

County Hunter News

December 1, 2007

Volume 3, Issue 12

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The USCA award is sponsored by CQ Magazine. Rules and information are here: <http://countyhunter.com/cq.htm>

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out: <http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm>

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can find information on these awards and the rules at:

http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

There is a lot more information at www.countyhunter.com . Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at www.CHNewsOnline.com

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1) November Update - November was a good month for county hunting at the 'bottom' of the sunspot cycle. Many mobiles were out and about, and the Thanksgiving holiday brought some good trips. Bob, N8KIE, trekked across the county putting out counties and wound up in WA and OR. Many people closed in on awards. Conditions on 40M for both cw and SSB were very good, and quite a few counties were run on 80M CW by a few active mobiles there out in the evenings. N9JF was on several trips putting out counties.

AD8W ran quite a few in 'Upper Michigan'. W0QE took a trip to WY. Duane, WV2B took the Geo Metro across to VT and put out counties – had a problem late in the trip – probably ran the small battery down a bit too much while stopped on adjacent sides of the bridge for Grand Island, VT and Clinton, NY. It seems to have fixed itself on the way home and is OK.

2) November was Sweepstakes month. Several county hunters were heard in the cw contest including K4AMC and K0RU. I usually get in and make 100-200 contacts. This year I decided to try something different as now folks are hunting for 'band counties'. My totals on 80M are pretty anemic since I don't have an 80M antenna at home in my tiny backyard. So I

decided to make some contacts on 80M. First, I needed an antenna. More later.

3) WARC 2007 Results – So far, not much of significance for hams has happened at the World Administrative Radio Conference that sets the frequency allocations world wide. HF Broadcasting did not get additional spectrum. Hams did not get an allocation at 5 MHz that was desired.

There is still a good possibility of an allocation at 137MHz.

ARRL notes the trial at 500 KHz continues with the experimentally licensed stations – as reported previously in the County Hunter News.

4) Field Day Results – Field Day results are in the current issue of QST. Did you go out with your local club or a group last year and participate? (trying to run counties during FD is an exercise in futility normally – lots of QRM and not many regulars around as they are off on FD operations). That is a good weekend to join your local club, or go out by yourself and do FD.

Locally, I went out with the Plano Klub in the 4A category. We had a lot of fun and good food. Many new ops got on HF for the first time. Ham radio could use lots of new enthusiastic people, and FD is a good way to bring folks into HF the proper way – by Elmering. It's also good for public relations – to show emergency preparedness, in addition to being a lot of fun, meeting some of the new local hams, and not being totally concentrated on just 'county hunting'. \

5) OIL – this past month, oil hit over \$98/barrel in the spot market. Oil has gone up 900% in the past 7 years. It really hasn't dawned on 98% of people that oil is not 'cheap' any more and is going to continue to rise in prices as long as economies keep growing! Gasoline prices are at about \$3 to \$3.25 in many places, with 'higher price' areas already at \$3.50 to \$4.00/gallon. Folks are suggesting that \$4/gas will be here next summer.

6) N6HH reworks – Often, folks think they have 'worked them all' and when they go to check the cards, or try to get that last QSL or MRC, they find they have some 'reworks'. Pete, N6HH discovered he needed 3 'reworks' to finish. (First, AK, Greenville, VA and Pawnee, OK.) As you may realize, Pete is a Big Rig driver and has been putting out counties for years.

N9JF took a detour to give him Pawnee, OK. Pete hooked up with KL7IYD in the First District, and KA3LLF and WB4KZW both volunteered to get Greenville for him. With a 'little bit of help' from his friends, Pete was finished up in no time.

7) W0QE trip report (as posted on the K3IMC forum)

“Brief CO/SD/WY trip report

3 days and about 1400 miles and only 25 counties. I did work 8 band mode combinations and made 1476 contacts. Not very efficient if you measure counties per mile traveled. However the scenery was beautiful and visiting Mt. Rushmore with only 3 cars in the parking lot was definitely the way to see the place.

Best band was 40m CW followed closely by 40m SSB and 30m CW. A very nice surprise was 80m CW where I worked all ends of the country several times. I guess the new bigger antenna and some more noise troubleshooting paid off as I had S0 noise on every band.

I do have a couple of concerns. I had a hard time getting recognized on 40m SSB but once a run began I worked a lot of stations. Perhaps I am wrong but I think part of the problem may be the frenzy concerning the MP award and that N8KIE and N4CD were both out running. Second thing is that trying to operate on so many band modes is just not sustainable. The counties were big and even then I had to stop sometimes to finish before going to the next county. I did work stations on every band/mode in almost every county which shows there is a lot of interest. Would it be better to operate on fewer bands/modes in the future or would it be better to not take relays or is there some other solution? It is impossible to operate in small counties on many bands and modes without stopping for long periods of time.

Still was a lot of fun. 73, Larry W0QE”

8) Scam Artist – KI4WRX Daniel Rouse

Duane reports on the K3IMC forum that the NC police are after KI4WRX for internet fraud. Here's a link on the Beaufort County web page at:

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



Wanted by the Police for Internet Fraud

“Crime Stoppers needs your help to capture Daniel Scott Rouse. He is wanted by the Washington Police Department for one count of Obtaining Property by False Pretense. Rouse is also wanted for questioning in several other cases involving internet fraud. If you know the whereabouts of Daniel Scott Rouse please call Crime Stoppers at 974-6400. Crime Stoppers will pay up to a \$1,000.00 reward for information leading to his arrest. And remember at Crime Stoppers we only want your information not your name.”

Apparently, he has been scamming folks on Ebay and other sites. He apparently has moved two or three times lately, too.

If you see him at a hamfest, turn him in and collect some spending cash.

9) South Central Mini

The South Central mini will be held February 21-24, 2008 at the Best Western in Weslaco, TX, hosted by Joyce, WB9NUL and Barry, W9UCW.

Info at <http://marac.org/SCmini2008reg.pdf>

See you there – weather usually good in TX that time of year – although the panhandle (way up northwest) can have normal bouts of winter weather. Bring shorts and tee-shirts – could be in the 70s. Escape the northern winters for a few days/weeks.

10) Year End CW totals

Every year, Elwood, KA3MMM, updates the yearly ‘CW Totals’. At the end of the year, update him on your current progress toward your next level award for CW. If you are working on first time, tell him how many counties worked on cw. If you are working on Nth time, tell him how many toward that level, and which level. He puts out the information usually in January and it will be published likely in the February issue of the newsletters.

Metro Wi-Fi – A Technology Misfit

“Two years ago, Plano hoped to blanket the community with free wireless Internet. City leaders harbored images of residents surfing the Web at city parks, visitors downloading transit schedules, and parents catching up on e-mail during soccer games. “

Hmmm..nice thoughts. And they thought they could get it for ‘free’.

“Today, the effort hardly resembles the city's vision of being at innovation's forefront. A library, a park and two recreation centers will get wireless Internet coverage under a far less ambitious plan approved last month by the City Council. The service, part of a six-month test, will be available to paid subscribers only.”

Not only is it not free, it covers about 0.1% of the city!

“Plano's decision to scale back its Wi-Fi plans represents the bursting of another Internet bubble of sorts. The dream of installing citywide Wi-Fi here and elsewhere has collided with high installation costs and other market realities.”

More people have lost more billions attempting to serve the wireless ‘data market’ with stand alone systems than anyone would care to count. From Sprint, to SBS, to Bell South, and to dozens and dozens of other failures.

“In Texas, about 16 municipalities, including Plano, have installed or plan to install Wi-Fi in at least some parts of the community, according to the latest statistics compiled by MuniWireless.com, a telecommunications Web site that tracks such projects. None of the systems are both free and citywide.”

In October 2005, Plano officials began soliciting bids to provide free Wi-Fi citywide. The goal was to install the technology at no expense to taxpayers. But time revealed that the approach might have been more hype than reality.

““The initial people that sold Wi-Fi were saying, 'This is going to be free,' ” said James Carlini, a suburban Chicago-based industry consultant. “Well, as we all know, nothing is free.” “

Installing Wi-Fi on a large-scale basis, which requires mounting transmitters throughout the coverage area, requires backhaul to a data center from every small coverage transceiver, and of course, is much more expensive than originally thought. One of the largest Wi-Fi providers, Atlanta-based EarthLink, recently announced financial losses and layoffs.

Municipal Wi-Fi was a dreamed up service by consultants and small radio manufacturers and internet type wannabees, who wanted to get ‘someone’ to invest hundreds of millions in a service that was doomed to failure from day one. There’s no free lunch in radio. Municipal ‘free wi-fi’, too, shall follow the fate of 8 track tapes, 78 rpm records, and vacuum tube table radios.

Nearly every motel provides free wi-fi. MacDonald’s has free wi-fi at many stores. Who is going to pay \$10 or \$20 a month to surf the web only in the town parks, library, or rec center? (PS – the library already has free access terminals).

<http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/110407dnmetcitywifi.2da2059.html>

Broadband over Powerlines (BPL) is another fantasy promoted by manufacturers as well. To date, there is hardly a system operating in the country that doesn’t have massive RFI problems to ham radio and

government users. It is being promoted by those who know almost nothing about 'RF' as the magic solution to a non-existent problem, that won't solve 'problems' cheaply or effectively, and isn't going to be economically viable.

The politicians continue to promote this as 'competitive' when in reality it isn't. Another technology that should just die.

State Awards

There are many states that issue awards for working all the counties in a state. You can see many listed at:

www.countyhunter.com then select state awards.

Recently, Michigan has again joined the list of states where you can get a colorful certificate for working all counties – any band 160 through 2M. The contacts must be confirmed and after Jan. 1, 1964. If you have a USCA from CQ you automatically qualify (provided all your contacts are after the start date).

<http://www.michupnet.com/wamcawrd.html>

The rules in one place require that:

“Contacts may be made from multiple locations within the same state for U.S. applicants or country for foreign applicants. “

For USCA, you can count counties from any location, stateside or DX, any state. So there is a conflict there. If you are starting from scratch, their rules require all contacts be made from the same state (and confirmed).

In addition:

“Cards must show station worked, date, time, frequency, mode and county the station is located in.”

So there may be some cards in your collection that do not list the county that cannot be counted? Or maybe they will accept a QTH on the card that you can show is 'in the county'?

CQ Magazine will accept QSL cards if you determine the county either from the US Postal Service Guide or by the listing on QRZ, or by other means that establishes the address on the card is in the claimed county. Not all hams put their county on the card.

I assume that they would accept signed MRCs (mobile reply cards) that most active county hunters use, but that is not said either. (for USCA, most county hunters have boxes full of signed MRCs, not QSL cards).

WORKED ALL MICHIGAN COUNTIES AWARD
SPONSORED BY THE MICHIGAN UPPER PENINSULA NET

This certificate is awarded to amateur radio station _____ in
recognition of two-way contact with an amateur radio station in each of
Michigan's 83 counties.

Date: _____ Award Manager: _____

Certificate # _____

Peak Oil News

Total Chairman Speaks

As reported in the Financial Times

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a6558618-881d-11dc-9464-0000779fd2ac.html?nclick_check=1

“The world's capacity to produce oil will fall well short of official forecasts, the chief executive of Total warned yesterday. In an unusually stark prediction for the head of one of the world's biggest oil companies, Christophe de Margerie, CEO of the French group, said it would be difficult to reach even 100m barrels a day.

The International Energy Agency, the rich countries' watchdog, in its "business as usual" projections, has said oil supply will reach 116m barrels a day by 2030, up from about 85m b/d today. The US government (USGS) has a similar forecast of 118m b/d in 2030, including a relatively small contribution from biofuels.

Mr de Margerie, however, said while forecasts could always change, "100m barrels [per day] . . . is now in my view an optimistic case". He added: "It is not my view: it is the industry view, or the view of those who like to speak clearly, honestly, and not . . . just try to please people."

Mr de Margerie said the problem was not with the amount of oil in the ground. "Reserves have never been so big," he said, partly because advances in technology had made more sources of oil accessible. Instead, the constraints were the industry's ability to produce the oil quickly enough and oil-rich countries' willingness or ability to develop their reserves.

He said the industry had also "misunderstood" that resource-rich countries would want to preserve some of their best oil fields for the future, while offering smaller and more difficult fields to foreign investors.

"100 [million barrels per day] is difficult, because in the 100 you have already additional production in Iraq, in Venezuela, [and] in Nigeria; you have additional production everywhere. And we know that today those developments are not under way," he said."

* * * * *

Readers of the CHNews are already familiar with these concepts discussed last month – the Oil Export Withholding Scenario – preserving for the future production and future financial well being of an oil exporter, the troubling lack of new MegaProjects after 2012, the increasing decline rates, and the other ‘interests’ of many of the National Oil Companies – who now control 90% of the remaining world reserves of conventional oil. (and much of the non-conventional oil. The Chief Executive of Total did everything but say ‘Peak Oil Production’.

“Few oil company leaders have spoken out about the limits to oil output in such uncompromising terms as Mr de Margerie, even though most have been struggling to increase production. Total is one of the fastest-growing of the "big five" international oil companies in terms of volume growth, but it was recently forced to trim back its projections of extra output.”

Major Projects Delayed Again

Supermajor Chevron said today that it expects first flows from its 500 million barrel Tahiti discovery in the deep-water Gulf of Mexico by the third quarter of 2009 – a full year later than the original on stream date.

The installation of Tahiti’s truss spar was delayed this past June when

testing revealed a metallurgical problem with the mooring shackles that will attach the platform to the massive lines that will secure it to the seafloor.

Tahiti is located in Green Canyon blocks 640 and 641, about 190 miles south of New Orleans and in more than 4000 feet of water. .

The Tahiti spar will have daily production capacity of 125,000 barrels of crude oil and 70 million cubic feet of natural gas.

Chevron operates the estimated \$3.5 billion Tahiti project with a 58% working interest. Partners StatoilHydro and Total hold 25% and 17% stakes, respectively.”

Interesting comments re investment

Schlumberger Chief Executive Andrew Gould, speaking at a Simmons & Co. event in Scotland in September, also underlined that more investment is required to increase oil and gas production. No one indeed contests that.

"For perhaps the first time in more than 30 years, the industry will need to pursue exploration for new reserves at the same time as it grows and sustains the existing production of both oil and natural gas," Gould said in the presentation.

Various stake holders however postured on the sensitive issue in a different perspective. James A. Slutz, the US deputy assistant secretary for oil and natural gas, underlined that there is no long-term global oil shortage. Clarifying the US official position, he said any worries about oil supply were caused more by slow technological take-up by oil explorers than by any specific oil shortage, or as the industry puts it, a low rate of change in the approach to non-conventional oil.

"Globally, oil prices are not the thing that is going to cause us problems," he said. "The key thing is that hydrocarbons are becoming more difficult to develop, taking more time, and the cumulative effect of this is a more challenging supply situation," he said. There was also a long-time frame between deciding to invest in new producing projects and them delivering, he added.”

Dang..those economics get in the way. The different priorities of the National Oil Companies get in the way.

So what is happening? Alberta just raised significantly the royalty rates on existing and new oil sands, conventional oil and natural gas wells. The likely outcome for ‘producing projects’? Postponement or abandonment of projects or further delays.

Venezuela ‘non-conventional oil’ – Hmmm..Chavez running off the major companies, ‘nationalizing them’ and imposing draconian punitive royalty rates on them, taking their ‘equity’ positions with the result that several just walk away from tens of billions in investments. Production there going to grow? Not likely – the folks who developed the technology are now leaving in droves.

The official US position is pure horse manure. It’s ‘the oil just has to be there – all we need to do is find it and produce it – and finances really don’t matter.’ The main democratic position of candidates seems to be more subsidies for ethanol to eliminate our dependence on foreign oil (joke).

Interesting Future Prediction

A while back, the CHNews noted that the Carl and Jerry stories from Popular Electronics had been reprinted in a series of soft cover books. I’ve been enjoying again the stories that appeared while I was a youngster and long before I got my ham license in the 1960s. Those stories might have been one of the reasons why I did get interested in short wave listening, electronics, and ham radio.

In the May 1957 issue, Carl and Jerry are in the basement workshop. Jerry had just received a Regency ATC-1 transistor ham-band converter as a birthday present. It was featured on the cover of Pop ‘Tronics the year before. This was the first solid-state device for hams. At this time, you could buy a transistor broadcast AM receiver set – they too were ‘new’ technology.

Regency had offered the first 'transistor radio' – the TR-1 – for sale in 1954. They are collector's items today!

The ATC-1 converter used the car radio as the IF. (The unit was a masterpiece of clever engineering - it featured a rotating dial drum, BFO, linear bandspread, Q-multiplier, and excellent stability -- and all with just two transistors.)



Regency ATC-1 Converter

Jerry had managed to convince his father to buy it for him for a present because his dad was tired of helping him lug the '100 lb communication receiver' and '100 lb transmitter' up to the summer cottage for vacations.

Needless to say, they got into an adventure with it, saved an auto accident victim, and had a lot of fun in the process. At the end of the story (and this is 1957), reviewing their experience, Carl says:

"It certainly makes you think. I see no reason at all why we shouldn't have excellent transistor communications receivers in a very short time. They should be lightweight, rugged, and about one tenth the size of the present communications receivers. Being powered with a few flashlight batteries, they'll be entirely independent of the light line, and the AC hum will be no problem."

Carl exclaimed "If this trend keeps on, a fellow is going to be able to pack a whole ham station into a shoe box!"

Just 10 years later, we saw the first solid state radios communications receiver appear in the mid 60s (Davco receiver) and 20 years later the Atlas

Transceivers – 12V power). Regency offered one of the first two meter FM solid state radios, the HR-2, in the early 70s, along with an HR-6 (6M FM), HR-220 and HR-440.

In the past few years, ham transceivers have fit comfortably in a shoe box (TS-50, IC706, IC7000 along with a switching power supply). Now the hand held battery operated QRP rigs like the Yaesu which will fit into the corner of a shoe box! Or 20W self contained ‘packpack’ radios. Just 50 years. Imagine where we might be in another 50 years!



DAVCO DR-30 Receiver – Used 23 PNP Germanium Transistors and Two FETs
1965-1966 7x4x6 inches and 7 lbs 80 thru 6 meters
Used Collins Mechanical Filters Sold for \$389!

On the Road with N4CD

Thanksgiving was approaching and N4CD usually heads north to Maryland for the holidays. After getting snowed under in WV a few times in late December on previous trips, I started making the annual trek a month earlier. As usual, I plotted the route from the K3IMC needs list and from what I might be able to get for myself for Master Platinum award – with other desperately needed counties per the K3IMC page and then connected the dots, and that was the route. I’m also slowly working toward giving out all

the counties a second time – although that is getting slower as I have to go further and further to hit new ones!

It was a late start this year – the car was in the shop getting a dent fixed on the driver side door – that occurred last year at Thanksgiving when I parked on the street at my sister's house, and a visitor to the neighbor's damaged it by backing into my when they backed their car out of a driveway. Since they had sent me the money to repair it, it might be strange to not have it fixed when I got there, so at the last moment, the car got repaired before the trip. It took longer than they promised. So the trip was not as long as I wanted, but still could get many needs.

My trek started up the i\Interstate through Arkansas. I need to go a long way to need a needed MP county these days since I've cleaned up most within 500 miles on previous trips. The first night I wound up in Obion, TN at the Super 8 Motel – Ryan's across the street for dinner. There were three left in KY so the fun started when I got there the next day. Jessamine, Lee and Elliot plus the ones in between. There are so many needs in KY, and the roads don't go through most of them – you have to make special side trips for the seldom run counties. Conditions were good with lots of activity on 40M SSB and CW, and good runs on 30M, and usually a half dozen contacts on 20M - most from west part of the USA. Not too much DX this year. There has been quite a period of no sunspots with the flux number below 70. Bad news for DX and the higher bands, but good for 40M. I didn't make it out of KY the second day. On the third day I headed up through Elliot to WV.

I finished up my KY MP needs – and ran just about everything on SSB and CW while heading through the counties. The 40M net seems to have moved to 7188 because of a Space Shuttle mission. Just after noon one starts hearing foreign broadcast back east – while there is none on 7185, and by late afternoon, it is very hard to hear much other than strong SSB stations through the QRM. Meanwhile, 7185 seems clear of BC stations in the east. However, the shuttle broadcasts are on 7185. Another shuttle launch is coming up. So we need to not be on 7185 at that time.

In TX you start hearing the Chinese station on 7185 early in the afternoon, and for a while in the morning, but nothing back east. Nothing is clear for long out west! No frequency seems to work everywhere.

I stayed overnight in WV. Then off again in the morning. The weather was fine up until the eastern part of WV – then in Mineral County, the fog started – 30 foot visibility. Snow on the sides of the road from a snow storm a day or two before. Temps right above freezing. The speed dropped to less than 25 mph and that was still difficult as the road twisted and turned with miles of switchbacks coming down into Keyser, WV. There was over an hour at less than 20 miles an hour average. Yuk! No fun driving under those conditions. No operating while driving either as it took 100% concentration to see where one was going. Normally it is very nice scenery as you wind along the roads. Now, you could barely see the sides of the roads. One impatient SUV passed me (totally blind) and went on down the hill. At the first stop light at the bottom of the hill five miles later, there he sat in front of me – he couldn't go any faster even though he knew the road! I'm getting to dislike WV, and I still have a few MP needs there – ran them all, but no one was around with MG when I went through them years ago. Larry, N2OCW, is closing in on his MG, so maybe he will get them instead of me! Now that sounds like a plan.

At the MacDonald's in Keyser, all the hunters were complaining that they couldn't see far enough to see deer. They had given up. It might have been the first day of hunting season, but there wasn't any hunting in the hills!

I still had two days left to county hunt at that point, so I headed north up into PA for Perry county – and then east in NJ. It had snowed the day before and everything was white- not really what I wanted to see! I can do without a 'white Thanksgiving'! I wound up at the Super 8 in Raritan, NJ, having gotten thoroughly lost trying to get there in rush hour traffic. This time of year, with a cloudy day drizzly day, the sun is down by 5pm and it gets dark quickly. It was drizzling and that didn't make driving any fun on the very crowded roads of NJ at rush hour. I hunkered down for the night, and the next day headed down to MD to beat the rush hour in Washington DC. On the days before Thanksgiving, everyone seems to 'leave early' and head on out. I only got to run about half of NJ, so I'll have to head back there – didn't have time to run Atlantic – one last one I needed for MP. Maybe next summer? Nice weather. No snow! No freezing temps! (and I grew up in Bergen County, NJ too – got smart and headed south!)

On the way south, I took a few detours to run Ocean and Monmouth, NJ, then down through New Castle, DE to Maryland, coming down I-95. Since the traffic wasn't too bad, I decided to head down through Baltimore City –

always needed it seems – and it is not fun to run – lots of traffic and lots of noise, and if you get off the interstate, you can wind up on major roads that you can't easily get off of, or manage to navigate our way back on to the Interstate. Somehow, I picked the right exit and found a nice quiet area 500 feet off the Interstate – at a school parking lot. There were good runs on all bands – hopefully I eliminated a few needs for many people. It was easy to get back on to I-95, and it was down to the DC area, with one detour to Anne Arundel County. I managed to hit the DC Beltway before 2 pm, which was good, because an hour later there was an accident on I-95 that shut the road down in both directions for 3 hours! I lucked out. I arrived Tuesday afternoon at my sister's house – she was expecting a gigantic crowd for the holidays with the kids and their girl/boy friends.

On Wednesday, I ran down to Arlington, VA – which used to be home from 1983 to 1990. I ran the county from right down the street from where I used to live – fairly quiet and you can park easily. W6TMD needed Arlington for an “N” prefix and AB2LS needed it for a last county. It's another tough one to run – you have one Interstate through it – but busy I-66 has restrictions part of the day for HOV use only – and very urban – so not so easy to park and find a good spot to run. There is only a few miles of Interstate too, and you are probably very busy navigating, or you'll wind up somewhere strange like the middle of Washington DC! There were good runs on all bands.

After 45 minutes of ‘putting out the county’, I met up with Karl, K4YT, for a nice lunch. According to his web page at <http://www.mob-rule.com/cgi-bin/makeuser.cgi?user=k4yt> Karl is up to having worked 3074 counties. He started back in the 1960s, but lost interest. He is a DXer and travels much of the time for work. After 35 years in government service, he is now a ‘contractor’ and traveling just as much. At any given time, you might hear him in Rwanda or Thailand operating in a major DX contest with an HS0 call.

<http://www.mob-rule.com/counties/>



K4YT/DL4YT Karl

Karl is down to just three to finish USCA mixed. He needs Washington, UT, Madison, VA and Adams, WA. Be sure to coordinate as he travels quite often (half the time). He is also trying to do them all SSB, and he is busily working mobiles to fill in where he had fixed stations previously.

Friday night I caught the Seldom Scene and Dry Branch Fire Squad (Bluegrass music) at the Birchmere in Alexandria, VA. The whole gaggle of folks at my sister's house attended for a fun time. It was then back to Texas on Sunday morning.

The route home was to snag some of the Southwest Virginia counties. Folks needed Russell and Grayson and many others down that way. I headed south along the Interstate 81 early in the morning. That weekend, CQ held the CQ WW DX contest. 20M was a mess with CQ contest – so I used the alternate frequency of 14.113 – and even that for the first part of the day had some “AM” (Spain) contest activity – it ended about noon. No contesting is allowed on 30M so it was clear and 40M cw worked well, and of course, 40M SSB.

Unfortunately, K5OT, Larry, was off DX contesting while I ran his last few for WBOW countiespriorities. He didn't have the time while contesting from PJ land at a multi-op. Maybe someone else will hit Russell, VA, and

then go north just a bit to McDowell, WV, for 2 of his last 3, with the last saved. Oh well....I knew he was off DXing..but there wasn't much flexibility in my schedule...not a week, anyway. Fortunately, lots of others needed Tazewell, and Russell and Wise.

I was headed up to Dickenson.....took the turn, and recalled I had been on that exact same road maybe 10 years before.....you head under a big blue coal chute over the road. It then winds up a long steep hill to the county line near the top. If you aren't paying attention, you'll zip right on past it...the sign is hidden behind the telephone pole! I had to head off the pavement to get the pic. You can run the CL right across the street. There are many places I've been that look familiar when I get there!



Dickenson VA County Line

When I was in KY on the way up, headed toward a county, Chuck, W3CR asked if I was on a certain highway. When I said yes, he said he'd been on that road before! There are only so many ways to get to some of the counties so many have traveled the same roads.

Many county lines in VA and NC are at the tops of mountains – at the 'pass' – which makes it very hard to stop at many of them as the road is narrow and there is no shoulder. Same for WV!

I wound up back at the Interstate for a motel (Super 8) – and since it was Sunday, it was Pizza Night. I had the 'Senior Special' at the Pizza Hut – a personal pan pizza and trip to the salad bar- for \$5.99 plus tax – not bad

price. Gas was running over \$3 back east, and it was around \$3 in most places in VA, TN, NC, ARK and TX. Here in TX it is \$2.92 or so a gallon.

Things went well....so on Monday it was down through Grayson, VA. The western part of NC is very hilly. There are good roads and horrible roads. It's hard to tell from the maps. Oops..the fog was back as I got to NC. It rained the entire day...from a drizzle to light rain. They probably need it badly (drought) but it would have been nice if it had picked another couple days to rain. I hit Ashe and Alleghany. It's a mile detour to get to Ashe but you need to stop to run it (dead end). I did Allegany, then east 40 miles over to Forsyth and Stokes, then back west again. Some of those NC roads are as bad as WV/KY roads as far as turns, twists and switchbacks! It was foggy in the mountains, and I only got about 250 miles that day with all the stops to run the counties. I wound up in a 50-70 year old small motel – The Lemon Tree Inn in Mitchell, NC....cheap enough - \$39, including nice breakfast in the morning. Off to dinner at the China Buffet then back to the motel.

Over breakfast, I yakked with the manager who had been there for 25 years. The motel was about ½ mile up a small road, and he told tales of the State Police bringing some folks who were literally scared to drive on the roads – they had gotten over their heads driving a large vehicle, or had trouble driving in the snow (lots of it there). He gets a fair amount of business from stranded motorists! Well, I'll make a note to avoid that area of NC in snow! (they have ski areas near by and the highest mountains in NC are not far away at 5000+ feet). This is not the area to drive 30+ foot motor homes unless you stick to the one or two major roads and avoid the twisty winding majority of other roads! If you want to see scenery – go there other than winter time!

On the east coast, you can't run too early – bands not open. At 7:30 local (EST) – only 40M is open to some of the country – and skip still long. I wake up at sunrise and am raring to go, but have to drag my feet back east.

Worked W6TMD(CA) in several counties early in the mornings on 40M during the trip. Most of activity this trip on 40cw and 40SSB, with usually only 3-6 contacts on 30M and a handful on 20M cw. Most of the time, it seems only a few showed up on 20M SSB after I QSYed up to 14.342 or 343 after 40M. Just poor propagation. In the evenings, you can work out to

the west coast on 40M SSB at times – depending upon the broadcast level. I'm usually QRT by sunset – others tend to run a lot later.

Wednesday I headed toward the Interstate 26 through Avery NC into Unicoi, TN. Carter, Sullivan and others – then hit I-81, then down to Knoxville and across I-40. I needed to run Perry, TN. So late in the afternoon, I hit that one – short detour off I-40. Then, I figured I could head north on the same road, past the Interstate again, up to Houston – that was one of a few I had not transmitted from the second time around – and some folks were asking for it, one for a LC. So the car headed north 25 miles to Houston. If you sit and run 20, 30, 40cw and 40SSB, you are there for ½ hour or so.



Houston, TN – last county for K8QWY

Many of the roads in TN and AL have noisy power lines as you move along them. If you stop, the noise isn't too bad – but you are stopped for 30 minutes putting out the county. I found a nice relatively quiet driveway in both Perry, TN and Houston, TN to run the counties away from the power lines. With the weaker sigs at S2 and S3, you need all the advantage you can get. The Interstates are usually very quiet, so you can zip along at the speed limit and run them with minimal problems (if you have a quiet car). The noise seems to be saved for the rest areas! (with power lines).

It was getting dark, so it was back to the Interstate, where all the motels were. I had stayed at one which was a Super 8. Now it was a Knight's Inn....so I stopped there for the night. Reasonable rates – less than Super 8, and the quality is about 'Motel 6'.

This time of year, most of the motels are not full – most are half empty – so the trip planning was a go to sunset then find a motel. There is a nice restaurant – the Log Cabin – 300 feet away – so I grabbed a county ham dinner. I filled up the car with Shell gas (one of the few ‘top tier’ gas providers per October 2007 CHNews). If you are going to pay the same for gas at any station, you might as well get the best quality gas. If you are a Loretta Lynn fan, there is the Loretta Lynn gift shop right up the street at this exit off the highway.

On this trip, I averaged about 29 on the Interstates and main roads...the one day in NC at slow speeds and stuck in lower gears, the Buick got only 25 mpg.

Wednesday morning I headed west again on I-40. Along the way, I got a cell phone call from N1BY. Seems he desperately needed Lee, AR for a LC WBOW for ‘all SSB’. (He already has USCA and 2nd time around). He wanted to work them all on SSB. I said I’d get back to him in a few minutes. I’m always a bit cautious about committing. Sometimes folks ask for ‘small detours’ that turn out to be 150 miles. They look at a TX map in a Rand McNally Atlas, and think ‘it’s only a few inches off the Interstate’. Well, in TX, those few inches are about 30 miles to the inch!.....well, it turns out Lee AR is only about a 10 mile detour total – of course, once you get there, you’ll be there for 30 minutes running the county, but it was very doable. So I called him back and said ‘no problem’ – it was 2 hours further west to get the one he needed.

I was just taking it easy – running one county on one mode...if time, would run on the other mode...if not, not all counties got run on both modes...had to keep moving toward home – was already coming up on 2 weeks away from home. I got to Lee...the road I picked was noisy. The further I went into the county, the worse it got...so I had to sit near the county line where the noise was about S4-5 on 40M SSB. I hooked up with N1BY for his LC....It took a lot of relays (QSP) to get the folks through on SSB, but cw was easier.



Lee, AR, for N1BY LC WBOW for “ALL SSB”

After that, I kept heading toward Dallas...the car started complaining...it had a lot of miles on the oil. The Buick has a ‘oil life’ counter – it starts at 100%, and depending upon the type of driving you do, which it senses, it counts it down to 0. The car was unhappy, flashing a ‘change oil soon’ messages as life was under 10%. Normally, I change the oil at 5500 to 6000 miles when it gets down to 20% life remaining. It’s all highway driving. It was complaining – down under 10%, and the warning came on every time the car was started. In addition, the oil pressure meter (digital meter you can select) was sitting at 130 PSI...normal for a car is 40-80 or so, with 40-50 at idle, and maybe 70-80 PSI at 70 mph. It just sat at 130. That could be from a clogged oil filter...so I figured if I wanted this car to go to 200K or more miles, I had better get the oil changed before another 500 miles. I was hoping to make it home before it got to 10% but didn’t make it.

I had to get gas at Brinkley, AR...so I asked if there was place to get oil changed. The answer was down the street – so I headed to tire and oil change place. The lady at the counter said they could change the oil right away – if I took the antennas off the car. The hamstick comes off quick, and the other antenna took 5 minutes to get off. Then the lady and her daughter changed the oil and filter. I put the antennas back on in 5 minutes and it was down the road again.

The high oil pressure remained after filter changed....so it is off to Buick for diagnosis and fix – maybe a bad oil sender? Either the tires going bad – or the car itself....bad ‘whine’ now directly tied to vehicle speed...another thing to have Buick look at. Car now has 171,000 miles – barely broken in...but it is going on 7 years old.

Larry, N2OCW is up at 235,000 miles on his. Mark, KO1U, just retired his car at 360K miles – rusted out up there in Massachusetts. Likely, W1TEE, Gene, still has the record at 375,000 miles in his county hunting car. Duane, WV2B, has over 250K on his Geo Metro. So there is hope for the Buick. Maybe another 30,000 miles before I think about keeping it or looking for something newer? New cars are expensive – and they don’t get any better gas mileage.

N8KIE was busy putting out WA and OR counties. He got snowed in Tuesday night while on a county line – headed back to the motel. The next day he was winding his way around, eventually headed toward Multnomah. That happened to be my LC for MP in OR. I had worked W6TMD (mostly on cw) in all the others in WA and OR. He was fading away on 20M, so I would have to hope for some 40M propagation from TX. I let a few folks know that I desperately needed it. I figured I had an hour, so took a dinner break at the Cracker Barrel in Hunt County on the way home. In the middle of dinner, Jack, N7ID calls on the cellphone – N8KIE is running Multnomah on 40M...I left in the middle of dinner, let the server know I had to run to the car for a minute or two.....made it out to the car in a minute – and there was N8KIE....poor copy, but I got relayed in right away and made it. (with a little help from friends!). Whew! I would hate to have to drive up there to get that one for MP! Long way – I do have to run OR again for second time – but now I can work on the others I need (like most of MT!) for Platinum. I went back in and finished dinner, then headed home in the dark through the traffic.

WQ7A now has MG, so maybe I’ll snag him a few in ID and MT if he heads that way! As time goes on, more and more are closing in on the MG award. Each new MG holder has to put out at least 500 separate counties to qualify for the Master Platinum award after they get their Master Gold award – which is good as the rest of the folks can chase them from day one toward their own MP award!

It was a good trip....two weeks away from home....so many counties...so little time....and folks still need TX counties – time for a big holiday season trip around the state to clean up some needs. KM9X needs 47 for platinum. N2OCW needs 10 or so. I need to run 2 more for MP. The weather is usually good in December (although it can snow a foot in the panhandle of TX any time during the winter!). Keep your needs current – you never know where N4CD will wind up!

Hillary Clinton's Position on Energy

As the leading candidate for the Democrat party, Hillary Clinton is espousing some very interesting positions.

Feb 2, 2007 “The other day the oil companies reported the highest profits in the history of the world. I want to take those profits and I want to put them into a strategic energy fund that will begin to find alternative smart energy, alternatives and technologies that will begin to actually move us toward the direction of independence! “

Source: Speech at Democratic National Committee winter meeting Feb 2, 2007

Hmmm..at the same time that oil companies are spending tens of billions to develop offshore fields at tremendous cost and risk, are going to the ends of the Earth (arctic) and down to record depths – 7 miles – and are facing increasing challenges in production from all areas of the world, she is going to kill the incentive of oil companies? Keep in mind that the largest independent, Exxon Mobil, is the 14th largest oil company in the world. The other 13 ahead of it are National Oil Companies! Not only that, profits have been dropping in the last quarter due to squeezed refining margins.

Confiscate their profits like a commie? By the way, she never does say what that would do for employment in the oil field (millions of jobs) or what it would do to most pension plans, IRAs and 401K funds invested in stocks and index funds including the largest of the stocks in the entire market like Exxon Mobil, Royal Dutch, BP, Chevron/Texaco, etc, nor of the hundreds

of small players. Does she want those oil companies to join Halliburton in locating offshore? And taking those jobs with them? Or selling themselves to PetroChina?

More interesting in that the oil companies have a profit margin of 10-15% - in line with most large industries. Now companies like Microsoft make equally large profits – charge high prices for products – and have profit margins approaching 50%! Why isn't she going after them?

Duh! So when she taxes away the profits of the oil companies, and they invest less and find less and produce less oil – what are you going to get? Less and less oil at higher and higher prices! Very quickly! Shortages – gasoline lines. Your worst nightmare! (I'm amazed that average Joe Citizen seems all for taxing those 'obscene' profits. I guess average Joe Citizen is amazed by 'big numbers' but cannot understand basic percentages).

“An important thing to do is to have a new energy policy so that we are not dependent upon regimes that are going to undermine our security, our economy and our environment.”

Source: Annual 2006 Take Back America Conference Jun 14, 2006

I don't know what planet she is living on, but 60+% of the world's oil conventional reserves lie in the Middle East. Even if the USA is not dependent upon it (and it will be), she is so far off base. Russia is the largest provider of oil. Venezuela is one of the largest producers in OPEC. The largest reserves of natural gas, which we are now starting to import – come from Russia and the Middle East countries. Maybe she needs a lesson in geography? All of Europe will be dependent upon Russia, the old Russian republics, and the Middle East for oil and natural gas.

Maybe she needs a lesson in technology? Despite the claims that 'Alberta has more oil than Saudi' (which is true), she fails to realize that even under the absolute best estimates, Alberta with 100 billion dollars or more in investment might be able to produce 3 million barrels of oil a day by 2015. And not much more in the next ten years after that. This is a mining operation, and is very energy intensive, very spoiling of the environment, emits gigatons of CO₂ into the atmosphere, and needs more water than Canada can spare. Alberta won't even be able to supply two years world increase in demand! Demand forecasts require production of another 35

million barrels of oil a year by 2025. The oil sands are literally a ‘drop in the bucket’. She hasn’t got a clue. The US imports 14 million barrels of oil a day. You see the problem? They can produce 3 million. We need 14 million a day now for imports. Can she do simple math?

China’s oil companies and the gov’t of China is buying up rights to oil around the globe, doing deals everywhere (they have fewer scruples about Somalia and other places and don’t attach conditions like us). They are trying to build a pipeline from Alberta to the Pacific to export Canadian oil to China. Our environment? All the junk we buy from China is fueling 12% annual growth and China is building 3 coal fired power plants a week to make all those goods for export to the USA. The pollution from them spreads worldwide.

Maybe she is afraid to say “limit population”? Maybe she is afraid to say ‘consume less’? Maybe she is afraid to say ‘stop illegal criminal immigration’ which means we have to import more energy for more cars, heat more homes, at an ever increasing pace for hordes more people?

“And, I will vote to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to bring all nations together to address global warming and build a better future for us all.”

Source: www.hillary2000.org, “Environment” Sep 9, 2000

Kyoto was a dismal failure. Even Canada, a very strong supporter, backed away from it. Ran away from it! (They produce record amounts of CO2 from the Oil Sands production and it is getting worse each year). China is now the largest emitter of CO2, yet no one expects China to meet Kyoto protocol reductions. Maybe one country met the CO2 reduction targets. The US never ratified it. She blabbers but has no idea of the chaos it would cause. Same for ‘carbon caps’ and ‘carbon taxes’ – talk about boondoggles and special deals for this and that industry, political favors, decisions to achieve popular votes based on pseudo scientific principles.

So she was for it, but now would likely claim if it had been in effect, there would have been any change in CO2 emission other than the European bogus market in carbon trading credits full of scams? It didn’t work in EU and it won’t work in the future. But Hillary was ‘for it’ – a cockamamie scheme hatched out by socialists and communists to ‘control everything’.

“Amendment to improve the energy security of the United States and reduce United States dependence on foreign oil imports by 40% by 2025. The amendment seeks to reduce usage by 7.6 million barrels of oil a day, out of a total usage of 20 million barrels of oil a day. The bill without amendment seeks to reduce usage by 1 million barrels of oil a day. Opponents of the amendment said, “It would be disruptive of jobs if you set a 78 mile per gallon CAFÉ standard for cars, a 185-percent increase; a 60 mile per gallon standard for trucks, light trucks, a 174-percent increase.”

Reference: Energy Policy Act of 2005; Bill [S.Amdt. 784 to H.R. 6](#) ; vote number [2005-140](#) on Jun 16, 2005

Interesting. She voted ‘yes’ on that amendment. Unfortunately, it doesn’t reflect reality. Since then, USA oil consumption has gone up 1.2% per year for the past two years. Setting CAFÉ standards that high would take 10 years or longer to implement, then another ten years before they would dent demand. You really see cars getting 78mpg shortly, and ‘trucks’ like SUVs getting 60mpg any time soon? That’s the average – so many would have to be getting 110 or 120 mpg to balance out things.

“Vote to pass a bill would overhaul the nation's energy policies, reorganize the electricity system and make available approximately \$15 billion in energy-related tax incentives. It also would direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to establish a new CAFE standard within 15 months to two years. It would support the use of alternative energy and call for utilities to increase their dependence on renewable fuels.”

Reference: Energy Policy Act of 2003; Bill [HR 6](#) ; vote number [2003-317](#) on Jul 31, 2003

Hillary voted NO along party lines. Let’s see..she is not for CAFÉ standards significantly higher – except she voted for standards of 78 mpg before. She is not for alternative energy – except she voted for it many times before. Oh – the bill gave some tax incentives to overhaul the electricity system. Darn. She had to vote along party lines, not her ‘position on energy’. If she wants to win in MI, she can’t vote for tighter emissions and CAFÉ standards. What kind of a candidate is that that waffles in the wind depending upon who proposed the bill and whether she’ll win one state at the expense of the environment and the ‘energy independence’ of the USA? Nothing but waffling on issues depending upon her audience.

“Dorgan Amdt. No. 865; To require that the hydrogen commercialization plan of the Department of Energy include a description of activities to support certain hydrogen technology deployment goals. Part of S 14 Energy Omnibus bill; this vote would pass an amendment that would call for the Department of Energy to set targets and timelines to maintain the production of 100,000 hydrogen-powered vehicles by 2010, and 2.5 million vehicles annually by 2020. It also would call for the department to set targets for the sale of hydrogen at fueling stations. The bill would require the Energy secretary to submit a yearly progress report to Congress.”

Reference: Bill [S.14](#) ; vote number [2003-212](#) on Jun 10, 2003

Hillary voted YES on this. Now who in their right mind thinks the government is going to have a chance selecting the ‘right’ technology? Want the government political appointees to set standards for your PC? You’d probably be programming in ADA, assembler, or COBOL, and be lucky to even have a browser. The government has failed on so many occasions to ‘predict future technology’ – yet Hillary would for a trillion dollars investment – in something that uses natural gas now to produce hydrogen – and, of all ironies, the US is now beginning to import natural gas from the Middle East!

Remember all the hype by Rifkin 10-20 years ago about ‘the hydrogen economy’? Is anyone going that way? Heck, fuel cell cars at the moment cost 3-5 times as much as a regular car, and last 3 years at best before you replace all the expensive parts. No one yet has a viable hydrogen storage system for vehicles.

Can’t you see federal agencies being forced to buy hydrogen powered vehicles – which turn out to be real turkeys? Have you yet to see a fuel cell powered car at your dealer? Or driven one? Or really seen more than one prototype on TV?

It’s easy to pass ‘pie in the sky bills’. Unfortunately, it would be taxpayers that support this lunacy. You and me! But she votes for ‘feel good’ legislation with your TAX DOLLARS – tens of billions of them.

Meanwhile, at the best ‘think tank’ in the country – the National Renewable Energy Lab – Congress has repeatedly slashed the budget on programs.

The Democrat candidates for office don’t have a clue on oil. They are all hoping they can blame it on ‘Big Oil’ and those ‘nasty’ Middle East countries having a ‘cartel’ and withholding oil. Meanwhile, the rest of the world is bemoaning high wheat and corn prices – and the USA is reaping record prices on farm products. Milk is up 50% in a year or more. Poorer folks around the world are screaming they are having trouble affording food because ‘ethanol’ is driving up food prices.

The candidates can’t have it both ways – want highly subsidized ethanol and biofuels and no ‘Big Oil’, and wish for technology by picking nice sounding ‘winner technologies’. I didn’t see former President Clinton put up solar cells on the White House or do anything green. Hillary was right there. Where was her concern for the environment then? For energy independence? For alternative energy? What did she tell her husband the country should be doing for energy independence? What did he do? Not a dang thing. **Have you heard her say what SHE is doing to reduce energy consumption personally?** No – that is for the ‘little folks’ to do. She can’t be bothered.

The USA pigged out on cheap energy during the 80s and 90s. Fuel mileage on passenger cars declined as the ‘loop hole’ for SUVs got a thousand times bigger – and people today get WORSE gas mileage overall. Building tens of millions of McMansions in ever expanding suburbia required more and more fuel to commute. Continual population rise year after year increases demand year after year.

So she has suddenly flip flopped and hopped on the Global Warming bandwagon....and the ‘bash Big Oil’ and confiscate their profits bandwagon. Neither of which will solve or energy problems for the next 20-30 years. She has no clue. Neither do the rest of the candidates.

MAJOR FIND OFF BRAZIL

Recently, with much fanfare, Brazil announced the find of the Tupi offshore field and it was reported all over the news as a possible 8-10 billion barrel bonanza. At a world consumption rate of 30 billion barrels a year, that is a 4 month supply. This is possibly the largest find in 20 years, but begs the question – where is all the oil the world needs coming from if ‘major finds’ occur once every 20 years?

“Oil man Byron King. “The Tupi field is 286 kilometers (177 miles) offshore in the South Atlantic Ocean. Tupi lies under 2,140 meters (7,060 feet) of water, more than 3,000 meters (almost 10,000 feet) of sand and rocks and then another 2,000-meter (6,600-foot)-thick layer of salt. Getting that oil out of the crust will be a formidable challenge and require many years of expensive investment. Most of Brazil's oil-bearing potential lies off its Atlantic coast.

“A discovery of 8 billion barrels is in the same class as Prudhoe Bay. ARCO and BP have spent over 30 years drilling and extracting oil from Prudhoe Bay. So it is not as if all 8 billion barrels from Tupi will see the light of day anytime soon. Petrobras has a very long-term program in front of it.”

On the brighter side, “I’ve long admired Petrobras for its outstanding technical competence... they are a genuine global leader in ultra-deep offshore oil extraction.

"Plus," added Byron, "by the time Brazil's oil comes online in any significant way, many other oil provinces of the world will be producing less. So congratulations to Petrobras, but don't use this news as an excuse to buy a new gas-guzzling Hummer.””

<http://p088.ezboard.com/fdownstreamventurespetroleummarkets.showMessage?topicID=21365.topic>

Recall the projections for world energy demand need another 30 million barrels a day of production by 2025. Likely this field will not come on line till near 2015, and then produce less than ½ million barrels per day initially, maybe peaking out at 1-2 million barrels of day of production. So where is the rest of the oil going to come from?

N9STL - Big Rig Mobile

The Big Rig Award was at one time one of the awards that many people were working towards. Back in the 80s and 90s, there were seemingly dozens of 'Big Rigs' traveling all over the country - I remember KK7X, WB4FFV, KC1NA, N8ELQ, N9VIB, N8ENB, WB2ZHP, N0VWD, KB0GZR, N0KGX, W1CQA, , N8MYC, KB0BYK, ND1H, N5FLD, N1EDL, AA0PY, AB5AM..and of course, there were others before and after. Now, we have just a small handful.

So what does it take to give out a contact for Big Rig.

On page 7 of the rules, MARAC defines what a Big Rig is:

“A large truck consisting of a tractor unit that is capable of pulling a cargo trailer and is being driven by an operator holding a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) rated for the rig being operated (for a rig rated at 26001 GWD or more). A **Big Rig** is also sometimes referred to as a “Semi” or “18-wheeler.” To qualify as a **Big Rig** for MARAC Awards, the tractor must have at least 10 wheels with tires touching the ground. If a trailer is attached, the trailer may be either loaded or unloaded.

The definition of **Big Rig** does not include RV's, dump trucks, 5th-wheels, tow trucks, buses, or panel/delivery trucks.”

On page 16, MARAC defines what is 'good' for a Big Rig contact:

“**OBJECTIVE:** To make contacts with amateur radio operators who are driving or riding in **Big Rigs**.”

It would clearly appear that:

a) The driver of the Big Rig does not even have a ham license. However, if he does, and operates from the Big Rig, naturally he/she is good for Big Rig contact.

b) A person ‘riding’ in the Big Rig if a licensed ham can give out a valid contact for the Big Rig Award. The rider (or visitor) doesn’t have to have a truck driving license..

So if you or N4CD or N9STL were invited by a commercially licensed Big Rig driver to operate from his/her truck, you could give out contacts good for the Big Rig. If KI0JD were to operate from a Big Rig, then she would ‘be good for just about every award’ (other than prefixes). Same for N9STL. If she dragged the OM into the truck, then that would include ‘team award’ – the only thing they would not be good for is the prefixes they do not have.

So despite the ‘common knowledge’ espoused on 14.336 about what is required for Big Rig, the rules say that any licensed ham ‘riding along’ in a qualified Big Rig can also give out contacts! In the past, there was a YL Big Rig operator who regularly gave out counties. If you listen on channel 19, you’ll hear YL drivers. (I put Channel 19 (27.185 MHz AM) into the IC-706 memory – it comes in handy when you are stopped on the Interstate and want to know why! That is all they are talking about for 10 miles either side. Even though there is no resonant antenna, you’ll hear enough to know what is causing the backup!). Of course, knowing doesn’t make it go any faster, but at least you know the reason for your frustration as you are trying to get to the next counties!

Of course, with tightened company security and safety rules, that is more difficult, but surely visiting at a truck stop with a friendly 18-wheeler, you can put out Big Rig contacts. (logging contacts will have to be specially done - indicate Big Rig for the contact – to get credit in the database).

Givers and Takers

On the K3IMC Forum, there were some interesting posts about ‘Givers and Takers’ in a discussion of Masters Gold and Master Platinum. Some of the MARAC awards are service awards – designed to reward those who contribute to the county hunter community to work for higher level awards. They are not intended to be easy – or for someone who feels no obligation to

give something back to the county hunter community. Some interesting thoughts appeared.

As you may recall, as discussed earlier in the County Hunter News, Masters Gold was conceived as the first challenging ‘service award’. It took a while to solidify into the current requirements. For those not familiar with Masters Gold, there are two parts to the award. One part is actually ‘working’ all the counties with qualifying contacts. The second part is accumulating points for service to the county hunter community.

Some on the forum seemed a bit concerned about labeling folks ‘givers or takers’. I really don’t see any reason not to distinguish between them. There are givers or takers in every organization. My local radio club is suffering from ‘lack of volunteers’ and demographics. Few want to volunteer to be officers. Nearly all the members are retired. Who knows what will happen. County Hunting is the same way. If folks won’t volunteer to help out run nets, and help run the main award organization, sponsor conventions, write newsletters, or go out and run counties, where would county hunting be?

No one gets paid to be net control, be an editor, or be an officer of a club. Most county hunters are putting out counties on their own nickel, and these days it’s not cheap for long county hunting trips. So why not reward those who help out with awards just for those who ARE willing to spend their time and money helping out the rest of the county hunter community?

Of course, there are always going to be more takers than givers – in any organization. That is human nature and prioritization of needs and wants. Some in the past have done a lot – and may be taking a break after doing much earlier. Just look to your local radio clubs – maybe 30-40-50 show up – but most of the work done behind the scenes is done by maybe half a dozen or 10. Everyone benefits – but some put in more time to help out others.

When you are out mobile, and certain loud stations seem to have to be the first to work you, or always seem to appear after spots appear on a regular basis, but never spot, never announce you, never volunteer to do relays, quickly disappear after a contact – what should we call them? Opportunists?

If you were in the Scouts – you didn't get to be an Eagle Scout because you wanted to be an Eagle Scout. You had to meet the requirements. Only a small percentage of folks made Eagle Scout (or the equivalent in other organizations). You could collect all the merit badges you wanted, but if you didn't meet the other requirements, you just never 'qualified' for it.

The same is true in county hunting. There are currently two service oriented awards.

For Masters Gold – you have to accumulate 1500 points of credit. You can do this by being net control or Assistant on any county hunter frequency – SSB or CW. You can accumulate points by volunteering to sponsor a convention, serve as a MARAC officer, be the newsletter editor, or on the Board of Directors. Naturally, not all can do any/all of them. There are only so many officer/BOD slots, and conventions are sponsored 2-3 years out. However, all of these you can do from home without driving a mile for the MG award.

That leaves running counties as the primary means by which most people accumulate the 1500 points. For most county hunters, they don't have to take 1500-10,000 mile trips to reach that. If they live in a state of 100 counties, each county can be run 30 times on different days. Go out for 1 day runs every few months and put out 20 counties one trip, 20 different counties another trip, maybe go to the convention and put out 20-30 counties on the way there, 20-30 counties on the way back, and you'll be getting that transmitted county total up quickly.

As an added benefit – and to provide INCENTIVE for mobiles to continue to actively run counties after they get their Bingo award – the MG award also gives you credit toward your own MG award for the county if you work someone FROM the county who holds Bingo (after you yourself have a star and Bingo). When the award started, there were a whole lot less folks with Bingo! So you can clean up your needs by going to the county and putting it out. Naturally, in that process, you also give the county to dozens of other county hunters – a win/win situation. And part of the 'service' concept that rewards you for 'giving'. After all, it would seem a bit ironic that you might be the only person on the air that day that did not get credit for the county that you spent time and money getting to!

The concept was carried over to the Master Platinum Award. There are two parts here. In Part I, everyone can be working from Day 1 of the award toward working the counties. Many are well along with county counts over 2600. Part II requires those working toward it to transmit from 500 separate counties, and make a contact with someone with MG from that county. It's a bit tougher, but is intended to be a higher level award for 'givers'.

In the same vein as MG, those who go run the counties can get credit themselves for a county by working someone with MG from the county. It would hardly be fair for a mobile to spend time and money going there and being the ONLY one on the entire net not getting credit for the county! In the beginning days, there were only a handful of mobiles out there with MG! During most weeks, you may find one mobile out there good for MP.

Yes, Masters Gold and Master Platinum are different from most other MARAC awards. Not everyone is going to get them. Not every one got to be an Eagle Scout or letter athlete in school. Who knows what the next level award might be?

So far, 27 have reached Masters Gold status, and many others are closing in – thanks to the efforts of the 'givers'. In the MP case, there are likely a dozen or more with over 2400 counties worked, and at least 5 mobiles out here having met the 500 transmitted counties. They were intended to be challenges – some of the most difficult awards.

Along the way, you'll find there are 'givers and takers.' I have no problem with that. I also recognize that there are many who did a lot of giving in the past are not as active. Their contributions are recognized and provide many great memories of the past good times. For MP, the slate was wiped clean at the start date for the award. It's what have you done for me lately? Those counties need to get run after folks get their MG awards.

We have newcomers to the hobby all the time. It's up to each to decide where they will be in life – a 'giver' or a 'taker'. And to what level of participation. Some eagerly accept the challenge and are great additions to the county hunter community. Others are courteous and maybe not able to help out as much as they would like and are great to have. Occasionally they might help. Some just run mobile. Great! Then there are those that just show up, pile on to work the mobile as fast as possible, and vanish as quickly as possible, having 'gotten theirs'. OK. Most of every group is

‘passive members’. Should we ‘reward’ the ‘takers’ with the highest level awards? I don’t think so.

So some of them may never get MG or MP? So? The **service awards** are for exactly that – rewarding the givers.

Mobile Antenna Comparison – QST

Rich, K1OF, wrote up a comparison of several mobile antenna types in the November 2007 issue of QST (p 30). It stirred up a bit of controversy on a discussion board – then again, there are ‘believers’ in any type of antenna system as being superior to all others regardless of the facts. Myths surrounding the G5RV home station antenna abound everywhere.

Rich set up a simple test range measuring three different antennas at a distance of 360 feet and zero degree take off angle. His test measured the maximum field intensity at the measuring location with the same power going into the test antenna. The test antennas were mounted on the side of a pickup truck with a ball mount. After each antenna was tuned as best as possible, an in line Dentron antenna tuner was used to provide a 1:1 match to the IC706 used.

The three types he gave results for in his write up included a helical wound (ala Hamstick), a center loaded like the Hustler standard set up, and a screwdriver.

The vehicles were optimized in position to each other for the tests. Obviously the vehicles were directional with changes of many dB depending upon which way they were oriented.

Here's a table of his results – everything referenced to the best antenna

<u>Band</u>	Helical <u>dB</u>	Center Loaded <u>db</u>	Screwdriver <u>db</u>
80	-2.2	0	-4.2
60	-2.3	0	-6.9
40	0	0	-4.2
20	0	0	-3.8
15	0	-0.6	-3.4
10	0	-0.1	-2.4

The antennas were of similar length, although varied over a range of 10 inches or so. They tested a shorter whip on the screwdriver – going from a 83 inch length on 40m to a 36 inch whip instead of a 66 inch whip caused an additional loss of 5 db on top of the already down -4.2 dB from the others! He did weasel a bit saying large base screwdriver antennas might perform better. No specific model was mentioned. See the QST article for the pictures of the antennas used for the test.

His conclusion was: “If maximum performance is your goal, choose the one wound with the thickest coil wire, one that is center or top-loaded, one that has the thickest base and whip dimensions, and the one with the longest practical length.”

Too bad he didn't measure any antennas with the resonators horizontal. Food for thought.

Indonesia – the Subtle Problem Expands

Remember last issue and the Export Land Model? Where countries start to use more of their own internal production?

From the Financial Times”

“Indonesia, the world’s largest exporter of thermal coal, is planning to impose a domestic market obligation (DMO) on coal producers to ensure sufficient supplies for 35 power stations that are due to come on stream in 2009.

Purnomo Yusgiantoro said “It’s necessary to secure future supplies for domestic use,” he said.... PLN, the state electricity company, predicts its coal needs will rise from 30m to 70m tonnes to supply the power stations. The Indonesian Coal Society estimates that by 2009 domestic demand will be 103m tonnes, up from 33m this year. Production is expected to be 203m tonnes this year, up from 193m last year.”

So where are their exports going?

“The Chinese and Indians are willing to take almost anything because demand is going crazy,” said Phil Rickard, a Jakarta-based extractive industries expert.”

Hmmm....See a pattern here? Indonesia used to be an oil exporter. Now it has to import oil. Today it is a coal exporter – the largest in Asia. But it is planning to retain much of future production for its own needs. All that coal that figures in to the ‘total world coal production’ is irrelevant if they wind up using 90% of it in 8 or 10 years themselves. They will have little to export.

Many of the OPEC countries are in the same position – using more and more of their oil production internally – having less to export. That is a double whammy for oil importers like China, India, and the USA.

The World of Super Computers

If you are a fan of Star Trek Next Generation, you’ll know that DATA, the android, bragged he had a 60-teraflop processor brain. Now, that is pretty amazing to get that much computational power (and associated power supply and cooling) into a cranium.

60-teraflops computational power puts you into the top 10 computers in the world currently. This summer, the \$100 million dollar RPI Computational Center for Nanotechnology(CCNI) was created – and at 100 teraflops – it is the seventh most powerful computer in the world, and the only one in university hands. That's 100 trillion calculations per second, or about 15,000 calculations per second for every man, woman and child on the planet!



IBM Blue Gene Computers

A few years ago, IBM, RPI, and NY State funded the CCNI initiative. In late 2006, IBM installed the first 2,048 processor Blue Gene computer – as the first step in reaching a 32,000 processor configuration. The CCNI final configuration will take 4300 sq. ft. with 16 IBM Blue Gene 2,000 processor computers, three AMD Opteron machines with 154 dual processors with dual cores, an Opteron machine with 40-4 way dual core processors, an Opteron symmetrical multi-processing machine(SMP), an IBM P-series SMP with 16 processors and an Intel MSP with 32 dual core processors. It will take 2.5 megawatts of power! (1200 homes worth)

CCNI will have 832 terabytes of storage.

So why build such computers? As technology continues to advance, the detail in which we can scrutinize and manipulate the world continues to sharpen. However, these reveal fresh mysteries, and has created more questions than answers. The nano world has proven tricky to navigate – What scientists take for granted may not hold true at the nanoscale level.

Over the past decade, nano research has yielded nanotubes, now being put to useful work in many products and areas. Carbon nanotubes hold the promise of being a foundation for everything from artificial muscles, super efficient batteries, and even bulletproof vests than are exponentially stronger than Kevlar.

The science has allowed the continuation of Moore's Law – first made in 1965 - which dictates the numbers of transistors on an IC will double every 18 to 24 months. Modeling will allow the tens of thousands of molecules and atoms, and the billions in a chip, to be simulated with new architectures. Each new generation of chip requires billions in investment – with high risk. Many promising technologies fail at the implementation level. Things don't just work as expected or predicted – so accurate simulation down to the molecular level is critical. Densities are approaching levels of a few molecules in width between lines and parts of transistors on a chip!

There will be hundreds of projects to use the powerful simulation tool. One, for example, is simulating blood flow in a heart – the virtual patient. The model could eventually be used in hospitals for help in surgery. What is the best out of several possible procedures? Surgeons often rely on instinct and past experience when deciding to open up the artery with a stent, bypass the clog, or jump over the inclusion and connect the artery with another nearby.

The model models blood flow, which keeps track of about 40 million different variables - t simulated for each outcome. Five years ago, these simulations took a year to complete. Recently the time was down to a day. At 2048 processors, Blue Gene can do it in less than 2 hours. The full configuration could do it under 15 minutes – the time a surgeon might wait before proceeding on an operation. So perhaps in 10 years, with even faster computers, hospitals will have blood flow simulators on Super Computers along with the CAT scanners and MRI machines in the cardiac operating room.

You might not have 'DATA' helping you out in person, but that 60 teraflop processor might just be here on your desktop in 20-30 years. DATA is still several hundred years in the future.

Getting Folks Finished Up

Ray, WG6X, sent in the following picture from his ‘speed trip’ to get Washington, AL for KR4ZH for the last WBOW.



WG6X Mobile

Quite a few others are closing in. This month we list the following needs from the K3IMC web site – maybe you can help them close in?

Ray notes this car gets good gas mileage – but really isn’t that comfortable for days of county hunting. His other vehicle (pick up truck) gobbles more gas, but is more comfy for long trips.

Who Owns the Oil?

“Who holds the world’s oil? You might assume it’s in the hands of big private oil companies like Exxon Mobil. But in fact, 77 percent of the world’s oil reserves are held by national oil companies with no private

equity, and there are 13 state-owned oil companies with more reserves than Exxon Mobil, the largest multinational oil company. The popular perception in the United States is that if leaders of oil countries nationalize their oil, they are bucking a global trend toward privatization. In reality, nationalized oil is the trend. And the percentage of oil controlled by state-owned companies is likely to continue rising, mainly because of the demographics of oil. Deposits are being exhausted in wealthy countries — the ones that exploited their oil first and generally have the most private oil — and are being found largely in developing countries, where oil tends to belong to the state.”

<http://p088.ezboard.com/fdownstreamventurespetroleummarkets.showMessage?topicID=21317.topic>

“Nationalization is also a political trend in some regions, mainly Latin America, where the populist presidents of Bolivia and Ecuador have made it part of their discourse. They are led, of course, by Hugo Chavez of Venezuela. He has made private producers accept state control of their operations. When they wouldn’t, as in the case of Exxon Mobil and Conoco Phillips, he simply nationalized their holdings. Chavez has also asserted his control over Venezuela’s state oil company, which before him operated very much like a private, profit-driven enterprise.”

Running Those Master Platinum Counties

Terry posted an interesting ‘tidbit’ regarding running the required number of counties for the Master Platinum (MP) award. Once a person qualifies for the Master’s Gold award, they may start work on the second part of the requirements for the award which require giving out 500 different counties, and making at least one contact from that county with another Master Gold holder.

Living in the northwest corner of the continental USA (WA), Terry notes that for him to get to the nearest 500 counties would take a lot more driving than for someone who lives where counties are a lot smaller.

He took the counties in the states around him and totaled up the square miles

WA 39 71303
OR 36 98386
CA 58 163707
NV 16 110567
MT 56 147046
ID 44 83574
UT 29 84904
AZ 15 114006
WY 23 97818
CO 64 104100
NM 33 121593
ND 53 70704
1/2 SD 33 38560

499 counties 1,306,268 square miles

Then, he looked at the southeast USA and totaled up those square miles

GA 159 59441
FL 67 65758
AL 67 52423
2/3 TN 64 28097
KY 120 40411
VA 95 42769
NC 100 53821
SC 46 32007

503 counties 374,727 Square miles

From this, he concluded that folks in the southeast had to drive 4 times as far. That may or may not be true. You aren't trying to cover 'area'. If you can whack corners of gigantic counties, that is fine – you don't have to necessarily traverse them end to end – although in many cases you do. Yes, living out west in the 'open spaces' has its downside.

Of course, even those county hunters out west normally venture east to conventions and minis and have the opportunity to run many counties along the way. To get to MG, you need to run 1500 counties as one way of getting

points. You can, for the MG award, use repeats, but likely most county hunters over 5 or 10 years go through hundreds and hundreds of counties as they head to hamfests, annual county hunter conventions and minis, and vacation trips.

Is the 500 too 'big'? To date, at least 25% of the current MG holders have achieved running the required number of MP counties or are darn close – W3CR, N4CD, N8KIE, KC0JG, WG6X, W6TMD, N9STL – and that has been just in a few years. Over 2700 MP counties have been transmitted from. The 500 likely won't be a stumbling block. Within two more years, half the current MG holders will have needed the 500 counties given out.

You'll recall that MG and MP are 'service oriented awards'. If no one runs the counties who is good for MP, no one gets the award. That is the 'incentive' to get it going. It is critical to have those counties run.

If WA6VJP could go out and run counties, anyone can. (He was blind – he went with a driver). The CW folks will remember him – he put in more hours and was there on the cw net if the band was open – for a decade or more.

Yes, some may never get MG or MP. Some who don't know cw will never get USACW. Some who don't operate on anything but 20 and 40M will never get the Five Band award. That's the way it is.

Yes, it takes some commitment to get the highest level award currently issued by MARAC. The first USCA took 4 years until the first person qualified, and if you read up on the history of the USCA in January 2007 issue, you'll see that in 1961, the general thought was that no one would ever finish! To do what was thought impossible was done in 4 years.

Soon there will be some MP awards issued – my guess is 2009. So folks, go out and transmit from some counties!

Fossil fuels feed our food supply

“When you hear the words "peak oil," the first thing that springs to mind are the long lines at the gas pumps during the '70s energy crisis. However, the

continual decrease in the world's oil reserves will more likely result in longer bread lines than gas lines.

Collectively, Americans eat almost as much in fossil fuels as we burn in automobiles. American agriculture directly accounts for 17 percent of our energy use, or the equivalent of 400 gallons of oil consumed by every man, woman and child per year, according to 1994 statistics.

We have seen a major leap in farm productivity in the last 50 years, with food production doubling and even tripling in the case of cereal grains. This amazing leap did not come from new farms or farmlands. Farmlands are also in decline and being gobbled up by urban sprawl. These massive gains in food production can be credited to the use of synthetic fertilizers and, to a smaller extent, better plant hybrids.

The unpalatable truth about our oil-based food system is that "it takes 10 calories of fossil fuels to make one calorie of food energy," according to a study by David Pimentel and Mario Giampietro, published by the Carrying Capacity Institute. This scary statistic takes into account only the production of the food itself. If you factor in the processing, packaging, transportation, refrigeration and all of the other petroleum-intensive processes, that statistic can inflate to 87 calories of fuel per calorie of food.

Why so much? Most of our food travels an average of 1,500 "food miles" to get from the farm to our fork. Once these "fossil foods" get to our houses, we spend even more energy on refrigerating and cooking until each bite we eat is literally marinated in fossil fuels."

<http://www.recordonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071104/NEWS/711040325>

Getting on 80M for SS

It was time for another 'temporary' antenna. I took an old W9UCW 75M resonator from the storage area, and found one of the hefty W9UCW mast connector pieces and two six foot sections of masts. I needed something to mount this 15 foot high or so antenna, so I used a mag mount. I didn't have anything made of steel to put it on, so I put it in on a 2x3 foot board. It didn't want to stay upright, so I moved over the big plastic garbage can, and tied

the mast to it to keep it pointing 'up'. The can also held the mag mount down.



Mag Mount and Radials

The mag mount had a grounding bolt that I added previously – I attached two 33 foot radials and two 66 foot radials (left over from FD two years ago) to the base, and they wandered out in by 10x40 foot backyard, out onto the driveway and around the corner of the fence. At first it didn't want to tune below 3800 MHz – it was a 75M resonator, not an 80M one. I added on about 6 inches of wire on the stinger and it came in nicely around 3545, which allowed me to use my internal tuner on the radio to cover about 3510 to 3575 KHz(3:1 SWR). The coax came in through the bedroom window. Fortunately it was very mild and temps in the 70s. I spent most of my time trying to catch stations on 80M CW to fill in some band-counties. I'm not a late night owl, but managed to stay up for a few 'dark hours' when 80M gets good.



75M resonator with wire extension

If you could find the tuning rod that was about 6 inches longer and same diameter, you could get it mobile on the cw freq with no problem. I just used a chunk of #18 stranded antenna wire twisted around it for the one day event.

The past few years in Sweepstakes, I've been chasing folks on 40 and 15 and 10 – usually working the exact same folks in the exact same counties each year. This year, I worked many of the same folks but on 80 for new band counties, and just made a few on 40 and 15 to fill in some contacts on the log sheet. Unlike state QSO parties, you can only work someone once - regardless of the band. So if you work them on 40M, you can't later work them on 80M. The idea is to work as many people as possible like Field Day.

The antenna did OK – I caught about 45 states on 80M from WA to ME to FL to CA. Naturally, you catch the very loud stations with good ears far away – and only 1 or 2 in a rare state like ID or WY or VT from 1500 plus miles away. There's a fair amount of QRM – with west coast wiping out the east coast in the middle of the country.

I didn't bust pileups, but got through to most stations after a while. The noise here is high on 80M – too many TVs and computers and lamp

dimmers. Of course, it seems half the hams in MN live in Hennepin County, and in TN in Davidson. Why don't folks believe a N4 call can be in NTX section? I dunno. Now to figure out all the counties. Some didn't make sense. You look them up on QRZ and it gives one address, but they gave a different state. So that one is out unless they have email. In some cases, QRZ does not give the county – so if there was email address, a request to find out what county the person was in was sent. In this contest, you have to send your ARRL section as part of the exchange.

Folks were giving out contact numbers over 1000, so lots of contacts got made. Hope you snagged a few new ones in the CW or SSB ones.

During the cw contest, county hunter mobiles ran on the county hunter alternate freqs – Darrel, W6TMD, used 14.113 for 20M cw and 7092 for 40CW. Duane, WV2B, ran cw up from the SSB freq on 40M and on 14.113. During the SSB weekend – well, there are no alternates. Good time to stay home on the one Sunday that things are very busy.

The 10M contest is coming up in December – likely will hear the same corners of the US again if the band opens, but you never know- could be some E-skip type propagation. Maybe it will be time again to put up the temporary 160M vertical again – as described in a previous issue of the CHNews? Ah...it would be nice to live on 5 acres out in the country so I could have a big antenna farm! (and no nearby big screen TVs and neighbors computers)

Al Gore's Worst Nightmare

As the world peaks in oil production, what will happen? (From the CWEI investor board at investorvillage.com)

Gore Nightmare as Europe Pays to Ship U.S. Coal

“Now that the price of coal is at a historic low relative to oil, there's no stopping consumers and producers alike from embracing Al Gore's nightmare. A ton of U.S. coal is so cheap at about \$47 that European utilities will pay \$50 to ship it across the Atlantic

Peabody Energy Corp., Consol Energy Inc. and Arch Coal Inc., the three biggest U.S. coal companies, forecast the largest increase in exports in 20 years. Coal use worldwide has grown 27 percent since 2002, three times faster than crude, said BP Plc. U.S. East Coast coal has risen 71 percent, while oil tripled on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

U.S. coal prices are equal to \$1.98 for each million British thermal units of energy, compared with \$12.51 for fuel oil and \$6.91 for natural gas, data compiled by Bloomberg show. A million British thermal units is the equivalent of eight gallons of gasoline.

More than 1,000 coal-fed power plants will be built in the next five years, mostly in China and India, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. China, the world's biggest coal producer, became a net importer for the first time this year.

India needs to add 40,000 megawatts a year, or 30 percent of current capacity, to maintain its 8 percent economic growth, said Jayarama Chalasani, director at Mumbai-based Reliance Energy Ltd., India's second-biggest utility.

U.S. coal exports have increased 37 percent this year and will continue to climb because of record global demand and a weaker dollar, analysts and executives say.”

Awards

Master's Gold #26, AB4YZ, Ray, October 5, 2007
Master's Gold #27, WQ7A, Terry, October 27, 2007
Fifth Time #86, W0EAR, Don, November 4, 2007
Fourth Time #133, N2OCW, Larry, November 3, 2007
Five Star #30, WG6X, Ray, November 10, 2007
Second Time #374, KR4ZH, Jim, November 9, 2007
Bingo III #10, W7KQZ, Ernie, November 26, 2007
USCA #1163, KA2NDX, Wayne, November 23, 2007

Operating Events for County Hunters

December is not normally a good month for State QSO parties. There are a few contests where you can snag counties and band/counties, but no QSO parties.

The ARRL 160M contest is Nov 30/Dec 2. Details at
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/160-meters.html>

The ARRL 10M contest is 0000Z Dec 8-2400Z Dec 9. See
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/10-meters.html>
for the rules. .

On New Year's Eve, there is Straight Key Night to have a bit of fun.

Other than these, there are a few other 'operating events' for specialized areas such as lighthouses.

That's all for this month. See you next month. (page 52 of 52)