

County Hunter News

May 1, 2006

Volume 2, Issue 5

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.

Information on County Hunting can be found at: www.countyhunter.com

The county hunter CW nets run on 14.0565, 10.114, 7038.5 and 3556.5 MHz with most activity now on 30M. Tuesday evening is 80m CW activity night.

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@prodigy.net)

Notes from the Editor

Reminder: – Dayton Hamvention is coming up in May, with County Hunter Forum on Friday afternoon. KJ8F has once again reserved the Ryan's Buffet off the Interstate for dinner. Try to arrive at dinner between 5:30 and 6pm – but we'll likely still be there till after 7:30.

Reminder: – MARAC CW contest this month. Rules in last issue of CHNews.

Comments and Question Section

Comment: A few years ago, the county hunters decided to use 7038.5 since the old frequency of 7039 was often busy with QRP stuff. Now it seems some of the mobiles use 7039, most use 7038.5. That makes it hard to find them, or quickly check if a mobile is running there. Should we try and standardize? Maybe a topic for a ‘cw meeting’ at next convention?

Question: There was a log book published that would let you track the five-star award. Likely the B&B shop or the SC one printed it. Did anyone ever publish a log book that would allow you to track the Five Band Award (i.e., room for contacts for each band with date?).

Question From Reader: How to do start a ‘list’ on cw for a mobile run? A new op to cw asked how he could use the ‘list’ way of helping reduce the pile-up that makes copying calls difficult.

Answer: If you are out running counties on a planned trip, you may find that as soon as you show up, there are a dozen or more county hunters all anxious to immediately work you, and then go back to “Zombie Land” until their next needed county. Sometimes all the mobile op hears when he sends “QRZ” is a gigantic cacophony of calls mixed together. At that point, it may be useful to instead send “LIST QRZ”.

However, on quiet days, if you do that right away as soon as you are announced by net control, you may find only one or two waiting to work you. The “LIST QRZ” won’t result in a neat orderly set of people calling. On quieter days, or when there has been no activity for a while, most people won’t show up until after the spot is made, and works its way through the system. That can take several minutes. Then maybe after 2 or 3 minutes, the pile starts, and you find it difficult to pick out a call. Then, using the command, “LIST QRZ” and waiting after the first one calls (or maybe several) and waiting until the folks realize you sent “LIST” and then calling, it should work better. Some ops frequently use LIST QRZ. Others just are able to work them one by one.

Sometimes it depends on propagation – lots of signals are near equal on 30M, since everyone runs about the same power, and few have beams or exceptional antenna systems.

Question: I can't enter "7.038.5" in my computer or onto the spotting website. Why don't we use 7039 instead?

Answer: Good question. Likely, the spotting sites or your computer log program want the freq in MHz or KHz. If you put two decimal points in there, it is confusing it. It should be 14.0565 MHz or 140565.5 KHz and 7.0385 or 7038.5 KHz. Try it and see if that doesn't fix the problem. Or on Risto's site, just type in 140565 and it is smart enough to post it right.

Comment: New county hunter heard now frequently on 20cw - RV6YZ. The call might throw you at first. The Europeans have been quite active on CW lately around the spring equinox.

In this issue – the normal picture gallery, an article on remote antenna switches, operating on Dukes/Nantucket, MA, an examination of the rules regarding 'club calls', operating events of interest to county hunters, and more.

Editorial: It was just a few years ago that nearly all the 'club nonsense' started. I recall one operator, who must have decided he was 'bored' and needed to invent a new challenge – not only for county hunting, but to justify adding to the QRM of the DXpileups as well to work 'all the countries again'. He got himself a vanity 'club call'. It even had his initials.

That started it. Soon, his 'buddy' decided he would do the same, and W1BQL suddenly appeared 'chasing counties' adding to the paperwork load as both had to get confirmations from every station they worked. Then, it wasn't too much later that a few others decided to jump on the bandwagon and 'work all counties for THEIR club'. So AA4UT, K9MOT were busy chasing counties, adding to the pileups, and keeping mobiles busy with extra logging, extra paperwork, for essentially duplicate contacts and duplicate MRCs. Between the 4 of them, at least 12,308 unneeded QSOs had to be logged, and mobiles had to verify 12,308 contacts by checking logs and signing MRCs. Likely over 14,000 by the time you count counties given out by several mobiles. Maybe 16,000?

Then a few folks realize that if they got a 'ride along' club call with an X in it, even though they weren't good for Bingo themselves, they could start giving out 'Bingo contacts' right away. Normally, it would take a few years

before a newcomer earned the first ‘star’. I guess a few wanted to ‘be valuable’ and thought the ‘ride along’ club call was a good idea. A ‘short circuit around the system’.

Now, it seems that upon re-examining the rules, that just about all of the ‘club call’ contacts and awards are in jeopardy of violating multiple rules from multiple award issuing groups. Maybe none of them are good for any MARAC awards? The CHNews examines the issues in more detail in this issue.

CQ Magazine Award Requirements - USACA

If you look on the CQ web page at the requirements for the prestigious USA-CA award, you will find:

“1. USA-CA is available to all licensed amateurs everywhere in the world and is issued to them as **individuals** for all county contacts made, regardless of calls held, operating QTHs, or dates.”

It makes one wonder then, how ‘club calls’ think they qualify as ‘individuals’? By law, and group that wishes to obtain a club station call sign must sign an FCC application stating that the ‘club’ has at least 4 members. Some clubs have 50 or 100 or 200 members! Under no stretch of the imagination is a ‘club’ an ‘individual’.

Maybe someone was asleep at the switch in CQ land when club calls like “K2JG”, K9MOT, AA4UT, and W1BQL received a USACA in the name of the ‘group’???? Clearly, none of them fit the description of an individual.

If someone wishes to work all counties with another call sign, the award should go to the individual who made the contacts. That is, USACA XXX not to the “group” K2JG, but awarded to KZ2P, James G., with an endorsement perhaps of “while using call sign K2JG or station facilities of K2JG”. Or if that individual already has a USACA, maybe just an endorsement on his USACA certificate, and no new number? That is often the case with ‘all CW’ or ‘all mobile’ added onto a USACA, if the necessary QSLs/MRCs are obtained. Or an endorsement for “All 40M”.

The FCC does not even give operating privileges to a ‘call sign’ for a club and clearly states that. (See below in More Club Call Lunacy). How can a call sign that cannot even operate receive awards for operating?

If CQ should determine that Club Calls are not eligible to hold awards for individuals, there really is a simple solution. Any award issued to date should simply be re-issued to the individual who make the contacts. For example, K2JG could be reassigned to KZ2P, who made all the contacts. W1BQL could be reassigned to the individual who made all the contacts, KA1JPR. AA4UT’s USACA could be reassigned to AF3X who made all the contacts. And K9MOT could be re-assigned to WA9DLB who made all the contacts. That would quickly solve this sticky problem.

The ARRL rules for DXCC are similar. Rule #1 for DXCC states: “The DXCC Century Club Award, with certificate and lapel pin is available to Amateur Radio **Operators** throughout the world.”

Since a ‘club’ station cannot be an operator by FCC rules, it clearly cannot hold a DXCC or other ARRL awards for individuals. The FCC rule is below in the More Club Lunacy article. I really don’t think that the ARRL had in mind ‘club calls’ winding up on the DXCC honor roll competing against individuals for recognition, do you?

Both CQ and ARRL run contests which have separate categories for multi-op stations to enter, and awards for those multi-op stations for those contests where there are categories for groups to enter. Great! And there are hundreds of multi-op entries. Same in many state QSO parties – to encourage participation. But it seems clearly in violation of the existing rules for ‘stations’ to get awards for county hunting intended for individuals.

One unintended consequence of ‘club calls’ having a ‘star’ (having received the USA-CA) is that it causes massive problems when other awards for MARAC, which are based upon **an individual** having a star, and are thrown into massive rule violations when others use(borrow) the ‘call sign’ but do not have USACA themselves.

None of CQ, ARRL, or MARAC organizations make ‘groups’ eligible to receive awards (other than winning contests in that category) in their rules section.

Peak Oil News

Something different this month for readers. Here's a concept car – while not likely to make it into production, rumor has it part of the concepts may make it into other Ford cars/SUVs. Imagine a zippy car, getting 40-65 mpg! I sure hope that Ford can come up with some high mileage cars that folks want to buy, as Detroit cars are not seen as leading the technology parade.

From: http://media.ford.com/newsroom/release_display.cfm?release=22296

“DETROIT, Jan. 8, 2006 – The Ford Reflex proves that small cars can be bold, American and innovative. The sporty concept is expected to be an auto show star, reflecting a growing and important "small is big" trend in America.

Reflex is a technological showcase with its advanced diesel-electric hybrid engine – delivering up to 65 miles per gallon – solar panels, flexible interior made from synthetic and regenerated materials, and such advanced safety features as inflatable safety belts in the rear..

Reflex features an advanced diesel-electric hybrid propulsion system that harnesses diesel, electric and solar power. This combination of power can deliver maximum fuel economy – up to 65 mpg – without compromising performance.

The concept features an electric motor on the rear axle in addition to the hybrid propulsion system on the front axle. The rear motor provides all-wheel-drive capability, improved driving dynamics and the fuel economy benefits of a full hybrid vehicle.

Reflex's energy is stored in a new-generation lithium-ion battery pack, using the same technology found in cell phones. Ford was the first

manufacturer to produce an electric vehicle using this type of battery system when it introduced the electric Ford Ka research vehicle in 2000. Also contributing to Reflex's power and performance are unique headlamps and tail lamps that integrate solar panels. The Ford-patented battery-charging lighting system improves fuel economy by using the sun's power to charge the on-board batteries, while capturing and reusing the daylight at night. “

The car features a small turbo diesel from the European Fiesta, and a refined version of the hybrid electric system in the Escape Hybrid. The turbo diesel generates 55 HP, and the electric motor about 42HP. There is a six speed transmission to feed power to the front wheels, and a separate 15 KW motor to drive the rear wheels. The car should get between 40 and 65 mpg, and will do 0 to 60 in less than 7 seconds.



Picture of Ford Reflex Concept Car

Ethanol Update:

“The conversion to ethanol was prompted by the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, which left refiners vulnerable to groundwater contamination suits and mandated greater use of renewable fuels. The use of ethanol forced gasoline retailers to clean their tanks, remove all water from them and install extremely fine filters on their pumps.

Ethanol is a solvent that picks up any gunk in tanks and readily blends with water. Those properties could ruin a 9,000-gallon tank of gasoline at a huge cost to a retailer.

It costs up to \$1,500 to clean tanks, said Kevin S. Kan, president and chief executive officer of American Auto Wash Inc. in Malvern, which operates 18 stations in the region, including 13 BPs that have converted to the ethanol blend.

Ethanol is logistically more complicated than the petrochemical it replaced - MTBE, or methyl tertiary butyl ether. Refiners could blend MTBE into gasoline at the refinery and send the finished gasoline through pipelines to terminals.

But ethanol must be blended into gasoline at the terminal because it would mix with water if it were sent through pipelines, ruining the fuel. So, fuel terminals have to go through a similar process of cleaning tanks to store ethanol before it is blended.

They must also install blending equipment.”

Source:

<http://p088.ezboard.com/fdownstreamventurespetroleummarkets.showMessage?topicID=16919.topic>

“Dozens of gasoline stations from Virginia to Massachusetts ran short of fuel on Friday as suppliers struggled with a transition to a new anti-smog gasoline blend using corn-based ethanol as an additive, marketers said.

The disruptions, caused in part by a lack of trucks to move ethanol to supply terminals, comes amid an already severe spike in retail gasoline prices to near \$3 per gallon as the cost of crude hits new highs.

"The situation here is chaotic," said Mike O'Connor, president of the Virginia Petroleum Jobbers Association, which represents gas stations in the state. He said his association is seeking a federal waiver to allow the sale of lower grade gasoline to ease the crunch.

Fuel marketers said there were reports of gasoline stations running out of fuel in areas of Virginia, around Washington D.C., in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and parts of Massachusetts.

The U.S. government had warned in recent weeks that gasoline supplies could be disrupted along the East Coast and in Texas as the oil industry shifts to the new anti-smog blend using ethanol.

The problem with the replacement additive, experts say, is that ethanol cannot be shipped in pipelines because it absorbs water, and requires trucks, rail cars or barges for transport.

The MARAC MASTER'S GOLD MYSTERY SUBTLE CHANGE

Subtitled "the Ernie Rule" Change

Well, it seems that mysterious strange things have happened lately in the MG rules. Only you won't be aware of it, unless you connect the dots.

If one looks at the revision table at the end of the MARAC awards description, as listed on the web, one will note the last change to the MARAC Master's Gold Rules is listed as having been made on 12/8/04.

That is true. However, another change was made to another rule that affects the MG rules. This was done by adding a new section, on 1/10/06. This is what the section states:

“Net Control - Hours of Service

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 by maintaining control of a net frequency, keeping a list of active mobiles, announcing mobile call signs and counties, and providing relays. **NCS** and **ANCS** hours may not be claimed when a net is not operating ("open session"). For each mobile station assisted, the **NCS** or **ANCS** may claim ten (10) minutes of service for each county or county line run by a mobile. A log must be maintained by the **NCS** or **ANCS** containing the date, call sign of each mobile, and the name of each county 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 mobile county runs assisted and the hours or service as **NCS** and **ANCS** claimed.”

In the past, for the Adkins Award, and for MG, all you had to report were the dates/times of NC/ANC hours. I’m sure many folks did not keep and preserve ‘mobile run’ lists, or a running tally of mobile runs each day. This description of ‘required net control detailed statistics, kept separate from other contacts logged during the day, seems to fit only one individual - who fanatically counts every run, can’t seem to wait to get to the bottom of the log sheet, and somehow delights in reporting ‘how many mobile runs occurred’ each day. Who really cares if it was 37 or 62? Most folks worry about their needed counties being run. Or whether they managed to get a relay or double relay from the usual non-existent co-equal helper most of the time.

Many folks who volunteer as ‘ANC’ keep a list of what they work, full well knowing that NC, who is fanatical to detail, will have all that other detail information in his log, plus the spotting sites will have it all reported, so there is really no need for two people to be counting beans every day on mobile runs. Nor keep a ‘separate log’ only for NC contacts. Not only that, but many people keep a paper log, and enter into it at the same time **off frequency contacts** that they make, or ‘**mobile contacts**’ when the mobile just wants to get credit for a county. Indeed, the ANCs may have to quickly try to catch a mobile on a different band when a spot is noted, and this gets logged right in with the mobile runs. If you have run NC for hundreds of

hours, you literally have hundreds or thousands of pages of logs. How many keep SEPARATE LOGS only for NC/ANC contacts?

In case you didn't read that 'requirement' carefully, now you have to send in either your original log, or a copy of it to claim NC hours. If you have 500 pages of logs, for 500 days you helped out, or maybe 800 pages of logs or 1000 pages of log, now you must either transcribe them, or Xerox them at about 10c/page and mail them in to the awards custodian!!!!!!! Plus count all the mobile runs one by one, day by day.

The change now rules out 'county hunting' nets as they existed for decades, with at times 'activity' night where fixed stations worked each other on the net to give out counties, and often 'new' stations just checked in who weren't county hunters just to give out contacts. Now, both fixed stations and mobiles run on 3556.5 on Tuesday nights, and there are net controls. It doesn't count now? Or, you have to separate out the 'mobile runs'? Only they count? If a fixed or portable station 'fills in', that doesn't count?

The rules state that you can only count 'mobile runs'.

On cw, a list of active mobiles is never ever kept. This rule applies only to the way the SSB net on 14.336 runs. The 40M SSB net does not maintain a list of active mobiles, unless there are many down there, such as at convention time. Usually there is just a handful, and they call in when they are in new ones. On cw, net control asks for mobiles QRV, and if more than one responds, they are run in order usually. No list.

The rules first require the net to be 'not in closed session'. On cw, seldom is there ever a 'formal net' with NC spending hours and hours each day continuously calling stations in 'order'. Nor is there blabber about "anyone need the latest numbers?" or 'Don't forget to send in your application and reserve your hotel room for the MARAC National in Appleton, WI' or similar to 'keep the frequency'. The same goes on 40M. No filling time.

The rules and award committee that come up with them, and the entire BOD/directors who approved them seem totally unaware these requirements, their impact, and that they are not the 'norm' for the 40M net, nor any of the cw nets. Clueless.

This change essentially rules out getting NC or ANC time on 40M and on the CW nets IN TOTAL. The nets do not run that way. If you had NC time there, likely kiss it 'goodbye' if this rule continues as written.

It would seem in violation of the spirit of the agreement made with the founder of the award, to exclude the normal net operations on 40M and CW. It would seem to exclude all those except those who run the net on 14.336. Talk about 'empire building'!

The last I checked, the 'call sign' of station license K2JG never logged a single exchange, it was the control operator who did, so I would assume 'callsign' K2JG can never get any hours of NC time, any more than "Hertz" gets credit for hours driving a car on the highway or "American Airlines" can log 'flight hours' as a pilot. Right? "K2JG" never wrote in a log, nor counted. An entity like a club has neither vocal chords nor eyeballs, or hands.

From the Sept 2005 issue of the CHNews by Bud, the originator of the MG award:

"In the August 05 on-line newsletter, you wrote an article about the Master's Gold Award. I wanted to let you know that you are 100% correct about the INTENT of Master's Gold. In 1995/1996 when this award was turned over to the MARAC Awards Committee it was agreed that MARAC would not change the INTENT or basic parameters of that award."

I am sure that Bud had no intention of excluding or attempting to legislate the way the CW nets are run, and the nets on 40M. Or forcing 'net rules and procedures' upon nets that use different procedures and have for the past 30 years. Nor wiping out hundreds of hours of NC done according to the existing rules at the time, and now wiped out.

The new rules clearly divide the 'gang that hangs out on 14.336 vs. everyone else. Clearly. The BOD wants to unite CW and SSB folks? Hardly. This rule needs to be revisited quickly. While it seems the intent was good, the implementation was awful!

Many have already accumulated hundreds of hours of NC time. Is that all going to be 'disallowed'? Unless you kept fanatically accurate records, you likely won't be able to count it, and recall who was 'on frequency', who was just a 'mobile contact', etc.

Operating Events in May

Courtesy of ARRL Contest Corral

MARAC County Hunters Contest -- CW, sponsored by the Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club from 0000Z May 6-2400Z May 7. Frequencies (MHz): 3.575, 7.050, 14.050, 21.050, 28.050, work fixed stations once/band and mobiles once for each county and band. Categories: Mobile, Fixed, Mixed. Exchange: RST, state, and county code (see Web site) or DX. County line QSOs count as one QSO but separate multipliers. QSO points: Fixed stations in US -- 1 point, Mobile -- 15 points, DX -- 5 pts, one station must be in a US county. Score: QSO points × US counties counted only once. Mobiles sum score from each state. For more information: www.marac.org. Logs due Jun 9 to aa8r@aol.com or Randy Hatt, 7878 W County Line Rd, Howard City, MI 49239.

10-10 International Spring Contest--CW/Digital--from 0001Z May 6-2359Z May 7, logs due May 22 (see Feb *QST*, p 99, or www.ten-ten.org).

Indiana QSO Party -- CW/SSB, sponsored by the Hoosier DX and Contest Club from 1600Z May 6-0400Z May 7. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 1.805 and 40 kHz above the band edge on 80-10 meters, SSB -- 1.845, 3.850, 7.230, 14.250, 21.300, 28.450, try 160 at 0200Z, no crossband QSOs. Categories: SOAB (HP, LP < 100 W, QRP, no spotting assistance), MS (incl SO using spotting assistance), Mobile, Portable. Exchange: RS(T) + S/P or IN county (DX stations send RS(T) only). QSO points: SSB -- 1 pt, CW -- 2 pts, contact stations once per band/mode and once per county. County line stations count for 2 counties max. Score is QSO point's × IN counties or S/P/C counted once per mode. Bonus for working W9UUU. For more information: www.hdxcc.org/inqp.

New England QSO Party -- CW/Phone, 2000Z May 6-0500Z May 7 and 1300Z-2400Z May 7. New England is ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, and RI. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 3.540, 7.035, 14.040, 21.040, 28.040; SSB -- 3.875, 7.280, 14.280, 21.380, 28.380; no cross mode or crossband QSOs, all CW QSOs in CW band segments. Categories: SOAB (HP, LP and QRP), MS (includes stations using any kind of spotting assistance), mobiles use same categories. Exchange: RS(T) and S/P (non-US/VE sends DX) or NE county/state. Work stations once per band/mode and mobiles in each county. County lines logged as two QSOs. QSO points: phone -- 1 pt, CW and

Digital -- 2 pts. Score: Non-NE stations -- QSO point's \times NE counties; NE stations -- QSO point's \times S/P/C; mobiles total QSO points from all counties and count multipliers only once. For more information: www.neqp.org.

7th Area QSO Party -- CW/SSB, sponsored by the Central Oregon DX Club from 1300Z May 6-0700Z May 7. Frequencies (MHz): 80- 10 meters, CW -- 40 kHz above band edge, SSB -- 3.855, 7.255, 14.255, 21.355 and 28.455; no repeater QSOs. Exchange: State and county code (see Web site) or S/P/C. QSO points: SSB -- 2 pts, CW -- 3 pts. Score: QSO points \times 7th area counties (7th area stations add states and provinces) counted only once. For more information: www.7qp.org.

Mid-Atlantic QSO Party -- SSB/FM/CW, sponsored by the Independent Mid-Atlantic QSO Party Committee from 1200Z May 13-2400Z May 15. Mid-Atlantic States include DE, MD-DC, NJ, NY, PA, VA and WV. Frequencies: 160-10 meters, 50 kHz from bottom of band segment for operating mode, 50, 144, 222 and 432 MHz. Categories: SO-LP and QRP, MS/Club, Mobile, Rover, all classes except QRP max 200 W output. Exchange: serial number and QTH (Mid-Atl stations send 3-letter county and 2-letter state, US/VE send state or province, DX sends DX). QSO points: Phone -- 1 pt, CW -- 2 pts, Mobile -- 3 pts. Score: QSO points \times Mid-Atl counties (Mid-Atl stations count S/P + 1 DX), all multipliers counted only once. For more information: www.maqp.info

FISTS Spring Sprint--CW, sponsored by the FISTS CW Club from 1700Z-2100Z May 13 (see Feb *QST*, p 99, or www.fists.org/sprints.html).

CQ WW WPX Contest -- CW, sponsored by *CQ* Magazine from 0000Z May 27-2400Z May 28 (see Mar *QST*, p 98, or www.cqwp.com).

US Counties QSO Party -- SSB, sponsored by The Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club from 0000Z May 20-2400Z May 21. Frequencies (MHz): 3.880, 7.240, 14.275, 21.340, 28.340. Work fixed stations once/band and mobiles once for each county and band. Categories: Mobile, Fixed. Exchange: RST and county or S/P/C. County line QSOs count as one QSO but separate multipliers. QSO points: US fixed stations -- 1 point, US mobile -- 15 points, all others -- 5 pts, one station must be in a US county. Score is QSO points \times US counties (counted only once). Mobiles sum score from each state. For more information:

www.stpaulisland.net/countycontest.html. Logs due Jun 19 to (US logs)

wv2b@juno.com or Duane Traver, WV2B, PO Box 607, Candor, NY 13743-0607, non-US logs to snichols@mvosprey.com or Scott Nichols, VE1OP, PO Box 1796, North Sydney, NS B2A 3S9, Canada.

Report from a “SSB” County Hunter – KM9X

Trying time for those on SSB! If you're a CW county hunter, you can appreciate making do without 30M! Running in the Midwest/eastern USA is challenging without 30 and 40m to use much of the day. CW folks have it!

From the K3IMC forum.

“Subject: WBOW trip summary

Message: The recent trip for my WBOW for Master County Hunter(Bingo) was a fun four days, but I wish the bands had cooperated. Had many counties with no contacts, and most counties had 1-3 contacts. Same on 40m. Most had no contacts, many with 1-3 and maybe one county with 10 contacts. Seems 40m worked best in the late evening. 20m was never good at any time. Wish I could have got some needed counties for those out there with requests. Especially, KL7D in Warren, NC. No bands again!

Thanks to the few that helped out as NCS or ANCS.

We ran 2151 miles, put out 107 counties, including Gates, NC , and my last for BINGO with KB9MGI. 63 counties were unique to run for me, and put me over 900 unique counties ran, and almost 2600 total. Miles are now about 56,000.

Had some great weather and a beautiful trip, spring is well underway in the east, as Indiana is still grey, trees just budding. Got into a severe thunderstorm in the middle of Raleigh NC... Wreck on I40 has us sitting on the county line of Jefferson/Cocke, TN on Tuesday, for about 20 min. Never ran a county line sitting in the middle of the interstate before! We spent over an hour in traffic until we found we had 5 more miles to inch forward. Thank god we I had a 4 wheel drive - went through the median and back to the last exit and to a bathroom!!! Then the long way around through

Sevierville, TN. Fund the Bush Baked Beans plant! The weird stuff you see off the Interstate!

Thanks for all those bingo contacts and the net controls through the last four years in completing the Bingo award # 279.

Dan KM9X”

More “Club Call” Lunacy

Well, the ‘club’ business is in great need to get resolved one way or the other. MARAC seems to have MAJOR problems now with rules for multiple awards when you examine them closely.

A year after the April 2005 April Fool article in the County Hunter News (see April 2005) about MARC chairperson Katy-Nine Zee-pee automatically giving out a Bingo award to every new USACA holder since nearly every county hunter seemed to adopted either an "X" call or a club call with an X, the other 99.5% of the club membership realized what their actions were doing to the awards. It also raised a lot of questions about the current state of affairs of the awards and of just few who were more than bending over backwards to 'give out counties' for awards that they themselves were not good for.

If you look at the FCC webpage, at http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/index.htm?job=licensing_1&id=amateur

You will that is says the following:

“A club station license allows members of an amateur radio club to have a station operating under a club call sign. The license is granted only to the trustee of the club. **It conveys no operating privileges.**”

Isn't that interesting? **A club license is only a “tation license”**. Way back when, everyone got two licenses, one for a ‘station’, one for the operator. The ‘station license’ allowed you to set up a station. It had no operating

privileges. You had a separate 'operator license'. The 'club' call cannot operate. Only someone who has their own license to OPERATE can use the club station as a control operator, but the 'club' itself is **NEVER** an 'operator'. By FCC rules and regulations.

The "club call" can no more operate a radio than "American Airlines" fly an airplane without a licensed pilot.

Looking into the Award Rules and the Bylaws, which go to the very heart of the aims and purposes of MARAC, we find:

The **bylaws** state:

"All MARAC awards are available to any licensed amateur radio operator anywhere in the world. Where applicable, the MARAC awards are available for Short Wave Listeners (SWL's) on a heard basis."

It would seem difficult, with no operator privileges given to a club station by the FCC (and the club callsign specified), for the club station then to claim it is an 'operator' able to apply for MARAC awards. It clearly is NOT. It does not pass the test! MARAC cannot issue it an 'operator' award. Clearly.

This statement is in the bylaws, which if were to be changed, would require approval of the ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP. This cannot be changed by the awards committee. As it stands, it rules out giving awards to 'clubs'.

Even normal practice, when a callsign changes hands, like K9DCJ from Arnie to the MARAC club, the stars stay with the original OPERATOR, not the callsign. Same for W5UGD and others. Clearly, MARAC intends that stars and awards go to the OPERATOR, not the 'callsign' when it is not used by the operator who got it. An individual operator is assigned his/her own call sign. When you work the operator who got it, you get the stars. It would seem 'clubs' aren't even eligible to have MARAC awards, including multiple stars or Bingo because they aren't 'operators' to begin with, and there is no provision in the Award rules to give clubs an award.

It is only 0.5% of the entire membership that has played and continues to play this 'club nonsense' business. The other 99.5% quickly realized the quagmire that this club lunacy was getting MARAC into.

Another statement in the bylaws:

“(7) All contacts must be made using the call signs issued to the licensee”. In no way, does a control operator have the ability to claim the ‘club station’ call is issued to him/her. It isn’t. It is issued to ‘the club’ and is held by a ‘trustee’, who has no special operating privileges conveyed by the station license.

Also, from MARAC bylaws:

“(10) Each participant, by applying for or submitting an application for a MARAC award, stipulates to:

(a) Having observed all MARAC rules.”

Of one is not a ‘licensee’ of the call, then one cannot be following the rules when a ‘club station call’ submits an application for an award, can it? None of the contacts was made using the FCC licensed call of the operator.

Even the ‘team award’ which one might argue goes to a ‘group’ is not awarded to the ‘team’ as such. Both individuals in the ‘team’ get a separate plaque, one for each OPERATOR. Clearly another indication that MARAC issues awards to INDIVIDUALS.

Ripping off MARAC? : According to MARAC bylaws, to apply for an award, if you are a member, you pay typically \$2. If you are not a member, you pay MUCH more. That encourages folks to join MARAC and get the bargain rate. According to the MARAC database, Atlantic Radio Club has never been a MARAC member, but has received at least 5 awards – 2nd, 3rd, 4th, Five-Star, and Bingo. I wonder if the Atlantic Radio Club, which is not a MARAC member, paid the non-member rate for the awards? Or applied by sending in the application at the higher non-member rate per award? The

wording is clear. There is no exception for club calls that I see. K2JG is not a MARAC member.

But can the club even join? Or be qualified to receive awards?

The bylaws contain no provision for a 'club' to be a member of any type. In fact, the rules specifically require one to be a person or 'operator' to be a member, and apply for or hold awards. This cannot be 'interpreted away'. A club has no operating privileges by FCC grant. A club an individual. By FCC requirement, to get a club station call you must have at least '4 members' in your group.

There are four categories of membership, including charter, regular, family, and honorary. All require being an 'operator' or a 'person'. For example:

"(b) Regular Members: Any **amateur radio operator** with a valid, current **operating** license may become a Regular member of MARAC upon application and payment of dues. Regular members retain voting privileges and other benefits of membership as long as payment of dues is current." (Bolding added).

For MARAC members, most awards are \$2 for a certificate, but \$7 for a non-member! Plaques are \$15 more for non-members. Wonder if those club stations did the right thing? (Which really is not apply in the first place because they are ineligible)

Even More Club Lunacy – Part I – Masters Gold:

Well, I mentioned that the "Atlantic Radio Club" with station license K2JG hadn't been spotted mobile in over a year. So, I guess in the true fashion of 'Club Call Lunacy', K2JG, Atlantic Radio Club call, suddenly appears mobile in the middle of Montana on 3/31/06, running a county. Someone needed to 'borrow' the "K" call to give out the county to a county hunter who was desperate to work a "K" prefix "operator". Was this the same operator at K2JG that you hear day after day in Florida, who suddenly got inspired to go mobile? Who has a "K" prefix in his call, and who is an 'operator' by FCC rules? Who could have followed the rules and legally given out a "K" contact and contact good for MG and MP and 5 stars? Nope. Another 'club member' it seems. All that club equipment magically

get sent to MT? Nope? It seems that ‘just the station call’ was ‘put in use’. That led to red flags everywhere!

The **operator** at the club station, now out mobile in MT, neither had a star, nor Bingo, so we have a serious dilemma. Also, the call was not licensed to him. The club itself has no operating privileges, so “it” can’t be the operator as required. MARAC could not have, by its own bylaws, given the club call stars and Bingo. The call when logged by the computer program shows ‘good for 4 stars, Master’s Gold and Bingo” contacts.. But is it? Who was the Bingo award and USACA/nth time’s awards given to? Can’t be the ‘club’ since it wasn’t the” operator”. It was actually earned by KZ2P, likely with an endorsement “using club station K2JG’. K2JG was ineligible to hold those awards. Neither an operator, or someone who could” claim all the contacts were made by the ‘licensee’ when submitting an application for awards. “

There is a big catch – if you read the MARAC rules for Master Gold Award, it says:

“**SPECIAL RULES:** All contacts for Master Gold must be made after the applicant has earned at least one **Star** and the Bingo Award. Each contact must be made with **another operator** who has also earned at least one **Star** and the Bingo Award.”

Note: It says the ‘**other operator**’ must have also earned at least one star, and the bingo award. Not the callsign! The ‘club’ cannot be an operator – by FCC statement on license, and definition of ‘clubs’.

W0MU, who has neither a star, nor Bingo, was the operator at ‘club station” with call sign ‘K2JG’used as a ‘ride along club call’ at that time, as the FCC required control op actually operate a ‘club station’. Since he had neither a star nor Bingo, the contact was NOT GOOD for Master’s Gold by the rules! I hope you didn’t count it. Did your computer program count it? It shouldn’t. If it did, you need to manually delete it from your Master Gold book!

Seriously! KE3VV, Dave, who was involved in the last re-write of the rules, acknowledged that the rules say ‘operator’ for a very specific reason. It is similar to the club station operation situation, where you may operate the

club up to the privileges of your license, or the club license trustee's, which ever is less.

If you have a technician license, you cannot operate on 20M SSB (unless there is also a control operator at your side doing the actual T/R switching, who has a General or higher license), and the club custodian has at least a General or higher license. He acknowledged that that language was VERY specific, and that club station K2JG with an unqualified operator would not be good to give out the MG award contact.

Isn't it **ironic** that the 'club station' normal operator that rails continually about phantom contacts, was the one who 'authorized' the club callsign to be used as 'ride along' mobile, and cause serious logging problems giving phantom contacts to people?

The "Club" lunacy continues, with only a few folks still running or operating with club calls. Everyone else appears to have the good sense of doing the right thing and ending this club call nonsense. You hear K2JG (the Atlantic Club), usually out of the same house as KZ2P, and NA7XX always in the same car as W0MU, and W4CA, always in the car with AB4YZ. The first two are Officers of MARAC. Guess they think it is 'just a game' to scam the folks with the ride along calls, or they are 'exercising their power and positions'? The first one to jump in and 'defend' this lunacy on the K3IMC forum quickly is also a MARAC Director out west.

Even More Club Lunacy – Part II – Five Star:

Maybe this same rule should be applied to the Five Star award? Maybe you shouldn't get more stars that the "operator" has, not necessarily or added to the stars of the 'club call'????? Oops, you better read the rules. It doesn't count! W0MU had no stars.

Yet another major problem with 'club calls'. Let's say that club station call sign K2JG goes mobile in Carbon MT. That 'callsign' has 4 stars associated with it. Of course, you know that the 'club' was never an operator and could not have earned those stars, right? You enter club call sign K2JG into your computer but it shows good for 4 stars. In addition to giving you false credit for Master's Gold (if you have your Bingo and a star), it also gives you false credit for the Five Star award! More phantom contacts generated for

EVERYONE who worked the 'club' if the operator does not hold four stars!!!

The MARAC rules specifically state in the requirements for Five Star Award:

"Contacts with amateur **operators** who have earned more than one Star count for the number of stars earned. If you have a Valid Contact with someone who holds the MARAC Worked All USA Counties Fifth Time Award, that contact is worth five Stars, and you have completed the county with only one contact!" Ah, but the club is never an operator- the FCC says so.

Note it says clearly **operator**. It says someone! (Not that you worked a 'call sign'. Or a group of people.) If W0MU, who holds NO stars, is using club call sign K2JG, and W0MU is the operator (he is the control operator by FCC definition), then everyone's computer gave them a phantom contact for 4 stars in Carbon MT! W0MU cannot give you four stars.

Later, it again says:

"In no case, however, can you claim more Star credits for a call sign in your log **than the total number of Stars actually held by the operator** at the time of your last claimed contact in that county. Also, you cannot claim credit for Stars earned by an operator after the date of your last contact unless you make an additional Valid Contact with that call sign in the county for which the additional Stars are claimed." It cannot be stated more clearly. An operator with no stars cannot give you stars, or more than he has in total.

Now , everyone not only has to delete the MG contacts, but also delete any stars that they were credited with working K2JG in Carbon MT! The operator did not meet the criteria.. But there is more to come on stars later.

Even More Club Lunacy – Part III – Prefixes:

Now, why did this recent club lunacy start? It seems someone needed a “K” prefix to finish up Montana. So W0MU, the SC Director, simply “used” a borrowed K “ride along club call” for his run to give out “K” prefix there.

That run then messed up the logging systems of likely more than half the people who worked him, giving them false credit for MG and Five Star. But that is not all! There were even more 'phantom' contacts generated!

"The MARAC rules for the USA-PA are, from page 33 of the revised rules as of Jan 2006: "USA Prefix Award (USA-PA)

OBJECTIVE: To making Valid Contacts with **amateur radio operators** who have as the first letter of **their call sign** one of four letters assigned to USA stations." Oops...that leaves out mobile 'club'. The club has no operator privileges. It means that if you counted "NA7XX" for an "N", it didn't count if W0MU was the operator. It means if you counted "W4CA" for a W, with AB4YZ at the mike, it didn't count. Time to erase those hundreds or thousands of entries in your prefix book?

If the 'club call' makes a contact from Carbon MT, with W0MU as the operator, the operator has a "W" callsign. It matters not what callsign is being used, it is the callsign of the operator that determines the prefix. The "W" is the prefix of the operator. The MARAC rules make no provision for 'ride along club calls' and as written in multiple sections, say they can't and don't count.

Thus, one can conclude that club calls, which are not operators, cannot count for prefixes that are different than what the operator of the moment has. And if the operator has a "K", there is no need for the ride along club call.

Likely that would hard to tell for random contacts in a contest, but certainly easy to tell when on the CH nets by regular county hunters. You can easily check QRZ.com or other databases to find out if a call is a club call. In most cases, the computer programs want the information on 'home county' and state for the call anyway. If you see 'club station' you likely will have to override the posting to 5 star awards, MG if applicable and prefix books. That's what the rules seem to require.

I wonder if the logging programs even have the intelligence to figure out they should NOT credit K2JG in Carbon, MT for the Master Gold award in someone's database, if W0MU was the operator at the time?? Or the Five Star award? I don't recall seeing any field where you have to enter the operator's call as well as the 'club call' in use to be sure that you meet the

current MARAC rules. Maybe they'll have to be major rewrites to give VALID contacts that aren't 'phantom contacts' credited in the database? Or rewrite the programs, so it asks you 'is this a club call' for newly appearing club calls, and not credit you for the awards a club call cannot give you? Other previously entered club calls would not post to books erroneously.

For the Bingo award, the wild card is : "Call signs with an **X** in the call (such as **KX1AB** or **W1ABX**) and call signs belonging to **operators** with one or more **Stars** are good for Bingo in every **USA County**."

That opens up the same bag of worms. Does a club call belong to an 'operator? No. You can't take the 'club' to dinner and order it dinner. The 'club' doesn't go to sleep. The 'club' doesn't turn on or off the radio, or move the dial, or the PTT switch by FCC rule. It seems it can't count for Bingo, either, if it has a star. Club Call K9MOT cannot give you a Bingo contact, even though it seems to have earned a 'star', UNLESS the current control operator also has a star! How would you know?

Maybe one of the first things that the Board should examine after the election is to stopping club from going mobile or hold MARAC awards NO credit for 'ride along mobile club calls'. Period. Maybe CQ will do the same. Their rules requiring giving awards to individuals. Same for the ARRL.

Maybe it is time to end this craziness? Or are the members so anxious to get awards at 'any costs' that they'll look the other way on 'borrowed calls' where the operator himself/herself is not qualified to give out those awards? That would be a sad state of affairs, wouldn't it?

You want a "K" call in Carbon MT? Wait for an **operator** who has that call to go there. Darrel, W6TMD worked a fixed station there with a "K" call the same day in Carbon, MT, on sked, as the 'ride along' K club call sign appeared. He didn't need the sham contact from the 'club call'.

The clamoring of 'it has to count' regardless of the wording, usually seen on the K3IMC forum after a post that a contact doesn't count by the rules, shows just how distorted the awards process has become. The contact 'just has to count' because someone needs it real bad????? Or someone drove 100 miles to give out a 'club call' contact that really doesn't count by the rules,

but wants to count it anyway? That is the message often detected in on the forum and the chat room by the 'fast and easy' crowd.

It's just disappointing that nearly all the parties involved in 'claiming it has to be good' are MARAC Officers/Directors who should represent MARAC at the highest standards (and maybe they should check first with the awards custodian/chairman, and actually read the rules, before claiming it counts because their logging program counted it!). It's disappointing that the person who 'loaned' the club call and the person who used the club call are both MARAC officials.

Now let's see.....where does this club nonsense take us? I'm sure there have been lots of 'good intentions' by using 'ride along club calls'. That doesn't mean it was right. As they say, the road to hell is paved with 'good intentions'.

Maybe you work WB9NUL, Joyce, good for 2 stars on the way to the National Convention? Work Barry, W9UCW, likely in the same car, and you get a "W" and team contact, but no extra star. But suddenly, if K9DCJ should just happen to pop up in that car magically, and you work it, you get a "K" prefix, and 3 more stars, for a total of five stars. Whoa!...the sum of the stars of the operators is only 2. Now, magically, through the use of prestidigitation and other mysterious processes, suddenly you get all the stars you need in a county?

You fill out all five stars? And the "K" prefix? And for every county that that team, oops, trio runs through? But there are only 2 people in the car!..... There isn't even a 3rd person using the 'club call', and it itself is not an operator. See a problem. If you need 3 people in the car for a car pool to use the HOV lanes, having the 'club' ride along won't do it. By the MARAC rules, you can't get more stars than the total of all the stars of the **operators** in the car, but the logging programs give you double!....that is double trouble for MARAC!!!! By five star rules, you can't claim those extra stars. By prefix rules, you can't claim the "K". Only Joyce, WB9NUL, with her own stars can give you a Bingo contact.

What would happen if K9DCJ got Bingo? Bingo! Every computer system would try to log it good for MG, as if the operator working it had his/her Bingo and a star. But, the crew of WB9NUL/W9UCW in the car would NOT be good for MG, since neither of the operators was good

individually!..(At least not yet) ..Well, K9DCJ doesn't have Bingo yet, but someday it likely will if this continues. All those logging programs would log 'phantom contacts'. If others used K9DCJ, without having their own stars and Bingo, the same thing.

Maybe this is yet another reason why MARAC should just NOT ALLOW club calls to go out mobiling or earn awards. They aren't qualified by MARAC rules or CQ rules to even have awards as they are not operators.

It seems most of the time, this 'club business' it is just something to keep someone occupied, giving them a reason to make thousands or tens of thousands of extra contacts on net, create more QRM, reduce the chances of you getting through before the mobile runs out of a county, runs the allotted time and isn't moved, etc. And using a 'club' call to allegedly bypass the requirements to work "Someone" with the right borrowed prefix or claim credit for Bingo or Five Star is just a sham. The one mobile last year with 3 extra borrowed calls demonstrated that clearly. Fortunately, he ceased with that silliness. None of the other calls likely had operating privileges so shouldn't be counted for anything.

Over the years, many people have left county hunting in disgust at the 'antics' going on to 'give out contacts' at any cost. This 'club call' craziness does nothing to dispel that impression.

Are we done yet? No. More awards in trouble.

PART IV - POLARIS AWARD

For the Polaris Award, potentially yet more problems. It is the operator who must have a star, not the callsign? When someone borrows a club callsign and uses it, it might give folks credit for the Polaris award. Does using K9DCJ (which has two stars) by someone with no stars result in the logging programs logging this as a phantom contact? Say if Barry, W9UCW handed out a K9DCJ contact? Are people smart enough who paper log to not log it? That one is on the border – since K9DCJ does have a star issued by CQ Magazine. But is the current op one that got a star? Who knows? Who checks? If you want to follow the rules, you should use the contact ONLY if the operator has a star, and only for his/her call, not the club call.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are so many problems with club calls going mobile, and clubs seeking awards, that most folks would logically conclude there is no valid reason to have them go mobile, or allow club stations and their associated station call signs to obtain MARAC awards. It is the OPERATORS who get the awards. The FCC awards NO operating privileges to a club call sign, just a 'station license'. By FCC grant and definition, "club station calls" cannot be 'operators'.

The Awards Committee seemingly cannot 'change this' away. The restriction on issuing awards to non-operating 'entities' such as Club Call 'station licenses' that have no operating privileges are in the Bylaws, and a change requires a vote of the membership to change.

The requirement is also that applicants use calls for all contacts licensed to themselves rules out applying for 'club station' awards. Neither K2JG, nor K9DCJ is licensed to an individual, but by definition, to at least 4 people. No one can claim the call as 'their own call given them by the FCC'. Clearly both 'club calls' have been used by multiple operators. That restriction, too, is in the Bylaws.

Move a Mobile? It seems you have less and less volunteers to 'move a mobile'. A good part of this is due to the current Net Control practices. I got an email from a W1 station. He listens occasionally on .336, and heard a station he would have liked to work. When NC asked for volunteers, he was hearing the mobile well enough to move and willing to do it. BUT.....he is one of the dozens of stations that NC has created a new rule for, and he isn't 'allowed' to move mobiles or 'help out run' a mobile.

So who loses here? Every county hunter loses, because K6TEX was not moved off frequency in Barton, KS. No one else volunteered, yet there was a willing volunteer, but because of the 'agenda' of the Net Mullah, he didn't get moved because that station 'wasn't allowed' to even 'help' on net. **The Net Mullah was more concerned with his personal agenda than the welfare of the mobiles and fixed stations seeking awards. (Oh!, and he**

had that rare K prefix too!) That W1 didn't get the county, and dozens of others didn't have the opportunity to work or receive a relay off frequency. EVERY county hunter is continually being hurt by the 'agenda' of the Net Mullah.

It seems that agenda is "running mobiles off", and "running helpers off". Only on 14.336 for the last 5-6 years.

De N4CD

Hustler Resonators and Moisture de K8MFO

I am a new user of Hustler mobile products, although not totally new to mobile operation. In the late 1950s and early 1960s I used such classics as a Webster Bandspanner and "Slim Jim" antennas. For what they were, they worked as they were touted.

Recently I have been buying up used Hustler stuff at hamfests. Using a triband "hub" on a 54 inch mast, I was able to quickly bring 80/40/20 SWR down to 1:1 at my chosen frequencies. The 40 and 20 resonators were left on the mast at a time when we had severe rainstorms for about 3 days. I noted that the minimum SWR point on 20 went up about 50 KHZ, and down about 30 KHZ on 40. Doing some research on the Web, I found that this is not a unique problem.

Someone suggested I call "Jason" at Newtronics. He conceded that moisture tends to get under the vinyl coil coverings on the resonators. His suggestion to get rid of the existing moisture was to put the resonators in a 120 degree Fahrenheit oven for 5 to 10 minutes. For a long term solution, he suggested using a silicone sealant around the edges of the vinyl covering. I used a silicone aquarium sealant and put the resonators back on the mast. Since then we have had some substantial rainstorms, and my minimum SWR point has not changed. As they say, YMMV, but so far it has worked for me. I should add that the resonators that I have been using are the older style white colored ones -- they use the clutch assembly for tightening the stinger, and not a set screw. My bag of hamfest "goodies" includes a set of the old gray insulators, but I have not yet tried them.

Submitted by Don Karvonen K8MFO April 3, 2006

A “Rookie” Award?

W0MU proposed a ‘rookie’ award as one of the annual awards given out. Might be a great idea, if you come up with rules that make sense. It would be nice to those who become active during a year for the first, and do an outstanding job the ‘first year’. A few questions arise, though, and obviously, it makes sense to examine things ahead, rather than wind up with confusing rules and then trying to sort things out.

W0MU provided no details of his proposal he forwarded to the Awards Committee for consideration. So most of this is conjecture.

I'm curious as to how one defines "rookie" and define eligibility?

In sports, where the term is usually used there is:

- 1) A signed contract for a defined period - usually a season - and is usually for 'professionals'. It is selected by the team managers/leagues/coaches. There are reams of statistics available on performance to use.
- 2) A clear definition of a 'rookie' - a first year player in the 'professional leagues'.
- 3) That player almost always has 'experience' through a farm league team, where he may or may not have played for years and years. Thus, a 'rookie' is not a 'newbie' to the sport except in very rare cases having avoided the 'training' of the minor leagues. Or in football, likely 4 years of high school football before reaching college, and then it is by year – i.e., freshman, etc.

This leads me to think about how you define a 'rookie' county hunter.

Would it be like the County Hunter of the Year award, which is selected by only the Directors, after folks within their districts have made nominations to the Directors, and they select the single CHOY for CW and SSB?

Would it be like the "Best Mobile/Team" of the year, which is selected by the members based upon the quarterly ballots? And only that? If so, who

would determine who was even eligible to receive votes? Members aren't likely to remember exactly 'when' someone appeared for the first time, or investigate whether they were a county hunter 10 or 20 years ago, and 're-appeared', not being a rookie at all.

Would the 'rookie' have to appear on the nets after the last National Convention on the county hunter net for the first time? Or in what time period? For how many 'quarters'? In what capacity? As a 'mobile'? As someone just 'chasing counties'? As someone doing NC? If he came and went by the end of a 'year' would he still be eligible? - i.e., burned out or lost interest, if quarterly balloting had been used?

I'm sure a rookie could win best mobile if he did a fantastic job of putting out counties. Same for NC of the year.

If he had appeared on net before the National Convention or before June 30, which is the end of the 2nd quarter balloting by members for best mobile, would he/she be ineligible?

If he/she had been on the CH nets years ago, or had a different call, but been active, would that person be ineligible? An example might be N5PR, who got his USACA, but recently re-appeared on the CW nets and is very active. How many CH knew that detail?

This proposed award deserves good scrutiny before being enacted. There are enough awards already that seem to have major 'issues' at the moment.

Awards

2nd Time #360, KA0SHC, Larry, 3/28/06

Bingo III #40, Jim, VE9DH, 4/1/2006

4th time #124, Jim, VE9DH, 4/4/2006

Bingo #279, KM9X, Dan, 4/17/2006

Transmitted All Counties #7, Jack, N7ID, 4/19/2006

Bingo #280, N2OCW, Larry, 4/20/06

Please Support Your County Hunting Web Sites

Please think about some financial support for County Hunter Dot Com, a great web site that provides forums, has hundreds of county hunting pictures, a “NO BS” forum and other forums of interest, where some post their trips. Dennis is soliciting any help in defraying some of the annual costs of keeping the website going. His pages include Big Rig information, CW net control procedures, listing of ‘all the numbers’, Award information links for CQ and MARAC, and lots of other county hunting info.

Dennis was instrumental in getting the County Hunter News On-Line, hosting the CHNews until we moved to our new URL after a year. If you enjoy all the good things that come your way ‘free’, perhaps it is time to help out with a little financial support. You can also free get email forwarding from @countyhunter.com if you wish.

Any amount helps. Thanks – de N4CD

Wow! Another “Transmitted All Counties”

Jack, N7ID transmitted from the Second District, AK on 4/19/2006 to become the 7th person to transmit from all 3077 counties in the USA! Congrats! He received award #7 dated 4/19/2006.

May Picture Gallery



Jim K0ARS with the Ford Truck at the Mini

Jim pulls trailers with the Diesel Powered Ford (still some noise from the injector pump) all over the Midwest. Active on CW on 30M usually, and sometimes gets on SSB.



Alan, K8CW with his mobile at the Mini

Alan ran E-field antennas for several years, supplying antennas, resonators, masts, multi-way adapters for building antenna systems. Recently, he 'retired' from his regular business and the antenna business. He's active on CW, has worked and confirmed all counties on 40M, and is working toward all of them on 30M.



AA9JJ and N9QPQ – not CW folks (yet)
Frank good for Master's Platinum
At the mini in Weslaco Feb 2006

When I get a chance and see the spots on 40M, I try and work them toward my totals for Master Platinum. If you track teams, they are one of the most active teams out there.



Don, K3IMC with the mobile at the Mini

Don is getting more active on CW these days, both from the home QTH, and while 'on the road'. He's running 20 and 30M on the car. Don runs the County Hunter Web at: <http://208.178.228.13/ch/index.html> where you can see a 'forum' for discussions, and a 'needs' page where folks list what they need to finish up certain awards. That is very useful and appreciated by the County Hunting Community.

Blast from the Past

N4CD runs Dukes/Nantucket, MA

(From the August RoadRunner, published by MARAC, Inc, August 2000 issue, article written by N4CD.)

Every now and then you have the opportunity to run some 'fun' counties which aren't run all that much. The Second District of Alaska and Kalawao, HI are probably the hardest (and most expensive) ones to get to for most people, but Dukes and Nantucket, MA are not run very often, as they are not places you can just drive to easily and operate. This past July, I took a trip to these islands to put them out for the county hunter net. Percy KA1JPR, hadn't made it there on his motorcycle in quite a while, so it was desperately needed by many. I saved up some cash, and headed out there.

Nantucket is 26 miles off the coast of MA near Yarmouth, and it takes a good ferry ride to get over there. These days, there is a high speed passenger ferry that will get you there in about an hour. (\$40) The slow cheaper ferry, which also hauls cars, takes 2 ½ hours. Nantucket is a summer resort destination, and during the 'season', things are very expensive and very crowded. It is nearly impossible to get your car over there without reserving a ferry spot months ahead of time, and the fee each way is \$158 for the car! Plus, it takes 4 hours each way travel time for a car, so your time on the island gets real, real short!

Needless to say, it is more cost effective to be a 'passenger' and rent a car (\$100/day) on the island. I headed out early Saturday morning - weekends are especially busy, and parking the car at the ferry is not always easy - I caught the 6 a.m. ferry out to the island. Not many people take the 6 am ferry, but by 8 am, things are full, completely. I got a rental car at 0800 local time, a small Daewoo (made in Korea).

If you are going there, reserve your car ahead of time since during season, most are long gone by 9 am. Everything was carried on the ferry in a small suitcase with wheels, including (mag mount, antenna, IC706, key, mic, antenna tuner), and one small shoulder bag (tools, MFJ antenna analyzer, 2m HT, log book), and one taped together set of masts/resonator. The Daewoo had easy to get at battery terminals, and a small flat trunk deck, the most critical points of going 'rental mobile'. Also, it turned out to be exceptionally r.f. quiet, with no detectable ignition noise at idle. I used the N4CD temporary set up described a few years ago in the Road Runner - hose clamps to hold the power leads, and a 3 magnet mount on the trunk deck. You aren't going to

go fast, or far, on either island. Traffic moves along narrow roads at 10-40 mph. Lots of bicycles slowing traffic down.

N7PIB had advised me on some good operating spots, and I headed east to the lighthouse just north of Siasconset. It has a nice parking lot, is high up, and no power lines anywhere nearby. Also, you can zip back into Siasconset, and use the public rest room, and stop at the market. These might seem like minor points, but finding a public rest room on either island is difficult!!

Since propagation had been not so great for the past couple of months, I decided to go all out with the antenna system. I ran 9 feet of mast off the mag mount, and a 20m resonator on top of that. Worked great (SWR 1.6:1 across the entire band). Rig was the IC706. Needless to say, I didn't go driving along with this antenna setup since there are no tractor trailer trucks to keep the trees trimmed to 14 feet or so - When I needed to move, I took it apart, and put it inside. I spent most of the day, except for lunch trip to town, in the parking lot making contacts on net - CW, SSB, - and off frequency (GA QSO party, DX).

The rig was fired up around 9 a.m., and what a surprise. Net Control, about 250 miles away, was 40 over S9. Lots of short skip. Over the next six hours, 190 county hunter contacts were made (both SSB and CW) during a half dozen runs. Around 3pm, I headed back toward town. I decided it would be nice to get some ice cream - but a small cone costs \$3.75 (large \$6.50), so I decided I wasn't going to pay tourist trap prices for an ice cream cone!

Gas was \$2.13/gal, and the car used 2 gallons going 20 miles, but also idling for 2 hours or so. The ride back was uneventful on the 6pm ferry. It's a hydrofoil, and moves along at 40 mph! I got back to the motel (this is Cape Cod area, so motels on the mainland expensive too, and full), grabbed a sandwich, and crashed early. Next morning bright and early at 5 a.m., I headed out toward Wood's Hole, the departure site for the Dukes county ferry. Everyone else in the world calls it Martha's Vineyard. It is the playground of the rich and famous (and snobs) including the Kennedy's and others.

The close in parking lot for the ferry was nearly full at 5:45 a.m., and I got one of the last spots. The shuttle bus came by immediately, and I forgot to grab the 40m resonator! I was too busy insuring that I had all the radio stuff. That would turn out to be a big mistake, as Sunday had no short skip at all.

If the near lot is full, you take a shuttle bus five miles from remote lots. I was planning on taking the 7 a.m. ferry, but found they had a special 6 a.m. ferry on weekends. I got to the island at 7 a.m. and had to wait until the car rental place opened at 8:30. The deli on the island sold a croissant and coffee for about \$6. Ouch! And the line was 200 people long. I suppose with houses starting at about \$600,000 for a small cottage, these sorts of prices aren't out of line. This time, the rental car was a Plymouth Neon (\$80/day).

I thought that if one lighthouse operating location was good, another should work well. I headed off to the west end of the island, for the lighthouse, about 20 miles away. It is on a nice high spot away from power lines. Great spot to operate from, except you can't park within a ½ mile of it! The nearby parking lot, a lot lower in elevation, charges \$15/day to park, since this is a beach area! I looked for any spot to operate, and wound up on a small road with no power lines. You can't park along any 'state highway' on the island, and you have state highways and private narrow, dirt/gravel, or sand 'driveways'. There must be a million 'no parking' signs on the island. Not too many options. I got chased away from the first spot by someone who claimed it was a 'his private road'. I moved down the main road ½ mile to a construction site – shielded by bushes from the road, and with a nice convenient porta john sitting there. That site turned out to work well. Sunday I had stopped at a little market before reaching the operating site, and bought sandwich, soda, and lots of bottled water!

Later, I headed back toward the ferry, and found another good spot, the Tisley Park and Ride lot, which seems to be on the highest spot on the center of the island. It is wide open, lots of empty parking spaces, flat, and power lines 1000 feet away and quiet. I sat there for two hours with no hassles, other than shuttle bus coming by every 10 minutes - after a while, the bus driver, ignored me. You might try that spot if you get there.

After that, I tried the east end lighthouse, but no parking lot. The island has almost no parking along any of the roads, other than in business parking lots, and near power lines. I did find a spot along the beach area to stop and operate for the last run. (the regular beach areas are town permit only parking). I turned in the car, and headed back to the ferry. I saw a small line as I came near the building, and figured that I'd make the 4 pm ferry back. Unfortunately, that was only the first 50 people in the line which snaked around the building and down the street - there were already 500 people waiting in a 1000+ foot line for the ferry (Sunday afternoon weekenders heading home). The 4pm ferry holds 100 passengers or so. The 5pm ferry holds 750, and there wasn't a spare seat on it.

While it is great to put these islands out on weekends when the most county hunters are around, you run into the most amount of tourists, too! After the 'season' is over, things quiet down a whole lot.

The next day, I visited ARRL HQ in Newington CT. You wouldn't believe the racket on the radio in the parking lot from all the computers inside! I filed a complaint at the reception desk (pun intended).

The trip turned out well, with 190 county hunter contacts from Nantucket, and 180 from Dukes, despite poorer propagation on Sunday. It would help to have 40m along. If you plan ahead, or go out of season, during the week, you can take your car to Dukes reasonably easy.

Nantucket is probably good for a rental car, or a week's stay to justify the ferry expense. Everything drops in price after October 1. However, you do have to watch out for Nor'easters (aka the Perfect Storm) which can ruin your day.

KM1C Runs Dukes, MA

Dukes, MA - Quick Summary / Comments by Bill, KM1C as posted on K3IMC Web Site 4/12/06

Cost of the Hotel: A few dollars. Cost of the boat to and from Martha's Vineyard: A few more dollars. Cost of running 224 QSOs, CW & Phone, on multiple bands (33 on 80 CW), under a nearly full moon on the edge of an empty Atlantic beach with absolutely no, nada, zero QRN from any local source: PRICELESS.

Excellent trip, thank you one and all for the VERY fun QSOs.

A couple of quick comments:

1. Amazingly, with no QRN, it was very easy to copy nearly all of the stations that asked for relays. I think there were only two stations where I actually did not hear ANY signal at all.



KM1C – 3 miles south of Edgartown, MA – Dukes, MA

2. With not great band conditions, it certainly does not hurt to give the report multiple times. Signals would go from barely readable to easily readable while riding a QSB "wave".

3. I'm sure you 80 meter guys already know this, but it sure helped me last night when I discovered that using the 20 db attenuator on the TS-480 really ENHANCED the weak signals when it suppressed the atmospheric QRN M O R E than it suppressed the actual signal I was trying to copy. Weak signals would then "jump" on top of the QRN, rather than being buried by it or in it. Reminded me of the days when I had a couple of beverages at the NH QTH for 80 and 160. The attenuator seemed to work in the same way.

BTW, sure glad I bought the narrow CW mechanical filter for the 480. It does not kick in until I dial the DSP filter down to 300 Hz or less. Whoever runs the KW just above our 3556.5 frequency would have done a lot of damage with bad AGC thumping, had I not been able to dial in a "little slice of quiet heaven" at 300 Hz or less!

4. A little surprised at running dry on 40 CW a number of times. Of course, that could be because 30 CW is so hot, hot, hot, that it naturally becomes the "de facto" band for short and medium range QSOs.

5. If it weren't for the CHN activity, this trip would have been a bust. Very few QSOs off of the CHN frequencies. Did some search and pounce, but CQs giving "NA-046" after the call produced just about zilch.

Zero "IOTA" pile-ups on me, just the occasional, almost reluctant, caller. I think band conditions and the weekday operation is what doomed any IOTA activity.

Off the soapbox. Thanks for all the QSOs.



KM1C on Dukes - \$80/night here 'off season'. You can't afford it 'in season'.

Comes the summer, I'll be back on the air from the truck. Will run Dukes again plus Nantucket. I will also shoot for all Maine and all NH before the summer is over. If

XYL gets real, real busy with her stuff, I might get a chance to run most or all of VT, too.

Definitely use the Lexington, MA address on QRZ.com Again, thanks for all the QSOs. Looking forward to many more.

73 de Bill KM1C

Editor Note: KM1C was the first mobile to run Dukes on 30M. It's the first spot in the W6RK database. Lots needed it desperately. Now that's off the list of never run counties on 30M. Still some counties out there never run on 30M yet! Plus Bill was the first to run on 3556.5!

Editor Note 2: I've found that using the 20db attenuator on the IC706 helps on 40M when strong foreign BC interference is present. It tends to overload the front end, and you can actually copy signals better with it 'on'. Same on 80M when the band is filled with 40 over S9 signals. Just remember to turn it off before you try 30 and 20M again, otherwise the band will sound dead!

Remote Antenna Switches

If you have lots of antennas, and either not much room to bring all the coaxes into the hamshack, or the money to afford the coax if it is a long way, or you have access problems bringing a pile of coaxes down through the wall, there are some options.

In the past, Heathkit and others sold a 'remote antenna switch' – a device that switched a single feedline to multiple antennas at a remote point from the shack. If you had a tower with a tri-bander, and a few inverted Vee antennas, and maybe a sloper, you could buy only one long feedline from the switch into the shack, and just have short lines from the antenna to the remote switch, which could be mounted high up on the tower. You now see second hand ones at hamfests for \$30-\$60.

For the past 30 years, I've had a Heathkit HA-1460. At one time it was 60 feet up on a tower, then sat in storage for 7 years while I was inactive other than some contesting at other stations. When I moved to Texas, it wound up installed in the attic so I only had to run a single coax down through the wall to the hamshack from the antennas that came in that way. It switched the 30 and 40m dipoles which went over the peak of the

roof in stealth format, plus a 6M squalo in the attic. Up until recently, it seems to work fine. Then in mid February it decided to start giving me problems. It would stall half way between positions.

It required an 8 conductor cable about the diameter of RG58 be run between the two units – the switch (weatherproof) at the ‘antenna end’, and a control box at the shack end. It would switch up to 5 antennas, and ground them in the sixth position for lightning protection. I gave it lots of use going from 30 to 40m and back all the time, chasing counties!

After a half dozen trips up and back from the attic via the pull down stairs in the garage to change antennas a few times to chase some stations, I decided it was time to buy a new one. I was missing too many mobiles, and using the 30m dipole on 40m just didn’t work worth a darn....and I missed W3CR in many Master Platinum counties on his trip in AR while chasing W6TMD through his counties on 20 and 30cw. Often, by the time I saw the spot for 40SSB, Chuck had finished and gone to 3898 SSB, and I don’t have a fixed antenna for that (yet).

I hustled over to the local ham store (Texas Towers) and checked out their inventory. They carry the Ameritron line of switches, and the Texas RF one. There are two types available – the ones that require a separate control line, and newer ones which use the coax itself to carry the voltage which runs the relays.

I took down the Heathkit switch from the attic, brought it down to the shack, took it apart, and tried to figure out what was wrong. Still clean inside, and nothing seemed wrong. Maybe the stepper motor had worn out from thousands of switching back and forth from 30 to 40cw in county hunting? I put it back up in the attic, and checked the bottom end unit. I took the bottom unit apart. Nothing obvious was wrong. I tightened up one ground post on the lower unit that provided the ‘ground’ for the circuit to the attic.

I had already installed the Ameritron RCS-4 units and had it up and running in 20 minutes. Seems to work fine. Switches almost instantly, compared to the clackety clack of the Heathkit as it searched for the right position.

So I thought I would give the Heathkit one more try while I was checking out the new unit. Well, you can guess – it seemed to work just fine. So now I have two – one will be a backup for a while, until I figure out another antenna project. From the Ameritron web site: www.ameritron.com



You can also get models that switch up to 10 antennas to a single coax feedline. Some have additional lightning protection built in, and some ground all unused antennas when not in use. MFJ carries these in their catalog, along with Texas Towers, and likely the other major dealers of equipment as well.

60 Meters

WV2B posted some good info on the K3IMC site:

“60 Meter Count Hunting

Message: Since County Hunting on 60 Meters was mentioned in N4CD's newsletter, I thought I would mention some of the regulations, although I am sure anyone interested in the band likely knows them already.

1. Amateur use is *secondary*, hams are offered no protection from interference by government mobile and fixed services, and should be careful not to interfere with them.
2. Operation is on five discrete 2.8 KHz wide "channels" only. The amateur tuning frequencies are:

5330.5
5346.5
5366.5

5371.5

5403.5

3. Operation is to be with a maximum power of 50 Watts ERP- 50 Watts PEP output into an antenna with 0 gain {dipole}. USB operation only.

4. Operators must use all means available to minimize audio bandwidth while still maintaining communications-quality intelligibility.

So my thoughts are that 60 meters may be useful for some county hunting. But, any county hunters wishing to use 60 meters should be sure that their audio bandwidth is acceptable {no FMing mobiles, or splattering fixed stations}, and that their frequency readout is accurate. Also, since the band is limited to only 5 channels, dominating a specific "channel for extended periods of time may not be well received by other users of the band, especially as use of the band continues to increase. Users must not be tempted to increase power beyond the 50 watt limit to make a needed contact.

The phrase applied to 60 meters has been= "misuse it, and lose it". 60 Meters may become another good band for county hunting, but such use should be approached carefully. Thanks for considering my thoughts. The standards mentioned above taken from "The FCC Rulebook", published by ARRL. 73, Duane, WV2B

Call: WV2B 03/23/06”

Notes de N4CD: So, first – turn off your speech processor – you want a clean signal – or set it up for minimum compression and a clean signal. If you are at home, you need to calculate how to have no more than 50W ERP. If you use a dipole, then turn down the rig to 50-55w out. If you use a loaded vertical, likely you can run 100w, and will have less than unity gain antenna. For a mobile, you likely won't exceed 50w ERP with any mobile whip. (Hustler sells 60m resonators, and screwdrivers will have less than 50% efficiency here). Put the 60m channels in memory –lock the freq dial so it won't move! - and remember it is USB, which is different than the convention of LSB from 40m down to 160m meters. You likely will have to override the normal selection the radio will make, unless you have a brand new model that incorporates 60m. (And you'll need to 'open up' your rig to transmit on 60m).

If anyone(!) comes on frequency and says you are causing interference, immediately cease – that is the rule. Might be fun band to try after 20M goes to sleep for the day, or when the BC interference is killing 40m in the mornings/afternoons for those that only ever operate on SSB. Absolutely no CW allowed!

MARAC Elections

The County Hunter News thinks it's time to get some 'change' in the current leadership. Over the past two years, the current board managed to put MARAC into a state of paralysis for over 3 months, unable even to pay a bill or hold a meeting. That was the 'doings' of just a few. Now is the time to get some folks on the board who might actually read what they are voting on before they vote on it, and don't have an 'agenda' to enforce, or folks to bash. The CHNews suggests you consider the following candidates as having the requisite experience, and a good positive attitude and outlook on MARAC to lead MARAC into the future.

De WQ7A (from K3IMC forum) - Treasurer

24 March 2006 Fellow County Hunters I am announcing my candidacy for the Board of Directors position of Treasurer.

I believe that I can bring some talent to the BOD that will help direct this organization in a positive direction.

First, just a little about myself. I am retired from United Airlines as a senior Captain after serving 36 years for them. Many of my bookkeeping skills were honed in that position.

I have been in Amateur Radio since 1959 and continually licensed since that time under several call signs. During this period I have achieved the 5 Band Worked All States award, and confirmed over 300 DX countries.

I became interested in County Hunting many years ago and earned my USA-CA number 1075 in September of 2003. Since that time I have earned my

second star and Bingo Award. I have transmitted from over 1000 unique counties for the County Hunter community. My wife and I have attended many MARAC conventions and enjoyed each and every one.

I have served MARAC in the capacity of Awards Committee for some time. I have created several Excel spreadsheets for the County Hunters to use for logging their contacts and created county name overlays for those who use Street Atlas USA.

Currently I am deeply involved in the development of the new MARAC Logger program by KD9ZP and others. It has been my responsibility to assist Kwiklog users in their conversion process to the new program. I have developed two Excel spreadsheets to help the Kwiklog users view their files.

I believe that serving you on the Board of Directors would be a privilege and an honor. I would use my best judgment to vote for your best interest and the best interest of MARAC in all matters that come before the BOD.

I solicit your vote and thank you for voting for whoever your favorite candidate might be.

73, Terry, WQ7A

de N7AKT: (from K3IMC forum) - Director – Southeast

I would like to announce my candidacy for the position of S.E. District Director I am now retired, after 8 yrs. in the Marine corp., 7 yrs. as a security guard at a resort, and 35 yrs, as a law enforcement officer. I have been active in amateur radio since 1977 and been a member of MARAC since 1978 (I think. I've had one other call sign (WD9GPC from WI.) I moved to NV. in 1978 and upgraded to Gen. and received call N7AKT. I got interested in county hunting when I accidentally ran across the net when I heard a lot of people shooting everybody. 2 2, bang bang, rifle shots, etc. Being a former marine sniper this got my attention. To make a long story short I became a member and received MARAC # 1414. Worked all the counties and received USA-CA # 410, USA-CA # 27, USA-CA # 9, USA-CA # 3, and USA-CA #5. Got bingo #11 sometime in between. I've worked 178 countries via. mobile, and transmitted from all 3077 counties #6. Every contact I've ever made was mobile. I have no base station. I've been to a

number of conventions mostly in the eighties, and now that I'm retired I will be at a lot more. I would be honored to represent all the members in the SE District if elected. Regardless, make sure you vote for the person of your choice.

Thanks in advance, 73's Scottie, N7AKT

W6RK, Risto – running for President

W6RK

My name is Risto Kotalampi. I am originally from Finland where I spent my youth in a small city of Ähtäri. I studied Electrical Engineering, Digital Signal Processing and Computer Science in Tampere University of Technology. I moved permanently to U.S.A. in 1996. I am married to my wonderful wife Barbara and we have one boy, Adam, who is 7 years old (not yet licensed but we are working on it). I work for America Online, Inc. as a Technical Manager and I am leading a team of six highly skilled Systems and Database Engineers. Radio has been my way of life since 1980 when I first started shortwave listening. I have been licensed since 1983 and my first call sign was OH6EE. I love ham and shortwave radio because there is so much you can do and there are always new challenges to improve your operator skill or station setup. Besides my addiction to county hunting, I have a lot of passion for contesting, DXing, digital modes and shortwave broadcasting listening. My strongest area of expertise is web technologies, database driven applications and I am always looking ways to utilize Internet in county hunting. A lot of people know me about the county hunting spotting website <http://ch.w6rk.com/> with advanced features like email alerts, plotting mobile routes on the map, county and mobile statistics, etc.

Why do I want to be the President of MARAC? I have an urge to help people, find out ways to do things better and make a difference in county hunting. I want to start several new initiatives with the club: we need to expand the club to be the general interest club representing county hunting and mobile operations, actively marketing our club and county hunting and recruit new members and hams into county hunting. We also need to look

into ourselves and ask if everything we do is good for the hobby and if we're all good ambassadors for MARAC or not. I was the President of the Finnish DX Association, a club of 1000+ members during 1993-1997 so running large organizations isn't totally new for me and I'm looking forward to use my organizational skills in MARAC, to I am asking for your vote. I'm going to offer an opportunity for the change of the direction, new blood, new energy and bucket full of new ideas to make county hunting a lot of fun. You will also find me very pragmatic and objective team builder who is always looking for things to improve and not shy to address difficult issues. It's a huge challenge, but I like challenges and I'll be looking forward to work with all of you in making MARAC a club you will all be proud of being members. This club needs a new direction and I'm offering an opportunity for it. I am here to reform the club and change the direction and I'm asking your vote in this important election.

I believe MARAC's board and officers are here to serve you and I'd be honored to be the President of MARAC and work with the board and all of the members to move us to the bright future.

Address: 25881 Meadowmist Drive, Hayward, CA 94544 (Alameda County)
Email: risto@kotalampi.com
Phone: 510-315-0539
Special web site: <http://marac.w6rk.com/>

N8KIE – Running for Director

N8KIE Bob Woody, USA-CA 1093 Bingo 263 and 2nd time 359. First licensed as WD8CMT in 1976. I got interested in county hunting in 2002 and ran my first county mobile in July '02. Since that time we have run 1658 counties in 44 states. I find it more thrilling to give out last counties than to get them. I took over the Great Lakes Director post after the passing of Hugh K8GPC. I look forward to serving MARAC for many years in whatever capacity I can. 73

Vice President:

Mark Michel (W9OP)

N0ZA - South Central Director

I was first licensed as WN5LTQ and WA5LTQ in 1965. I upgraded to general class about two months later. In 1968, after the so-called incentive-licensing plan went into effect, I obtained an advanced class ticket. In 1970, I moved from Dallas to El Paso TX. In 1974, I passed the extra class exam on the second try. In 1977, I received the call sign, N5ZZ. I moved to western Colorado in 1977, and my call sign changed to N0ZA.

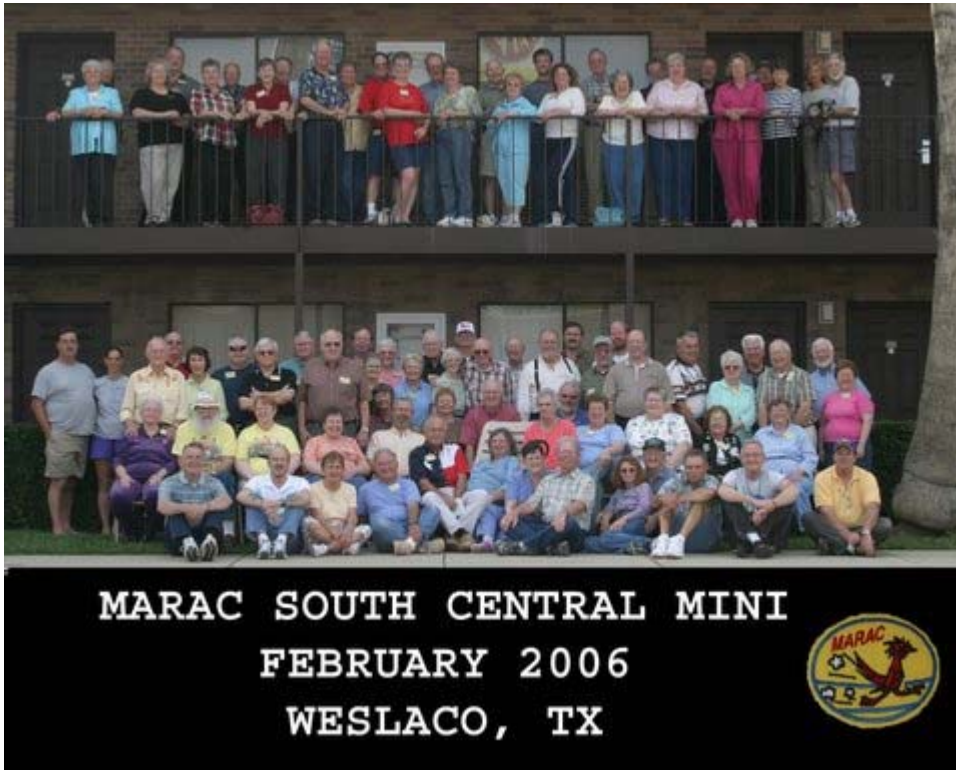
Over the years my radio operation has had a strong emphasis toward CW, and my interests have been mainly DXing and contesting. My first brush with county hunting was in 1970, and continued until 1977. I managed to work around 1500 counties; my time was very limited as my medical practice kept me very busy.

In 1997, following a spat with a neighbor over RFI, I turned off the amplifiers and Started county hunting again – very seriously.

I received USA-CA #988. In addition, I have done the counties three times, Bingo twice, and USA-CW. Twenty-five counties remain for the Masters Gold. I enjoy being with the county hunter family, and attend as many of the conventions as possible. I have been very active as a mobile station since 1998. I have been approached regarding accepting a nomination for the position of Director for the South-Central Division. If elected, I will do my best to represent the district and act in the best interests of MARAC and amateur radio.

NOTE: Ross N0ZA makes nearly all the conventions and minis, and has put out a lot of counties on SSB and CW for the folks. He brings lots of county hunting experience to the job

IF you are a MARAC member, please vote when the time comes, or when you get your ballot in the issue of the RoadRunner.



That's it for this month. See you next month – or in Dayton if you can make it! – 73 de N4CD