications with longer lead times!

The FCC (Federal Commission on Communications) announced that effective immediately, all licensed amateurs and all applicants for a license could automatically use a call with an "X" in it. This was in response to several petitions filed for Rule Making, many filed in the last year. The licensee may, upon written notice, either by email or regular postal mail to FCC Headquarters in Washington, DC, use their existing call, except substituting the digits "22" instead of the normal number assigned by the FCC, append an "X" to the call. Thus, a Callsign of KJ4ABC, which is not good for the Bingo award in most counties, could be changed to KJ22ABCX. For calls with only one or two letters in the suffix, enough XXs would be added to make a suffix of 4 letters. FCC spokesperson Coyote E. Riley advised that the FCC will maintain a special database of calls which have been self-designated to append the extra "X" or XXs.

MARC Awards Chairperson, Katy-Nyne Zepe, announced that immediately that MARC would accept four letter suffixes for the Bingo award, since these were now permitted by the FCC. Additionally, since amateurs could also add an X to the suffix, it was decided to also allow the "X" in a longer suffix to count for Bingo.

Since all new calls and all previously calls can be modified to contain an X, MARC is considering awarding the Bingo Award to all new recipients of the USACA award as likely they have already exchanged reports with a station that had an X in the call. This will simply the awards process. Within a 60 day period, award chairman Katy Nyne-Zepe will decide if there is any real need for the Bingo Award having separate requirements and announce at the annual convention. .

The County Hunter News is happy to provide you with late breaking news. This story just broke as the FCC made their announcement on April 1, 2005. See the relevant websites for the details of the changes or next month's issues of the ham magazines. Look under 'news releases' for April 1.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Michigan Mini 2005 April 14, 15, & 16th

Guesthouse International's Lighthouse Inn, 1555 Phoenix Rd, South Haven, Michigan 49090, Van Buren County, tel: 269-639-9900.

Rooms 59.00...double or single,

Registration is \$12.00 couple, \$9.00 single,

Banquet \$21.00 each, Make reservations before 4/01/05

Dayton Hamvention May 2005

The County Hunter Forum will be held on Friday at 1:30PM this year (earlier than normal). After the forum at about 5:30, the county hunters will QSY to Ryan's Steak House (buffet style) for dinner. More details in the May issue of the CHN.

Operating Events

Another good month is here with lots of events for county hunters, especially CW county hunters. Some of these should have lots of activity.

Missouri QSO Party -- CW/SSB, sponsored by the Boeing Employees Amateur Radio Society of St. Louis (BEARS) from 1800Z Apr 2 - 0500Z Apr 3, and 1800Z - 2400Z Apr 3. Frequencies (MHz): CW - 40 kHz from band edge and 1810 kHz; Phone - 1.850, 3.980, 7.280, 14.280, 21.380, 28.310, work MO stations once per band and mode.

Categories: Fixed, MO Mobile, MO Rover. Exchange: RST, serial number, and MO county or S/P/C. QSO Points: CW -- 2 pts, Phone 1 pt. Score: MO stations -- QSO Points x States + Provinces + MO counties + 1 for DX; non-MO stations -- QSO Points x MO counties. Multipliers count only once. QSOs with W0MA count add'l 100 QSO points. For more information -- <http://www.qsl.net/w0ma>. Logs due 30 days after the contest to n0aj@arrl.net or James L Kinser N0AJ, 2147 Encino Drive, Florissant, MO 63031-7627.

Montana QSO Party--Phone/CW/Digital - sponsored by the Flathead Valley Amateur Radio Club from 2300Z Apr 2 - 2300Z Apr 3. Frequencies: 160 meters -- 70 cm, no categories, repeaters and IRLP are permitted. Exchange: RST and S/P/C or MT county. If a station changes counties, it can be worked again. Score: QSOs x S/P/C + MT counties (counted only once). For more information: k7ncr@arrl.net. Logs due May 10 to

angelmelody@centurytel.net or Norm Palin K7NCR, 68 Silver Leaf Dr, Kalispell, MT 59901.

Georgia QSO Party, April 9 1800Z until 0359Z April 10, and 1400Z to 2359Z. 80-10M not including WARC. No county line operations. Exchange is RST and GA county or state/province/country. More info at gqp.contesting.com

Michigan QSO Party, Apr 16 1600Z to 0400Z on Apr 17. 160-10 meters. More info at www.miqp.org

Florida QSO Party – 1600Z on Apr 23 – to 0159Z Apr 24, and 1200Z-2159Z on Apr 24. CW – up 35 KHz, SSB 7.260, 14.260, 21.335, 28.485. Exchange: RST and FL county or S/P/C. more info at www.floridaqsoparty.org

Nebraska QSO party Apr 23 1700Z to 1700Z Apr 24. 160-2M, up 35 KHz on cw, SSB on 1.870, 3.865, 7.265, 14.265, 21.365, 28.465. more info at www.qsl.net/hdxa

Awards Issued

AB4YZ Second Time #348 2/21/05
AA4VN USACA # 1114, March 1, 2005, All mobile to mobile
KF7CT USACA #1115, March 2, 2005
N2OO USACA #1116 March 5, 2005
KE0AY Bingo #264 March 6, 2005
W0QE USA-CW #74 March 8, 2005
KM9X USCA #1117 March 8, 2005
ND3T Fifth Time, #72 March 10, 2005
ND3T Five Star #20, March 10, 2005
W4OV USACA #1118 March 14, 2005
K5RPC 5th Time #73 March 21, 2005

3M Get-Together Cancelled

From KM4W:

To all my friends and attendees of the 3M.I know at the 2004 mini I said I would continue as host. After much thought, poor health and haggling with management at the Holiday Inn in Murfreesboro, and of course my age, (I will be 84 the 22nd day of March.) and of course this is the 6th change of management at this Motel since 1989, the year we started in Murfreesboro. I have decided to call it enough after 24 years. The Motel management wants to raise the room rate to \$72.00/night, plus 13% tax and also to raise the Buffet Dinner to \$22.00/person. With the economy and gas prices the way they are, that was another reason.

I'm sorry to disappoint a great number of good people, but I feel like it has been a great success. At times I know it has exceeded the National. The first mini started out with 51 attendees and we have had as high as 265 at the Murfreesboro meeting. Some of you I'll probably never see again, but I'll never forget a great group of people...

There is one other thing I would like to comment on. I have hosted the mini since 1981, and received congratulations and approved comments from the members and attendees, but it should be known that the originator of the S.E. Mini was N4ANV, (Gene Tyree). The statement I would like to make is, if it had not been for N4ANV there would never have been a 3M. I'll never forget all the wonderful people who made up the 3M, and a great big thanks to all the people who helped me run things while you were here.

73,s Bill KM4W

Time to Vote

If you are a MARAC member, it is now time to cast your ballot for the candidates running for election. While several races are 'uncontested', others have multiple candidates. Unlike the previous administration, which, until the shenanigans of KZ2P, W5UGD, and N8ELQ, had at least several CW operators on the board (K2NJ, N4CD, KC6AWX), the possibility of having NO current CW operators looms.

At the last election, members elected folks who represented all county hunters and had much experience putting out counties both CW and SSB, and working counties on CW and SSB. (Pres: K2NJ, VP: N4CD) It is hard to think of a fair representation when folks running for office never operate on cw, never go mobile on CW, and haven't been heard on cw in months (ex: N8ELQ, W5UGD, W0MU).

Your elected officials will represent ALL the MARAC members – from those who spend lots of their money going mobile and putting out counties, to those helping run the net, and those involved in making the conventions and mini-conventions a success year after year. They will represent the interests of both SSB and CW county hunters. Right now, there seems to be a widening split between the CW county hunters and SSB ones.

W5UGD single handedly has separated the CW county hunters from the SSB oriented ones, while putting most of the SSB county hunters into the "Zombie mode" (see CHN news Jan 2005). By separating the two spotting systems. While claiming he can 'lead' MARAC, he has clearly demonstrated just the other – dividing county hunters apart.

The CHN supports the following candidates:

President Candidate Choices: N8ELQ and WB9NUL

For President, the CHN supports WB9NUL. Joyce has been very active in the past 12 years that I have been a county hunter. She has hosted one national convention, and many mini-conventions down in South Texas. Each year, she has worked hard at the National and 3M and minis to host the Hospitality suite. As the South Central Director for many years, she has represented the interests of both SSB and CW county hunters, and the OM, Barry, W9UCW occasionally operates CW mobile while they give out counties. Barry provided the antenna systems for that hundreds of county hunters use.

For President, CHN does not support N8ELQ. Randy was one of two who dead-locked MARAC and put it into months of paralysis, certainly not in the best interests of the entire membership. I believe he did not represent the membership in this action. He has not been on CW, and rarely has even put out a county on SSB. It may also be possible he has moved from his district where he is Director, and has not 'resigned' even though not eligible to currently hold office. His phone has been disconnected in MI.

Vice President Candidates: W9OP and W5UGD

For Vice-President, W9OP, Mark, has been a very active County Hunter for many, many years, and is still active, chasing counties and putting out the counties year after year. He operates both CW and SSB, and joined the crowd on 30M as well. He has been a regular attendee at the 3M get-togethers, so I am sure many of you have met him there or at the National Conventions. Mark has many years of experience. He can fairly represent the interests of both cw and SSB county hunters.

Alternate candidate W5UGD. With his mercurial temper, John has disconnected the inter-working between his site and the W6RK site where most CW spots are made, essentially cutting off many CW county hunters, plus those who cannot view the live spots site at work or behind firewalls. His campaign to 'punish' N4CD and others, and bullying tactics, and indeed **attempted extortion of other webmasters to carry out his demands for a 'black list' of folks prohibited from spotting or posting** clearly reveals he is not suited for holding an office with responsibility. An office of MARAC must be able to work with conflict, resolve things in an equitable manner, and treat all members equally. Clearly, he fails on all counts.

In the event of disablement of the President, the VP assumes leadership of the organization. MARAC members should keep that in mind.

I do not recall seeing W5UGD at any national conventions, and he has only been active a very short time in county hunting, and is seldom heard on the net, and then only on SSB. Rarely mobile, too.

Whichever candidate you like, PLEASE VOTE. Your choices affect the ability of MARAC to get things done, and done fairly.

You can vote either on-line at marac.org, or use the ballot in the RoadRunner. Please be very careful to follow the directions on how to submit your ballot! In either case, you need to know your 'election key'.

De N4CD

On the Road with N4CD - W4OV

From Bruce, W4OV, who just finished up and got his USACA number!

“My first contact with the County Hunters was on 40 meters in 1964. I was traveling Kansas for Endicott Johnson Shoe Company. Back in those days you could get a hotel room for 6 dollars and the Best Western was 10. I found a Swan 140 receiver at Walter Ashe Radio in St. Louis and put it in my brand new Chevrolet station wagon. Not being married and with lots of miles between stops I had time to give out a lot of counties to people like K9EAB. Other mobiles on the road at that time were W0KZZ, K8CIR, W5HDK, K4ISE, W0JWD, WA9DCQ and W4BPC, (Baker Peter Charlie., Back in those days we were allowed to use phonetics hi hi). I was not collecting counties but many of the mobile stations filled out MRCs for the counties they were in when they worked me. I certainly appreciate all their work. A couple of years ago I became interested in the YASME award and started going over old cards to see how many I had that would qualify. I was looking for cards from Lloyd and Iris Colvin, Danny Weil, Dick Spenceley and others. That is when I started running across the cards from some of the county hunters I had worked and had eyeball QSOs years ago. I found I had almost 1000 counties already confirmed! The chase was on.

During the next year or so I worked the rest of the counties on 20, 30 & 40 meters. As the propagation diminished on 20, 30 meters proved to be an important band as mobile activity increased. I want to thank the mobiles that covered all the counties and gave me the contacts. A lot of things can be learned from this exceptionally nice bunch of hams. I just got word from Ted that my USA-CA number is 1118. Thanks to all the guys for the help. What now, well I thought I'd finish up DXCC on 160 before starting on the counties again, but this time only CW.

73, Bruce W4OV*.”

Bruce Phegley <http://home.bellsouth.net/p/pwp-PTmobile>

<http://www.qsl.net/w4ov>



Gasoline Getting Expensive

The price of county hunting keeps climbing and climbing. Last year at this time, gas was about \$1.35/gallon in Texas. Now it is at \$2/gallon and likely to climb to \$2.50/gal before long. In places like California with stricter requirements on the fuel, it is already \$2.50 and headed for \$3/gal. That sure makes going out on 'county putting out' expeditions coast a bunch more.

What is going on? There are several takes on this issue, but one that has caught my interest for the past year is the theory of "Peak Oil". Back in the 1950s, and oil geologist

by the name of M. Hubbert King spent time looking at the normal lifecycle of oil fields. From data he gathered and analyzed, he predicted that USA oil production would peak around 1971, more than 15 years from his prediction. For over 40 years, the USA had been the chief producer of oil, and exported it worldwide. During WW2, we supplied all the allies with oil for the war machine, and since Germany had little supply, the difference in the availability of oil made a very significant difference in the outcome of the war.

After the 1940s, the USA developed the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, bringing on line some of the largest reservoirs of oil in the world. However, until 1971, the USA was self sufficient in oil. No one in the 1950s believed that USA oil production would peak. Folks just assumed there was always going to be 'enough' oil to expand forever.

Come 1971, and sure enough, the data showed that USA oil production had peaked. This happened at roughly the half way point of depleting the reservoir, i.e., when it was half empty. He accurately predicted when the USA continental oil would peak. The phenomena is known as 'Hubbert's Peak'.

Every oil field starts completely full. As you pump it down, wells produce less barrels of oil per day, and require secondary and tertiary methods to get the oil to the wells. At the half way-point, no matter how many wells and how many techniques you employ, you find that production drops each year by a few percent.

Not only was that prediction correct, but if you add in the oil from Prudhoe Bay (which he did not include) and offshore oil from the Gulf of Mexico, USA production has never exceeded that in 1971. It drops every year. One other important detail he noted was that the peak of oil production occurred roughly 40 years after the peak of oil discovery (in barrels/yr of 'new' oil discovered).

Others took his work and methods, and did a very detailed analysis of all the known oil fields in the world (over 10,000 of them). For the past five years, different groups of people have been predicting when world 'peak oil' will occur. This is the point at which the world's oil producers are maxed out – they cannot produce any more oil per year no matter what they do.

The peak of world oil discovery was in 1962. Since then, less oil has been found each year, and the fields tend to be smaller and in more difficult places (either environment or political situation). If you don't find the oil, you can't produce it. It is now 40 years later.

When the world reaches 'peak oil', that will be the point at which conventional oil (light and sour crudes) used to produce gasoline, diesel, and 100,000 other products from plastics to paints to rubber to chemicals, dyes, fabrics, and many other things 'essential' to modern life, reaches maximum production. At that point, you learn to make due with less oil, and start using substitutes if you can find them.

At the same time, the USA and Canada are now at peak production for natural gas. It will be roughly 20-25 years before the world reaches peak production for natural gas as there are large reserves in the Middle East and Russia which can be tapped. You will begin to see a lot of 'LNG', liquefied natural gas, being brought into the USA to supply our natural gas needs.

So what does this mean for county hunters? If the world is indeed at or 'peak oil', which is likely to be a 'plateau' for several years before hitting a decline, it means that the price of a barrel of oil is not going down significantly anytime soon. As demand from China keeps ratcheting up (and this is the current reason why prices are going through the roof), and the oil suppliers cannot produce more, you will get what Alan Greenspan calls 'demand destruction'. Prices will rise until someone starts to use less. Or until the economy in China ceases to grow or the economies worldwide come to a standstill due to higher energy prices. China is adding several million new cars on the road each year (and they are not replacing 'old ones').

Then keep in mind that there will be less and less oil each year, so prices will have to rise every year to reduce demand. China is growing at 10%/yr and its need for fuel is climbing at the same rate. There won't be enough to go around. By 2025, the world will have to increase energy production by 50% to meet demand growth.

If you are interested in more reading on the subject, I recommend the following links. Some are downright pessimistic, others like the ASPO site very detailed and reflect the thinking of dozens of top grade petroleum engineers/geologists.

<http://www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/Introduction.html>

<http://www.hubbertpeak.com/>

www.dieoff.org

<http://www.gulland.ca/depletion/depletion.htm>

<http://www.asponews.org/>

40M Making Comeback

The 40M band once again is proving very useful for SSB county hunters. With the 'fair' conditions on 20 M and with difficulty many times working mobiles within 500 miles, 40M is an excellent band for use in the middle of the country for county hunting. Several stations are quite active running the net when enough mobiles are out and about, and keep 7238 clear. A recent accord with the Rotten Apples has straightened out most of the problems of use of the frequency, and it should just get better as we head toward the sunspot minimum.

At Dayton last year, I did a 'show of hands' and most of the folks there did have 40m capability. So now is the time to QSY to 40m, or in some cases, just stay on 40M while you are 'putting out' the counties. This band should be good to use for the next 3-5 years, until we head back up on the sunspot count.

Antennas systems are much more critical. Antenna efficiency is significantly lower, and grounds are even more important. If you can, try to attend an Antenna Seminar by Barry, W9UCW, and he'll help you understand the various parameters affecting antenna performance.

CW SPOTS MOSTLY ON W6RK SITE

In the early part of March, the link between the W6RK spotting page at ch.w6rk.com and the IRC chat room/live spots on Superhosts was severed. Before this time, spots made on either site were seen on both sites. Most of the cw spots came via the W6RK sites. Now, the MIRC sees very few CW spots, and is mostly SSB.

On many days, spots for CW operation often only appear on the W6RK site, so if you are a CW operator, or sometimes snag counties on cw, but spend a lot of time on SSB, you need to be watching the W6RK site as well. Otherwise, you won't see the spots, and some mobiles only operate CW (quite a few these days). Sometimes a mobile will put out a county on SSB, then skip several, waiting for his turn again on SSB, yet run every county on CW along the way.

This all started when one station in IRC started sending taunts (ala KZ2P) to one of the folks who never checks into the chat room, but watches the W6RK page, via a 'spot' routine in the IRC. This is a clear violation of the protocol which had been set up, and the response by the operator of the IRC site was to sever the link rather than address the problem with station sending the taunts.

So now, the cw county hunters, plus those who mainly operate SSB, but also snag desperately needed counties on CW, have to watch two sites, and the features of the IRC no longer apply since the spots do not go to the IRC site automatically to set off alarms, etc, and summon you to your computer.

It seems that some of the MARAC folks, and MARAC board member wannabees, are going out of their way to intentionally inconvenience the CW county hunters. At the recent South Central Mini, the interim appointed Director, W0MU, while busily looking for 'input' and suggestions on the forums and in person, skipped the cw meeting, commenting later, "well, it was about CW, wasn't it?". With the severance of the W6RK site and MIRC channel by W5UGD, running for MARAC VP, the CW county hunters are again those that seem to be ignored or 'punished'.

Under the leadership of K2NJ, MARAC forged ahead with the highly popular USA-CW award. Previously, this had been kept informally by KA3MMM and others, as MARAC turned a blind eye toward CW county hunters.

Over 1/3rd of the active County Hunters either use cw primarily or operate both SSB and CW. The world does not revolve around 14.336 although some folks would like to make it that way. CW folks have been amply rewarded with the excitement on 30 meters in the past year, and 40cw also seems to be making a nice comeback along with 40M SSB.

Only one of the candidates for MARAC office even operates on CW consistently (W9OP) so the board will be dominated entirely by SSB types.

Notes from W6RK on Spots

Risto send me the following information. It is really eye-opening!

“Here's something you can use in your next newsletter... :-) I did some comparisons between W5UGD's mIRC spots stats and ch.w6rk.com.

Here are some results:

Between 3/7/05 and 3/24/05:

W5UGD: 1994 spots

ch.w6rk.com: 1816 spots

W5UGD had slightly more spots in his system but we can soon see why.

W5UGD spot distribution:

20m SSB 63%

40m SSB 22%

30m CW 9%

40m CW 1%

20m CW 4%

Others < 1%

All SSB: 85%

All CW: 14%

ch.w6rk.com spot distribution:

30m CW: 37%

20m SSB: 29%

40m SSB: 17%

20m CW: 11%

40m CW: 5%

Others < 1%

All SSB: 46%

All CW: 53%

Next... let's look at different areas of county hunting and compare

absolute number of spots:

20m SSB: W5UGD has 2.4 times more spots

20m CW: ch.w6rk.com has 2.5 times more spots

30m CW: ch.w6rk.com has 3.7 times more spots

40m SSB: W5UGD has 1.4 times more spots

40m CW: ch.w6rk.com has 4.7 times more spots

All SSB: W5UGD has 2 times more spots

All CW: ch.w6rk.com has 3 times more spots

As you can see W5UGD's site is only good if county hunting for you is sitting on 14.336 and your VFO is stuck. (And you're not banned by the NCS to operate on that frequency). (ED: or if you are not banned from even posting spots on W5UGD's site, like some!)

But it's also not true that ch.w6rk.com is only for CW county hunters. 46% of the spots in ch.w6rk.com are SSB spots!

Then, how many people are spotting using these two systems?

During this time period 72 different users spotted through ch.w6rk.com.
46 users spotted through W5UGD.

73!

Risto
W6RK

CW Happenings

Well, my new QTH is slowly getting a radio station established, still a few antenna things to do but at least this weekend I got back on CW....thanks to K7REL N2JH and K2TAL. John N2JH for providing the impetus by arranging a sked with K7REL who need Chautauqua County on CW, and Terry K2TAL for his good jerry-rigged brain.

When I unpacked my CW iambic paddles after last September's move, I was surprised to find the spring missing, not even lying in the bottom of the box. Another ham helped me identify the size of the spring I needed last night, so I set out this morning to find a 1/8" by 3 " spring. Judging by the looks of the bloke at the Tractor Supply Store I figured I was in for a long search. Next try was Radio Shack, no springs whatsoever. The guy at Home Depot told me that probably had some but he had no idea where they would be. That reply puzzled me

because I figured the point of having staff to ask ...was so they could locate stuff. He didn't offer any more help until I asked if he might consider using a computer to search their inventory. That spurred his brain and we found many references to "Extending Springs". We both chuckled at the thought of springs that did NOT extend.

In a section for screen doors and the like, we found 1/4 by 2 inch springs, nothing at all 1/8 in diameter, nothing three inch in length. So, at least encouraged by the knowledge that such springs existed, I tried True Value. They had 1/8 by 1.5 inches and 1/4 by 3 inches but nothing 1/8 by 3. So I bought the 1/4 by 3 hoping that might work. On the way home Terry K2TAL asked how my quest had gone. I mentioned what I found, his brain being better than mine, he suggested I should have considered two of the 1/8 by 1.5 inch springs. I made a U turn and picked the package of two up, both had the exact little eye hooks on the end that were needed to fit my paddles.

A few minutes later, and a cut up paper clip to link the two springs together I was in business. I made the sked with K7REL and gave him Chautauqua County. Nice to be back on CW. Despite six months away, I actually made a QSO, though quite rusty!

Andy K3UK"

Letter from KA3DRO

The following was received from KA3DRO. Ed: Small portions have been deleted for space reasons. Note: Since KA3DRO gave N7BKW (who was 'banned at the time) the last county for WBOW, he too was 'banned' by you know who.

"This is a copy of a letter that I had sent to the RR a few years ago when I was making a long RV trip and tried to explain to the membership what and why I felt like I did. And what I expected to do about it. I am preparing another long trip in May & June into July this year and felt that the subject, because of current events, is still valid and perhaps should be published.

I expect that now, with more experience with the key, and with 30 M CW and 40M SSB, I shall attempt to give out many of these counties on those bands....but still feel bad about so many CH'ers not having the opportunity to get the contacts on 20M SSB.

This years trip will be outlined on the K3IMC and KK7X planned trips when it is finalized but will be about 7,000 miles long and allow for major CH runs in Arkansas, (with KG5J). Then 2 full, long days in N. Texas/ Oklahoma panhandle, SW New Mexico and Texas, and after stops in Phoenix & Las Vegas, I will complete all Idaho (along with W7LQT) running counties E. of Boise all the way to Wyoming & Montana. I will make a run through SE Montana, and then complete the rest of S Dakota with major runs from

Mt. Rushmore, then from Mitchell and from Aberdeen. We will then visit Bemidji area to see friends, and then head to Rochester in SE MN to run the last 22 counties I need to complete that state. After that, we will 'drift' home.

I hope that some few more CH'ers will see why I, along with so many others, have been on a "sabbatical" of sorts..... Many quality people will never return..... Hopefully, a few others will return when the tide changes and the respect and civility/morality of this club return to the way it is.

Vy73/Ron (KA3DRO)

Dear Fellow county hunters;

Dreams are a way of American life; without dreams and goals, we have little to look forward to in life - particularly as we get older. Years ago, after "getting hooked" with County Hunting, I watched KB7QO parade around the USA in his almost, to me, impossible goal of putting out every county in the USA, and I was there for the end as he completed his goal. I vowed to myself that this was a great goal and would truly permit my wife and me to see the entire country.... I VOWED THAT DAY TO DUPLICATE HIS PERFORMANCE.

Since then, several others have accomplished this worthy goal and this has always spurred me on and given me a little extra push whenever the goal seemed to drift away. . While I enjoyed my goal of receiving all those counties from you, I find the real enjoyment I receive is putting them out.... Particularly the hard ones that require that extra effort to go deep into the woods and high up into the mountains. I can still remember the thrill of getting that elusive county because of the extra efforts of many of you.... And of those who no longer frequent our airwaves as well.

Well, I refuse to abandon my goal because of the efforts of one person to deny me my access to the 20m SSB net and to you. My goal was and is to put out all the counties of the USA and I am going to do it! I expect to depart soon on a trip that will cover about 4,700 miles in our RV and will be stopping along the way to put out several hundred new counties.... New for me anyway. These side trips will cover about another 2,800 miles and are made necessary because the noise in the RV, which I cannot seem to remove while driving, does not allow for me to make contacts along the way.... Plus, towing a car makes it necessary to have both hands on the wheel at all times. There may be times I will be able to pause, stop the vehicle, and get a contact. And be able to put out the county if someone wants to move me off frequency.

The next part is the most important part of this letter to you. And the potential to be the saddest as well. I have noted that I only need to record one contact to meet the requirements of "putting out a county". And it does not have to be with a County Hunter.... It can be with any licensed amateur anywhere. While this may meet the requirements and help me meet my basic goal

I will try to announce where I will run the county and go there to do so. I am sorry if you need it and can't get it but that's not my fault and refuse to accept that responsibility... you know who you can blame for that.

Vy 73/ KA3DRO

Note from Editor: The 40M net runs most of the day on 7238 and is quite good in most of the middle of the country. The 30M CW net runs most of the day and will be excellent for propagation from nearly all the area you will cover!

Picture from the Texas South Central Mini

Bob, KK5MI, sent the following picture with permission to be included in the County Hunter News. The folks enjoyed a very nice get together in Austin again. Next year, the mini will be hosted by WB9NUL/W9UCW in south Texas, and the year after will again return to Austin.



**MARAC South Central Mini
February 2005
Austin, TX**



Pictures from WA7SLD

Jim, WA7SLD sent the following pictures of his mobile and mobile installation in a Mitsubishi Endeavor. Jim runs CW all over the western USA putting out a FB signal.



Fini – that's all for this month. See you next month.....73 de N4CD