

County Hunter News

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Volume 4, Issue 8

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in 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 attempt to 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.

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and **7056.5**, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188/7185 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.915.5, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18135 or 18.132.5 for occasional 17M SSB runs.

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

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1) Mobile Activity in late June/July 2008 – WOW!

Joyce, N9STL, took a nice trip the beginning of July heading up to run many in WI. Lots of followers on 7188, and one day on 20M on a Tuesday when ‘James’ wasn’t busy running mobiles off the frequency she ran all day on 14.336. Otherwise, you found her on 14.342 thereabouts. Lots of folks jumped in and helped including WG6X, N5UZW, N4AAT, N8CIJ, KE3VV, WA8OWR. Lots of spots and folks got relays – anyone who wanted one. Joyce is good for just about every MARAC award including Five Star, MG, Bingo, Platinum, YL mobile, Nth time, the N prefix, and more. She is just about done running the required 500 separate counties for the Master Platinum Award.

Toward the end of the month, she was off to IN, OH, and KY to run more counties for the MP award (hitting the magic 500 number), plus get some needed counties for the folks.

Gene, K5GE, another Master Gold holder, headed off to the northwest running up through UT, ID, MT. Ran on 40M SSB, and on 20M. Everyone got relays on 40M. Can’t say the same about 20M. He headed to the event in California via ‘the Pacific Northwest’. Many worked him on 40M SSB.

Signals were good. As those up in the NW know, the broadcast interference is real troublesome up that way on 40M SSB. Gene did a great job. Ross, N0ZA, and others out west helped with the relays on 40M. For sure, he's got more than his 500 transmitted separate counties needed for Master Platinum – likely 3 times that by now as he knocks off needed counties himself. . He does a great job of pulling out the signals. After the convention, he headed back to TX running counties along the way.

Jim, N9JF, was 'running the table' – starting low and running up through at least 15M CW as he 'put out' counties on his business trips. I worked him on 17M, and others worked him on 15, 12 and 10M CW! Wow. In one county, I snagged him on every band from 40-10M. Maybe some sporadic E at work? It's going to be fun once the sunspots return! I caught him in some new band counties on 17m, 15m, 12m and 10M cw! How about that? I wasn't the only one working him as he went up in bands, either! He made several trips in July for the folks.

Only a few times I had the propagation on 17m and above at that distance, but hopefully it is a sign of what is to come. Others were working and spotting him on the higher bands in other counties when there was NIL propagation here.

Jeff, W9MSE, took a trip to OH from his home, and ran the counties both ways. Propagation good with runs on 17M with dozens calling.

Jerry, W0GXQ, headed to the airport to fly to the convention, but ran the counties all the way down and back. Again, good signals on 17M along the way! Skip is still fairly long, but it will get shorter as we head to the sunspot max. He listed his contacts for the trip down:

W0GXQ's Monday's trip from MN to NW Iowa

Here is the breakout on the contacts per band:

80M - 5

40M - 22

30M - 40

20M - 148

17M - 162

15M - 67

10M - 35

Scottie, N4AAT, is now QRV on 15 and 17M cw! Many others on 17m including N8II, KW4V, K8ZZ, K1TKL, K4XI, W0QE, N0ZA, AA0IP, K5SF, KG5RJ, and a dozen or more others! Now we'll have to work on getting more mobiles out there running the higher frequencies.

Scottie fixed up his ham station in the garage and is QRV on cw from the home station now. Mobile he has resonators up through 10M now! He's making contacts from the mobile on CW. (usually on request)

See the top heading of the CHNews for the CW frequencies above 20M.

Ray, AB4YZ, ran across the country on the way to the event in CA, running lots of TX, NM, AZ headed west. Good runs on 40M SSB, 40/30/20cw and showed up on 20M SSB. Real tough on 40M west of the Rockies! Haven't got him on 17M, but from the far west, that would be an ideal band! He then headed north to OR, WA, ID, and MT headed back east. Running 20 SSB and 20 CW in most counties. Now headed back east.

Don, K3IMC, went out on a special trip for Jack, N7ID to get his last few counties in GA for Master's Gold. A few weeks ago, Jack had got Navarro, TX from Charlie, W0RRY, and filled the other missing one in TX with one of the folks on a trip across country. With a little help from his friends, Jack finished up MG. Now, he is out putting out counties left and right, trying to run his 500 separate counties needed for MG before winter sets in! He headed from ID to OH, and back a different route.

Jim, W4HSA has been running quite a few counties in VA, NC area on CW these days. He's also been helping out as NC on 40/30/20 M CW many days. Quite active.

Mike, NF0N, took a bicycle mobile trip headed west across NE! Wow! Folks working him with the 5W QRP set up on the bicycle! Good cw signals. Running off two gel cells.

He posted on the K3IMC forum:

“My bicycle (tricycle) trip across Nebraska is complete. My riding friend, KA0NCR, bailed out at the end of the first day so I ended up riding across Nebraska myself. I did end the ride a little early in O'Neill Nebraska yesterday so did not put out a few counties close to me. My thanks to those who heard me on the times I was able to run counties. Conditions were quite good and I was able to make nearly 100 contacts on 20 SSB and CW. For those interested, my setup was a Trice XL-NT adult tadpole tricycle pulling a Burley trailer. On the trailer I had fabricated a aluminum plate to mount the Buddistick antenna with coax and power cable running to the trike. I used a 7-amp hour battery (pulled across the state I might add) which worked quite well. The radio was an ICOM IC-703 with autotuner built in running 10 watt's. Thanks again to those who heard and worked me. It was an interesting experience for myself and hopefully for the county hunters. I hope to work you now from my usual mobile in the automobile. By the way, Nebraska is not flat. Mike, NF0N”

Gary, W4GNS, put out counties on CW for the folks. Nice to hear Dave, KA5TQF, on cw now working mobiles around the country.

Eddie, G4KHG, started in Kauai, HI, then hit the mainland, putting out counties on 20CW and 14.343, and on 14.336 when a ‘friendly net’ was in operation there. (translation: absence of KZ2P and KA1JPR) Note, while in the states, he has to sign as KH6/G4KHG in HI, or W7/G4KHG in the Pacific Northwest. He was running with a good signal on 20M, and had 30M along as well. Doing a nice job of putting out counties.

Chuck, AD8W, headed to the Convention in his new Ford. He quickly discovered when he put the mobile radio in that the two were not compatible. Extremely high noise making operation impossible while moving! He had to stop to run the few counties he did put out on the entire trip west.

AC0B headed west putting out the counties along the way.

Bob, N8KIE, wandered west to the convention running counties in NE, CO, UT along the way on 20M SSB. He's off to HI, and will run across northern MT on the return trip later.

Phil, AB7RW headed south to the convention and back running the counties on 20 and 17M!

Scottie, N4AAT, took a trip up to DE and MD and back working on his 500 transmitted counties. Did a fine job on 20M SSB. Also now mobile on CW!

Mark, W8MP, headed west putting out some rare counties in SD, ND, WY, into MT – running CW and SSB. In a motorhome headed west.

Carol, KI0JD, and Birger, KA0DDJ, headed to the convention and back – running counties along the way. Carol is another one good for Master Platinum contacts (she has MG). If you work both, you get credit for a 'team contact'.

Frank, AA9JJ, and Kay, N9QPQ, both good for MP contacts, headed to the convention, and back via many northern CA and NV counties. Nice job of putting out some rare counties.

Tim, W8JJ, took a trip to WV running the counties on multiple bands including 17M! Mostly cw with some runs on SSB.

Jim, W8FNW and W8GEJ, were busy putting out counties in OH on SSB and CW. They seem to be out frequently.

Nell, K0GO, and Hank, W5VD, made a trip from TX to ND area. Nell is one of the handful of county hunter mobiles to have run all 3077 counties (Ran All Counties #5). Hank reports that the new Buick Lucerne is as 'ham friendly' as the previous Buick LeSabre – no noise while mobile.

Tony, WA9DLB, made a nice trip up to WI putting them out on SSB for the folks.

Art, WA4WQG, got his mobile Tarheel antenna fixed with the help of WG6X, and is once again giving out counties on 20M.

Wow! A good month for getting some of the less run counties activated, and I probably missed a few of the ‘expeditions’ this month – so much activity that kept the bands hopping. Unfortunately, conditions didn’t always cooperate and 20M became poor around mid-day with some of the louder east coast stations unable to hear or work the west coast mobiles, which left the mid and lower power stations just sitting there hoping for a ‘peak’ in the signals to try and get in a contact. Sometimes it worked, sometimes folks just heard ‘noise’ the whole run. That’s why it is ‘county hunting’ – you don’t always get what you are after.

2) County Challenge Award

Last month we indicated that ‘nothing’ had been done since the award was tabled and sent back to the awards committee for ‘minor changes’. The CHNews might have been somewhat in error. While the article was written in May, the article was correct at the time, however, the awards committee and the web master finally posted the award information sometime in June, with a revision date of June 01, 2008, a mere 11 months or so after the July 2007 MARAC General Meeting where this award was presented to the BOD and ‘approved’. It took six months for the meeting minutes to appear in the MARAC County Line Road Runner, and nearly another six months to get it posted on the Awards Page so folks finally knew what the rules were and could apply for the award. Talk about ‘lost in limbo’.

The good news now is: The award information is now finally available on the MARAC web page.

At the July 2008 BOD meeting, a resolution was passed to name the County Challenge Award in honor of Bill Inkrote, K2NJ.

I’m not sure whether the information appeared just before or after the appearance of the CHNews issue or in response to it. In any event, it is now available.

3) Transmitted Counties

Jerry, W0GXQ, pointed out that for the MARAC Master Gold award, only half of your contacts prior to the start date in 1994 can be counted toward

points. While this applies to ‘old timers’ who were mobile before 1994, it is not relevant to county hunters starting after that, who will have all of their contacts after 1994 count. Most old timers are aware of and have a pile of transmitted counties they can use.

The article in June was designed to spur CURRENT mobile activity. Naturally, if you were mobile back in the 60s and 70s and 80s, up to half of those counties up to 750 ‘points’ can be used for the Master’s Gold award, and all of them toward ‘transmitted all USA counties’ or other transmitted county awards (all in a state, one county in so many states, etc).

One cannot emphasize enough the need to ‘put out counties’. If gas price keeps creeping up, 100 or 200 or 300 extra transmitted counties now might come mightily in handy when you are approaching 1500, but regret having skipped running a lot of counties when you were headed here or there on vacation, to hamfests 200 miles away, etc, and just decided not to make contacts along the way. Or worse, made a lot of random contacts giving the mobile running on net your county, but not keeping any records of them!

I received a call from one desperate county hunter. He was closing in on MG, having worked just about all the counties he needed to work, but worrying about how he now might get to those 1500 points required. Well, he was starting a bit late! He’d gotten his USACA number over 4 years ago. Not much (any?) mobile activity in the past 8 years since he became a county hunter. Now, he was quite concerned.

He might have to go out with friends with high gas mileage vehicles or out in state QSO parties or something else to quickly run up the totals. Two hams in the car are ½ the gas per county. 5 hams even less. You just don’t get 1500 of transmitted counties in 3 or 6 months – unless you spend those months on the road!

I remember when during mini conventions folks would pile 4 or 5 into a car and teams would head off to put out counties during some of the days of the mini or national. Wasn’t it Ralph, WA4HXG, and half a dozen others who were always out giving out counties (and back then counties for the 5 Band award?) Now, it seems the main activity is drinking and socializing and drinking and socializing all day and all night. No one goes out and runs.

Where are the mobiles at a convention? Heck, now, you look at the list of attendees at a mini, or national, half of them fly in, not running a single county getting there, OR WHILE THERE. The parking lot is still full enough of mobiles, and if folks are concerned with high gas prices and running up their transmitted county total, that is the perfect opportunity to add in another 20-30 or more counties by going out for day of ‘county putting out’ with 3 or 4 or 5 in a car. Split the gas bill. Not only that, you can honestly put out different prefixes if you have OPERATORS in the car whose calls begin with the different prefixes! (rather than ‘borrowed’ calls). Folks used to do it all the time in the past. Heck, I recall that even going from Murfreesboro to the Mary Bo Bo’s feast 50 miles away generated all sorts of mobile activity, with everyone putting out the counties, taking small detours to get even more counties going to and from the event.

Where are the gung ho ‘county putter outers?’’. Even if half the folks at conventions arrive by plane counties can be run! Yes, it could be the umpteenth run from rare ‘Rutherford County’, or wherever the convention is – but you’ll get your transmitted county. The sit and drink, sit and drink and BS the whole time for days and days doesn’t get you points. Higher gas prices still doesn’t limit how many can pile into a car and go run some counties one day!

Try some different bands – activate 75M or 17M or 15M in the counties around the convention site – or try PSK with one of the mobiles set up for PSK!

For those who suddenly realize they are closing in on MG, and wonder how they are suddenly going to get those 1500 points after slumbering for years and years....well, it is going to get tougher and tougher as gas prices continue to climb. Time for action now!

4) Awards Committee

I received an email from Carol-Ann, AB2LS, advising me that she was no longer on the Awards Committee. Seems MARAC as of June 2008 had her listed as a member of the Awards Committee. She indicated that Mark, N2MH, is her area rep on the Awards Committee. Don’t know how long that has been in effect, but it seems the MARAC web site is often a year

behind with the ‘frequent’ updates from Mike, W0MU and all those providing ‘timely’ information.

So who is really on the awards committee????

With the issuance of the first Master Platinum Award, maybe it is time for the Awards Committee to consider the next challenge?

5) Natural Bingo – Not yet!

This was one of Bill’s, K2NJs, favorite award suggestions.

After two years or more of consideration on Natural Bingo, the awards committee proposed the award as an ‘endorsement’ on the existing Bingo Award. (Master County Hunter) at the last BOD meeting. The proposed rules would include **only letters in the suffix** of the callsign.

While Bingo itself started out in the beginning as letters only the suffix (all ham calls back then were W2xxx or K2xxx – with later WA2, WB2, etc added as more calls were needed), nearly 100% of calls had 3 letter suffixes. You had to really be lucky to score a 1x2 call – had to be an extra, and be in the right place at the right time to claim one of the few calls that became available when the original holder became an SK. Calls starting with an ‘X’ as the first letter in the suffix were reserved for experimental stations. (and there were some WX2... type calls issued).

As the FCC changed the rules, giving out 2x1 and 2x2 calls, MARAC evolved to allow all the letters in those calls to count.

The original Bingo contained two ‘wild cards’. If you worked someone with a star (not a club callsign that had a star), that OPERATOR would be good for Bingo in any county. In addition, an “X” in the call made the callsign good for Bingo in any county.

The CHNews put forth a proposal in September 2006 issue that would address the elimination of the ‘wild cards’ to get back to Natural Bingo. The only issue would then be the ‘X’ letter and how to address it.

Jeffrey, AF3X, spoke out at the July meeting saying that IF only the suffix counted, he would be good for Natural Bingo in ZERO counties, which didn't seem fair! That would also include KM9X and WG6X!

The BOD sent the matter back quickly to the awards committee for further consideration. Going on more than 2 years now. Maybe it is no coincidence that some of the Award Committee folks and two BOD members loudly proclaim 'they never read the CHNews'. Maybe they should? They would have been aware of the X issue? Most of the MARAC membership reads it.

6) Net Shenanigans

Seems that Art, **WA4WQG**, has his 20M mobile antenna working again, so he can get relays on 20M SSB from home with no long lecture following every request. Ray, **WG6X**, helped him diagnose and fix the Tarheel antenna that was giving him problems on 20M.

Art was in trouble for requesting relays at home when his mobile antenna system wasn't working on 20M. The 'games' that the Net Mullah plays.

After the last newsletter, it seems **Larry, N2OCW** is 'allowed' back into the chat room, but still having trouble getting heard for relays. He's closing in on MG with ONE to go for MG – Lincoln, OR. No one has run it who good for Bingo in over 9 months!

Otherwise, after 5 days of 'vacation' the NC on 20M seems to be 'back to normal' with no new 'run offs' this month.

Unfortunately, after 5 wonderful days of 'the old fashioned' Friendly Net on 14.336, things reverted to the sad state of affairs that we've had for the past 10 years or so (the K2JG reign).

Dave, **KA5TQF** wrote: ""there is a small band of malcontents who have decided to "hurt" Jim and the 20m net by putting out their counties ONLY on 40m." Now, that is amazing. Some folks like Jack, **N7ID** only have a 20M hamstick on the car. Others like **K4DI** only have a 40M hamstick. Where is the outrage, Dave, when **N7ID**, good for the Platinum Award, is back in the Midwest running counties on 20M only? Where 80% of the active county hunters cannot hear him due to propagation? Is **N7ID**

'hurting N5UZW', NC of the Year, but not running on 40M? Should we take some action to 'extort' him to add 40M to his mobile?

That is solely the choice of the mobile. What bands they want to run. What antennas they have on the car. Some XYs just don't like bigger antennas.

Some county hunters run CW only. I see no outrage on your part when W9MSE runs through a desperately needed county for an SSB County Hunter. **Is he 'hurting KZ2P' by running only CW?** Really! This line of thinking is ludicrous.

Is KZ2P hurt if the county is run only on 40M? Where is the outrage when N9STL 'only runs on 40M' due to being 'unwelcome' on 14.336? Where is the outrage when someone who only listens on net misses the county off frequency that isn't announced?

The statement you made:" "For now, I have given these people a "pass" as all this happened while I was away from the radio for six months in the hospital. I have recently caught one of these malcontents making a run from Florida to Alabama."

Malcontent? Is that the 'negativism chatroom' buzzword for 'those that are banned from 336 by James'? Or those who only have one hamstick on the car and they choose 40M?

You, too, are seemingly going to start extortion tactics....If you don't run mobile on 20M SSB and give me a needed county, then 'no relays' for you from the home station? Really? Please DON'T. We don't need a mini K2JG out in west Texas.

KA5TQF: *"Let me start out by unequivocally stating that Jim has NEVER told me what to do regarding the net. Quite the contrary, I have gone to him for "fatherly" advice on matters regarding the net."*

It is really sad that you missed the Golden Age of Net Controls, and currently don't hear N5UZW and the great Friendly Net on 7188. If you look to KZ2P for fatherly advice, you couldn't have picked a worse 'father figure'. Not much different than selecting Al Capone as your father figure back in the 1930s.

For five days in July , the entire county hunting community saw how great things could be with everyone running, everyone getting relays. For five days, you had no problem running mobiles, relaying ANYONE in.

Too bad it had to slide back quickly to the continuing set of ‘banned lists’ and ‘negativity’ on 14.336 and in the “Negativity chat room’. Worse, that you seem to think that ‘extortion’ is proper on 14.336. The “Nattering Nabobs of Negativism’ who run/control the chat room. (for those around in the Spiro Agnew days). “Not allowed”....”No relays”.....etc. “IF you don’t. then.....” type threats. Sad. Really sad.

7) No Alarm Clock?

Every now and then, you’ll find motels with no alarm clocks in the rooms. Many of the ‘budget’ ones are barebones. I’ve traveled with a small battery powered clock. Now, I find I can use my cellphone – nearly all of them have an alarm function. If you keep the phone charged up, you can put it on the nightstand, and it is loud enough to get you up early in the morning! It might take you a while to find the alarm function – or ask any teenager and they’ll be able to explain it to you quickly!

Master Platinum #1 K5GE



Mary Ida and Gene, K5GE – at the California Convention

Why is this fellow smiling ear to ear? Other than enjoying the convention and a well earned rest after a long trip to ID, MT, WA and OR on the ‘county hunter way’ to California from Texas?

First, a trivia question – Who was the first to get Masters Gold Award? You got it! Gene, K5GE (11/29/99).

And who is the first to get the Masters Platinum Award? You got it! Gene, K5GE! Number #1 again! Announced at the convention. When he hit Clearwater, ID, on the last trip, that was #3077 for him!

Of course, with all his trips to finish up, including being the first and only county hunter with MG to visit Dukes and Nantucket, MA, he gave lots of those scarce counties to the rest of the county hunters. Some of them are now down to under 100 to finish for this award. [Newcomers and non-county hunters should be aware that you can get credit for the MP county if you work someone FROM the county with a Masters Gold Award after you have your Masters Gold Award.] Not only that, you can start logging counties toward your MP Award now!

Thus, while Gene was the first and only one holding a Masters Gold Award on Dukes and Nantucket, he too got credit for the county when he worked someone with Masters Gold while he was there, such as working N9STL or N4CD. It's an expensive trip to get over to Nantucket with a car – so not many do it these days. Some take the 'fast shuttle' and rent a car while there – but it is still an expensive one to put out for the folks. Dukes, MA, Kalawao, HI, San Juan, WA are others tough to get to and expensive to run.

So once again, Gene snags award number one. Congrats Gene! Well done and the first to do it!

On the Road with N4CD- Part I

It was off on another 6000 mile N4CD trip to SD/ND/MT, ID, WY, UT, NM, and back home again. I'm trying to keep up with Gene, K5GE, who had been running counties left and right from coast to coast. So many counties, so little time. Same goal for both of us – getting finished up for Master Platinum. Those counties he ran helped me and many others out a lot. In the past two months, I've made major trips to ND/SD/IA, OH and New England to fill it lots of blanks in my coloring book. This time is was clean up the Northwest USA. It looked like two weeks of driving.

The price of gas was up at \$4 or so. I got to the point where I just looked at how many gallons I took when I filled up, then figured out the gas mileage in my head...and never looked at the price of how much just went into the

tank. That would be too discouraging. I was going to do this trip, and worry about what it costs later! I still stay at Super 8s, or similar motels, and sometimes a less expensive one, but even those are averaging \$60-70 a night, and many Super 8 motels are in the \$70-\$80 range now. Inflation and energy costs passed on. Back east they are even more!

There were counties to run for the folks and it was summer time with long days and good weather most of the time. In TX, it was going to be near 100 degrees and hot, hot, and hot. So why not head toward MT and cooler temps? Another good reason would be the Net Mullah would be off on 'vacation' out in CA for five days or so, so there would be a nice friendly net on 20M SSB! More of the 'special needs' could be met.

I plotted out what I needed to run for MP, and that was half a dozen in SD and some in ND on the west side, plus about 2/3rds of MT, and 15 something in ID. There would be lots of time spent in MT – it's a big, big state and it was the worse one for needs for MP for me. Lots of other folks needed counties, too! It would be west across the top of MT....then east across the middle....then west again across the south! Big state. I would hit about 80% of the counties there.

I loaded up the car and hit the road before 5am on Wednesday morning – aiming for a long 850 mile day to get to Valentine, NE (Cherry County). The route was up I35 through OK (boring) and then up route 81 in KS. Scottie, N4AAT, called and said he needed Mitchell, KS for a last county. I changed the route slightly and ran through Mitchell, then up 281 then over to 83 up to Valentine, dragging in after 8pm. Oops, KI0AZ called just after I left the county. Headed back and got it for him. I'm happy I don't have to drive for a living. Too long driving 12 hours a day average! oOr 14 or 15 somedays!



Mitchell, KS - LC for N4AAT, Scottie
One of a hundred “Percy Pictures” this trip

This was a long day, but there were lots of contacts since I hit a bunch of needed counties. Almost everything ‘on the run’. Fun on 20M with no one run off today and everyone getting a relay. No games. Super 8 Motel. Waffle for breakfast.

I brought along the 17M antenna. It goes on the same mag mount as the 40M SSB antenna, so it was one or the other. From experience, on the last trip to SD/ND, the 40M SSB was real tough up north, so I figured I’d try 17M to see how it would work. I’ll probably add another resonator to the six foot mast, and restore 40M SSB operation again in the future.

The regular NC on 20M SSB was off on ‘vacation’ in California, so there was a very friendly net on 20M SSB for the first five days of the trip. At least a half dozen were doing NC duties. Conditions were not good – “A” index way up there many days, but lots of folks got lots of counties. Having four or five willing to jump in and help sure made a difference.

Dave, KA5TQF, was doing a great job of running all the mobiles requesting to run. I ran just about every county for the first five days on 20M SSB and

CW, 17M CW, and most on 30 and 40M CW. Not a lot of activity on 30M these days, and the wide digital crud on 10.1228 makes hearing the weak ones near impossible on 10.1225. Dave, KA5TQF, now also busy working counties on CW!

The second day wasn't much easier – 'only 750 miles' as I headed west in Cherry, then up into SD where I did lots of zig zagging as I headed north. The second day I arrived in Williston, SD – the Super 8 was full with all the construction workers on the Bakken shale oil field and highway repair – so I had reserved at a Americas Best Value Inn. Not bad. Waffle for breakfast. On the road before 7am.

17M was working well – I made 3-20 contacts from each county for the first four days. When the A index was 14 or so, 17M died. 20M also tended to die for a few hours at midday on many days. Still, activity on 17M from most counties – from 2 to nearly 20 in some! At times, I could not work folks on 20M and they caught me on 17M! After two more counties in ND, I headed west on Route 2 with detours to get some counties. Mike, KQ0B, was down to 2 counties to finish everything for WBOW. Here's Roosevelt, MT...desperately needed. (He got the last one a few days later from AB4YZ! – now he needs to run another 200 counties to get up to 1500 points)



Roosevelt, MT County Line for KQ0B! next to last WBOW

Lots of great county lines here – with nothing in sight, or no power lines. Good views at many – but a few bummers where the power lines cross or where there is S5 noise or worse. In general – MT is a very good state to run the county lines. Most of the northern USA out west is good. But don't bet the bank on it. Some you can't park or run. Some are wet.

The third night was in Conrad, MT – Super 8 Motel. I decided I could run one more county, so I passed the motel by, then ran down to Teton – 8 miles down the road before checking in. Nice county line there on Highway 219. Got to the motel late. Waffle for breakfast. On the road before 7am.

The sun is up by 5am out here, and it is light till 10pm. I'm long gone by then, and the band dies about 6:30 local time (Mountain Time) - So not much reason for being out much later. Most of the county hunters back east have also called it quits as it is getting to be 8-9pm and there are other things to do! On CW, 40M still works, but of course, only 1/3rd the contacts as the SSB folks have a 'dead band' late in the evening these days.

Wow! Some voices from the past were heard. Ed, N8OYY, chasing counties again. Rodney, WB8CTX showed up for a while. K0IYA was in there working counties left and right. Very friendly net, no one yelled at, no one 'run off', no one excluded. George, KD8HA was on for a county or two. K1BV, Ted, worked me in a couple. WQ1H, too. Good to hear so many on!

Everyone was pitching in to help and relay folks in, and if phonetics were used by passer by stations, no one yelled at them. Wonderful time for the first five days. Wouldn't it be great if it were always that way! Larry, N2OCW got relays as did Art, WA4WQG with no warnings following' IF you want relays, you better.....'.....geez, what does the Net Mullah think it is, second grade? He'll whack you over the knuckles if you say something wrong or irritate him, or if you haven't run counties on 20M SSB for him.

Art, WA4WQG, does seem to have the 20M mobile antenna working again. He is 87 years old and still going mobile, chasing counties and putting them out. I guess he'll nowget relays now when he is home on 20M SSB?

It was again west through MT, with lots of detours. I headed down 93 from Kalispell to get to Lake. If you keep going, you can hit 28 and go down to Sanders – which I did. Nice quiet spot once you get there.



Sanders MT County Line

I had already run Lake, so I went down to place where I could park safely (not on this CL unless you have 4 wheel drive to get off the road!)....and ran Sanders.

Then you either have to backtrack the way you came, or?????

If you look at the map, there is a 'secondary road' from Niarada up to Highway 2. That would save about 70 miles of driving. I asked the GPS for the route to get up to Highway 2 headed west and it said take that gravel road. OK....if the Garmin Nuvi says take the road, it must be OK, right? They wouldn't put in roads that a trusting driver would take, without some sort of disclaimer, would they? On the regular map, it is a 'secondary road' (gravel). Nothing else noted.

If you look at the map, or the Atlas, it looks like a fairly straight road. A good gravel road is not bad if you can do 30 mph – and save maybe 50-60 or more miles back through a lot of towns and traffic lights.

In a few words – DON’T...repeat – DO NOT EVER take this road unless you have lots of time and a 4 wheel drive vehicle and a satellite phone. Don’t believe your Garmin, either! Check a regular map first! Then double check and triple check, and find out if anyone has recently made it through alive on the road!



Garmin Nuvi 200W Nav System
“Sitting on the Dashboard of my car”

The Garmin Nav system is a nice addition to the CH mobile. Mine sits on a ‘floppy mount’ – weighted bean bag type mount. Stays put except on the following described road.....you can use it to find motels, find short cuts, or get yourself back on course when you get terribly lost. Or find out how long before you get somewhere. Nifty addition. At night, I put it in a carrying case, and throw the bean bag mount on the floor behind the driver seat out of range of prying eyes. Around Dallas downtown, if you have the suction cup mount on the windshield, you are prime bait for window smashers who assume the Nav unit is probably stowed in the glove compartment.

It also can be your ‘digital speedometer’ and compass, telling you which way you are headed. How did I do it without it? Most of the time, I have the route plotted out, well before hand, and sometimes use MapQuest to get

the fastest route to somewhere (available free on line). This unit also helpful to find motels, IF you call it after it gives you the options. The database is several years old. OK...back to the road that shouldn't be in the database.....

The road started out fine. It was good gravel and one could do about 30. Flat. Some farm fields on both sides. No traffic, but even on paved roads there wasn't that much traffic around there. It was called Brown's Meadow Road. Not too bad for the first ten miles. Then....it started to go uphill. And uphill. And uphill. The road surface started to be a lot worse. There were no houses, no farmhouses, no buildings. After 15 miles or so, it really started to get bad. A turn every 300 feet – left...then right..then left...I thought a 'meadow road' would follow a nice river channel going through flat territory.

Nope. I passed a sign for 'Forest Protection Area'. Maybe that should have set off alarm bells. It wasn't a good sign – probably that meant no civilization until you emerged from the 'forest area'. There was only one building along the route for the next 40 miles, and it was some sort of garage (small) with a fuel tank across the 'road'. That was it for 40 miles.

The dirt 'trail' now wound up and up. Not much dirt. Mostly rock. Now the speed was down to 15 mph. The surface was rocky, and in places no gravel – just washboard road going up with switchback after switchback. I had gone 20 miles – and if I went back, it would be more than 100 miles to get around it. So I figured it had to go back down soon, right?

Everything rattled. No other cars. It went up and up. Soon I was down to 10 mph, and in some places 5 mph. The car bottomed out many times. 3-6 inch rocks everywhere. You had to zig and zag to stay away from large protruding rocks. The last thing you need is a punctured gas tank, or broken axle or crunched oil pan.

Up and up and up with switchback after switchback. It was too far to go back and besides there was NO place to turn around. It went uphill for another 5+ miles or more, at 10 mph. Groan. Everything rattling. Road just rocky surface with big ruts. If you get a flat here, you are in deep doo-doo. No cellphone service.

Actually you wouldn't want to meet a car – no place to turn around and road about 1 ½ cars wide. If that.

After about an hour of going 'up' you finally reach the "top". No buildings. No cars. No civilization. The only good thing was all the trees that had fallen across the road were cut so you could get a vehicle through – so someone at sometime had been through the road. It was down for another hour – and not much better for the first 10 miles going down. Then it got a bit better – and I actually passed two folks on ATVs headed up the mountain road. After more than 2 hours of bone jarring, car shaking road, I finally got to the end. Some civilization at the end.

I had just read the episode of Matt and Sharon in the RoadRunner Newsletter - out in CO on their dirt road a few days before. . They had a big truck with lots of clearance. I was just driving my Buick LeSabre. I was wondering as I went up and up, with almost no place to turn around, whether this road would come to an abrupt end...or have a 30 inch diameter tree across the road...well, anything over three inches is more than I am going to handle with no tools other than a pair of diagonal cutters and a screwdriver or two!

Never, ever, ever take this road unless you like really desolate, horrible, bone jarring, axle bending, oil pan scraping roads that aren't going to save you any time! Don't trust your GPS when it tells you to take such a road! That road is anything but straight – must have 200-300 turns in it! It must climb several thousand feet, and probably there are 2 cars a day crazy enough to use it. If that.

Well, after that 'adventure' it was back on Highway 2 at 70 mph (the MT Speed limit) headed west to Lincoln, MT.

I was taking pictures of most county line signs. I call them "percy pictures". I must have about 2000 counties now with pictures – I used to use a film camera, and get double prints made. I sent out the pics to folks that had a last county there when they sent me an MRC for it. Now, I use the digital camera, and often send out pics of the county line to those I mark "LC" in the log book. Or put them in the CHNews!

When 'Percy' starts blabbering and bloviating on 14.336, I've got pics of 90% of the counties run. When I'm zipping along interstates or the traffic is

too heavy, well, that county line sign doesn't get snapped. If you buy your batteries ahead on sale, the pics are a few pennies apiece to take. Due to space limitations, the CHNews has to use the 'low resolution' pictures – otherwise it might take some hours to download a newsletter at dial up speeds!

Sometimes if you can't get the pic entering a county, you can get it leaving the county. In some cases, there just aren't any 'entering XX county' and you have to take a pic of a road sign with the county name on it, or "Taos Water District" or (Taos 552) or whatever is available. 90% of the counties have a sign – some aren't safe to stop and take a pic of without major hassles. I wound up with over 100 pics from the trip.

Next, the journey was into Idaho to run counties – Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai. I went looking for a motel – none had been reserved. The Garmin Nuvi can give you motels 'near' a town. If you punch in 'where to? And then 'near' – you can find motels near any city in its database! So I went hunting for a motel in St. Maries, ID (Benewah CO) about 90 minutes further on. The Pine Motel came up - I called it. From my last trip, I knew to CALL the motel and see if it was still there and find out if a room was available and for what price. They had one, and said come down Highway 3 off I 90. OK....that means I could take I 90 another 10 miles to the east and get off and run Shoshone that evening quick, then scoot back 10 miles and down Route 3 to St. Maries. I needed an MP contact in Shoshone, so one in the log today is better than worrying about conditions in the morning.

You also don't know how the operating conditions will be there either on the other road on the route. Sometimes you get bad surprises. Sometimes good ones. I got to the motel by 6:30 – Pacific time. It was really 7:30 MT, which I was on internally. Another late day! Motel OK. No breakfast other than a cup of coffee. Stopped at gas station and got sticky bun.

Off early in the morning – 6:30 AM Pacific Time – 7:30 MT. 40M was open as I headed south on Route 3. It runs down to Shoshone, then Latah. Good places to run there and with the poor conditions, you need to find the best spot to operate with minimum noise. If you have S3 noise, you won't be hearing the 'tu-tu's. So you try to find a good spot before calling in on 20M SSB. Most of the time, I was stopped to run on SSB. Otherwise, an S2 powerline will kill half the weak stations with the current conditions. And many powerlines give you a S3-S5 noise level as you run by them.

Somewhat easier while moving on cw as the narrow bandwidth filter takes out a good part of the noise!

Jim, VE9DH desperately needed Clearwater, but first I had to finish Latah. I ran it on cw with good operating conditions. Then the road came down, down, down to the river bottom, and I realized I forgot to run Latah on SSB. I did that from a horrible spot and it didn't work well – down in a big canyon, giant hills (mountains) all around, 35 to 45 degree take off angle. Not many in the log. My goof.

However, I guess the next county line made up for it – Nez Perce/Clearwater, ID on 'P1" – great spot, high up, big parking area right at county line, very slight noise from powerline, fantastic views. One of the best county lines around! But don't try it in winter in a snow storm! Good runs and Jim got his needed county.



Clearwater/Nez Perce ID CL

Now how good does it get? How about a 40 foot wide parking area, visible county line signs, less than S1 noise from the powerline 100 feet away, beautiful views. (Note: Don't try this in winter unless the snow plows have been through – big climb up to this point on P1 from the west.) I suspect the big parking lot is where the snow plows turn around!



Wow- Giant Parking Area, near NIL noise – on “P1”

It was down to Lewis then into Idaho, ID. If you are on highway 12 – you are on highway 12 for a long time, going uphill for 120 miles along the river as you head to Montana once again. . You are moving along at a good clip. Up and up and up and up for 100 miles to Lobo Pass – where you can run the county line of Idaho, ID/Missoula MT. Good spot too. If you wonder why mobiles disappear for two hours out west....on RT 12, there are NO stations on the broadcast radio. No AM stations. No FM stations. Maybe a satellite radio would work well. On the ham radio, spotty reception – the road runs a bit northeast along the river in a canyon for the better part of 100 plus miles. And it is all in Idaho County, ID.

Then more short detours – to get Ravalli – then up to the interstate and east to Granite and Powell. Ran both, and stayed in Drummond, MT (Granite CO) at the Sky Motel. If the next county is a few miles down the road, often I’ll run it that day, so I can leave early before the bands are open and be on the far side of that county when the higher bands start to open.

No breakfast provided. Splurged for breakfast at the diner next door – good. Open at 6am, so I could be on the road before 7am. The A index is

now 14 – yuk. No wonder why most signal reports were 33s today. Poor conditions. Well, it was a fun 5 days on SSB with the absence of the one who runs off mobiles.

I just heard about the annual awards. Good news.

Joe, N5UZW got NC of the Year. He's also a prolific county 'putter outer' too.

Jerry, W0GXQ, got CW NC of the Year. He's another prolific county 'putter outer'.

Terry, WQ7A, got SSB County Hunter of the Year – he's another active mobile having put out hundreds of counties.

Kent, KL1V got Best SSB Mobile of the Year and CW County Hunter of the Year. Everyone knows he's an active mobile – runs entire blocs/states diligently running SSB and most on cw. Nice that the 'MOBILE AWARDS' Club gave awards to active mobiles! There were several others nominated as well who were active mobiles.

And no surprise that **Frank, AA9JJ, and Kay, N9QPQ**, got Best Team of the Year – they always seem to be taking trips and putting out the counties.

Jack, N7ID, received his MG award, #28, so he'll be running the 500 counties he needs to qualify for the second part of the requirements for Platinum.

And speaking about Platinum, K5GE received Master Platinum #1. He was the first to get MG, and now the first to get MP. Amazing!

(Attention Awards Committee – time to think up the next level award!)
Folks are finishing up the 'highest level' award and we could use incentives to keep mobiles active! Titanium? Plutonium? Who knows?

So far the weather has been good. Few showers in SD and ND, but clear after – temps in the 50s in the morning – nice – and up to about 85 or 90 in the day. Wonderful! In TX, it is summer sizzle, going down to 82 at night, and up to 100+ in the day. Yuk!

When I get home, I'll have to figure out how to keep the ducks out of my swimming pool. Since I have been gone a lot, 3 ducks are making it home. They crap in the pool, and it is hard to keep the algae down. Maybe I need a dog that likes to jump in after them? One evening after the last trip I was sitting outside after a short swim, and this one duck comes flying in, loudly honking away...makes a nice landing like a seaplane.....settles in.....then he got surprised as I lunged in the pool after him.

Unfortunately, he was back the next day. Hmmm! I'll worry about that when I get home again. I'll likely be resting up a few weeks before the next trip anywhere. I know that I need to head to CA in September, so that might be the next one. There are still counties left in OH and NC that I need, so it might be more road trips to finish up for Master Platinum to get the ones I need. It's a tough award. As more people get their MG award, it will get easier. If they are out mobile.

So that is the update as of Sunday night. Probably lots of cw tomorrow as I head east in MT and the Net Mullah once again returns and 'runs off mobiles'. And yell at folks for using phonetics and who don't grasp the way things are done instantly.

That is the end of Part I. Five days of Friendly Net on 20M SSB.

Hey! Bitch!
“Da Freakwency is in use”

(This is an N4CD editorial.)

The above headline is what folks heard on the 20M SSB net on 14.336 on July 1 in the afternoon. Astounding, isn't it? And you likely already know where it came from, so I won't mention any calls. It might just go down in

county hunting history, similar to the Howard Dean scream that will never be forgotten that signaled the end of his hopes for the Presidency of the USA.

It came from the mouth Percy (Percival Ford) of Lady Lake, FL, who has used the phony-etics “Just Plain Rotten” on the air for years. He also operates at the club of one call WIBQL.

This is not the first time...but about the sixth or tenth time that Percival proves himself a SERIAL LIAR. Time and time again. So on with the story.

Joyce, N9STL, had been running on 14.336 all day with no problems and assistance by many running her. More than a dozen spots on the W6RK site. Percy had been gone for most of the day, and James typically takes Tuesdays and Thursdays off from his job ‘running OFF mobiles and fixed stations’ on 14.336, the frequency he ‘occupies’. People had been helping out all day running Joyce, with spots by KC5QCB, N5UZW, WG6X, N8CIJ, WA8OWR, WQ7A and many others made on 14.336 as they ran or assisted Joyce during her trip to WI to put out lots of Master Platinum counties, give out YL contacts and five stars and MG and MP.

Check the W6RK spots log. How many counties and mobiles did KA1JPR run that day? Exactly one up to that point, right?

N9STL also ran on 7188, the ‘friendly net’. Many needed the counties she was running on both bands. Since twin-twin #1, James, took the day off from ‘running off mobiles’, it was a friendly net on 20M that day.

Now, here we have someone spending their gas money to help out others qualify for MARAC awards. For the five star award (Joyce has 5 stars). For the Bingo, MG and MP award. For the YL mobile award. For Nth time. For USACA. And what happens?

So what does Percy do? It was late afternoon. He decided to jump in and run Gene, K5GE, although Gene had been run by many others during the day. There were plenty around to help out.

Conditions on 20M weren’t that great on July 1. Well, they haven’t been great for a few years, but things were even below the miserable average. I was listening because I had just been listening for K5GE.

Percy immediately comes on after Gene's run when N9STL courteously answers his question about 'any mobile ready to run?' – he answers with:

Hey! Bitch! 'Da freakwency is in use!'

There is NO excuse whatsoever for language like that on the air!

Here's an EXACT transcript from a recording of what transpired that day (July 1, 2008).

From the K3IMC forum:

De N9STL: "The following is a record of my taping of my run on 20 meters.

N9STL: Is the frequency in use?

No response

N9STL: This is N9STL. I am in Polk, WI. N4UJK, you here, Ed?

KA1JPR: N9STL The frequency is in use. We got a mobile running. What did you say, Abe? Idaho. Ok ,he is going to 40 now, right? Ok K5GE Box Elder, UT 40 meters and ah he is going into Idaho after that tonight. Is there another mobile ready to run?

N9STL: N9STL

KA1JPR: I don't think so. Any mobile ready to run?

N9STL: Ah, do you want to tell Ed, N4UJK, that he needs this and that he can't have it because of you?

N4UJK: N9STL N4UJK

and in the background

KA1JPR: Is there a mobile ready to run?.

N9STL: N4UJK Ed you are 59 59.

N4UJK: also 59 thank you.

N9STL: Also 59. You are welcome.

At this time KA1JPR went into his tirade and name calling and accusing me of talking over a mobile running.

N9STL: I am not talking over a net. You are not running a net. Bob N8KIE go to 343..... he is such a jerk. 343 Bob go to 343 And good evening.”

At this point I left the frequency.

N4CD has posted on the forum that KA1JPR said:

“Hey! Bitch ! Da Freakwency is in use.”

For the next five minutes, after yelling ‘**Hey Bitch! Da Freakwency is in use**’, Percy is there ‘occupying the frequency, and asking over and over and over and over again is ‘Any mobile ready to run?’ We all know what he had in mind was making sure certain mobiles didn’t get to run on 14.336. Even a newbie to county hunting knows that by now. He’d rather claim an empty frequency for the delight of ‘running off mobiles’. Anything to ‘enforce’ the KZ2P AGENDA. Bloviating away at maximum volume!

Immediately, there was an outburst from others on the net, basically telling Percy to ‘shut your mouth’ (in family friendly terms). Incredible. The outrage was intense. From all over the country. People have had enough of Percy.

I received an email from Percy. It was:

“**twink**

get you fact straight i was running gene when she came on i stayed off there most of the day so she could run”

Well, those listening know that isn't quite the case. When she came on and Percy was finishing up the mobile, she courteously stood by. Only after the mobile was signed did she request to run when he asked “is ANY mobile ready to run?”

The recording shows, once again, he is lying, lying, lying - trying to cover his sorry behind. Even more so that he proclaimed his innocence all day long. Sorry, the recording shows he is nothing but a liar and bully. Previous history shows he has fabricated lies for years and years now about N9STL, KA3DRO, KI0JD, N4CD and a raft of others.

And as his statement “ I stayed off so she could run'?” Well, from the recording, you know full well that when given the chance to run her, or even step aside so N4UJK could run her, he chose to remain there and ‘occupy’ the frequency and maliciously interfere. Jam the frequency so others could not run her. So once again, he is a **BOLD FACED LIAR**. His own words prove it.

You'll note that Joyce wouldn't even repeat what Percy had said. She was shocked along with the rest of those listening. However, there is no reason to ‘ignore’ such behavior as it now seems to be the ‘norm’ on 14.336 when the ‘twin twins’ are around. (Two of them, each with invisible playmate club calls – thus the “twin twins” – the mini-me's). It is the same vitriol that permeates the chat room day after day. Percy took it to the airwaves.

Even after this episode had been posted on the K3IMC forum right after it happened, on July 2 in the morning, Percy was on the air again and KE3VV told him ‘That was totally uncalled for’. Ted, K9HUH, told Percy ‘How dare you EVER call a woman that name on the air’!

Percy's response? Defiance. He said ‘**That's what she is and that is what I will call her**’. Was he the least bit ‘sorry’. NO WAY! Defiant is the term. Any remorse? Not a bit.

Even more amazing that Dave, KE3VV, ‘apologized’ for Percy's behavior and posted on the K3IMC forum “I also apologize for the rude behavior on

14.336 yesterday.....”it was uncalled for and I hope it never happens again.
There is simply no excuse for it. 73, Dave KE3VV”.

Ray, WG6X wrote:

“I wasn't there, but heard about it & I apologize for that crappy action.

No one deserves to be treated this way. It was a open frequency, and you (N9STL) had ever right in the world to be there and to run.”

Why are folks trying to apologize for Percy’s incredibly bad behavior?

Joyce moved up to 14.343 after the incredible outburst from KA1JPR, along with others, leaving Percy calling over and over again for ‘Any mobile ready to run?’ for the next five or ten minutes. After a while, he just slinked away and vanished for the day. I guess he thought he got 1000 baddie points for preventing a ‘non approved mobile’ from running on an empty frequency! Brilliant. It takes a moron with an IQ of 60 to do something like that and enjoy it. A real slimeball. A coward.

He and James (the twin twins – the ones with their invisible mini-me partners) think they can denigrate county hunters at will, call them Bitches or liars or cheats, accuse them of ‘magic carpet rides’ due to Percy’s delusional Arabian fantasies and poor math skills, jerk around people with ‘fear of banishment’ or ‘no relays’ for imagined made up offenses, and extort them to ‘run counties on 20M SSB’ or else no relays, ‘allow them’ into the chat room or not depending upon the phase of the moon and how much torture they want to inflict that day. The ‘chat room crowd’. And some folks will still ‘worship’ at their feet, call them ‘the best net controls ever’, and ‘apologize’ for their actions. Or worse, blaming people for wishing to use an ‘empty frequency’ when no one is running. Incredible!

I posted what had happened on the K3IMC forum. Within minutes, one of the ‘chat room crowd’ had forwarded the post to Percy

Seems everyone else thought that Gene was done, and with Percy yelling “Any mobile ready to run?” for the next five minutes, right after the now infamous ‘Hey Bitch’ transmission, obviously Percy thought Gene was done as well. Otherwise he wouldn’t have spent the next ten minutes making sure

that Joyce would not return to 14.336. He must have wanted those ‘baddie points’ real bad.

The rest of the county hunters would have been very happy if he took **the entire day off**. Well, actually the entire month or better yet the entire year or better even yet, permanently off county hunting if that is what his idea of ‘fun’ is and good net procedure. And what his idea of an attempt at net control – which is basically running mobiles off and occupying the frequency. Only certain mobiles are ‘allowed’ on ‘his’ net. “Approved mobiles”. Anyone but N4ANV, W9GBH, W8QOI, KT4U, W4DF, WA4UNS, N4CD, N9STL, N3AHA, KK7X, W7WBZ, AA4GT, NV4Z, KF8UN, WB4UPW, K7REL, K9HUH, WA4WQG, N2OCW, K4QFK, K5CWR, and on and one and on.....

Under no circumstances was it justified to start out: “**Hey! Bitch!**” on the air. None. Ever!

NN8L posted on the forum:

“I know I'm the new guy, but.....

I was there and I heard it all. **Unfortunately, my wife was in the room and heard it all also**. She was amazed that it was going on and to be quite honest, I was embarrassed somewhat to be involved in a hobby that has individuals such as this playing traffic cop on one of the nets.

Some of you know that I've only been around a couple of months, but if I had heard this before starting I wouldn't be a county hunter today.

This used to be a gentleman’s hobby. Enough people including the mobiles that run a lot need to stand up and let it be known that this type of behavior can't continue. I remember myself telling mobiles to stand by on 14.336 when others were running, and nobody was called any names then. A public apology is warranted, but that would take a real man to do that.”

It's amazing that Percy has anyone who even want to hear his voice on 14.336. **Disgusting. Offensive. Reprehensible.**

Percy owes Joyce, N9STL, and the entire County Hunting Community an apology. I suggest a letter of apology published in the MARAC County Line Road Runner would be an appropriate forum.

That would determine if there is the least bit of humanity and decency as a man, or if he wishes to remain a lying coward hiding behind the chat room crowd group of net bullies.

Either that, or a permanent vacation. I've heard that he has been invited by at least one other net to never return. This is one more net that could benefit by his total absence if he wishes to continue on that path.

Even Mike, W0MU, has to admit that Percy is a convicted liar. While N9STL was in Montana for her last WBOW for MG, Percy spent hours and hours insisting 'she's not mobile' and 'she's not in MT'. When Mike had an eyeball with her in MT - even he was shown how blatant and offensive a liar Percival is.

The rest of the county hunters know that his rant on the "Magic Carpet Ride" of KI0JD was equally false, and there Percival spent six months, yes, six months blabbing about how he had calculated (really miscalculated) time, speed, distant using 'math'. Many county hunters quickly showed he was seriously in error, but that didn't stop six months of 'trashing and bashing' and spewing lies daily. Yet, once again, he is shown to be a serial liar - as he was calling for 'any mobile to run'.

We don't need such offensive and malicious behavior on the air on county hunting nets. We don't need people like this on 14.336. Or any other frequency where county hunters congregate. Ever. Any contribution the twin-twin #2 in FL might make is completely overshadowed by this type of behavior. You hear it on Channel 19 on the CB band. It gets almost that bad on 75M on some days and frequencies. There is no reason why the county hunter nets have to descend to the profanity laden speech of Channel 19 or 75M.

You remember Howard's Dean Scream that ended his possibilities as a candidate for President? Well, we got another scream that will go down in County Hunter History.

Percy, KA1JPR, will go down in history for his "**HEY! BITCH! Da Freakwency is in use!**" transmission. Maybe, he, too, will go away. To this day, he is still making excuses, **fabricating stories** and insisting 'he did nothing wrong'.

At the National MARAC Convention, at the Annual Board Meeting, this subject was brought up. At least two of the directors were on the air at the time when this occurred.

This is part of the transcript of the board meeting:

This was part of a motion put forth by KE3VV.

KE3VV – DAVE: WHEREAS, the Board of Directors takes notice of escalating incidents of harassment, name-calling, and other behavior that bring discredit to amateur radio and MARAC and discourage participation in county hunting and the MARAC awards program; and

WHEREAS, a recent incident where Percy (KA1JPR) cursed Joyce (N9STL) on the air on a frequency that is used daily by the Mobile Emergency and County Hunters Net has led many members of MARAC to request that the Board of Directors take some action in response to this and other malicious, inappropriate, and negative behavior; and

WHEREAS, while the purpose of MARAC is not to regulate the spoken or written words of members of the county hunting community, the MARAC Board of Directors does not believe that silence is a proper response to disruptive and divisive behavior (including written and spoken insults, name calling, harassment, and abuse) that disparages individual county hunters, MARAC, or the county hunting community; and

WHEREAS, the Charter of MARAC states that the purposes of MARAC are:

To promote amateur radio;

To promote efficiency and expertise in mobile and portable operation for emergency and general communications

To recognize and award outstanding accomplishments in amateur radio, with emphasis on mobile operation; and

To promote goodwill and fraternalism among amateurs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of MARAC that –

The Board of MARAC condemns the behavior of KA1JPR and others who disrupt county hunting activities and bring discredit upon county hunting and amateur radio, whether or not those activities are sponsored by MARAC; and”

The Board of MARAC requests that KA1JPR apologize to N9STL in writing and provide a copy of the apology to the Board of Directors”.

Joyce, WB9NUL, offered to write such a letter personally rather than from the board, but the feeling was rather intense and this ‘incident’. Hopefully it will be an ‘isolated case’ and hopefully Percival will be ‘man enough’ to publicly apologize for this ‘crossing the line’ and refrain from future episodes.

17M Works! 18.0915

Wow! We had some 'fireworks' in the past month. Three mobiles lit up the band. First, N9JF put out counties on 17M, then went up to 15, 12, and 10. Jeff, W9MSE, headed back from OH to WI, and ran every county on 17M. At the same time, Jerry, W0GXQ was running down from MN to IA to catch an airplane, and he was running on 20/17/15 and 10 meters! Wow! Great day for filling in band counties. Phil, AB7RW, was mobile headed down toward California, running on 17M CW, too! Who was on 17M? These are some of the stations heard!

Larry, W0QE, Silver, N9QS, Jeff, W9MSE, Ross, N0ZA, Les, KW4V, K4AMC, Scottie, N4AAT, Randy, AA8R, W8EGB, Ed, K8ZZ, K8MW, Jerry, W0GXQ, Jim, N1BY, Greg, NM2L, Jeff, N8II, Arden, AA0IP, Richard, K5SF, Greg, KG5RJ, Alan, K8CW, Pete, N4AKP, Jerry, K1SO, Phil, AB7RW, Jim, NW6S, Mike, K8OOK, Ken, K4XI, Dave, W4YDY, Gene, WB4KZW, Tom, K7REL, Phil, VE1WT, Morris, KV4DT, Charles, K0HNC, Matt, W0NAC, Bill, KB5IPQ, Herb, W9GBH, Ron, KB6UF, KA4RRU, Janet, KC5QCB, Jack, N7ID, Don, W9GUY, Dick, NG9L, Al, N1API, Morris, KV4DT, Larry, N2OCW, Rufus, KD4HXM, Randy, AD4IA, Chuck, W3CR, Billy, KD5YUK, Dave, W4YDY, Silver N9QS, Ernie, W7KQZ, Dick, Mike, WA9OUE, Scottie, N4AAT, Bob KW3F, Nelson, KU0A, Paul, K1TKL, Phil, VE1WT, Jim, NW6S, Gary, WD6CKT, Goerge, AA4GT, Bob, KA9JAC, Ron, N1QY and more.....

I tuned across 17M cw band. No other signals, other than computer birdies, but many were giving/getting 559s and 579s and 599s on the CH frequency! It might be a good band, and the rest of the country seems to be asleep on it. Of course, many use 17M only for DXing, so there isn't a whole lot of long skip DX. Hopefully we'll not wind up on a major DXpedition choice frequency, which happened when we were on 30M at the lower end of the band on 10.114 initially. Time will tell, but since you don't have to buy crystals for your radio, even if we move someday it isn't the end of the world. Right now, 18.0915 seems to be 'our frequency'.

Many people can load up their 20M beam, some have 20-10M beams including WARC, others have verticals that include the WARC bands. You

can try loading a 80 or 40M dipole to see if it will work. Making an inverted vee or dipole isn't too hard either. Come join the fun on 17M!

Radio History – Harold Wheeler – “ Mr. Radio”

If you go to Wall Township, NJ, and visit the New Jersey Antique Radio Club, you can see a real treasure from the early days of radio. Known as the “Washington Receiver”, the 1925 breadboard is the first radio with an automatic volume control circuit, built by Wheeler in his lab in Washington, DC.

HAROLD ALDEN WHEELER 1903-1996 - At a symposium celebrating the centennial of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) in 1984, Professor Edward C. Jordan, head of the Electrical Engineering Department of the University of Illinois introduced Harold Wheeler as “Mr. Radio.” Professor Jordan called Wheeler, “without a doubt the most distinguished living pioneer in the field once called radio, a field which now has developed and broadened into the modern fields of electronics, computers, and communications.”

At age thirteen, Wheeler decided on radio engineering as a career. He set up a workshop in his home where he built simple electrical devices, including a crystal detector radio receiver. In April 1920 he received a license for his amateur station 3QK. In 1921 he won a scholarship by competitive exam at George Washington University and majored in physics. His father had advised him to study physics rather than electrical engineering on the grounds that an electrical engineering education at that time was superficial in its treatment of the relevant

In later years, Wheeler's inventions played an important part in transforming radio art into radio science. While a student, he continued working in his basement laboratory. He said that he spent more time there than he did studying. In 1922, Wheeler met Alan Hazeltine, professor of Electrical Engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology, who was an inventor and pioneer in applying mathematical analysis to the design of radio equipment.

Wheeler told Hazeltine that he had successfully built a radio receiver, in his home lab, incorporating a novel circuit that provided a significant improvement over current designs. Hazeltine was greatly surprised and then showed Wheeler a pending patent application for the same invention, which he had made three years earlier but had never built a model. Hazeltine later remarked that, “Wheeler took it very well.”

Wheeler was then nineteen years old and had just completed his freshman year at GWU. They arranged a patent agreement, and it was decided that Wheeler would work for Professor Hazeltine during the summer of 1923. This was the start of a long and fruitful collaboration.

Professor Hazeltine's invention, which he called the “Neutrodyne”, went into large-scale production by fourteen manufacturers in 1923, at which time more than 500 stations were broadcasting to about two million listeners. [CHN readers will recall the Neutrodyne as ‘neutralized r.f. amplifiers’ in a TRF set. Only triodes were available, and they would tend to oscillate as an r.f amplifier.}

“In early 1924 Professor Hazeltine established the Hazeltine Corporation to manage his Neutrodyne patent as well as other patents, and to provide engineering services, mainly advice on product design to licensees. That year, Wheeler became the first employee of the new firm, but on a part-time basis because he was still an undergraduate. He joined full time in 1928.

The Neutrodyne, with its distinctive three tuning dials, was the dominant type of receiver for most of the 1920s. In 1928 the introduction of the screen grid tube made the Neutrodyne technically obsolete, but made possible the application of an automatic volume control (AVC) in AM receiver design.

This was an invention made by Wheeler in 1925, which maintained a constant sound level from a radio receiver while tuning to various broadcasting signals of differing strengths. AM radio receivers incorporating this AVC circuit came into use about 1930, and it has been included in every set since then. The AVC replaced the Neutrodyne as the key invention in Hazeltine's licensing portfolio. The world had moved to the superhet design.

The decade of the 1930s was a most productive period in Wheeler's career. He was awarded patents for 126 inventions made before World War II. His inventions and papers during that period covered circuits, test equipment,

acoustics, antennas, transmission lines, methods of calculation for inductance of coils (included in all relevant textbooks and handbooks since the mid-1930s), skin effect, coupled circuit theory, television scanning theory (analysis of distortions in TV amplifiers using his concept of “paired echoes”), and the analysis and design of wide-band amplifiers for TV

He worked full-time until he was eighty years old and then worked three days a week until his eighty-fourth birthday. He filed for his 182nd patent at age eighty-four and published his last paper, the hundredth, at age eighty-two.

Dr. George Brown of RCA, former vice-president of engineering and a distinguished antenna designer who received a hundred patents and knew Harold Wheeler and his work for nearly fifty years, said, “Wheeler's publications and patents are profuse and cover such a broad field as to be overwhelming. He is one of the giants of the industry.”

Reader Feedback

a) non-CQ Magazine USA CA

Readers of the CHNews are familiar with the KF0LZ story, where Dave submitted a valid application to the CQ Custodian at the time, Dorothy, WB9RCJ, and she arbitrarily turned down what would later be found to be valid, and where MARAC then decided to issue a USA-CA like award. As you recall, Dorothy was soon ‘relieved’ of the award custodian duties, and Norm, WA3RTY, was appointed the new award custodian by CQ. The same application that Dorothy had capriciously turned down was found fully acceptable by Norm, and the CQ award issued.

Sonny, W5VDW, pointed out that the B&B shop had a similar award going way back. To quote him and his post on K3IMC:

“I quote the information from the July 1994 County Hunter Handbook, Page 101, as follows: "This award certificate is issued for confirmed contacts made with other amateurs in the US Call Districts. The award was originally issued by the CW County Hunters but is not limited to CW operators. Zero

thru the Ninth call District make up the ten possible awards. Alaska will count in the 7th call district and Hawaii will count in the 6th District. Each of the basic ten awards is issued for confirming contacts in 1/3 of the counties in the district. MARAC Red, Blue, Gold Seals and Ribbons for confirming contacts in 1/2,2/3 and all counties in each of the districts. For the purposes of this award, the number of counties to be verified will be the number of counties in existence on the day that the application is processed by MARAC.

Application shall list all counties within each state showing the date, time, band and call of the station contacted. Normal fees do apply.

The MARAC Special Plaque may be issued for contacts made with all Counties in the USA. Holders of the USA-CA All Counties Award would be automatically eligible for the award. If you hold the USA-CA All Counties Award, submit the number of your award with the award date to the custodian along with the appropriate fee. Basic fee for members \$2/\$3 for non-members or non-current members.

The MARAC Special Plaque fee is \$40 for current members or \$50 for non or non-current members. All contacts must be confirmed".

Sixty-nine members were given this award, as of the 1994 listing on Page 69 of the Book. The first issued on 4 October 1986 to N0GYN and the last recorded, at that time, to W1TEE on 25 March 1994"

Interesting, no?

MARAC issued numbers up to about #89, mostly duplicating the awards that were issued by CQ Magazine by assigning parallel numbers in sequence when new ones were issued by CQ for a while. It was finally discontinued when there really was no purpose for it, and MARAC realized that everyone would apply for the CQ Award directly. It was 'redundant'.

b) All YL Award

Nell, K0GO, forwarded information that the date she flew to Hawaii to give Earl, his last, for WBOW YL Mobile was over Thanksgiving Weekend in 1982! Note that Gene, K5GE, is the last recipient for 'ALL YL MOBILE' with a date of 1/25/08.

c) Prefixes – There was much discussion on the K3IMC forum regarding prefixes.

d) From George, AA4GT:

“I use a 1956 Vibroplex bug. It is through you and others that I am finally getting my speed back up. I hope soon that I can help out on the Net. I am up to 1800 Counties now on CW. I also have a 1981 Vibroplex paddle. I need practice on it.

Mary has been having health problems. She has her radio on every day. She hears people that the head control does not but not allowed to relay. It is a shame.. I will stay on CW. They are a good bunch.
73 George AA4GT”

Trip Report KB6HWD

From the K3IMC Forum

Below is a short incident during our trip in June.

“During our vacation trip from TX to NV to So Cal and home, my wife Vicki -KD6MCM - and I had a mostly uneventful time. We were running all the counties we passed through but conditions were not so good. The 40 meter band was especially disappointing. We made one contact within an hour of our start and not another for 6 days. On 20 meters it wasn't much better especially the further west we got. “

“The next 40 meter contact is the reason for this article. Vicki was busily writing down all my exchanges on 20 meters throughout our trip. But while traveling south on Hwy 395 at mile 67 on Thursday June 5th we had just come into San Bernardino Co, CA. We had just made a minimum 2/2 contact with Ernie, W7KQZ on 20 meters. He mentioned he needed it also on 40 so I went over to 7.188 and we were barely able to make contact, also a minimum.

About 5 minutes after contacting Ernie on 40, Vicki and I noticed some dust ahead about one half mile or so. I mentioned to her that I hoped it wasn't a car off of the road. Because of the hilly road we couldn't see the reason. As we came over the next rise on the undivided 2 lane highway we could see that a southbound car had skidded and was overturned on its top on the left side, in the dirt.

About 4 people from 2 northbound cars were running to the aid of the folks inside. Vicki checked her cell phone and we had no cell signal at that point. I could not stop immediately because there were no shoulders and if cars came from behind they could not have stopped soon enough before hitting us. I remembered hearing Ernie a few minutes earlier and began calling him on 40 meters. I wasn't sure I heard him but transmitted the information to him in case he could hear me.

About one mile further my wife's phone picked up a cell tower and she dialed 911 as there was now a place to pull off. As she was giving the operator the particulars the operator mentioned that another call was coming in too. About 15 minutes later I contacted Ernie on 20 and he said he did hear me calling and he was able to contact the Barstow, CA, Highway Patrol office and they would alert the proper, nearest office.

Thanks to all the net controls, fixed stations, mobiles and to Ernie for monitoring the various 'county hunting' frequencies even though there seems to be no activity. This is a great example of caring ham radio operators helping the drivers on the road who may not even be aware we are out there. It could have been us that needed help too.

A special thanks to my wife for logging by hand all 243 contacts in the counties we drove through on our trip.

73 Tom Risher KD6HWD
Round Rock, TX”

De N4CD – You are lucky. Tom that Ernie, W7KQZ, was around – Ernie seems to be there early in the mornings and late at night. Ernie always willing to help out.

A while back, there was a medical emergency where a county hunter needed to contact a mobile. KZ2P didn't 'allow' the communications to take place on 14.336. Sad. Running mobiles that day was 'more important' than handling priority traffic in his eyes. Other times KZ2P has had folks call in with emergencies and ask if anyone wants to take them off frequency and handle the request. . No one volunteered or could hear the station, so KZ2P wished them good luck 'calling on another frequency' to get assistance. He didn't want to keep any potential mobile waiting.

That makes you wonder where the "**Mobile Emergency and County Hunter Net**" went.

On the Road with N4CD Part II

The Net Mullah appeared early on Monday morning pleading for "any mobile STATION ready to run a county?". Hour after hour for much of the next five days in the morning. I was there. Seems I'm one of the first on the air, listening on 20M after I run on the cw bands and listening for other mobiles to show up on 20M SSB. Well, you and I know he only means 'any approved mobile' ready to run a county. He'd rather have dead air than run a non-approved mobile. So usually he talked to himself for the first hour or so every morning. Amusing! With 30 and 40M cw, I was logging a page or two of contacts before the first SSB mobile showed up typically.

So it was off on cw and SSB off net as I headed east in the morning to get more MT counties for the folks. I ran up on 14.342, 14.323, and 14.340 on SSB after most 20M CW runs. One of the net controls on 20CW would pass the SSB frequency, and the pile of stations would be waiting as soon as I got there, and more appeared after the spots! So things worked out for many of the SSB county hunters. Or I'd use the spotting service.

At other times, a cellphone call to the 'spotting service' got quick spots added so the folks who had spots up and running would know where to QSY. Of course, that hurts the folks out mobile, who don't have spots, who don't get the county, but they can say a few more 'thank you Jim's for that.

It seems that someone in South Carolina at a Club station gets very annoyed when one announces a move off net frequency after working a mobile. Could it be that 'one of the club' members cranks up the Alphas, swishes the VFOs and does his best to show how little respect he has for the county hunters? I'll never tell, but after five days of very nice net on 14.336 with NO interference at all with the Mullah gone, it seems more than a remarkable coincidence that the interference only starts when 'he' returns and isn't there when he is transmitting on 14.336 if you listen with two receivers on each frequency. Hmmm???

That night I spent in Billings, MT at a Super 8. In the morning, no waffle, but good breakfast – headed east to get Treasure. You have to run up to next exit after the sign...which gives you lots of time to run county – sit a bit – then run back on other bands. Then down to the south on Highway 47 to get to WY. This was a another long day of driving. You get to Sheridan WY, and then take Route 14 and 14a west to get to Big Horn – one I needed to run.

You start going up..and up...and up. Maybe you start at 2000 feet – and you go back and forth and back and forth for miles – finally reaching the summit at about 8300 feet. Lots of county lines out this way at at the summit. I search for a county sign – hard to figure out exactly where it is from the maps I have. Check again. Larry, W0QE, says the C/L is on Highway 14A miles and miles ahead. OK...I see it now on the map. Once at the top, you can really zip along on the plateau. Almost no slow traffic on any of the highways. No big motor homes going anywhere. 20 miles or so to the C/L. Well, other than fantastic vistas, not much up here unless you are a geology enthusiast. Same for Daggett County UT area – lots of rock formations to study.

So I check the maps and it could be that it is still miles down the road...so you zip along on the plateau for miles and miles, hit the fork of 14 and 14a...and still go a ways, and finally there is the sign!



Big Horn, WY County Line

Note: As you leave town going up ‘the BIG HILL’ going west, there are at least five or six gates with big signs and signs that say “If lights are flashing, road is closed’. This BIG HILL is probably closed every snow storm they get. Did I see snow? That ‘white stuff’ in the pic above is snow. Lots of patches of snow up this high – some still 30 x 50 feet or larger along side the road. Imagine this place in the winter time! Larry mentioned he had seen two feet of snow up there earlier.

Of course, all across MT and WY you’ll see gates at all the interstate entrances, and even along the interstate they’ll be signs that flash and say ‘exit here – road closed ahead’. It’s not fun traveling up north in winter! You can get seriously delayed. No going anywhere in a blowing blizzard snow storm. Or even afterwards if the winds kick up and there is snow to be blown around. Whiteouts from blowing snow! Shut down for a day or two or three!

The temps were in the 70s, and no snow at the bottom, but there were remnants of snow up top everywhere. Along side the road in shaded areas. Up on the hills in patches. Lots of wildflowers along the road – snow patches everywhere and of course, lots of mountains. Wow – someone has one heck of a radar installation up here on a mountain peak. Must be a real challenge getting in and out in the winter time!

After a nice ride way high up, you see the signs for ‘down down down’ 10% grade- use lower gear. That’s fairly steep. I stop to make sure I have run all the bands and finish up. It’s hard to work to the east as you head down the west side of big mountains....very hard – especially in poor conditions – you are trying to talk through the mountains! So I finish the bands, then turn up the CD player and zip along 14a headed to the next counties to run. Making tracks to get back to MT....nothing I ‘have’ to run, but I run everything I go through anyway. Hmm...Suddenly I’m in Park WY.

The side roads are suddenly marked “PARK county”. OK...check map and missed point after road descended where I went into Park. [When I got home, I noticed the very last part of the road is a county line road – heads north along the county line!]. At one point, it is wholly within Park, WY.

So ran Park WY (bonus county). Then I hit the MT border. All sorts of signs welcoming you to MT, signs about speed limits and truck limits....but no county sign. It should be Carbon MT....check maps. Double check maps. Want to be running the right county. Every now and then you get confused. Run the wrong county, or read the map wrong. Wish the Garmin GPS had the counties in it. It does show the state lines! Nifty to see them coming up. It has room for an SD card. All we need is to figure out a database to put in it to teach it county lines!

Yep, Carbon MT so it is time to zip up to the Interstate and head west again for ID.

Let’s see...first I headed west in MT along Rt 2 over to ID...then east across the middle of MT....now back across the bottom of Montana headed west again. Whew. Enough of MT. Hours and hours on I90 - I make it to I 15 headed south. Greg, NM2L, needs Silver Bow...ran it and got him...then headed down I 15 to get him Madison. There is about 10 miles of Madison on the Interstate. Not much traffic (where is everyone?) so I can stop and take pictures easily of the county lines on the interstate.



Madison, MT for NM2L

I run it..and see the sign for the wet line with Beaverhead coming up. I stop by the bridge in Madison...park along side the metal fence on the Madison side. Hardly any traffic on I15. I'm there for 20 minutes. Then I look at the GPS and think what a dummy.

If you go another 500 feet into Beaverhead, you can get off, cross under the interstate, and come back up the east side frontage road back to Madison. It's a short run otherwise if you are moving at 75mph, the speed limit. You are OOC – out of the county before you even finish on 20M CW! That is one of the reasons why Madison is on the 'most wanted list'!

So if you want to run Madison, look for that exit just to the south of Madison and run it parked on the frontage road 1000 foot north from the exit! No hassles and no looking in the rear view for someone approaching asking why you are parked there, either. Didn't have any hassles anyway. Only about 6 cars passed me in 20 minutes. Where is everyone out there?

That worked out well. Quiet spot – like many in MT. Down the road away I stayed in Dillon at the Super 8. That day around 3 pm I calculated where I would get, and called ahead. No waffle – cereal instead.

Wednesday it was down into ID to run some there. I only needed to run about half of what I had planned since Gene, K5GE got me half of them, (and a few in MT) so my trip was a bit shorter thanks to him. He ran many that folks desperately needed on his last big trip. Around 8am I called Jack N7ID on the cellphone and we scheduled a quick breakfast meet in Blackfoot, ID (Bingham County). He and XYL Willie, W0AXJ, and I have nice eyeball for over an hour. He'll be putting out many counties to get his 500 for MP. He was going to try to get them all before the snow flies! He just got his MG, allowing him to start work on the second part of the Platinum Award.

He runs a Ford Taurus, with IC706 and Hamstick on the back on a mag mount. He turns it down between runs and pops up when ready to run. I leave and head down to Caribou County ID. On Highway 30, you head up the mountain pass (6000 feet). The county line is in a horrible spot – right in a ‘cut’ in the mountains – but 500 feet beyond is a fantastic place to run Caribou – super shot going east – good spot to pull over. Good vista to look at while you spend half an hour running 30/40/20/17m CW and 20M SSB.

Then it was backtracking for 50 miles to get Power, Bannock, Cassia, Minidoka...Power was on the KM9X ‘most wanted list’. I ran it – took the pic on the interstate....(another Percy Pic – hi hi over 100 this trip alone – N4CD was there...and there...and there...and there.....100 times)



Power ID – on the KM9X most wanted list – wet line
N4CD was there..and there..and there

It was then down another interstate after Minidoka to run Oneida (nice rest area strategically located- otherwise you'd be 'OOC' before running the bands). But before I got to Oneida, on I84, , after seeing a dozen 'dust storm areas' and 'warning – High Winds", right at the County Line, there is this 200 foot or more diameter dust devil (looked like a tornado to me) sitting in one spot just to the east of the C/L off the Interstate. The car in front of me pulls over to take a pic! It is at least 200 feet in diameter and 500 feet tall, black with dust. I watch it for 10 seconds – it doesn't appear to be moving. In TX, it would be a tornado. No time for pics!

I decide to zip on past - really zip on past. That is one C/L I did not stop to take a picture of! I floored the car to get past there as fast as possible! My antenna system is now tested at 90+ mph. Who knows if that thing sits there regularly or not. I wasn't going to find out! Nor if it decided to move.

The rest area is a few miles down. Recovered there. Hmmm.....it's very windy out this way and the dust is blowing everywhere. Cough, cough...not good. Visibility OK. Strong winds, but the wind seems to blow everywhere in the middle of the country – SD, ND, MT, ID, WY – in prodigious amounts. (That is why there are many wishing to build tens of thousands of windmills to harness that energy.)

Into UT – Box Elder, Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, stopping in Lehi at the Super 8. (Utah, UT). Real bad traffic. All that cars that aren't in MT and ID seem to be congregated in UT. Interstate very busy. Really busy and being near rush hour didn't help. Big accident northbound, and at least a 10 mile backup headed north! Glad I'm headed south but slow 20-30 mph traffic, some stop and go on the interstate. Major city traffic hassles.

As I check into the Super 8 – I notice the sign: “\$500 fee for smoking in non-smoking rooms”. These guys are serious. You also have to initial the same statement on your check-in sheet. Woe to he/she who takes a non-smoking room and either smokes or allows someone to smoke in the room! That's fine with me since as a non-smoker, and I can't stand cigarette ash and the fumes. Take warning – these guys are serious! I haven't seen that drastic language before.

Waffle for breakfast the next day – they had two waffle making machines. At six AM about 30 people in the breakfast room – all gone by 6:15 as they headed out to construction jobs. . So far so good. Most counties run on 20M SSB with help from the folks, off frequency on 14.340 and 14.323. Those that don't have the spots lose out on SSB. That's the 'game' on 14.336. Glad to see N5UZW once again get NC of the Year – if all the nets ran the same gracious way as Joe's net on 40M, there'd be a lot more 'peace and contentment' on the county hunter frequencies.

When I hear Ray, AB4YZ, I work him to make sure he has a MP contact – he needs one in every county and he sometimes resorts to 'tu tu' ing it with the Net Mullah, who isn't hearing him much of the time.....conditions are horrible and getting signals out of some CA, OR or WA counties is tough. Same for AA9JJ/N9QPQ, and Scottie, N4AAT, and Jack, N7ID – work them whenever I can to give them my counties. Jack now needs a MP qualify contact from every county he is in – working on that requirement for 500 transmitted counties (with a qualifying contact).

If you are on the Interstate in Sierra, CA headed east – that is bad news. Only one good spot on the whole piece of Sierra on the Interstate...and if you don't stop –you head east into a big gigantic valley with noisy powerlines! Hard to make any contacts or be heard! For 5 miles or more. You don't run that one on the run for 10 minutes! Oh, well, experience....been there..done that twice...and heard other mobiles finding

it out first hand in the past few days. Hi Hi.... You can tell if a mobile is doing it 'on the run'...suddenly they can't hear anyone including near 59 signals.

Frank and Kay were wandering around in CA. I can usually copy them OK....work them, too, to give them my county. Same for Nell, K0GO and Hank, W5VD. But many times I'm off on cw. Kay has to put out her 500 separate counties now that she has Masters Gold.

There have been a few 'collisions' with two mobiles running - conditions so poor that you don't hear the other one, or you check and someone says 'all clear' but they don't hear the other one running. It usually gets sorted out real quick - but some folks occasionally work somebody but don't know who they worked! Doesn't happen often but a few times. Like SSB with the voices, on cw, most ops know that AB4YZ sends a lot faster than N4CD and W8MP is going along slower.

Same on SSB when the net is in open session, and two mobiles start. Or someone picks up a mobile and someone else starts someone else, and no one is hearing each other until other stations start callingEveryone wishes we had better conditions during the day so it wasn't lots of 339s and 559s and not much else on 20M during the middle of the day. Mornings good and evenings good. Tomorrow is day 9 on the road.

The Weather Channel says 100 deg in Dallas. This morning it was 47 where I was.. Nice. No need for a/c....had the heat on in the car! In Dallas, it was probably a humid 82 at 7am. Maybe 85? Yuk! Part of me says time to get done with the trip and head home. Part of me says don't rush back to hot, hot Dallas! Enjoy the mountains for a few more days! Hi hi.

However, my butt is getting sore from sitting 12 hours a day in the car. My credit card is getting tired from \$80 to \$90 a day in gas for long days. It's averaging about \$4.15 out here. My car is getting about 27-28 at 75mph on the Interstate. If I slowed down, I'd get 30, but I'd also spend another day or two on the road - and motels and dinner are \$70/day average. So it's a toss up. Well, it might actually cost more to drive slower. So I drive the speed limitplus a few....Other than the cities, the interstates are sparsely populated. The secondary roads are sparsely populated. When it gets down below half a tank, I fill it up - and don't look at the price - just how many

gallons it took. I don't need the 'sticker shock' of how many \$\$\$\$ in gas this is costing.

Leaving Dillon MT, I saw less than 20 cars in the first half hour – both directions! Wow! That was on I 15! Of course, around Salt Lake City it was 20 mph creep and crawl, stop and go for 20 miles. Tens of thousands of cars – but not much traffic on the rural highways in many other places. Very very few large motor homes headed anywhere. There were a bunch on the roads to Yellowstone and Glacier, but not many. I think the folks got to where they were going, and stayed there for weeks, not moving much.

Thursday was another great day on the 20M net with a 'Friendly Net' in operation all day. Mike, KQ0B, and Ray, WG6X an things for the first six hours or so, then Joyce, N9STL, and Don, W9NGA, and Bob, K0IYA, and others pitched in. Conditions were so bad that sometimes Kent, KL1V, had the best propagation to WA, OR, and NV to run mobiles in the afternoon.

Glenn, WT0A, now getting his feet wet on CW. He wants those counties that 'aren't allowed' on 20M SSB Net! Another convert. And of course, Dave, KA5TQF, was working all the mobiles on CW. Don, W9NGA, is a new CW county hunter, too! Jim, W4HSA, is frequently there, too. More and more on CW these days.

I headed out of Utah, UT, from the Lehi Super 8 Motel – headed down toward Carbon County, UT. Not much problem heading across on Highway 6. You hit a piece of Wasatch with a good county line – then it is down into the canyons of Carbon – I made a quick contact at the county line sign. I had to go down into the small town to find a place to run. Then it was back up 191 through more canyons. The GPS at one point went crazy since it lost all the satellites in one canyon – first time I had seen that! Leaving Carbon, there are some good places on 191 to run it.

Lots of driving – to get up to Uintah and Daggett. You climb another big mountain pass getting up into Daggett- and this was the first time I saw warning signs "Watch out for snowplows in your lane!" They must get tens of feet of snow here. No houses for 20 miles and nothing for about 50 miles to write home about. I ran Daggett then headed west over to get Uinta, WY – nice county line you can run with Uinta/Sweetwater, WY. Then up to the interstate, then another 70 miles to get Sublette and Fremont. Wow. That

Sweetwater is a big county. Plan on being there for hours and hours and hours.

It was about 70+ miles up to get Fremont and Sublette from the Interstate. Just after I left the line, and zipping back the 24 miles to the first town, Mike, NF0N says he needs Sublette. Good timing. I turn the car around and get back to Sublette for him – just two miles back. Good thing he didn't need Fremont..that was 8 miles back or so. Ran it for him, then turned the car around and head back to the motel. Nothing to do but listen to the CD player – nothing on the radio of interest. Ham radio or broadcast.

It was own to the interstate for a Budget Host Motel in Rock Springs. Arrived 7pm Mountain Time. Sweetwater is one heck of a big county. It took over 2 hours to cross it the short way – and it takes longer to do it the long way! I'd get to do that tomorrow! Motels here busy with construction workers, and I'd bet some energy industry folks doing things, too.

Frank, AA9JJ, and Kay, N9QPQ, were running in NV today. You could tell they were on the Interstate in Sierra, CA – going west to east. It starts out fine, then you descend into the valley of little signal and big power lines. You can forget anything less than 'loud signals' from then on. Ray, AB4YZ, discovered the same thing yesterday! Years and years ago, I remember Dennis, KK7X, traveling that way frequently and saying "73...down into the canyons'...before he lost everyone on CW. Hi hi...plus I've run that several times, so you know what is going to happen to those who haven't hit that real bad spot before. The next thing you hear from the mobile is 'I'm in Washoe NV now' as they clear the canyon.

There were some nice county lines to run today. Fremont/Sublette is nice. Room to pull off along sign the road while the trucks zip by at 75 on a two lane road. Many super nice ones in MT and ID and WY – you can sit and enjoy the vista waiting for a mobile to finish up, or as you run the various bands. Not many motor homes out, but that is good for making time – a lumbering motorhome on a mountain pass ascent is no fun when they creep along for 5 or 10 miles struggling up a hill, and some out here at 8-10 mile climbs up to the pass. Not as tall as some in CO, but still up to 8000 feet frequently it seems!

Almost every day the car gets a good workout. Up 8000 feet or 9000 feet. Then back down again. Sometimes 3 or 4 times a day.

On some of the taller ascents, I turn on the heater – helps keep the engine temps down. Open the windows – usually cooler as you climb anyway. If nothing else, turn off the a/c going up the steep long climbs (the ones that go on for 4 or 5 or 10 miles!). The car would probably be OK with the a/c on, but no sense pushing an engine with almost 200K miles on it. The extra 20 degrees doesn't help things. Of course, if you don't have a temp gauge you'll never know – many cars don't – just idiot lights that come on too late to do anything about it!

KI0JD, Carol, and KA0DDJ, Burger, were headed home across NM from the convention. Gene, K5GE, wound up in Potter, TX for a day. Tony, WA9DLB was up in WI. Art, WA4WQG running some in VA.

I ran across WY then down to I 25 down to southern CO, and zipping across to Costilla down to Taos, NM to get that one. It's not easy to drive around Taos County - hard to get across that county east to west. I checked the GPS and it said head back north for the fastest route home...back the way I came to I25, then south. Well, I ignored it. The mission had been completed. All the counties had been run that I needed to run so it was 'free time' to goof off a bit.

Well, probably I should have headed north and backtracked 150 miles – would have gotten home a lot easier. Instead, I wandered south till I could head east. Not many choices – Taos county is all mountains with the roads in Canyons. Headed east on 38 through Red River (an Aspen like ski resort town up at 8000 plus feet) and up and down over mountain passes to Eagles Nest, NM, where I figured I was getting tired and it was time to stop.. Nice small town, with ski area (Angel Fire) five miles away and a lake for fishing. There was a small motel and I found a room for \$45 plus tax (Gold Pan Motel). I'd worry about getting home tomorrow. I yakked with the couple who had retired and moved there to run the motel just two months before. Later we'd wander together over to the 'saloon' for a beer or two. Watch out! Beers at 8300 feet hit home quickly!

I enjoyed the last day of 'cool temps' and low humidity. It typically drops to the 30s to high 40s here at night in the summer with the 8300 foot elevation! You know how high you are when you walk up the slight hill along main street from the motel – 500-800 feet later, you are huffing a bit from the elevation! The two local 'family type' restaurants were full from all the

RVers nearby so I hit Dorothy's Pizza place – she makes about 10 pizzas a day from scratch – home made sauce, home made dough – that's it! Very good but you have to wait a bit, and she'll entertain you with the history and tails and tribulations of living at 8300 feet in a very snowy area! Hi hi. The pizza was good! She is open year round and the big pizza oven keeps the place toasty warm.

Hundreds of RVs are congregated in Taos County – probably many from TX and central NM – many spend the summers there, and head back to warmer places for the winter, and some come for vacations. Maybe thousands of them. They are everywhere!

On Saturday, it was time to get home! Enough days on the road – so after more hours of winding up and down mountain passes, I hit the good roads – where you could run 65-75 mph the rest of the way home. There were lots of motor homes coming over the passes to Eagles Nest and Red River and similar spots – first time I saw strings of them headed up the mountain passes. Fortunately, I was going down.

Scottie was off in NC and VA and MD and DE – running some I needed so I had to monitor 20M SSB frequently to be sure I caught him in the 4 I needed for MP. Got 33s from him in the ones I needed, plus worked him in some others to give him my county. Thanks to some watching the runs and alerting me on the cellphone. I don't know what Scottie needs for MP at this point so whenever he runs and I can hear him, I work him to give him my county. Before you know it, there will be a half dozen with MP award. I'm trying to do my part by giving them out! So many counties, so little time. Hey, Eldon, N8STF was on for a bit out mobile.

At some point, the 2001 Buick is going to wear out. Gene, W1TEE drove his Plymouth till the wheels fell off, everything rusted through, as he ran every single county two times – the only one to have run them all twice. I don't think this car is going to go that far! (375,000 miles on his?).

There aren't too many back east with MG out mobile. Come to think of it, only N4AAT in the entire area from FL up to ME, other than occasional quick trip by KB6UF! WG6X has run in GA and KY and lots of AL and MS, plus heading to conventions and Dayton. So that is two active mobiles.

KE3VV and N2OCW are closing in, so that should help! Amazing – I heard Gail, WB2AXG, on the radio for the first time in years and years. She was in Plymouth MA, desperately needed by KE3VV for last WBOW for MG and for Bingo N. The good news is he got his last WBOW for the Nth Bingo, but alas, Gail doesn't hold Bingo, so Dave still needs a Bingo holder in Plymouth, MA. Last WBOW! Or he can drive there and put out the county with a qualifying contact. Cape Cod is nice this time of year.

I ran the counties today on the way home, mostly on cw. A few runs on SSB, but I'm getting worn out after so many days. Jonas, LY2ZZ needed Wilbarger, TX and we connected – signals not great but we made it. Log book almost full from end to end (100 pages) so it was a good time to get home. Terry, WQ7A back on the air. Good to hear him back out of the hospital where he has had a rough go lately. Harry, W6TPC, now a cw regular, too!

The car has over 199,000 miles approaching 200K. Time for an oil change – which I just changed two weeks ago. I bet those folks at the Buick place wonder why anyone drives enough to need an oil change every 3 weeks! (4 times in 3 months!).

I hit a lot of the 'most needed counties' so hopefully we connected. Many helped me out with MP contacts (N9STL, N9QS, W6TMD, N9QS, K5GE, AA9JJ/QPQ, AB4YZ, WG6X, N4AAT, AB2LS, KB6UF, N4AAT, N4UJK, N0ZA, KI0JD and now N7ID) so I didn't miss any. Majority of the MG holders are also on CW.

One or two mobiles still out on trips, so activity should continue. Mark, W8MP headed across to the Northwest. Ray, AB4YZ headed east. Now it is time for N4CD to take care of logs, take care of the mail and bills, the grass, figure out how to 'de duck' the pool, and a few other things!

See you next trip! You never know where N4CD will wind up! So many counties. So little time! People still need counties!

The Purpose of MARAC?

Dave, KE3VV, posted on the K3IMC Forum:

“According to the MARAC history published by the B&B Shop in 1994 (and written by WA0WOB, one of the founders of MARAC), in addition to the stated purposes in the MARAC Charter, there were four basic operating principles for MARAC.

- (1) MARAC would never be run "for profit".
- (2) MARAC would be fiscally conservative and always have money in the bank.
- (3) Income would not be received and disbursed by the same person.

The 4th Principle on which MARAC was founded: "Never operate the ICHN nets, but be a forum for discussion on improvements."

All facts, no spin, no opining,”

Wow. Who would have ‘think’ that. Have you ever seen any discussion of ‘net operation and improvements thereof’ in any MARAC meeting minutes before this month, for the BOD or at General Meetings? Has there been any discussion on how to ‘improve’ the large numbers run off, or MARAC members not able to run or get relays on the ICHN net’. Or why it isn’t even called the ICHN net anymore? Hmmmmm.....

The CHNews does have to commend MARAC for bringing the “Percy Affair’ up for consideration – which, if you believe principle #4 above mentioned by Dave, KE3VV, is certainly within the scope to discuss ‘improvements’ in the current operation of the 14.336 net.

Awards Computer Crashes

The MARAC Awards Computer crashed. Hard drive failed. If you have a computer (at least current generation) it is not 'if' your hard drive will fail, but "when". Apparently, the back up system at Awards HQ also wasn't working right, so now the Awards Custodian is busy, with lots of help, trying to rebuild the award database.

At the annual meeting, the BOD voted to expend up to \$1700 to attempt to get the data read from the dead hard drive. If there is no success, there will be no charge. Until the database is up and running again, awards will be handled manually, but likely there will be some delays in things like LC awards and others that were handled 'electronically' until things are gotten back to as close to 'normal' as possible.

So if you are neglecting your backups, or don't want to spend the \$100 or so for an external hard drive that will automatically back up everything each night.....be forewarned. It is usually a matter of 'when', not 'if' your hard drive dies. If it dies, and you have no backup, and you are really desperate to get the data – turn computer off immediately. Further attempts may cause more damage. That will give you the best chance of data recovery (expensive). It's a lot cheaper to back up to CDs, tape drive, or buy a \$100 external hard drive with automatic backup software.

Peak Oil News

1) Matt Simmons

“Matt Simmons, chief executive of Simmons & Company, a Houston energy consultancy, said that global oil production had peaked in 2005 and was set for a steep decline from present levels of about 85 million barrels per day. “By 2015, I think we would be lucky to be producing 60 million barrels and we should worry about producing only 40 million,” he told The Times.

His controversial views, rejected by many mainstream experts, suggest that some of the world's biggest oilfields, particularly in Kuwait and those of Saudi Arabia, the world's leading producer, are in decline. “It's just the law of numbers,” he said. “A lot of these oilfields are 40 years old. Once they roll over, they roll over very fast.”

Source: http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/natural_resources/article4237886.ece

2) Gas Price Flashback

Wow...I just checked one of the first issues of the Chnews in 2005

“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.”

That was three years ago. I’d guess we’d all really be happy for \$1.35 gas, or even \$2.00/gal gas now. In TX, it is now \$3.95 or more, and on the last two trips, it was not uncommon to see it at or above \$4 – up to \$4.19. Of course, it is more in CA and MT and ID and places out of the way.

3) Dave Cohen on the ASPO web site:

“Deceptive statements now dominate the political discourse on America's oil crisis in the 2008 presidential campaign. The confused debate about Republican supply-side measures versus Democratic demand-side measures entirely misses the central point: domestic oil production is about to experience a mini-peak in the years 2010-11 and then resume its inevitable decline.

Outside the Bakken play in Montana and North Dakota, almost all new domestic oil comes from the Gulf of Mexico deepwater. (This is called *ultra*-deepwater in water depths ≥ 3000 feet.) In the last 6 months, the two biggest deepwater projects scheduled in the Gulf after 2007 and for the next 5 to 7 years have already come on-stream—Atlantis (200,000 b/d maximum capacity) and Thunder Horse (250,000 b/d).

Both projects are operated by British Petroleum, and both projects were delayed approximately 3 years from their first announced start-up dates. These developments give Americans the slight "deepwater bump". After 2011, the most likely outcome is that scheduled new deepwater projects do not add enough oil to offset Lower-48 declines. (*Oil & Gas Journal*, June 9, 2008).

The next few years are as good as it gets for American domestic oil production.

We have thus run out of time to debate implementation of proposed supply measures that won't take effect until after 2020 . As I argued in *The Prognosis for the United States*, Americans must start reducing their oil demand by about 300,000 barrels per day each year for the next 7 years (*ASPO-USA*, June 25, 2008). Even this cut may not be adequate to prevent economic chaos because the oil price is over \$140/barrel now and rising fast.

Pelosi, McCain and others seem blissfully unaware that there is an Earth Sciences discipline called *geology*, and that within this field of study there is a specialty called *petroleum geology*. On what basis could you extrapolate future production from today's production rates? You can't, there is no basis. Some areas are geologically prospective, others are not. It is a matter of exploration & production. No doubt the most promising or most easily-accessed areas have been developed first

The oil companies "haven't decided it's worth their time to drill [in lots of offshore acreage]" because *geology* tells them that no commercial oil exists there, or they haven't yet gotten around to exploring some of the prospective acreage. In the latter case, it is a matter of leasing scarce drilling rigs that have been designed to operate in the ultra-deepwater. Multi-year delays are common. Chevron must wait to obtain a drilling rig which allows them to drill another test well in the Jack/St.Malo Walker Ridge in the Gulf (*Bloomberg*, June 13, 2007). The new appraisal well must be drilled before a development decision can be made.

These constraints on drilling in "untapped" OCS exploration parcels (blocks) apply equally to the protected and the unrestricted areas.

Three data points stand out: 1) OCS production never reaches 2.5 million barrels per day; 2) including restricted areas on the downside of the curve does not alter the offshore production peak and 3) no production in restricted areas occurs until 2018, a decade from now. Keep in mind that EIA forecasts are usually too optimistic. So much for Nancy Pelosi's extrapolation, or Bush's call to open up the restricted areas.”

“So, how bad is the political discourse? Opening up the protected areas is a red herring (the Republicans). Talk of boosting production in the unrestricted areas is a red herring (the Democrats). Politicians are talking about producing hypothetical oil in a hypothetical future which everyone, including the EIA, agrees is at least 10 years down the road. This is as bad as it gets.

What About Conservation?

The 19th century German politician Otto Von Bismarck said "Politics is the art of the possible." In 21st century America, politics has become the art of impossible dreams. *National Public Radio* ran a very interesting segment the other day which asked the question Why Aren't Candidates Talking Conservation? (June 30, 2008). *Day to Day* reporter Madeleine Brand asked Jodi Powell, Jimmy Carter's press secretary, why the presidential contenders are not willing to stand up, as Carter did, and tell Americans the straight story on why they must cut their oil consumption.

Brand pressed the point that such a stand would be politically unpopular, but Powell argued against this interpretation, saying that Carter's speech in 1979 was well received among voters. In any case, don't expect either Obama or McCain to take such a stand while they are running for president. Telling people to use less is perceived, rightly or wrongly, as an unpopular message which will prevent election.

Powell did make an important point, however. He said that "we've fallen into a pattern of treating the American people ... almost with contempt." Transparent deceptions about hypothetical futures don't cut the mustard, they are insulting. As a friend of mine said, addressing what Americans *must do now* is the "price of admission to this [energy] debate."

It's time to call out McCain and Obama, demanding that they tell us what Federal policies they would enact to help us in the next few years, not in a far-off imaginary future. If the answers are unsatisfactory, as they no doubt would be, at least we can face the future honestly with our eyes wide open. Jodi Powell called America's lack of preparedness a "huge tragedy." He is certainly right."

4) Biofuels (From Yahoo News)

"Biofuels have caused world food prices to increase by 75 percent, according to the findings of an unpublished World Bank report published in The Guardian newspaper on Friday.

The daily said the report was finished in April but was not published to avoid embarrassing the US government, which has claimed plant-derived fuels have pushed up prices by only three percent.

Biofuels, which supporters claim are a "greener" alternative to using fossil fuel and cut greenhouse gas emissions, and rising food prices will be on the agenda when G8 leaders meet in Japan next week for their annual summit.

The report's author, a senior World Bank economist, assessed that contrary to claims by US President George W. Bush, increased demand from India and China has not been the cause of rising food prices.

"Without the increase in biofuels, global wheat and maize stocks would not have declined appreciably and price increases due to other factors would have been moderate," the report said."

“It added that the drive for biofuels has distorted food markets by diverting grain away from food for fuel, encouraging farmers to set aside land for its production, and sparked financial speculation on grains.

"The basket of food prices examined in the study rose by 140 percent between 2002 and this February," The Guardian said.

"The report estimates that higher energy and fertilizer prices accounted for an increase of only 15 percent, while biofuels have been responsible for a 75 percent jump over that period."”

5) T. Boone Pickens Speaks:

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

“"This is not about Republicans vs. Democrats," Pickens says. "This is about saving our country from the ruination of spending \$700 billion a year on oil imports. Ninety days after the oil hits our shores, it's all burned up, and we've got nothing to show for it. But they (foreign oil producers) still have our money. It's killing our economy."”

T. Boone Pickens is on a one man crusade now to convert most of the electricity production away from NG to wind and solar, and use the freed up NG to provide transportation fuels. That would reduce the need for oil in the USA by 8 million barrels a day, a large part of our imports. You might be seeing some of his ads, paid for by himself, on TV and radio in the coming months. He is also spending a billion dollars building wind farms in the TX panhandle and elsewhere.

Visit the link above. If nothing else, elect some folks this fall with common sense to get the county going in the right direction. A ‘NO NO NO NO NO’ energy policy won’t solve any problems, and things will only get worse. We need nukes, and wind, and solar and clean coal and getting all the oil/natural gas there is to be gotten. There is no magic bullet. We need to be doing everything, and especially building wind farms, a smart electric grid and much more electrical transmission networks.

6) The End of 3rd World Civilization?

TEOTWAWKI – The End of the World as We Know It- in at least some areas.

“MAJURO — The tiny western Pacific island nation of the Marshall Islands has declared a state of economic emergency as soaring fuel prices threaten to shut down electricity supplies.

Failure to resolve the fuel crisis could lead to a "disaster of unimaginable magnitude," President Litokwa Tomeing said in a statement late Thursday.

"Accordingly, I Litokwa Tomeing, on behalf of the cabinet of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, hereby issue this public proclamation declaring a state of economic emergency," he said in the statement, which was broadcast nationally.

"The national power utilities are projected to face an estimated shortfall of 17.5 million US dollars to 21 million US dollars over the next 12 months assuming the global (fuel price) trend continues," he said.

This shortfall is close to 20 percent of the total national budget.

Tomeing said the country has enough diesel to keep the power generators running until the end of August but needs to find 8.5 million dollars in the next week to pay Seoul-based SK Networks for last month's diesel shipment and a downpayment for the next shipment.

The Marshalls Energy Company told the government last week that it cannot raise the money in time without an immediate cash injection.

The cabinet has decided to seek financial help from the United States, Taiwan, Japan, Australia and other countries and donor agencies to prevent a shut down of power in the country of about 54,000 people.

"Without electricity everything will come to a standstill," Finance Minister Jack Ading told visiting Asian Development Bank officials this week.

"The adverse effects of this global fuel crisis, its intensity and severity, are even more acute and destabilizing on small island states like the Marshall

Islands with practically no means to protect itself from external pressures and shocks," he said.

The cost of running diesel-powered generators in the two main urban centres and three outer islands is estimated at 2.8 million dollars a month.

Although power charges have nearly quadrupled in the last two years, utility companies generate only about 1.3 million dollars a month, according to figures provided by the Marshalls Energy Company, the main utility firm."

So what happens when the lights go out, and the population reverts to 1850s living? Where all the electrical appliances become instant junk? Where TVs and Radios go dead? Where ham radio ceases! What! Well, maybe some enterprising hams can get enough solar cells to operate QRP and continue to give out the country.

It's going to get interesting as countries around the world can no longer afford the diesel to run their generator stations.

Club Call Insanity – Solution?

Not long ago, one trucker was out there using 4 call signs on the 14.336 net. "The four of us got a 59, the four of us give you a 59 back". Even Net Mullah James didn't like that. He ran him off after a while because the trucker didn't have any interest in making 30 seconds worth of exchanges, with this call gives you 59, getting a reply, and then this call gives you 59.....and then this callsign gives you this. You really think the trucker logged who worked which callsigns? 4 times the paperwork? All sequentially as James demanded?

Even though James himself does the ‘both of us’ routine. The trucker just did the ‘quad of us’ routine. Do what does that make the Net Mullah? Right – a gigantic hypocrite.

James declared said that every call had to exchange reports with every call. Where does it say that in the rules? It doesn’t. In fact, you hear NC and his mini-me friend saying while working AB4YZ and his invisible mini-me friend “The both of us give you a 59” and the response ‘and “both of us give you a 59 back’. Soon it could be ‘the four of us give the four of you 59’...etc. It has already happened so it is not something that might happen, but something that even James shut down. Two is OK, but four he ran off.

Another one of his ‘made up on the spot’ rules, I guess.

Now, Dave, KE3VV, has affirmed by his interpretation of the rules for prefixes with ‘borrowed calls’ are ‘acceptable’. None of the county hunters rushed out to give out cheap contacts. Most know they are nothing but sham contacts.

Did you know that if you check into the 3905 Century Club net you are likely to find:

- a. Probably almost 50% of the people log in with club number.
- b You can log into the 3905 net with a maximum of 3 callsigns.
- c. The 3905 members swap club calls like they change their underwear.
- d. The unwritten rule is that only one person per day can use a given club callsign.

The same operator, same location...different borrowed calls so they can give out prefixes...like a K7 in MD, or a W3 in Oregon. **Folks can only log in with 3 different calls each day.** Talk about insanity. Even worse, then they start swapping QSL cards. You have to print up QSL cards for every borrowed callsign! And send them back at your expense! Of course, you might get 3 cards from the same person or 9 cards if you borrowed 9 different calls in the past week. Same person, in the same location, with 9 different calls in a month. Talk about mass insanity! Well, they don’t have 3077 counties to hunt down...only 50 states.

So now it is hunt down every prefix possible in every state. K1, K2, K3, K4..etc...N1, N2, N3, N4 in AK. Borrow the call from someone, use it for a day or two..then borrow another o In six months, you can borrow enough to give out every prefix in every state. **Maybe only 50 people you work...but, hey, stupidity is stupidity.....the same club call gets passed around to every state.**

Let it be just like the 10-10 nets. Borrow calls left and right. The four of 'us' give the four of you 59. Mobile to mobile cub calls. Borrowed club calls all over the place. My brothers call is XXX and his number is ZZZZ. My wife's call is YYYY and her number is QQQQ.

No wait...MARAC has individual achievement awards! Not group awards....**you actually have to use your own call!** And you actually have to exchange reports with the call holder, not someone who knows someone who has the call!

Occasionally, county hunters will stumble into a Field Day operation looking for counties, or in State QSO parties, or random contacts where one call is in use for the duration of the event.

Posted on the K3IMC forum by a member of the Awards Committee: "This is one of the main reasons the Awards Committee and the Board decided to allow Club Station contacts to count for most MARAC Awards. "

Well, would "it" count for the YL mobile award? You'd better work the callsign of the operator, because Logger won't let you log K2JG or K9MOT (Motorola Club)...no matter who the operator is. If some YL named "Pat" is using K2JG or K9MOT, well...Logger doesn't know that. Hmmm...**that too must be in individual achievement award....can't count a club call.** The club call has no gender. Strike another MARAC award. You need to work the call of the operator. So for YL is a club call good? Nope. If you set it for YL one time, and an OM is using the next time, oops! Error....error....error....and if the 'custodian' is a YL, it doesn't mean the person using it this time or the next time is a YL or OM.

Does “it” count for Bingo using the star wildcard. Nope. The operator must hold a star, and you must work the callsign of the operator. If W0MU is using K2JG, it doesn’t count for the wildcard Bingo. Another strike.

Does it count for MG? Nope. You must work the operator and his/her call. Even if the club ‘callsign’ has Bingo and a star, NOPE. It is the operator. Even if he/she had a star and Bingo, **he/she must be using his/her own call for a Valid Contact.**

So does it count for Master’s Gold. Nope. You are already ‘out’ in baseball.

Does it count for Master Platinum? Nope. Strike 4.

Does it count for the Polaris award? Nope. Strike 5

Does it count for Five Star? NOPE! That’s strike six.

Does it count for ‘teams’? Well, how is logger going to know if K9DCJ is being used by WB9NUL (YL) or W9UCW (OM)? If you work WB9NUL and K9DCJ, does it count? Nope.....to know whether it is a YL or OM, you really need to work the call of the OPERATOR. So again, Logger won’t log team contacts, and ‘club’ calls would hardly count toward teams. Another NOPE! If you log K9DCJ as a ‘her’, then Barry uses it, what then? Wrong logging? You bet! Error...error...error.....

Hey, I thought one of the MARAC awards folks told you club calls counted for ‘most MARAC awards! They don’t count for ‘most’ of the popular ones!

That was the list of the most popular awards, other than Nth time around and Bingo where it counts sometimes. Whoa! Only ‘sometimes’? Yes, you have to be smart enough (Logger isn’t) to know when it counts and doesn’t. Hmmmmm!

Now let us count all the individuals who have actually applied to MARAC for ‘club awards’.....you don’t have to count very high, do you? No higher than ‘2’. As in 22 22 22 22 Minimum Minimum MINIMUM . Like twin-twin – 2. A ‘minimum’ number. Can’t get much lower, can it?

1) KA1JPR, (Twin-twin #2) Percy and the imaginary playmate mini-me W1BQL. W1BQL received the 2nd time in 2000. Even Percy hasn't been all that excited about using the 'club call'.

2) KZ2P, (Twin-twin #1) and his imaginary "get off my frequency" mini-me playmate K2JG. A handful of awards. A small handful. Two fingers worth of 'club call' individual applicants.

Wow. It hardly seems worth the hours and hours of MARAC time, proposing and voting on 'wording' that allows 'clubs' to get awards, rewriting the rules - that have been spent justifying or trying to give Valid Awards to those two!

[There's only two other 'individuals' running mobile with 'borrowed calls'. Who else but AB4YZ and W0MU. Let's hope it doesn't multiply. Nearly everyone one else has stopped using vanity 'borrowed club calls' but those two seem to like the baddie points.]

Of course, if you are operating with a call other than your own, any contacts you make don't count toward your awards. Remember, the MARAC rules say you must be using your own call for a contact to count. If you go out for FD and use the club call, work the one county you still need - nothing you work with the club call counts toward your MARAC awards, even it is your last WBOW. Dang! Tough luck but those are the rules!

So much for 'club insanity'. 99%, yes that is 99% of the MARAC members don't play the 'club game'. You wonder why MARAC has gone out of its way to please less than 1% of the club membership at the expense of the other 99+>? Oh, right.....because it is KZ2P and KA1JPR and they are going to tell you what they want done, no? Or you'll be 'run off'?

Dave, KE3VV, posted on the K3IMC forum, that analysis of the rules showed that 'club calls' do count for prefixes, no matter who is using that 'callsign'. By interpreting 'operator' to be the 'control operator' of the club station, the prefixes count.

Bill, K2NJ, wanted club callsigns to count for situations where you worked a club call on Field Day, or perhaps during a state QSO party where folks piled in a car to run dozens of counties using their local club call. Few ever imagined 'imaginary ride along' mini-me type friends using multiple club calls giving out 'prefixes' for the county hunters. Well, actually, there is

only one active mobile out there doing it – most do not work the invisible mini-me callsign since they realize it is a ‘cheap cheap contact’.

So the issue of ‘prefixes’ is laid to rest. If you want a cheap contact, work W4CA. Otherwise, work a person who actually holds a call starting with “W” in those counties. Same for the seldom heard mini-me NA7XX.

Remember, club calls are NOT good for ‘most’ MARAC awards. If you stumble upon K9MOT or AA4UT on Field Day, the ‘star’ doesn’t count. No wildcard Bingo, no credit for Five Star.

One easy solution? How about if MARAC simply came up with a rule that if you wanted contacts to count for any MARAC awards, an operator could use ONLY ONE CALL in any given hour period?

That would allow folks to go out on state QSO parties using their local club call, and allow folks to log that, and log Field Day contacts and contacts from college clubs, etc. You could go to Field Day, operate with the club call, then head home, and by the time you are home, could use your own call to collect counties.

Bill, K2NJ, put it simply. One person, one call. It would chop off the insanity of the 3905 type ‘only 3 borrowed calls’ logging in or running counties, would end the ‘invisible friends’ operation. OH, W4CA could run counties. But with a single operator, neither you or the operator of W4CA could log contacts under any other call in that hour period. So W4CA could run and run and run. And you could log W4CA. But not W4CA and AB4YZ in the same hour. You just couldn’t log both W4CA and AB4YZ in the same one hour period. And Ray could not use both calls in the same hour.

So what do you think? Is this a way to chop of the ‘running counties with 3 borrowed calls’ bit before it starts multiplying again? Sure, folks could run the county with one call in the first hour. Then run the county with the second call if they wanted. Then use a third borrowed call in the 3rd hour. How many would do it? Or make it any 2 hour period or 4 hour period. Whatever works.

One person- one call in any given hour period for any award sponsored by MARAC. Simple! Elegant.

That would ‘allow’ club contacts when they really are ‘clubs’ – like on Field Day or State QSO parties or random operation for hours at a time by someone at a club using the club call for hours at a time. It would meet the intent of why ‘club calls’ were added to the MARAC Awards section. It would stop insanity of the sham ‘borrowed club calls’ contacts right now. And the mini-me stations as well.

Weird Cars

Do you need an economical car to get around town? Something with a small engine that should give you great mileage? A car for county hunting on long trips with great mileage?

Ever hear of the 1951 Thrif-T? Don’t feel bad. There aren’t too many around.



Here you have maybe the sole surviving Thrif-T car.

From a feature article in Hemmings Motor News (October 1, 2007)

“To the best of the owner's knowledge, the car you are looking at is the last surviving example. Actual Thrif-T production numbers have thus far eluded Zalutko, though it is known that the three-wheeler was designed by the Tri-Wheel Corp of Oxford, North Carolina, and manufactured by the Tri-Wheel Motor Corp., in Springfield, Massachusetts. Production of these cars and their variants lasted from 1948 until 1955. Thrift-Ts were produced in two standard colors, Hawaiian Gray and Lockhaven Green. Other colors, like the bright yellow finish on our feature car, were available at additional cost.

The interior of the Thrift-T is as bare-bones as its name implies: a bench seat and a floor mat for the driver and passenger but no door panels, kick panels or sound insulation of any kind. Controls and gauges are minimal, too, consisting of a steering wheel, a stick shift and a small array of gauges.

The Thrif-T is powered by a 62.5-cu.in., horizontally opposed, 10hp Onan engine, coupled to a Crosley transmission and axle, which rolls the little car's 4.50 x 12 tires to a top speed of 40 mph.”

In another article in AutoWeek Magazine, they suggest that although the target production was 500 per year, due to delays, bankruptcy and seizure of the assets by a bankruptcy court there weren't many made. The selling price was \$700 in 1947.

As described in the Autoweek (July 7, 2008) issue by the owner of the last remaining car, “You have to have a sense of humor to drive one of these”. “They are a cross between an amusement-park ride and a Davis – another American-built three-wheeler of the same era.

The current market value of the restored unit is estimated at \$40,000!

Do you think you could get an antenna on it and a radio in it? Does it even have a battery? Or electric starter?

Pictures From County Hunters

Phil, AB7RW, ran down to the convention then back north. Here's a pic of his mobile on the Mono/Alpine, CA line



AB7RW Mono/Alpine, CA (great views, too!)

Scottie, N4AAT, headed north from SC up to NC/VA/MD/DE on a speed trip and hit the 4 that N4CD desperately needed in NC for Master Platinum – and ran many others finishing up folks with needs. That brought N4CD down to one to go for WBOW for Platinum. Thanks, Scottie!

Note the large number of antennas –4 - he's set from DC to lighwave (well, up to 28 MHz now!) - SSB and CW, too. Resonators for just about anything now.



N4AAT - Wake/Harnett, NC Line

Last Counties in NC for N4CD for MP

From Scottie, N4AAT : “I average about 21.5 miles per gallon of diesel. As you can see on my truck, the two Outbacker 4 ft. Antennas are for 40 and 20 SSB. The other two antennas are CW. Left antenna, and mounted horizontal, are 20 and 30 CW. The right antenna is 10 and 15 CW mounted horizontal ,and 17 CW mounted vertical. They seem to work very good this way.

Net Control Hours

One way of qualifying for the Masters Gold Award is by accumulating Net Control Hours. However, the requirements were re-written a few years ago, and reflect the normal operation on SSB only. However, you can still acquire CW net control hours.

I remember well when there were usually two co-net control stations. Each would keep the list. Each would log all the mobiles, start and stop times. Each knew how to run mobiles off the list, when folks wanted 'down one' or 'down' two', or 'off to the side', and how to check in and add mobiles, and how to move mobiles off freq. Each would give the next three mobiles to run, not just one, at each pause. If there were no mobiles ready to run, they would fill the time with possibly a fixed station running a county if they expected it to be a while before someone was ready.

However, even for SSB, the requirements are fairly simple, yet require some 'book keeping'. From the MARAC rules page:

“For purposes of MARAC awards, credit for service as a **Net Control Station (NCS)** or **Assistant Net Control (ANCS)** can be earned for assisting mobile stations to make contacts with other county hunters, including:

maintaining control of a net frequency,

keeping a list of active mobiles, announcing mobile call signs and counties, and providing relays. **NCS** and **ANCS** time may not be claimed when a net is not operating ("open session").

A log must be maintained by the NCS or ANCS containing the dates and hours of operation as NCS or ANCS. The log may also include other information supporting the time of service claimed, such as call signs of mobiles run and the names of counties run.

This log must be submitted with any application for an award where credit for **NCS** or **ANCS** is claimed. When applying for an award, the applicant

must also submit a summary of the log showing the total number of hours or service as NCS and ANCS claimed.”

Wow.

First of all, you can't claim credit for 'just being around' and running a mobile you hear. The net has to be in 'session'. You have to be there continuously. You can't just be going 'Any mobile ready to run?' if there are five or six out there. Actually, the net has to be formally running, with "NC" keeping track of **active mobiles with a list** and their progress.

Second: You must keep a list and know who has priority if two or more call at the same time. (not just take the Big Rig first always) Either as as NC or ANC.

You cannot be a 'parrot' to the NC. **If you are claiming NC hours, you, too, must also keep the list!** You must know who is next! And who is on the list, and who should be the next to be called, and who is 'off to the side'.

Third, you should keep a log of the mobiles run while you were NC or ANC. Naturally time started, time signed. There will be questions. Any NC or ANC worth his/her salt will be able to answer who ran/where when they were NC or ANC in the recent past. Even if someone else assisted to run them and the NC/ANC did not hear who ran.

Fourth, you must submit the summarized log showing the dates and times that you were NC or ANC. And, of course, you must summarize it showing the total number of valid hours as ANC or ANCS when applying for any award.

So let us take an example. Let us say a station with a call like KA1xxx is 'helping' out the NC on 14.336 and wants to claim "Net Control Hours" maybe toward a Master's Gold Award, but doesn't keep the list. Doesn't know who is next, but waits for NC to tell him 'to call W3xxx'. If the NC disappears (power failure), does he have the list? Nope – because when the NC signs off and doesn't pass the list, the KA1xxx station sits there and says he doesn't have the list, so just goes 'any mobile ready to put out a county?'.

Worse, if the NC disappears, if two answers, he ignores one, and runs the other (usually the big rig has preference). At the end, he'll call again for

mobiles, and if two answer, he doesn't start a list, just takes the loudest one, runs that mobile, then the same spiel again. Woe to the weaker station who is simply ignored each time. Many times I've heard two or three call in, and all are ignored except the Big Rig. That's not running the net correctly in my book. Or by the MARAC rules, either. Hours don't count.

A NC following the rules would hear one, ask for others, start a list. Does the KA1xxx do that? Nope. Nor does he seem to 'keep a list' as required when he is 'assisting'.

Clearly that DOES NOT meet the requirements for NC hours – if he is not 'keeping the list' as well, as 'assistant' and is trying to claim hours – he simply can't claim those hours. Plain and simple. The ANC must keep the list along with NC – in case the NC disappears suddenly(power failure) or has to leave suddenly (big lightning storm?) That has happened several times in the past six months. Instant confusion. No one 'has the list'.

Is there anyone currently who can claim "Net Control Hours" other than KZ2P or K2JG on 20M SSB? A resounding NO! Not on 20M SSB when he is around! No one else keeps the list (seems to be only in one persons 'control', and the list seems to often be a 'secret' only known to KZ2P most of the time, with who is 'down' or 'pinked'.) Just wait for him to disappear with a power failure, and it is total pandemonium as to who is supposed to run next!

That is the function an 'assistant' net control is supposed to provide. Be able to take over in case NC disappears or has to leave suddenly. The ANC is supposed to have the list. **That is why you get 'credit' for the hours assisting if you follow the procedures outlined in the award rules.**

Naturally, on cw, seldom is a list of active mobiles required. When it is needed on rare occasions, it is kept, but with room to QSY up/down with ease, most cw folks chose to QSY if two mobiles are ready to run at the same time. Right now, Jim, W4HSA, is very active as NCS on 20M CW. He'll keep the CQers off the frequency, and announce every now and then "CHN – Any mobile QRV?". When a mobile asks "QNF?", he'll respond with is call, and then announce the county and do relays if requested.

[QNF? – is the net free?] – the CW equivalent of ‘any mobile running?’ on SSB.

AS cw NC, I kept a record of who ran, either on/off frequency. Announced the moves to off frequency (and spotted). Not all have spots and if you don’t announce on the main frequency, many will miss it.

If two mobiles show up, or someone is running, either he or others will tell the mobile asking QRX or “AS”(wait). If you are mobile and hear the mobile running, often you’ll work the mobile and move yourself off frequency, usually down 2 plus or minus. If really busy, down 2 and down 4.

With now 4 CW bands (40/30/20/17) there is always something open to run on, then return a bit later to run on another frequency!

The bottom line: If you want to claim NC or ANC hours on SSB as ‘assistant’, **YOU MUST BE KEEPING THE LIST**. Otherwise, you don’t meet the requirements. If you haven’t been keeping the list for the past 5 or 10 years, we’ll, put simply, those hours don’t count. Sort of like running counties ‘some time ago’ but having no record of when, where, and who you contacted to claim credit per the rules for ‘transmitted counties’.

So if you are interested in using ‘Net Control’ Hours for Masters Gold, read up on the rules so you don’t get tripped up! AS the CHNews has noted, most people use transmitted counties for the points credit toward the Masters Gold Award. Now you know why. Other than 40M SSB and CW, you currently are going to have a hard job on 20M SSB getting any credits for hours.

WG6X Ray’s Hints for Keeping the List

“Running a list is not hard to do for net or keep list of active mobiles.

Make a list of the mobiles to start with. As the mobiles run going down the list draw a line thru the mobile that ran and put him/her/team on the bottom of the list. If a new mobile wants on the list put the mobile on the bottom of the list.

If a mobile on the list wants to be highlighted for a while then one easy way is to draw a circle around the mobile and if there is a time frame the mobile will be back write it on side of the mobile call. That way you always start at the top with the mobiles that haven't ran since the others. If you go down the list and say the fourth one is now ready then draw a line thru that call and put them on the bottom.

One way to practice this is to listen to someone running the net and practice the above. It's not very hard or hard to understand. Of course you might have a highlighter pen instead of just circling the mobile/s call.

I hope this will help those that would like to run the net or keep a list of running mobiles when its open so everyone has a fair chance to run in some kind of order. “

(From the K3IMC forum)

Don, AE3Z also noted:

“Another possible procedure that I used with success was to write the mobile call on an index card.

Then write the time they started a run and the county..... keep the index cards in order and drop the mobile that just ran to the bottom of the pile..... or lower them 1-2-3, as requested if they can't run when its their turn..... this kept a "list" handy as well as reminded me of what they ran and when..... I was able to buy index cards cheaply at a local office supply..... they could also be spaced out on a desk top with a magic marker on the one being run as well..... lots of ways to do the job and it really is easier than it sometimes appears.”

N7ID, Masters Gold #28

Jack, N7ID, was issued Master Gold Award #28. Jack puts out a booming signal from Bingham County, ID, and is one of a few active mobiles in the Northwest. The mobile is a Ford Taurus with a 20M Hamstick on a mag mount on the trunk deck. That is about all the XYL will stand for!

As soon as he got his number, he headed east to run as many counties as he could on a trip to start working toward the 500 separate counties to be transmitted (with a qualifying MP contact) for the Master Platinum Award! No time wasted, and of course, before gas goes up again, and before the snow flies, he intends to have a big dent in that 500 separate county requirement!

Here's a picture of him and XLY Willie when I had an eyeball with him in Idaho where we met for a second breakfast:



Jack N7ID and Willie, W7AXY

The Ford Focus (red) is in the background and you can see the Hamstick sticking up in the picture.

Normally, Jack just runs the counties by himself. He is one of just 8 county hunters that have transmitted from ALL 3077 counties (Ran All USA #7) . He's a holder of a Commercial Driver's License that would make him good for the Big Rig Award if you ever caught him in an 18 wheeler.

Congrats, Jack! Good luck on getting those 500 counties fast and helping out everyone else qualify for Master Platinum!

Hope and Change? For the Worse

You know Barack Obama's Energy Policy. NO NO NO NO NO NO. That is no nukes, no coal, no new exploration/drilling for oil, no wind on Federal land (not scenic) , no more solar on Federal lands (they are 'backlogged' due to inefficiency) , no more anything! Teddy Kennedy wants no windmills off the New England coast, so Obama will chirp along with him. Shut down nukes, shut down coal, and the heck if folks freeze in the dark or pay \$8/gal for gas or heating oil. Won't bother Obama with his millions in tax free bonds. He's not going to pay those federal income taxes despite his multi-million a year income. He'll have enough to afford his energy bills. How about you?

Know look at his double talk on the Second Amendment. From NRA-ILA:

During the primaries, Obama tried to hide behind vague statements of support for "sportsmen" or unfounded claims of general support for the right to keep and bear arms.

But his real record, based on votes taken, political associations, and long standing positions, shows that Barack Obama is a serious threat to Second Amendment liberties. Look instead to what he has said and done during his entire political career.

FACT: Barack Obama voted to allow reckless lawsuits designed to bankrupt the firearms industry.

FACT: Barack Obama wants to **re-impose** the failed and discredited **Clinton Gun Ban**.

FACT: Barack Obama voted to **ban** almost **all rifle ammunition** commonly used for hunting and sport shooting.

FACT: Barack Obama has endorsed a complete **ban on handgun ownership**.

FACT: Barack Obama supports **local gun bans** in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and other cities.

FACT: Barack Obama voted to **uphold local gun bans** and the criminal prosecution of people who use firearms in self-defense.

FACT: Barack Obama refused to sign a **friend-of-the-court Brief** in support of individual Second Amendment rights in the *Heller* case.

FACT: Barack Obama opposes **Right to Carry laws**.

FACT: Barack Obama was a member of the **Board of Directors** of the **Joyce Foundation**, the leading source of funds for anti-gun organizations and “research.”

FACT: Barack Obama supported a proposal to **ban gun stores** within 5 miles of a school or park, which would eliminate almost every gun store in America.

FACT: Barack Obama favors a **ban on standard capacity magazines**.

FACT: Barack Obama supports **repeal of the Tiahrt Amendment**, which prohibits information on gun traces collected by the BATFE from being used in reckless lawsuits against firearm dealers and manufacturers.

FACT: Barack Obama supports a **ban on inexpensive handguns**.

FACT: Barack Obama supports a **ban on the resale of police issued firearms**, even if the money is going to police departments for replacement equipment.

<http://www.nraila.org/media/PDFs/2008Obamafactsht.pdf>

He has a long record of anti-gun positions. With the defeat of the left wing anti-gun position by the Supreme Court, that just ruled that Americans do have the right to defend themselves, their loved ones, and their homes from

those out to do them harm, Obama still is defiant and is saying that it really doesn't mean that. Remember, the first thing that happens in a socialist state is all the guns are confiscated. Including your hunting rifle and guns for self defense and target shooting. Only the criminals will then have guns.

As England is finding out with their total ban, crime is out of control, with criminal gangs running rampant. It's just as easy to score a 'handgun' as it is to score some other illegal drugs if you are willing to buy in the black market. The citizenry are helpless as the thugs have a field day robbing them, breaking and entering into their houses. If you 'hurt' a criminal who is attempting to burgle your house, or rob you of your money, in England, you are the one likely to wind up in jail, and have to pay 'compensation' because the crook is no longer able to work robbing other people and steal from them! Geez!

His idea of hope and change is 'he is going to **make changes** he wants and he **hopes** you don't notice or have the ability to oppose him'. Make us like England where crime is rampant and only the crooks have guns.

Right...he won't ban guns...he'll ban the ammunition you need to shoot one, and ban the ability to have a gun store in most Eastern states where you can buy a gun, rifle or hunting supplies. Figure out how far hunters or you will have to drive to buy ammo if there is 'no store within 5 miles of a school'. That's what he VOTED FOR!

He'll make registration mandatory then the price to register a gun will be a nominal \$500/yr. Each gun. That's his record of what he has voted on. Now, he'll say anything to get elected – but what out – his past record shows he is a socialist, left wing radical out to 'change America' to an ideal socialized place like Venezuela under Chavez, or Cuba under Castro, where the government will try (and fail) to run everything as inefficiently as possible.

Biggest Hypocrite Around?

James, aka "The Club", has had a 'thing' about mobiles that don't put out counties on 20M SSB, and then ask for relays. Let's see...just how many

counties has KZ2P/K2JG run lately? Wow! Other than 2 spots for Charleston, SC, one two years ago on W6RK.com, one 3 years ago (and was he mobile?), there is nothing. Zilch. This Master Gold holder hasn't run anything.

You also hear him frequently request of his 'helper' "Have him listen for me". Really? He wants a relay!

Why would the station who never puts out counties on 20M be asking for relays? Shouldn't he follow his own "rule"? If he doesn't put out counties for the folks on 20M SSB, he shouldn't be asking for relays to get a contact! Right! (didn't he drive from his house down to Atlanta airport? And rent a car in California? Hmmm????? Yet no mobile operation! And be where there is a parking lot full of fully operational mobile units, yet he makes ZERO contacts?).

Well, the next time you hear him extortion someone by saying 'if you don't run counties on my net, no relays from your home station!'...then think about the biggest hypocrite around - 'his eminence'.....as he asks an assistant: "Please have him listen for me!".....the 'twin-twin' who doesn't follow his own 'rules'.

Awards

BINGO II #47 WQ7A 6-6-08
5 STAR #34 KE3VV 6-12-08
3RD TIME #214 W0GXQ 6-23-08
BINGO #299 WB4KZW 7-1-08
MASTER PLATINUM #1 K5GE 7-3-08
2ND TIME #380 KF5HY 7-5-08
3RD TIME #215 N7ID 7-14-08
MASTER GOLD #28 N7ID 7-14-08
5TH TIME #90 W0DFK 7-19-08
BINGO III #12 W0DFK 7-19-08

Events for County Hunters in August

Aug 2 0001Z - Aug 3 2359Z

10-10 Summer Phone QSO Party Call, name, 10-10 number, S/P/C

www.ten-ten.org

Aug 2 1800Z - Aug 3 0600Z

North American QSO Party Name and state ncjweb.com

Aug 9 1600Z - Aug 10 2359Z

Maryland-DC QSO Party Maryland County/City or S/P/C

www.w3cwc.org/funcontest.htm

Aug 16 1800Z - Aug 17 0600Z

1.8-28 North American QSO Party Name and state ncjweb.com 14 days

Aug 16 2000Z - Aug 18 0200Z

New Jersey QSO Party Serial and NJ county or S/P/C www.qsl.net/w2rj

Aug 23 0700Z - Aug 24 2200z

Hawaii QSO Party RS(T), S/P/C or maritime regn or HI county

www.karc.us/hi_qso_party.html

That's it for this month! See you next month with more articles, pictures and content. De N4CD