County Hunter News

October 1, 2006
Volume 2, Issue 10

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, or provide news of upcoming events.

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

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.126, and 7038.5, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.w6rk.com

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@prodigy.net)

Notes from the Editor

September has been a good month. On SSB, the Chinese 'Fire Dragon' jammer seems to occasionally wound up on/near the SSB net frequency and once or twice near the 20m cw frequency, but overall things went well. We're still headed downhill in the sunspot cycle, and the lower bands have sure helped out at times.

Forty meters sounded pretty good at times, and DX is heard this time of year (fall equinox) often quite well. Don, K8MFO, finished up 'all cw' again, getting 3rd time as well.

The 30 meter net has moved to 10.126 to escape the afternoon and evening QRM from EU. Not a perfect frequency, but the east coast and northern USA not bothered by incessant DX CQing and QSOs on 10.114, and we should escape QRM from DXpeditions. However, the choice of frequency is now a minor problem. 10.126 And 10.128 are listed by NN8I as 'Amtor' frequencies on 30 meters (www.nn8i.com/digital.asp). It may also be a Pactor Gateway in EU. Some mornings there is a 'numbers' station spewing out top secret spy information to someone somewhere sitting on 10.126 LSB, with one healthy carrier. So we may need to 'fine tune' the frequency selection up or down a bit. More next month when folks come up with proposals to make the situation better.

The Texas QSO Party was great, but propagation was challenging for much of the weekend. Lots of counties were run and spotted, both on CW and SSB. Skip was often 'long' on 40, and counties were spotted on 15 meters as well. It looks like well over 200 counties were activated during the TQP. Some folks worked over 100 according to comments heard on the air. The next 'really big' QSO party is CQP the first part of October – always a good one to snag needed CA counties. Then the next weekend will be the PA QSO party. Lots of mobiles and counties always activated for those.

Beware the PA rules…you can be within a few hundred feet of a county line in PA, and 'run the line'. Hard to tell what is going on there. Usually every county in CA on the air, but finding them and working them is the challenge. Keep those spots up – help out the others. Work first, spot next. Let's see if we can get them all spotted for each contest! I'll be working on 'band counties' hunting for them on 40M cw in the evenings. I wish I had a decent 80 meter antenna, too….nothing at the moment here – and lots of QRN from the neighborhood here on 80M – a gazillion computers, gadgets, and light dimmers within 1000 feet.

For MARAC, you can only work two counties with one contact for a 'county line'. In the TQP, some stations were on 4 way lines, and you worked them 4 times in a row, once for each county. In the CQP, in the past, one station was 'boat mobile' sitting in San Francisco Bay on a '4 way

line' giving all 4 at one time. For MARAC awards, you could only count two per contact. Normally I wrote all 4 down, and by the end of the contest usually had someone else in at least 2 others of the 4, so counted the ones I needed for the "4" way up to 2. Or worked on 2 or 3 bands to get them on SSB and on CW.

It seems like there are a lot of RTTY contests that mess up the 40M 'cw band' in the evenings – there must be a RTTY contest every weekend…hundreds of signals in the CW band – and not many up in the 'digital' part of the band. Wish those folks in EU would get their "broadcast stations' moved out of 40M so they can operate where they are supposed to be – up above 7070 KHz. That QRM makes finding and keeping a frequency above 7025 challenging. Really tough for the mobiles. Some use 7122 when there is CW contest in progress.

Errata - Several readers pointed out that the picture of W7LQT, now SK, was at the Charleston, WV, convention in 1983. W0EAR exclaimed 'That's me holding the tail". Ken will be missed.

Sunspot Cycle – at the end of August, the second reversed polarity sunspot (one of the next Cycle 24 appeared). We still have 6 months or so to the minimum, then a gradual climb back up. It's only telling you that sooner or later, the next cycle will start. Last time, there were many weeks with 'zero sunspot count' before things headed back up again. We haven't reached that point yet.

In this issue – article on mobiling in other countries, some peak oil news and articles – lots happening this month, pictures, and whatever else crosses the editor's desk, a report on the change to 10.126, and some follow up on the new County Challenge Award.

According to the RoadRunner, MARAC had to scrap the plaque that was going to be issued to "K2JG" for "SSB NC Year 2006", as "K2JG was 'ineligible' to receive the plaque. The annual awards can only go to MARAC members 'in good standing'. It was caught at the last moment, maybe by sharp eyed MARAC Board members who double checked before sending things out after reading the last CHNews? Glad they caught that.

A new plaque had to be ordered for the MARAC member who received that award.

I wonder then why they counted any votes for "K2JG" when that 'callsign' was clearly ineligible. Those votes should have been scrapped, too! You can't count votes for non-members. It would be no different that if an individual non-member had run the net for thousands of hours, and folks nominated that person for NC of the year. Those votes would have to be scrapped. That person is ineligible. The same for "K2JG" and the Atlantic Radio Club. "IT" is not a member, not even able to become a member since not an 'individual'. And "it" and "KZ2P" are not the same, no matter what logic you use.

The most active NC station moved to South Carolina, and, not unexpectedly, the entire Atlantic Radio Club, K2JG, is moving HQ to South Carolina, with all its equipment, antennas, club house, etc. Amazingly, one operator at the 'Club" gets so excited when he hears N4CD calling a mobile, he says 'Hi There - Hi There' over and over again while the mobile is giving N4CD a signal report. Wow! I'll have to get on more often on SSB. Now I'm just filling in a few counties I need on 20M SSB to finish that category off. It's a shame he makes the mobiles have to repeat, though, at times. Or?

The 'good news' is that gasoline prices have once again come down to be in line with crude oil prices. Here in Texas, gasoline is now $2.20/gal or so, and likely will be there for a few months. Still up quite in a bit in 2 years, but not as painful. See story on 'winter gas' and relative prices.

In this issue – more on the County Challenge Award, news on 500 KHz, the Chinese 'jammers', and naturally, of interest to those who go mobile, articles on oil. Even the 'antenna guru' might lie awake at night, trying to figure out how to get an effective 505 KHz antenna on the back of his pickup truck? If he thought 160 was a challenge, here's a new one. You can run 20W ERP. Let's see…we get one of W0QE's 5000 watt amps, and need an antenna at least 0.4% efficient at 505 KHz, and a bandwidth of 5 KHz or so. A wavelength is about 600 meters there. So a quarter wave would be 150 meters, or 490 feet or so. An 8 foot whip is not a significant part of a quarter wavelength! Well, it's only experimental band right now, so no need for 'mobile' antenna just yet. That's off in the future.

County Challenge Award (CCA)

Last month the CHNews described Risto's exciting new 'challenge' for county hunters. It's off to a good start with many submitting their totals to him for listing. If you run Kwiklog or similar, you can easily find out your total counties per band (getting a breakdown by mode requires exporting a file and then searching it by other means). However, you can be listed for 'total counties' (and if you only operate one mode, that is easy to figure out how many you have on that mode). You can see on the Kwiklog summary page how many you have on each band. Send in those totals to Risto for listing on the site. (i.e., total of 3077 on 20m, 1500 on 40m, 1500 on 30m, etc).

Tom, K7REL suggested that you can export a file from Kwiklog, and then use Access or another database program to extract mode/band counts. That might be beyond the normal ability of most county.

Maybe the new MARAC Logger program will allow you to check each band/mode for total contacts?

Now you can search each band and mode combination to see how many spots have been made. The CCA involves all the bands from 160 through 6 meters, minus only 60 meters. This feature added by Risto is on the stats page. (Hit 'see the stats' on the main ch.W6RK.com page.)

For example, as of 9/14/2006, if you check the following bands, you will see how many spots are there:

10 meters 109 counties spot total, 96 cw, 17 counties on SSB
12 meters - only 1 county spotted so far!

15 meters 217 counties spots, 190 on cw, 54 counties SSB

17 meters 22 counties spots, 17 counties 17, 6 counties SSB

20 meters – every county has been spotted at least 7 times
20 meter cw - Only 3062 counties spotted so far! 15 to go! (And only 1000 counties have been spotted 7 times or more)
20 meter SSB - Every county spotted at least 5 times on SSB

30 meters – all counties spotted

40 meters – 3019 counties have been spotted, 2685 on cw, 2826 on SSB

80 meters- 807 counties total, 600 counties on cw, 275 on SSB

160 meters - 233 counties total, 231 on cw, 6 on SSB

OK – seems like the following counties need to get spotted on 20 meter CW – someone please run them and someone please spot them so we have all done on 20 meter CW! (Tallapoosa, AL, Monroe, IL, Crittenden, KY, Edmondson, KY, Grayson, KY, Marion, KY, Green, KY, McLean, KY, Muhlenberg, KY, Meade, KY, Nelson, KY, Washington, KY, Richmond, NY, Clinton, MO, Clay, SD). Naturally, with much of the CW CH activity now on 30, and with spots only going back a few years, many of these were likely run many times before spots arrived on the scene, and before CW county hunters migrated to 30 meters for the sunspot minimum. However, it remains a 'challenge' to get them all spotted!

Now is the time to get them all spotted on 40 meters as well – the next two years are the bottom of the sunspot cycle, and best for low band activity.

Naturally, many of the spots on 10 and 15 meters came from contesting, where rare counties such as HI were spotted. The same is true for 160 meters were in Sweepstakes, the ARRL 160 contest, and other contests you can snag some needed counties. The state QSO parties generated many 40cw and 80 cw spots.

With the beginning of 'CCA', there might be more incentive for more people to collect 'band counties', watching and hopefully spotting what they are hearing/working on the other bands! As we go through the sunspot minimum and start using higher bands, mobiles will likely run other bands besides 20/30/40 which is common now, with some activity on 3556.5 occasionally.

How long do you think before all counties spotted on 20 meter CW? Then what? 40 meters? 15? 17? Maybe this will get a few dials unstuck from 14.336?

Risto submitted the award to MARAC for consideration. If you feel it has merit, let your director know!

From KM1C, Bill:

How about "CHAD"? .... County Hunter Activity Days on the various bands as follows: 1st day of month = 160 meter activity 2d day of month = 80/75 meter activity 3d day of month = 40 meter activity etc., etc., 10th day of month = 6 meter activity. Then 11th day of month starts the cycle again with 160 meters as does the 21st day of the month.

Any 31st day of month could be a day off from the cycle. Cycle repeats again starting on the 1st of the next month. A specific band would always associated with the 2nd numeral in its date: 160 would always be on the 01th, 11th, 21st of each month 30 would always be on the 04th, 14th, 24th 17 would always be on the 06th, 16th, 26th 6 would always be on the 10th, 20th, 30th (fill in the other bands, schedule drops in wavelength one band per day). Each band would have a recommended 'base' frequency for each mode that does not conflict with our normal mobile running frequencies.

For example: 15 meters (on 07th, 17th and 27th of each month) recommended freqs could be: 21040 CW 21085 DIGITAL 21320 SSB. Same idea for other bands, trying not to conflict with existing nets running activity would be encouraged by both mobile and fixed stations. This would allow non-mobile hams the opportunity to run their fixed county on all 10 bands without conflicting with the normal mobile net frequencies. Self-spotting would be encouraged, running stations picking non-busy frequencies on or near recommended frequencies for that band. Net controls would NOT be encouraged, though running stations could ask for QSP help if they desire.

The w6rk spotting site would be a huge help in creating the above increased ch activity on all 10 bands: the header could identify which band is being promoted for that date and what the recommended freqs are. Maybe a new box could be created in the spotted station area indicating whether the spotted station is Mobile, Fixed, or Portable (M, F, or P) Whole idea is to promote CH activity on all the bands and modes by both fixed and mobile stations, utilizing the advantages of the w6rk spotting site, without interfering with the traditional net-controlled frequencies. Of course, I'm open to any other ideas or refinements to this idea. I do think this format

would really allow ops to 'fill in the squares' on bands and modes of their choice. I know I'll be chasing and running counties on all 10 bands and all 3 modes! It's the W6RK web site that is adding tons of fun to this endeavor!

Chinese FireDragon Jammer

From ARRL News – Sept 6

“NEWINGTON, CT, Sep 7, 2006 -- As the so-called "Firedragon" jammer continues to transmit in one or more Amateur Radio bands, three International Amateur Radio Union Region 3 member-societies so far have appealed to the jammer's target to move elsewhere. The Firedragon's all-music transmissions from the People's Republic of China (PRC) appear aimed at blocking the much-weaker broadcasts of the clandestine "Sound of Hope", located outside the PRC. Responding via e-mail September 5 to an inquiry from IARU Region 1 Monitoring System Vice Coordinator Uli Bihlmayer, DJ9KR, the SOH said its supporters use various avenues "including Amateur Radio frequencies" to get their message into the PRC.

"Through our investigation, we learned that the transmissions of SOH programs through Amateur Radio frequencies come from areas around China, and they each only target a local area of China with very low power, only for the intended audience and would interfere with nobody else," said SOH's Yue Chen.

Yue addressed the reply to "All Amateur Radio Community Members" and indicated it was copied to the International Telecommunication Union although no ITU addressee was displayed. Yue encouraged the Amateur Radio community to "openly urge the Chinese government to stop this outrageous act of radio jamming" and to urge the ITU to take action as well.

IARU Region 3 Complaints

Wireless Institute of Australia Director Glenn Dunstan, VK4DU, told the Sound of Hope via e-mail this week that if it wants the support of the international community, it should move its transmissions into legitimate broadcasting spectrum.

"There is more than enough radio spectrum for you to use outside of the Amateur Radio bands," Dunstan said September 5. "You are in breach of international radio regulations."

A similar reaction came September 6 from Amateur Radio Society of India (ARSI) Monitoring System Coordinator B.L. Manohar Arasu, VU2UR, who pointed the finger at both the Sound of Hope and the Firedragon music jammer.

"We, the Indian Amateur Radio operators, condemn both of you for using Amateur Radio frequencies," he said. "Please leave the frequencies clear at the earliest." Arasu suggested the jamming not only was bothersome to everyday hamming but could cause problems for emergency communication by radio amateurs.

New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters Monitoring Service Coordinator Len Martinson, ZL1BYA, e-mailed the Sound of Hope September 6 to say its "illegal broadcast transmissions" were causing unlawful and harmful interference to the legal occupants of the Amateur Radio bands in question.

"Your transmissions are also attracting the attention of jamming stations, which is increasing the interference to unacceptable levels," he said. "Please cease transmissions in the exclusive amateur bands immediately."

IARU Region 2 Monitoring System Coordinator Bill Zellers, WA4FKI, agreed with the tenor of the Region 3 complaints. "Why are they [SOH] making excuses for something that should not have happened?" he remarked.

Firedragon Back in 20-Meter CW Band

Bihlmayer said September 6 that the Firedragon was back on 14.050 MHz -- a part of the 20-meter band allocated to the Amateur Radio Service on an exclusive basis worldwide -- after spending two days on 14.400 MHz. He told DX Listening Digest that the Firedragon jammer on 14.050 MHz "is not the only one," and that several are active on frequencies outside the amateur bands. Over the past several months, the jammer also has been heard on 10.135 MHz, 14.260 MHz, 18.080 MHz and 18.160 MHz.

The music jammer takes apparent monitoring breaks on the hour, and when the jammer's carrier is off, Bihlmayer, who lives in Southern Germany, says he's heard a weak carrier on 14.050 MHz broadcasting a Chinese program that included speech.

He asked stations and SWLs in Hong Kong or Taiwan to listen during the breaks to pin down the jammer's target.

ARRL Monitoring System/Intruder Watch Liaison Chuck Skolaut, K0BOG, says he's been able to hear the jammer from W1AW. In July, when the same jammer also was appearing on 18.160 MHz, Bihlmayer alerted telecom authorities in Germany and Hong Kong, as well as IARU Region 3 and the PRC embassy in Berlin to the situation. The 17-meter band also is a worldwide exclusive Amateur Radio allocation. Skolaut says he's received reports about the music jammer from all over the US, including Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico as well as from New Zealand. “

NN3SI Closes Down for 2 years – from W5YI News

“Labor Day was the last day for visitors to the nation’s capital to see the Smithsonian’s Information Age exhibit and other historical communications artifacts. The *National Museum of American History* closed September 5th for a two-year renovation. The decision to close the museum was made reluctantly after it became clear that doing so was the quickest, safest and most cost-effective way to do the construction work.

The Information Age exhibit chronicles the birth and growth of electronic communications - the information age - from Samuel Morse's invention of a practical telegraph in the 1830s through the development of the telephone, radio, television, and computer. A special focus was how information technology has changed the way people live and work.

The Museum has more than 3 million artifacts in its collection. More than 7,000 objects chart the evolution of communications, including such treasures as the original Samuel Morse telegraph and Alexander Graham Bell’s first telephone. The Museum even operates its own ham radio station.

Amateur Radio station NN3SI. is located on the first floor of the west wing. Staffed by volunteers, it was available daily for thirty years for licensed visiting radio amateurs to operate.

Its unusual call sign, NN3SI, comes from the station's origin in the Museum's bicentennial exhibition “A Nation of Nations.” The FCC assigned a temporary call NN3SI for Nation of Nations - US radio district 3 - Smithsonian Institution, and later granted a request to make the call permanent. The station operates on a range of frequencies from 3.5 to 450 MHz

The 42-year-old museum, the largest history museum in the country, is expected to reopen - along with NN3SI - by summer 2008.

Update on 500 KHz

Readers of the CHNews will recall the information previously published on 500 KHz. Now, from the ARRL Letter, published by the ARRL, Newington, CT 06111 (Friday, Sept 15, 2006):

“ARRL GRANTED EXPERIMENTAL LICENSE FOR 500 KHZ RESEARCH BY RADIO AMATEURS

The FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology on September 13 granted Part 5 experimental license WD2XSH to the ARRL on behalf of a group of radio amateurs interested in investigating spectrum in the vicinity of 500 kHz. The two-year authorization permits experimentation and research between 505 and 510 kHz (600 meters) using narrowband modes at power levels of up to 20 W effective radiated power (ERP). ARRL Member Fritz Raab, W1FR, of Vermont, will serve as experimental project manager for "The 500 KC Experimental Group for Amateur Radio"

"I'm kind of excited to see how we can apply modern technology to a 'classic part' of the radio spectrum," Raab told ARRL this week. He pointed out that 500 kHz - the traditional maritime emergency frequency - is roughly geometrically halfway between the 136 kHz experimental band and the 160 meter amateur allocation.

"In contrast to 160 meters, 500 kHz is low enough to offer good groundwave propagation, but in contrast to 137 kHz it is high enough to allow us to engage in real communication with realistic equipment." Raab eventually would like to see at least a secondary 600-meter amateur allocation from 495 to 510 kHz.

"Besides the opportunities for experimenting at low frequencies, that frequency is well suited to regional groundwave communication," Raab said. He envisions eventual use of the spectrum to provide Amateur Radio emergency communication via groundwave, without having to deal with the vagaries of the ionosphere or causing interference to other services.

For about a century, the 500 kHz region was an important band for maritime communication, emergency and otherwise. The band is occasionally used by "heritage" commercial maritime stations, such as the Maritime Radio Historical Society's KPH on the West Coast, on special occasions. 500 kHz remains designated as an official maritime emergency CW frequency, although the vast majority of maritime users have shifted to satellite-based systems.

In addition to experimentation and regional emergency work, Raab says he believes that the 505-510 kHz spectrum could serve as "an historic band" that could support various commemorative special event-type operations. Proposals are under consideration in the UK and Ireland to establish an experimental Amateur Radio allocation in the vicinity of 500 kHz.

The WD2XSH project calls for operation from 21 discrete fixed sites spread throughout the US. Participants all are electrical professionals, many with maritime radio backgrounds, Raab said, adding that operation already has begun. The group eventually will be seeking reports from non-participants, he said.

Raab says the gear participants will use represents "every kind of antenna and equipment you can imagine," including surplus vacuum-tube maritime units. At his Colchester, Vermont, location he's using a 42-foot vertical, but others are employing inverted Ls, loops and Marconis, among others."

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Peak Oil News

Some interesting news this month. First, the 'headlines'…then the analysis.

For those who just want a summary, we'll include that at the beginning, so if you prefer to get 'news bites' just read the 'headllines' then go off and do other things.

Summary:

1) China car production up 25% year over year. Remember your 'exponential growth' formula? Where is all the gas coming from to run all those cars in China. Maybe 7 million new cars on the road in China this year. Maybe 9 million MORE next year. And more and more each and every year.

2) Story and Analysis on the new 'deep water find'

3) Argentina set to go from oil exporter to oil importer – another country whose internal consumption has ratcheted up, and internal production has started to decline.

4) A Consumer Report Summary on Ethanol in your car – bad news

5) Matt Simmons on Peak Oil

6) More Supply/Demand Analysis

7) News from Mexico

8) Winter vs Summer Gas – winter gas is less expensive to make

China Car Industry Rocketing Along!

(from the CWEI stock board) Beijing, Sep 8 (Xinhua) China's automobile production and sales both shot up 25 percent in the first eight months of the year, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said Friday.

The country produced 4.64 million vehicles between January and August, an increase of 25.37 percent.

Sales surged by 24.58 percent in the same period to hit 4.53 million units.

In the first eight months of the year, China produced 3.33 million passenger vehicles and sold 3.23 million units, rising 33 percent and 32 percent, respectively.

The top 10 manufacturers are the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp, FAW, the Dongfeng Motor Corp, Chang'an, Beijing Automotive Industry Corp, Cherry, Harbin Aircraft, the Guangzhou Automotive Industry Corp, Geely and Brilliance.

"New Deep Water Find"

WASHINGTON – "Results from a deep-water test well in the Gulf of Mexico suggest a new pool of oil and gas that could boost U.S. reserves by as much as 50 percent. Chevron Corp. on Tuesday estimated the 300-square-mile region where its test well sits could hold between 3 billion and 15 billion barrels of oil and natural gas liquids. Analysts are calling it the most significant domestic discovery since Alaska's Prudhoe Bay more than a generation ago."

"It will take many years and tens of billions of dollars to bring the oil to market, but the discovery carries particular importance for the entire industry at a time when Western oil and gas companies are finding fewer opportunities in politically unstable parts of the world, including the Middle East, Africa and Russia."

"The USA reserves currently are about 29 billion barrels of oil equivalent, (according to the U.S. Energy Department). Today, the U.S. imports more than half of its oil from countries with much larger reserves, such as Saudi Arabia whose 'claimed' reserves are nearly 10 times** those of the United States"

Chevron's well, called "Jack 2," was drilled down about 5.3 miles below sea level to a depth of 28, 175 feet. That is about the height of Mt. Everest! Now imagine pumping billions of barrels of oil 'uphill' that far.

This project is in the so-called lower tertiary, a rock formation that is 24 million to 65 million years old. Normally, at these depths, only natural gas is found. However, due to the 'salt domes' and their natural heat conduction, it appears that much of the hydrocarbons in this reservoir are oil, not natural gas. The well was drilled in the Walker Ridge area of the Gulf, about 270 miles southwest of New Orleans and 175 miles off the coast. It followed up a discovery made by Chevron in 2004.

Fron Byron King:

"The Gulf of Mexico basin, south of the U.S. coastline along Texas and Louisiana, offers a challenging geologic and tectonic setting to the best of geoscientists and engineers. Far beneath the surface of the coastal areas, and extending far offshore, the underlying basement crust is part of the ancient Precambrian "continental" mass that is part of the North American tectonic plate. Farther to the south offshore, at the edge of the continental slope where the seafloor of the Gulf of Mexico begins to descend precipitously to depth, the underlying crust is composed of "oceanic" material, primarily basalt. These rock types are the foundation of the Earth's crust in the region, upon which all else rests.

Chevron's deep-water success began with its ability to capitalize on many decades of fundamental research into oceanography, bathymetry, and geophysics that has allowed researchers to gain some semblance of understanding of what lies beneath the waves, let alone the seafloor, of the Gulf of Mexico. Immense sums have been spent by both government and industry to map the ocean floor, to measure the force of gravity and chart gravitational anomalies, to measure the magnetic fields in the area, and to gauge myriad other physical parameters. This is just some of the cultural, social, and scientific foundation for Jack #2.

Temperature plays a key role in all of this. At modest temperatures, and even if buried below the accepted depth for the oil window, the oil will retain its essential properties. But temperatures above about 180-200 degrees Fahrenheit will start to break down the oil into shorter-chain hydrocarbons

such as natural gas (methane, ethane, propane, etc.). The warmer the rock, the greater the likelihood that the organic matter will essentially become "overcooked" and the hydrocarbon molecules will volatilize and break down into carbonized material that is not oil, and eventually not even natural gas.

The Chevron announcement is not exactly "new" news. The Jack #2 well was drilled in 2004, and Chevron and its partners spent much of the past two years evaluating and testing the prospect. According to public accounts, the Jack well penetrated more than 350 feet of "oil pay," which is a very respectable and auspicious encounter with the relatively unfamiliar rocks of the geological target formations. But Chevron's technical teams apparently required a large amount of additional testing, data gathering, and analysis in order to determine future development plans. Thus, Chevron kept its information "tight" until last week.

As the week wore on however, knowledgeable geologists and petroleum engineers began to question all the euphoria. First they noted that the Jack No. 2 test was not conducted on a single oil field that might contain 15 billion barrels oil. Rather, it was one test of a well in a zone that extends for hundreds of miles under the Gulf of Mexico. Whatever producible oil the zone contains will likely be found in numerous smaller deposits.

A number of wells have already been sunk in the Lower Tertiary. Some were dry holes and a few struck oil bearing rock, which may have the potential to produce oil profitably. So far, only a handful of these exploratory wells have struck deposits of light oil, which may be possible to produce. Others have struck thicker oils that may be impossible to extract from extreme depths at acceptable rates.

What seems to be turning up in the deeper waters of the Gulf are a series of smaller oil fields — some of which may someday be profitable to produce and some of which probably won’t. Extrapolating this situation to a major new discovery that will delay the onset of peak oil is clearly a reach.

This zone is about 80 miles wide, 300 miles long and is located about 175 miles off shore. The well was unusual in that it went to a depth of 28,000 feet and the drilling began under 7,000 feet of water.

Among other things, the Los Angeles Times has reported that to drill the Jack #2 well and conduct the follow-up testing, Chevron paid $216,000 a day to lease Transocean Inc.'s Cajun Express drilling rig. Do the math: That is almost $80 million per year just to rent the rig. Geologists, geophysicists, petroleum engineers, drill bits, pipe, mud, wireline services, helicopter rides and all the rest come extra. And that is if you can obtain the necessary equipment and skilled personnel in an industry that is experiencing critical shortages of both. Looking forward, the rental rate for the Transocean rig will rise to $460,000 a day from 2007-2010 (not quite $170 million per year). In essence, the bigger the rig, the higher the day rate. So this deep-water drilling effort takes some serious money. Only deep pockets need apply.

More than half a dozen world records for test equipment pressure, depth, and duration in deep water were set during the Jack well test. Additionally, the test tree and other drill stem test tools set world records, helping Chevron and co-owners conduct the deepest extended drill stem test in deep-water Gulf of Mexico history."

As readers of the CHNews, one should keep in mind the following items:

a. The people involved in this project have announced they will drill more exploratory wells to 'confirm' the find. That will take at least 1 to 2 years. Then, in 2007 or 2008, at the earliest, they will go ahead with ordering a 'production/drilling platform' that will cost well over 3.5 billion, plus build the necessary pipelines to get the oil over 5 miles in height from the well. It would go on line, partially, in 2010 or later. More likely 2013, assuming all goes 'well'. (pun intended).

b. This is not 'one well',or field, as in Prudhoe Bay, but is the estimate for an entire area. Thus, there will be lots of need for more exploration to 'exploit' this 'find'. The actual field found by Jack exploration well is estimated to be 300,000 to 500,000 barrels. The 3 to 15 billion barrels is for the 'area' which has yet to be explored and drilled! This is a 'guestimate' at this time!

c. These structures were identified in the 1930s, but the technology to drill them didn't exist until recently (and the need to take the risk). Each exploration well costs $100 million dollars. Some of them come up dry.

Future wells will be double the cost. The first oil well drilled by Colonel Drake in Pennsylvania was 70 feet deep!

d. This will only be profitable as long as oil stays above $40/bbl.

e. Production would likely come on line maybe in 2013. Seven years, assuming the eco-freaks don't manage to find some endangered bottom dwelling creature in mile deep water to stop this project in its tracks.

f. Current world reserves are 800-1100 billion barrels of oil, depending upon which expert you use. **Thus, at 10 billion barrels of oil, this adds a total of 1% to world oil reserves!** It adds 1% to world production in maybe 6-7 years, optimistically. By that time, the mature fields will have dropped by several percent. World demand will be up nearly 10%.

g. After the 2005 hurricane season, and the damage to the Thunder Horse (3.5 billion dollar deep sea production platform put out of commission by the hurricanes) and MARS (demolished), insurance will be prohibitively expensive. Given a repeat of last season, it may be 'unavailable'. Over 100 rigs were damaged last season alone. Not a good situation when you are risking tens of billions of dollars.

h. Amazingly, the 'moratorium' on offshore drilling expires this year after 25 years. This moratorium keeps 85% of the USA coast 'off limits' to oil exploration. Coincidence? This potential discovery was known over a year ago, and just released to the press. It was announced in oil newsletters back in June. Hey, elections don't come up till fall! With high gas prices, what a lucky coincidence more oil was found 'just offshore' to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil (joke), and to 'ease the pain' in gas prices.

i. There have been many 'Gulf projects' that turn out to either be infeasible cost wise, or for other reasons are suddenly abandoned. Until they are producing, this is only a 'maybe'.

The USA currently uses 20.5 million barrels a day. This field might (**) produce 750,000 bbl per day. Let's see..that is, 3.75% of current demand. You think your gas bill is going to go down? In 7 years, world demand will be up by several million bbl/day, and world production likely down by several million a day. In addition, the rest of USA production will be down, likely by 10 or 20%. Prudhoe Bay is fading fast. ANWR? Who knows if ever?

If you read the 'news' article, you would think that most of our oil comes from Saudi Arabia. In fact, most of our imported oil comes from Canada and Mexico! (Mexico is likely past peak, and Canadian output is not increasing). The next biggest provider of oil to the USA is Venezuela. In the future, much of world's oil will come from the Middle East.

The hype of 'increasing reserves by 50%' just goes to show how pathetic the amount of US reserves are. Think of it like having $100 in your checking account, and suddenly finding another $50. That is a 50% increase. The amount of USA reserves, at 29 billion barrels, would last us all less than 4 years, if you could suck it all out as quick as you need it. This gives you maybe another 2 years (maybe) . Then what? You stop driving? You stop building. You stop eating? Of course, you cannot 'suck it all out' that fast. Maybe 3-6% per year, or if you apply all the technology there is, maybe 8-10%/yr for a few years, then dropping off a cliff suddenly, winding up eventually to near zero.

The good news is that there may (just may) be more ultra deep oil offshore. Or not. No one knows. It's and interesting situation. Of course, a lot of folks might make a lot of money. (at $60/bbl, times 10 Billion bbl, that is 600 billion dollars of oil)., if they are willing to take on the risk to develop and produce these fields. The test well produced oil at 6000/bbl day for several months, at a temperature of 200 deg C, and pressures of 20,000 psi at that depth! Nearly all other holes elsewhere 20,000 feet deep have mere 'oil shows' (no producible oil), with temps much higher than 200 deg C.

To develop this will cost roughly 30 times more investment in capital that conventional Gulf of Mexico oil (estimated $28,000 capital investment per daily barrel produced vs $1000 for shallow water oil production). That's a lot of 'sticker shock' for investors.

As Bryon King wrote: “The Chevron well is emblematic of the culture and industry of our modern, industrial, immensely complex, and interrelated world. Jack #2 is not just another oil well, but is instead the culmination of literally decades' worth of fundamental research and development work by industry, academe, and government. And the Chevron well has been made possible only due to a vast array of utterly spectacular, and fairly recent, developments in numerous scientific and engineering fields, coupled with people who are willing to place big bets on very risky plays “

The bottom line - On another oil board:

“"Of the companies who share the discovery, Chevron and Devon Energy made enthusiastic and optimistic statements about it – comments that had a positive effect on these companies’ shares. Chevron, for example, thinks this new oil will provide a basis for sustained long-term growth.

The third company, Norwegian-based Statoil, was more circumspect than the other two. Europeans, we have observed, tend to be less optimistic than Americans. They would say they are “realistic.”

Although Statoil found the drill results promising, its head of international operations explained that next year the trio will drill another exploratory well on the site to determine whether or not they will go ahead with development. Apparently, Statoil is not yet convinced the find will be economical. In addition, if they do go ahead, commercial oil production might begin in 2013.

But there’s more …We spoke to some our contacts who are geologists and experts in reservoir management regarding the Jack well, and they raised some important points.

First, the test well at Jack was the deepest ever drilled in the Gulf of Mexico. The total depth was 28,175 feet. It’s as deep, in fact, as the height of Mt. Everest. That’s quite a distance to be pumping oil. No one really knows much about rock formations at that depth, which is why more exploratory wells must be drilled to see if it can be done.

More importantly, as I mentioned above, no one knows what price oil must fetch for development of this discovery to be economical. But we can guess it won’t be as low as $20 a barrel. The highly optimistic reports so far say at

least $40. Experience tells us that preliminary figures generally turn out to be half the actual figure. That would make it $80. One of our geologist friends suggested it could take as much as $200-$300 oil prices to make Jack worth developing."

Update – mid September – the owners of the ThunderHorse off shore platform have again announced another 18 month delay to replace a billion dollars worth of undersea 'manifolds' that were apparently inadequately designed. Under pressure test, they failed. Now 3000 feet down on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, as the deepest production platform in the Gulf, they are critical to preventing major leaks and spills into the Gulf. One partner in the venture was unwilling to go with a 'cheap fix' that might not work, so again the latest 'state of the art' , or as some say, 'bleeding edge technology' , will run the costs of this one platform up another billion, to well over 3.5 billion dollars, before a single drop of oil is extracted. Oh, by the way, the cornucopeans are counting on that oil to provide what the world needs next year. It won't be there. Might not even be there in 2008.

The manifolds will have to be hauled back up to the surface, and repaired/replaced.

The ThunderHorse platform was done in by hurricanes more than a year ago, and sill not back in service. Estimates are it might be another 18 months before it produces a drop of oil. Jack-2 will be more than twice as deep! (if ever installed) with higher pressures and temperatures!

Reported in the Houston Chronicle on ThunderHorse:

"'On Monday, some were questioning the returns the project will make. The company has touted the field will deliver 1.5 billion barrels of oil, making it the biggest find yet in the Gulf."

"One BP employee said the British oil and gas company was moving to revise down expectations from the field, with new estimates that it might contain just 600 million barrels of oil."

Golly, then 900,000 million barrels of oil just 'disappeared' from the 'reserves' and about 54 billion dollars worth of oil (at $60/bbl) vaporized into thin air! The economics of the project are looking worse and worse.

From Argentina:

“Buenos Aires --28Aug2006

Argentina's oil exports plummeted 59% in the first half of 2006, heightening concerns that the country is on track to become a net oil importer, analysts said Monday.

Exports dropped to average 72,510 b/d in the first half of the year, down from 178,100 b/d in the comparable 2005 period, according to recently released preliminary Energy Secretariat data. The fall largely tracks dropping crude output.

"**This is the ninth year of decline in oil production, so everyday there's less to export**," Gustavo Calleja, a former federal undersecretary of fuels who is president of an economic and political think-tank, Fundacion Arturo Illia, told Platts. "We're getting to the point of becoming a net oil importer. We'll be there in four to five years," Calleja said.

Oil production fell 3% to an average of 651,500 b/d in the first half of the year from 672,000 b/d in the January-June 2005 period, according to the secretariat. The annual averages in 2005 and 2004 were 665,000 b/d and 696,000 b/d in 2004, respectively.

Exports fell to 11% of its crude production in the first half of this year from 27% a year earlier. Meanwhile, domestic demand is rising for petroleum products.

Consumer Reports on Ethanol

This month's Consumer Reports has a detailed look at the economics of ethanol and offers a wealth of hard data for evaluating the promise of fuels made from corn. Their take? The reality doesn't match the hype. It's one of the most substantive looks at it that I've seen, and some here might be interested in a few of the details.

Consumer Reports tests indicate that actual fuel economy drops by 27%

when using E85. This means that with fuel at an average price of 2.91, a person using E85 is paying the equivalent of $3.99 a gallon, over $1 more than other users. That is not surprising since ethanol contains only 2/3rds of the BTUs of gasoline.

Of course, very few people, even those who have flex-fuel capable vehicles, are actually using E85, for reasons largely having to do with availability. There aren't many places which offer E85. This, in turn, has a lot to do with both supply and distribution infrastructure. Existing pumps and tanks are not capable of storing E85 and it costs up to $200,000 to install new infrastructure to accept and deliver it.

As noted previously, in Brazil, E85 is priced at 2/3rds that of gasoline, or it doesn't sell.

So knowing that not many people actually fuel their flex-fuel vehicles with ethanol, why are the car companies making them? Well there's a little clause in the CAFÉ standards. When calculating to those standards, flex-fuel vehicles get a tremendous advantage – magic! The government assumes that they will be run on ethanol about ½ of the time – and for the ethanol half, CAFÉ is determined only by using the 15% that is gasoline. In this way, a Chevy Tahoe, normally rated at 21 mpg (already astonishing enough), is accorded a rating of 35 mpg if it is flex fuel capable. Amazing, isn't it? Even if it never run on E85! That helps the manufacturers crank out more SUVs without it affecting their overall CAFÉ. If they have to make 27mpg for all vehicles, those flex fuel guzzlers are at the high end, allowing them to sell more heavy vehicles across the board. Of course, your mileage doesn't go up on ethanol, it goes down!

Loopholes like that might account for the fact that, of the 30 vehicles listed by Consumer Reports as E85 capable, at least 22 are SUVs, and the other 8 are large vehicles.

Now, have you seen anyone in the USA suggesting ethanol E85 should sell for 2/3rds the price of gasoline? Joke? Ethanol produced from corn sells wholesale for $2/gal. In early Sept, the wholesale price of gasoline (containing 5% ethanol) was $1.70. Ethanol from corn is simply a government subsidized, government REQUIRED handout to an industry (agri-farming/fertilizer/seed producers). Rather, some are suggesting that subsidies should RISE as the wholesale price of gasoline falls! Wow! You

get shafted coming and going – more taxpayer dollars to pay to subsidize it, and 33% worse fuel mileage if you buy it!

So when you see politicians suggesting 'ethanol will reduce USA demand for imported oil', think "That will cost me 33% more if I have to buy E85 ethanol to drive the same distance" with the current pricing.

Matt Simmons on Peak Oil (from the Peak Oil Review)

"Commentary: Underestimating Demand, Overestimating Supply
by Matthew Simmons

At the end of August each year, the IEA updates the past 15 years' reports with all the latest revisions. I have not had time to check and see how big any revisions have been. What did strike me are the ongoing changes in both demand (which has always been viewed with a great deal of skepticism, that further growth of any magnitude was unlikely) and Non-OPEC supply which has been projected to surge beginning in the 4th quarter of the coming year for the past 15 years.

In retrospect, the best way to review key fundamentals is to look carefully at changes in global supply and demand, and where they've come from. Between 1991 and 2005, global demand for oil grew by 16.6 million b/d. More astonishing is that non-FSU demand grew from 58.9 million b/d in 1991 to 79.8 million barrels a day in 2005. In other words, outside the unanticipated collapse of the Former Soviet Union, the rest of the world's oil demand grew by 20.9 million barrels a day in just 14 years (35%; 2.5% per year) vs. the projection by many oil pundits that oil demand growth was certainly slowing down.

In the meantime, non-OPEC oil supply, outside the FSU, grew in that same 14 years, but only by a modest 6.7 million b/d, from 31 to million b/d to 37.7 million b/d. That's less than 0.5 mbd per year. Too many important regions peaked and went into decline. Had the FSU not been able to grow from 10.4 million to 11.6 million b/d and OPEC grown from 25.6 million to 34.2 million b/d, the world economy would likely have been in very hot water.

Looking forward, if FSU growth is modest and OPEC growth only happens in a handful of countries, and is offset by declines—in Indonesia, Venezuela,

possibly Nigeria, Iraq, possibly Iran and perhaps Saudi Arabia—it will be impossible to tolerate any sizable jumps in demand, and certainly nothing of the magnitude that has happened over the past 14 years.

The world of oil turned out very different from what the experts at EIA, IEA, CERA, BP, EXXON and others all thought. All one needed to do to spot these major trends in the past is do a modest amount of homework, evaluating the numbers to spot key trends.

All this would be academic to the world had it not been dealing with oil, the world's most critical and largest energy resource. How we blew the future will be the topic of many books over the next decades!"

Matt Simmons is Chairman of Simmons & Co. International, an independent investment bank specializing in the energy industry.

More Supply and Demand Data (from The Peak Oil Review Editors)

Since Matt Simmons suggested looking back at trends in supply and demand, here's a 10-year retrospective on the largest gainers and losers on the oil supply side. We also attached the domestic oil consumption trends for those same countries.

What the data tells us:

• The total supply gain in Russia and China was offset by the increased domestic consumption in those two countries. In essence, Russia's gain was swallowed up by China. Note that Russia's internal consumption is gaining ground faster than the 10-year figure would indicate.

• The 10 nations with the most declines doubled the impact of those declines by increasing their domestic consumption at an amount equal to their decline.

• One of the gainers, Iraq, is a very questionable bet to repeat its gain, which

reflected Iraq's transition from embargoed exporter in 1995 to war-torn exporter today.

• Two of top 10 decliners during the last decade—Columbia and Australia—dropped an additional ½-million barrels per day after their peaks (in 1999 and 2001, respectively). Thus the relatively modest sum of this 1995 to 2005 comparison belies their true depletion stories.

• We note that during the coming decade, at least three of the Big Gainers from the last decade—Russia, Mexico and China—are projected by many analysts (including their own internal agencies) to hit peak oil and go into decline. Owing to political strife, Iraq and Nigeria are wild cards. Are the five remaining players—Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Canada, Brazil and Qatar—up to the task of generating major increases during the decade to come?

Mexico News

Petroleos Mexicanos, the country's state-owned oil and gas monopoly, needs to raise investment to $18 billion in 2007 to expand its oil production and refining operations, according to Chief Executive Officer Luis Ramirez Corzo.

Pemex will spend $13 billion this year. The company has invested a record average of $10 billion a year since President Vicente Fox took office in December 2000.

The proposed investment may be inadequate to make up for declining output in Mexico's largest oil field and to replace rusting oil pipelines while at the same time boosting gasoline output and jump-starting a deteriorating petrochemical industry. They've underinvested for too long.

Output from Pemex's Cantarell oil field, which accounts for more than 70 percent of Mexico's production, declined about 9 percent in the first seven months from a year ago, faster than an estimate of 8 percent Pemex made on Aug. 2. At the beginning of the year, Pemex forecast the offshore field would decline about 6 percent.

The company said last year it needs to spend about $1 billion a year to fix

three-decade-old pipelines following a series of explosions that caused injuries and dumped thousands of barrels of crude on the ground and in rivers.

Deep-Water Reserves

Stepped-up exploration under Fox helped Pemex determine it has about 54 billion barrels of oil in deep-water deposits in the Gulf of Mexico, which would more than double its total reserves. The company has drilled an experimental well in deep water that has produced oil and gas.

The Mexican Congress, which approves Pemex's spending budget, has to choose whether company will invest to develop its deep-water fields alone or will share the risk with partners as is commonplace in the industry, Padilla said.

``It increasingly is coming down to whether they can get the results they desire with the money they are spending," Padilla said in a Press Release.

Noxal-1, the 'big announcement' made just before elections, turns out to be only a natural gas producer (deep wells, those more than 15,000 feet below ground, tend to be natural gas reservoirs). Another 'find' they made several years ago, Nab-1, was heavy oil, and a third deep water exploration well, Caxui-1, was a 'dry hole'.

Hmmmm…isn't it funny how 'big finds' tend to get announced right before election time in both Mexico and the USA??????? And later get seriously downgraded as to what is there after the election????? They are still hunting for that oil! Oh, and do you think the Mexican gov't can afford to take another 6 to 10 billion away from welfare programs without problems? NOT!

Summer vs Winter Gas – Price differential

A Primer on Gasoline Blending

Gasoline is composed of many different hydrocarbons. Crude oil enters a refinery, and is processed through various units before being blended into gasoline. A refinery may have a fluid catalytic cracker (FCC), an alkylate unit, and a reformer, each of which produces gasoline blending components.

Alkylate gasoline, for example, is valuable because it has a very high octane, and can be used to produce high-octane (and higher value) blends. Light straight run gasoline is the least processed stream. It is abundant and cheap to produce, but it has a low octane. The gasoline blender has to mix all of the components together to meet the product specifications.

There are two very important (although not the only) specifications that need to be met for each gasoline blend. The gasoline needs to have the proper octane, and it needs to have the proper Reid vapor pressure, or RVP. While the octane of a particular grade is constant throughout the year, the RVP spec changes as cooler weather sets in.

The RVP is the vapor pressure of the gasoline blend when the temperature is 100 degrees F. Normal atmospheric pressure varies, but is usually around 14.7 lbs per square inch (psi). Atmospheric pressure is caused by the weight of the air over our heads. If a liquid has a vapor pressure of greater than normal atmospheric pressure, that liquid boils. For example, when you heat a pot of water, the vapor pressure increases until it reaches atmospheric pressure. At that point, the water begins to boil.

In the summer, when temperatures can exceed 100 degrees F in many locations, it is important that the RVP of gasoline is well below 14.7. Otherwise, it can pressure up your gas tanks and gas cans, and it can boil in open containers. Gas that is boiled off ends up in the atmosphere, and contributes to air pollution. Therefore, the EPA has declared that summer gasoline blends may not exceed 7.8 psi in some locations, and 9.0 psi in others.

A typical summer gasoline blend might consist of 40% FCC gas, 25% straight run gas, 15% alkylate, 18% reformate, and 2% butane. The RVP of the gasoline blend depends on how much of each component is in the blend, and what the RVP is of each component. Butane is a relatively inexpensive ingredient in gasoline, but it has the highest vapor pressure at around 52 psi. In a gasoline blend, each component contributes a fraction to the overall RVP. In the case of butane, if there is 10% butane in the blend, it will contribute around 5.2 psi (10% of 52 psi) to the overall blend. (In reality, it is slightly more complicated than this, because some components interact with each other which can affect the expected RVP). This means that in the summer, the butane fraction must be very low in the gasoline, or the overall

RVP of the blend will be too high. That is the primary difference between winter and summer gasoline blends.

Why Prices Fall in the Fall

Winter gasoline blends are phased in as the weather gets cooler. September 15th is the date of the first increase in RVP, and in some areas the allowed RVP eventually increases to 15 psi. This has two implications for gasoline prices every fall. First, as noted, butane is a cheaper blending component than most of the other ingredients. That makes fall and winter gasoline cheaper to produce. But butane is also abundant, so that means that gasoline supplies effectively increase as the RVP requirement increases. Not only that, but this all takes place after summer driving season, when demand typically falls off. These factors normally combine each year to reduce gasoline prices in the fall (even in non-election years). The RVP is stepped back down to summer levels starting in the spring, and this usually causes prices to increase. And that's the true tale of why gasoline prices fall back in the fall, and spring forward in the spring.

Mobiling in other Countries

After seeing the picture of the mobile in the last CHNews, Axel, DL6KVA sent in the following:

You asked about Mobile activities from other countries. There is some from many countries but it's low level activity. There are not many award seekers looking for mobile contacts.

Most active countries to my knowledge are of course USA with the USA-CA and MARAC awards and since 2003 Russian operators became much more active mobiling around too.

Although both award programs (USA-CA and RDA) seems to be about the same (working administrative regions), with appropriately equal numbers (3077 vs. 2745), that is the only thing both really can be compared.

We know Russia has much more different climatic zones, reaching over 8 different time zones. Also we know it has not the usual roads as we know

from USA.

So most of RDA-activity is portable these days, but many teams and individuals are active /M too.

If anybody is interested how that looks in Russia they can take a look at last Russian extreme RDA expedition. It was a trip as RK6YYA/0 and RK6YYA/0/M through 4 far east oblasts (Chita, Amur, Chabarovsk, Primorsky Kray) and back to Chita in 24 days on the road. During this trip 4 operators (RV6YZ, RA6AR, RD4HM, DL6KVA) made around 21.500 QSOs from 70 different RDA-districts including 3500 of them while mobiling to the next place.

Lot of photos I made during that trip can be viewed at:

http://public.fotki.com/DL6KVA/rk6yya0_june_2006/

By the way ... next trip of RK6YYA-crew will be over 12.-16.10.2006 in European RA4-region through several RA4-oblast and some 60 districts.

Maybe You would like to publish a part of this info in the next CH issue?

Axel, DL6KVA"

Mobile Paddle – via W4GNS

A while back, Gary, W4GNS, showed me his new paddles that he had acquired. Here is the web site and some information on the paddles he bought. He's in a rough environment, in the 'big rig' with lots of vibration to tear things apart!

http://www.i2rtf.com/html/traveler_light.html

Info from their web site -

The Magnetic Traveler Light uses a unique folding base that protects the finger pieces during transport, and in the open position it provides the required lateral stability. The “Light” version, shown here, uses a light-weigth alloy for the base and the “wings”, and it weighs in at about 1.5 pounds - so it is still heavy enough to stay put during desktop usage. On special request we also provide a heavier version with a gold or palladium plated steel base. For the backpacking user who may not have a desk the Magnetic Traveler Light is equipped with attachments and a strap to fasten it to your leg.

The Magnetic Traveler Light is a iambic key that addresses the needs of the traveling or backpacking ham in a no-compromise design. It combines constructive elements found in our Simplex and Magnetic Classic keys in a rugged package that will survive the rigors of a roving life. Using sealed precision bearings, repelling magnets, micro-threaded adjustments, and light-weight alloys this is a unique key that is sure to become a classic.

County Hunter Contests/Activities – October 2006

Courtesy ARRL Contest Corral, ARRL, Newington, CT 07661

October 7-8

California QSO Party -- CW/SSB, sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club, 1600Z Oct 7-2200Z Oct 8. Frequencies: 160-2 meters. Categories: SOAB (HP >200 W, LP, QRP), MS, MM, CA County Expedition, Mobile, Club, School. SO work 24 hours only. CW QSOs in CW subbands, except 160/6/2 meters. Stations on a county line count as a single contact for QSO points, but both counties may be claimed as multipliers. Exchange: serial number and state/province (DX send DX) or CA county. QSO points: CW --3 pts, Phone -- 2 pts. Score: QSO points × CA counties (max 58) or CA stations multiply by states and VE call areas (max 58). For more information: **www.cqp.org**

October 15 – 16

Pennsylvania QSO Party -- CW, Phone, PSK31, RTTY. Sponsored by the Nittany ARC from 1600 Z Oct 14-0500Z Oct 15 and 1300Z-2200Z Oct 15. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 1.810 and 40 kHz above band edge; Phone -- 1.850, 3.980, 7.280, 14.280, 21.380, 28.480; mobiles -- 5 kHz below the listed frequencies; PSK31 -- 28.120, 24.920, 21.070, 14.070, 7.080, 3.580. Categories: SO (HP >150 W, LP, QRP), MS, MM, SO or MS Portable, Novice/Tech/Tech Plus, Mobile, Rover. Exchange: serial number and ARRL/RAC section (PA stations send PA county). QSO points: CW -- 2 pts on 160 and 80, 1.5 pts on other bands; Phone -- 1 pt, PSK31 and RTTY -- 2 pts. Score: QSO points × PA counties (PA stations use PA counties + ARRL/RAC sections + 1 DX) ×2 if QRP or ×3 if Novice/Tech. Add 200 points for each QSO with the bonus station (see Web site). PA mobiles and rovers add 500 points for each county with 10 or more QSOs. For more information: **www.nittany-arc.net/paqso.html**

Illinois QSO Party -- CW/Phone, sponsored by the Western Illinois ARC. 1700Z Oct 22-0100Z Oct 23. Frequencies (MHz): 160-2 meters, CW -- 50 kHz above band edge, Phone -- 3.890, 7.290, 14.290, 21.390, 28.390. Categories: IL-Fixed, IL-Portable, IL-Mobile, Non-IL. Work stations in each county, county line contacts count for 1 QSO from each county. Exchange: RS(T) and S/P/C (IL stations send county). QSO points: Phone -- 1 pt/QSO, CW -- 2 pts. Score: QSO points × IL counties (IL stations use states + IL counties + VE provinces + up to 5 DXCC entities). Count additional DX for points, but not multipliers. For more information: **www.w9awe.org/ILQP2006.html**

October 28 is CW DX contest weekend – not good for running 20/40M cw mobile that weekend.

Awards

USA-SB 30M #4, K8CW, Alan, August 31, 2006
Third Time #196, WA9DLB, Tony, September 5, 2006
USACW II #16, K8MFO, Don, September 11, 2006
Second time #365, K8MFO, Don, September 11, 2006
Bingo III #9, KC6AWX, Bob, September 20, 2006
Second Time #366, K0EH, Maurice, September 15, 2006
Sixth Time #28, HB9RG, Rudi, September 25, 2006

Note: The new MARAC Awards Chairperson is KC5QCB, Janet. Send in applications to her for MARAC Awards.

Alan, K8CW, is also the first person with an endorsement from CQ Magazine for 'all 30 meters'. To get that, all contacts have to be confirmed!

Picture Gallery

This month a few submissions from active county hunters.

From Leo, WY7LL:

Here's one I took for K8CW. I drove 510.1 miles from Pinehaven, Wyoming to Butte Montana for his last two on 30 meters. When I arrived in Billings on Saturday morning I checked my e-mail on the lap top and had found that Ross, N0ZA, had worked Alan in Hot Springs, Wyoming, so I didn't need to go there. I called Alan and he still needed SILVER BOW, MONTANA, about 2 1/2 to 3 hours away. When I arrived in BUTTE, I pulled into a church parking lot..... Looking for divine intervention as I make about 1 CW contact a year. I called Alan on the phone, Set up a frequency, and did a SLOW CW contact.

Since then I have downloaded a cw contest training program I read about on one of the forums and installed a file someone wrote for it with COUNTY HUNTER CALLS and am practicing about 30 minutes each evening. I listen on the 30 mtr freq on occasion and pick up a few calls now and again but it still to fast of action for me.

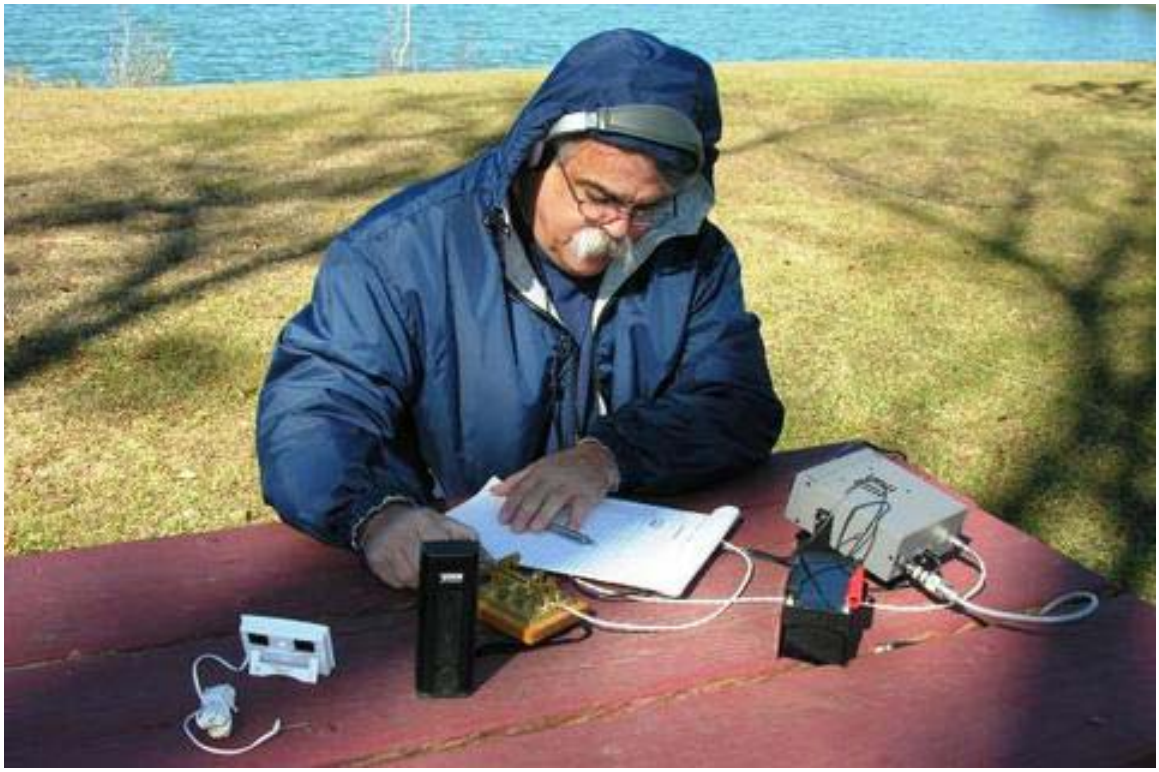
Leo, WY7LL, giving Last for WBOW for K8CW – 30m CW

Gary, W4GNS has been fighting noise problems ever since getting a new truck full of electronic engine controls. He finally solved the problem completely by moving the antenna away from the noise producing components.

Here's how!

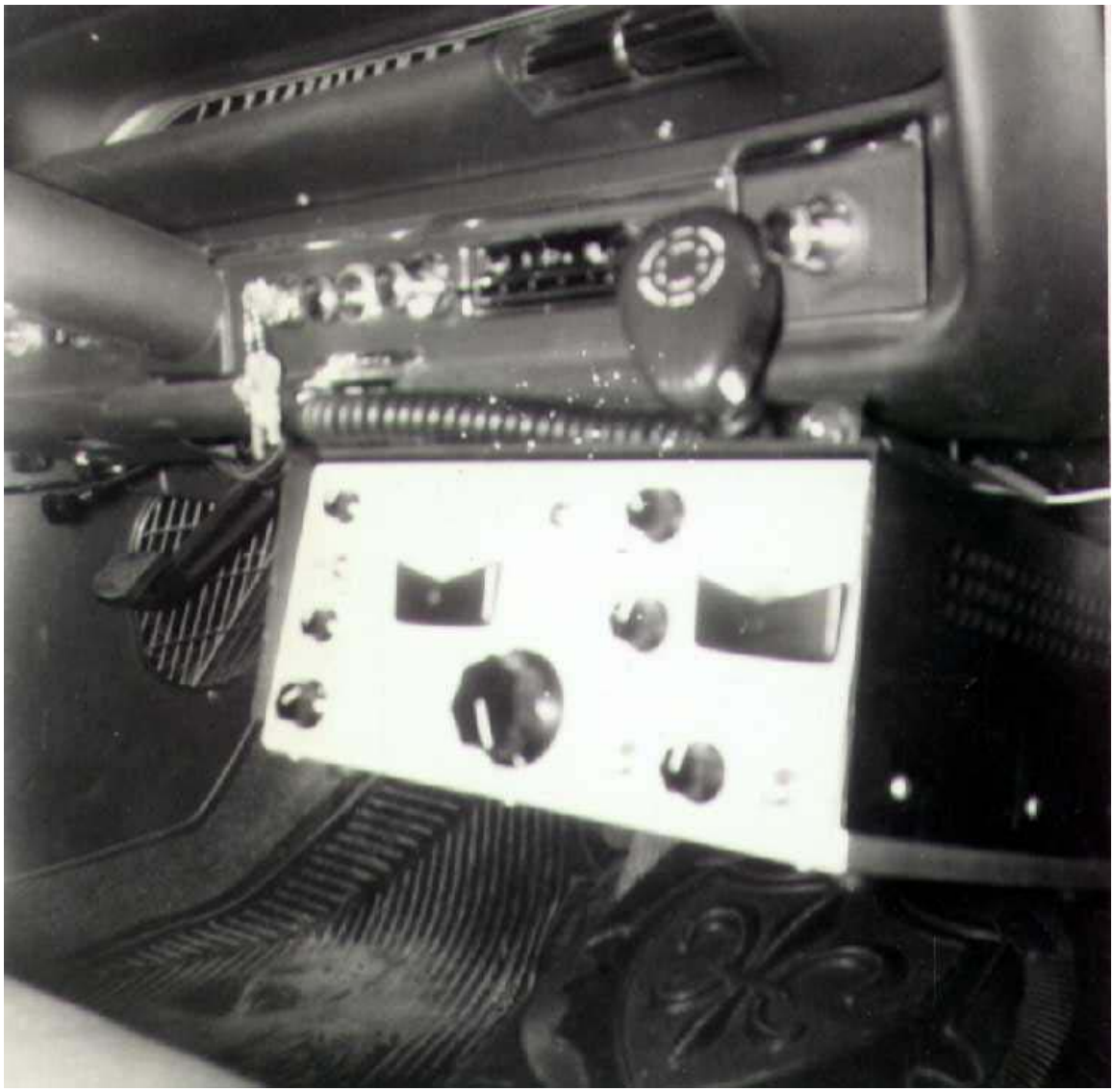
W4GNS 'rear mount' antenna

N5EBD runs QRP at times. Here he is in the back yard portable. This was back last winter! You don't need a jacket in TX in the summer time!



N5EBD on 30 meters portable in back yard

Here's a picture from Bruce, W4OV, of his first mobile in 1962, from the 'way back' machine……



1962 Mobile Installation – K0CML, now W4OV

K0CML/W4OV mobile – bet there's not much snow at his new QTH in FL

Folks always are interested in how you set up your mobile for cw operation while moving. Paul, N5PR sent in the following

Note the strap holding down the paddles around leg

Alex, K5XY, sent in the following “county line” picture

K5XY on County line Gila/Pinal, AZ

Alex will get on CW only by special arrangement.

Last minute flash – NA7W’s trip to the mini was interrupted by gall bladder surgery. Joyce, N9STL, also had gall bladder surgery this month. News – courtesy K3IMC “county hunter ‘web site.

Urban rumors seem to get circulated around the county hunter community. If an email says ‘forward this to everyone’ – **DON’T**. Check www.snopes.com for urban rumors. Usually this is some weird story circulating around and around, for years and years, until someone gullible

enough to believe it sends it around for another few weeks, keeping the phony story going forever.

And that's it for this month. See you next month! 73