

County Hunter News

August 1, 2006

Volume 2, Issue 8

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

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

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

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

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.114, and 7038.5, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time.

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@prodigy.net)

Notes from the Editor

Net Shenanigans –

Via email: “The last newsletter was right on! I talked my old time friend K3xx into getting started in county hunting and tried explain procedures to him but he was used to being a DXer and also having operated from overseas for the past 30 years used his DXing and contesting skills on 336... He was co-operating trying to be polite to someone he didn't know but kept making innocent mistakes which kept getting K2JG more pissed off. Later that evening Jim called him on the landline and blasted him. K3xx got so

pissed off, he said no more chasing counties! I suggested that he do only 30m since he is FOC and loves CW but I am not sure he will return after this jerk left a bad impression of the CHN and the hams who operate there.”

Not much different these days – but I have yet to figure out this ‘ugly’ business. Seems Percy can’t resist making a snide comment on just about every contact he makes, but recently the ‘club’ operator also seems to get in on the most stupid, inane type comments about ‘He’s ugly’, ‘He’s uglier than you’, etc. Duh? With 300 folks listening, what incredibly stupid logic is at work here? Does anyone care about ‘ugly’ jokes? Least of all AA9JJ or the others involuntarily involved in this stupidity? Leave it up to ‘Just Plain Rotten’ and now K2JG to continue this show of 2nd grade mentality. Really makes one wonder, especially casual passer by folks on 14.336.

Possible Change of 30M frequency

At the National Convention, the subject of the 30M net frequency was discussed in detail. In the northeastern part of the USA, there are frequently DX stations using 10.114 in the evenings, making working mobiles difficult. The group decided to start using 10.126 as a secondary frequency now, so you may hear mobiles QSY off net to 10.126. This should allow us to gauge whether there will be any problems with others using the frequency.

I noted at 1100Z a strong station (while mobile up north) on 10.126 sending five letter code groups. This continued until 1200Z, then disappeared. No idea where the station, is, but very strong. Not much activity at the time of day (6 am Eastern Time). So please, listen frequently to 10.126 to be sure there will be no surprises should the net move there. Watch for the QSYs to ‘126’. I’ve set 10.126 into memory next to 10.114 so it is easy to get there quickly. Now it is 10.114, 7038.5 and 14.0565.5 and 14.054.5, plus one below 10.114 is 10.126. Just use the memory positions on a 706 Mark One, or the memory switch on the 706 Mark II if you want.

W0GXQ, Jerry, Finishes all Counties on 30 Meters!

Jerry, W0GXQ, finished working all counties on 30 M. County Hunters have been using this band since June 2004, and in about 2 years, several were closing in on having worked them all. Jerry, with lots of hard work,

skeds to catch the last few, and some luck from mobiles headed near/through his last few, got honors as the first to do it. Larry, W0QE, Bob N4CD and Alan, K8CW are closing in, and many have worked 3000 on 30M. Hopefully within a few months, there will be many that have managed to snag them all on 30M.

Continuing Club Insanity

It's really hard to call it anything but. If you read the MARAC rules for the MARAC awards, you find that ONLY callsigns issued to 'operators' count for nearly all MARAC awards. It boggles the mind why folks continue to work the ONE mobile club station, still out running, and where the integrity of that one mobile club station is, when it is clear by MARAC rules that all contacts with a 'callsign' not issued to a PERSON are invalid for nearly every MARAC award, including the PREFIX award, which would likely be the only reason it is used. He says he is 'just activating' his local club call. In reality, he is using the club call to give out phantom contacts that DO NOT COUNT for the prefix award. So folks, I guess the reputation of the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club means nothing to the club members?

Sure, the 'club' can work OTHER mobiles toward the USACA award, which is issued to 'clubs', but running a club call mobile just gives out phantom contacts that DO NOT count for nearly all MARAC awards.

Even more mind boggling is the few club stations working counties toward MARAC awards. If you read the MARAC Bylaws, and rules, it states that MARAC awards are only ISSUED to individuals, and that to apply for an award, you must state that all contacts were made using a callsign assigned to the INDIVIDUAL by the FCC. Since club callsigns are NOT assigned to individuals, anyone submitting an application for a MARAC award is automatically disqualified for lying, and should not be able to apply for ANY new award after that point, even using their own callsign. They are lying on their application. Blatant lie in violation of the rules.

The BOD cannot change the Bylaws that state MARAC awards are only issued to individuals, without a formal amendment, passed by the board, and then ratified by a vote from the entire membership. Nor can they change the requirement that all contacts must be made by and individual who has the callsign assigned to him/her personally by the FCC. The awards committee

cannot change it – it is in the bylaws – and they only ‘recommend’ action that the board might ‘consider’.

CQ has a custodian that is free to ‘interpret’ the CQ Rules. MARAC Rules are more specific, and require an applicant to state contacts were made using a callsign issued to the individual. As previous articles have referenced, the FCC states that “Club” callsigns must be issued to a group of at least 4 operators, so no one ‘operator’ at the Club can claim to have it issued to themselves. Not only that, club callsigns do not convey ‘operator’ privileges, so a club callsign is NOT an operator.

Despite this, one ‘club’ has attempted to circumvent the rules and have ‘entities’ be allowed to submit an application. That was overturned. But even if an ‘entity applied’, the rules cannot ‘accept’ that application (whoever applied is lying), and thus by the mere process of applying, that person should be disqualified from ANY further awards.

Thus, with such clear rules, one wonders why ‘club’ stations are either working for MARAC awards (which they can’t receive, and if they apply automatically disqualify themselves from any further awards), or why ONE club station continues to run putting out bogus phantom counties that can’t be used for most MARAC awards, especially the prefix award?????

On page 33 of the MARAC rules, you find:

“W Prefix Award – Make **Valid Contacts** with operators that have the letter "W" as the first letter of their call signs.”

The FCC states a Club call has non operator privileges. Thus, when you work W4CA, the operator is AB4YZ, and he does not have a W for the first letter of his call, does he?

From MARAC awards page 33, you find the objective of the USA-PA award is:

“OBJECTIVE: To making **Valid Contacts** with amateur radio operators who have as the first letter of their call sign one of four letters assigned to USA stations.”

Now, one must really wonder about why ANYONE would count ‘phantom’ contacts that don’t count for the prefix award. And if they don’t count, why

bother to waste hundreds of hours of net time exchanging reports with a station (not an operator) who does not count for the prefix award? Unless YOU intend to cheat? And lie on your application for the USAPA award that you have followed the rules?

Maybe someone somewhere can see the logic in wasting so much time and effort for nothing? If you do, let me know!

MARAC has issued 'club' awards to only 'two' clubs of one (K2JG, alter ego of KZ2P, and W1BQL, alter ego of "Just Plain Rotten", , other than the MARAC K9DCJ call itself. Not YET a big problem, but why let it become more of a problem? When 'clubs' get stars, they are bogus stars when used mobile. The stars must belong to an operator, not a callsign.

That these two 'snuck through' when no one was watching, OR READING THE ACTUAL RULES, is now 'past history'. Neither one should have been issued awards. When one 'ran' a single county, it created over 100 logging errors in logging programs, giving 'phantom contacts' (INVALID contacts) in the award books. (Master's Gold, Five Star, Prefix, etc, etc). That was just a single county. Imagine if 50 counties had been run by a 'club' call with MARAC awards? Thousands upon thousands of phantom, invalid contacts falsely credited by logging programs!

The Second District of Alaska – by W6TMD

Darrel, W6TMD and Ron, KB6UF went to the Second District, AK in June. From the K3IMC forum post:

“Bob N4CD described our first day in the North Slope Borough quite well in the July edition of the County Hunter News. Exactly as Bob had assumed, we got to Coldfoot earlier than we expected based on all the stories we had heard about the 'Haul' road. The haul road definitely isn't the best in the world but it was about the same as the roads in Northern Idaho when I was growing up. It is mostly gravel road with an occasional stretch of pavement (pavement starts and ends in the middle of nowhere – must be some story there).

As you get further north (past the Atigun pass), there are stretches of road without much gravel. This would have qualified as a dirt road except it was drizzling and the road could only be described as a 'mud' road. I was in 4-wheel drive and still squirming around. But I'm getting ahead of myself. We arrived at Coldfoot at 2 PM local time on 15 June, checked into the 'motel', and headed north to the second district. I knew that many needed the 2nd district on 30 meters and our best shot at working the lower 48 would be after 0000Z. I wanted to have two shots at finding decent propagation on 30 meters.

We entered the 2nd district 60 miles north of Coldfoot (about 1 and ½ hours drive) and headed up to the Chandalar shelf about 3 miles past the North Slope Borough sign. It looked to me like we should be able to get out from this location. At 0000Z on 16 June I called on 20 M CW and worked 2 stations but didn't hear anything more. At 0030Z I tried 30 M and worked 6 stations after which we went to 14336 and worked 9 stations in about 10 minutes. At 0100Z I tried 20 CW again and more stations had obviously seen the spots that we were around. I had 14 contacts on 20 followed by 15 additional contacts on 30 M.



The sign for North Slope Borough
 The “County Line” between Fourth AK and Second AK
 Note the trans-AK pipeline in the picture

Bob N4CD was mobile but helped with relays on both 20 and 30 meters. We tried again on 20 SSB but heard nothing further so we decided that was about all we were going to work until the next day. We got back to Coldfoot about 7:30 PM but happy that we had had a reasonable opening for our first day in the 2nd district.

On 16 June we drove back to the 2nd district and started listening about 1400Z. Crackle, crackle, crackle on all bands and modes. We hadn't heard a signal from the lower 48 but we tried every ½ hour to call but no response. We decided to go over the Atigun pass and see if propagation might be better on the other side of the pass. We came across a group of 11 caribou before we started up the pass and took some good pictures. At the top of the pass, we had a Dall sheep just off the road and took more pictures. A cloud was covering the top of the pass and our pictures turned out mostly white

with a more concentrated white in the middle (the sheep). The temperature at the top of the pass was 32 degrees F. Down the other side from the pass, the cloud was still around us and the drizzle had turned the road to mud. But on we went to a point about 33 miles from the beginning of the 2nd district (just past pump station #4 there is a nice parking area – 68 degrees, 55 minutes according to Ron's GPS). I can't say how good a location this should be since the entire mountain in front of us was enclosed in the cloud.

I called on 20 CW and a strong signal came back – oh boy, some action. I worked SM6VR followed by OH3JF and then heard AB7RW/M and worked him with 559 reports. But that was the end. Nothing heard on 20 SSB for about 2 hours then we heard WQ7A weakly calling us. Terry announced us but he wasn't hearing anything else from stateside while pointed north. No one else was heard but we hadn't given up. After 3 hours on the north side of Atigun pass we decided to go back to the Chandalar shelf area.

Coming back down the other side of the pass we had a flat tire. I knew Ron was good for something as he did all the hard work in changing the tire. We stopped at a location still a little further from the mountain to the southeast with a better take off angle. I must have gotten tired of watching Ron do all that work so I took a nap. Still nothing heard on the bands and no one responding to us by 2200Z. Now we had to decide whether to stay and hope that the band might open after 0000Z or head to the tire service building at Coldfoot. We were not in the best of spirits after 8 hours on the North Slope and 4 total contacts. We headed south to Coldfoot. Luckily the tire person was still working and looked at the tire. Tires on a 20 inch rim are dear in Calif. – you can imagine how dear they are at Coldfoot. At least they had a tire so we were back in business for our trip to Denali Park the next day. Ron and I wish we could have given a few more of the deserving contacts from the second district but K3IMC had a nice run from the 2nd district a few days later so I hope that everyone erased 2nd district from their needs list.”

Peak Oil News and Related Items

Ethanol – The solution? Or not?

Right now, investors are throwing money at new ethanol production plants all over the country. From the Twin Cities Pioneer Press at:

www.twincities.com/mld/tw...916259.htm

“Suddenly, so many new ethanol plants are planned in Minnesota that a once-unthinkable debate has begun: Will there be enough corn to go around?

Investors plan to quadruple the size of Minnesota's ethanol industry within just a few years, according to permit data from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. If they do, they'd devour more than half of Minnesota's 1.2 billion-bushel corn crop.”

This is happening all over the country. Continuing:

“And that could spawn a new world of scarcity, where food companies, livestock operators and grain exporters scramble for what's left of a shrinking corn pile. The concern isn't that Americans will suddenly go hungry, but that ethanol's appetite will create shocks in the food system that nobody ever dreamed of.”

Well, I’m sure some energy minded folks, and those who look at the ‘big picture’ might have an idea of what happens if you quadruple, then quadruple again the number of ethanol plants. It’s called exponential growth. For Minnesota –

“Ethanol production used one-eighth of the corn crop in 2005, and state officials had predicted that figure would rise to one-sixth by 2012.”

“If all the factories now seeking permits are built, ethanol soon will consume more than 40 percent of Minnesota's corn crop. That will rise to 50 percent if the wave of plants now on the drawing board is built. A possible third wave of plants, cited by pollution-control officials, would bring corn usage to nearly 60 percent.”

Now, keep in mind that the animal raising industry, hogs in particular, use millions of bushels of corn to grow those hogs. What happens when there isn’t enough corn to go around?

“In Iowa, the effect is even more dramatic. There, some 55 ethanol plants are open or proposed, and "if all these plants are built, it would use virtually all the Iowa corn crop," said Iowa State University economist Bob Wisner.” That would not seem to be too good for the animal folks in Iowa, would it?

In the past, there have been large surpluses of corn. Commented one person:
“

"There's plenty of corn to go around," said Mark Hamerlinck of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association. "We're still shipping a great deal of corn out of the state. Now, will it affect exports? It could ... but doesn't it make more sense to ship corn 40 miles down the road to an ethanol plant than 12,000 miles across the globe?"

It sure might depend if you are one of the millions that depend upon that corn to stay alive. Much of the world cannot raise enough food to feed itself, and depends upon agricultural surpluses in other areas. Or if you are concerned about the balance of imports vs. exports, when we have nothing to export, but still import all that ‘stuff’ from China. How about elsewhere?

“In South Dakota, seven large ethanol plants lie within 30 miles of the Minnesota border, and already, three-fourths of that state's corn is used for ethanol. Even states that grow almost no corn are building ethanol plants now, too.”

I wonder where all the corn is going to come from? And what other industries are going to see price increases as ethanol plants buy

Wind Power – Some food for thought

From the General Electric Web Site at:

<http://www.ge.com/stories/en/10557.html>

“GE has expanded into one of the fastest-growing segments of the global energy industry with the addition of its new wind energy business. Last year, a record 6,500 megawatts of new wind power-generating capacity, enough to provide electricity to roughly 1.5 million homes, were added worldwide. This growth trajectory is expected to continue for some time.”

“Worldwide, wind energy has grown 31% annually over the last five years, resulting in an estimated global installed capacity of 24,000 megawatts. Cumulative industry investment will top \$25 billion in 2002. GE expects to see continued strong, double-digit growth in wind power over the next

several years, with much of the focus on Europe and the Americas, but, according to Zwolinski, the business also is looking for opportunities to expand wind power technology into other regions including Asia.”

From the Rensselaer Alumni Magazine, Spring 2006 –

“Although renewable energy sources are a tiny fraction of the world’s power supply, providing 2% of the primary energy used, they are increasing becoming an important solution to the clean and affordable energy, Wind, in particular, has become the world’s fastest-growing power source, according to the DOE (dept of energy). General Electric, which bought bankrupt Enron’s wind assets in 2002, expects to sell \$8 billion worth of wind turbines in 2006 and 2007 globally.

Said Victor Abate, ’86, “We’re going to ship more than 2, 100 wind turbines this year alone”.

The global installed base for wind is expanding at a rate of about 17 percent a year, according to Abate, and rapid worldwide growth is projected to continue as more countries turn to wind.

In the U.S., some 28 states now have wind farms that feed electricity into the local grid. “

I’ve seen wind farms in TX, NM, WV, CA, and likely just haven’t noticed them in lots of other places!

Now, if you recall your exponential growth, and figure 17% growth compounded out a few years.....in 4 years, you double. In 8 years you quadruple.....assuming you can build enough factories fast enough, hire enough workers, get enough of the materials necessary to grow that fast for very long! Trees don’t grow to the sky!

Now for the not so good news.....

Matt Simmons, author of the book “Twilight in the Desert” about the impending inevitable decline of Saudi Arabia oil output, has suddenly turned very bearish on oil production.

At <http://www.simmonsco-intl.com/files/Energy%20Conversation.pdf>

Titled: The Energy Crisis Has Arrived

He is predicting that the Middle East oil production will NOT rise. His predictions are:

2006	18,200 bbl/day
2007	12,600 bbl/day
2008	9,300 bbl/day

These are 'crude oil' only and don't include NGL (natural gas liquids – useable for making diesel fuel).

According to him, this is a BIG DEAL. If the Middle East peaks and falls, or is at peak now or within a year or two, there is no where else in the world that can step in and stem the inevitable, quick decline. The worse case he sees would be a drop in total world oil production from about 85 million/bbl day in 2006 to 25 million/bbl day in 2020.

As previous issues have highlighted, oil production around the world is in trouble. Saudi has 8%/yr decline rates of their mature fields, and that is all they have! They are scrambling at a mad pace to try and stem the decline, renting most of the world's drilling rigs and crews available. The UAE and Kuwait are 'tapped out'. Iran is in trouble. China is now an oil importer. Norway is dropping like a rock. Prudhoe Bay is tapped out and declining fast. Mexico's great Cantarell is going to drop like a rock. The amount of oil you need to 'discover' and produce is mind boggling. Even Exxon mobile says we need to find and produce 8 new barrels of oil for every 10 we use now by 2020. No one has found even 2 for every ten we use – and recently, not even that.

Meanwhile, the pundits without a clue are telling you 'America is the Saudi of coal'. Great – even given a trillion dollars, you couldn't produce enough oil from coal by 2015 to make a difference, and no one in Congress is going to vote a trillion dollars to do it. Same for oil sands – by 2015, they might produce 2 million bbl/day. The world, according to Simmons, will need about 60 million more a day just to stay even, and about 100 million more a day to meet projected demand.

While he has been forecasting problems with Saudi production for several years, he now has turned extremely bearish on the probabilities oil

production will rise more, and very much concerned that we are at peak oil production right now – the best of times – with nothing but ‘down’ ahead.

If he is right, we are in for some rough economic times coming up. Likely it won't take but a few years for the figures to come in. Remember, just because your gas tank is on “Full” right now doesn't mean you're going to get to fill it up in six months or a year. The same for oil demand/production. Just because it is being met (at \$72/bbl selling/buying price), doesn't mean that it will be met in a year at a price you like.

Just think about all that ‘exponential growth’ of X percent, every year – the oil demand out of China at 10%/yr. The same is true in India and much of the developing world.

Oh, they'll be enough ‘oil to go around’. The sellers might just be asking \$200 or \$300/bbl. Supply always equals demand. It's the price that varies.

Cantarell News

Remember Cantarell? It is the second largest oil field in the world, in Mexico, and set to go off the cliff. From the Yahoo message boards:
<http://finance.messages.yahoo.com/bbs?.mm=FN&action=m&board=7080979&tid=bry&sid=7080979&mid=7293>

“"The nation's largest producing area, the Cantarell offshore oil field in the Gulf of Mexico, is facing a similar decline, though on a much larger scale. Its current production of 2.1 million barrels per day -- which makes it the second-largest single oil field in the world, after the Ghawar field in Saudi Arabia -- is expected to fall to anywhere between 1.4 million and 520,000 barrels per day by 2008, according to government estimates."

The world has seen such declines already in the North Sea. Prudhoe Bay, were it not for limitations in the pipeline capacity, may have fallen as fast – put the peak production

If it goes to 1 million or less a day, that is over a 50% drop in output in 2 years! If this is the ‘typical’ case for the largest fields in the world, where secondary and tertiary recovery methods were used for long periods to ‘maintain’ production at high levels, then Ghawar, the single largest field in the world, now producing for over 45 years, an old, aging, very tired ‘giant’ might be set to do the same. This one field provides half of Saudi's oil. Should it drop 50% in 2 years, there is nothing the rest of the world can do

in that time frame to stem the beginning of the decline of worldwide oil production.

Matt Simmons in his book spends a great deal of time describing the geology and production history of this field. During the 1980s, when the US pushed the Saudis to produce as much as they could, in part to drive the price of oil down, and hurt the Russian economy, Ghawar was over produced, and output dropped by 50% for a few years, until it could 'recover'. Next time, the drop likely will be permanent.

The oil fields lie 3,000 to 11,000 feet underground. You have to use sophisticated technology to try and assess the condition of various parts, and don't have control over the way nature created the geology of the reservoir, the types of rock, the porosity, the nearby aquifers, and the homogeneity of the fields. At some point, every oil field peaks. With the 'new technology', we have succeeded in 'prolonging' the maximum production – but the downside of that is that after the peak, the decline is even steeper. For example, water injection and 'water drive' injected at the periphery, is used to 'flood' out the oil. At some point, the water flows easily to the producing wells, and you start getting more water than oil from the wells. It is a spiral down, with higher and higher percentage of water, and more and more effort required to drill and locate special 'horizontal wells' in the narrower and narrower layers of remaining oil. And that is only a stop gap measure, until the water intrudes on those new wells.

Think of it as an athlete using steroids for performance enhancing – gives a big boost during the 'productive years'. Then, the 'decline afterwards' and the after affects are often much worse than just the 'normal case'. In some cases, 'terminal'.

If you take the dramatic rise in oil of the past three years, where oil prices are suddenly rising at a constant rate per year, and extrapolate the rise out, by the end of 2006 you might see oil in the range of \$70-\$82, and at the end of 2007 in the \$85-95 range, and by the end of 2008 in the \$99 to \$110 per barrel. Who knows? However, if world oil production has indeed peaked, get set for triple digit oil prices. And \$4 to \$5/gal gasoline. Or worse. And that by 2009. You don't even want to think what it would be in 2015 if Matt Simmons is right. It won't be pretty.

Bill Clinton Speaks out:

From the July 2006 ASPO newsletter at: <https://aspo-ireland.org/Newsletter67.pdf>

Straight Talk

Clinton raises alarm about oil depletion

By Charlie Smith

Former U.S. president **Bill Clinton** has urged newspaper editors to focus more attention on the depletion of the world's oil reserves. In a June 17 speech to the **Association of Alternative Newsweeklies** convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, Clinton said a "significant number of petroleum geologists" have warned that the world could be nearing the peak in oil production. Clinton suggested that at current consumption rates (now more than 30 billion barrels per year according to the International Energy Agency), the world could be out of "recoverable oil" in 35 to 50 years, elevating the risk of "resource-based wars of all kinds".

During a question-and-answer period, the *Georgia Straight* asked Clinton if he believed that Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates had exaggerated claims about their proven oil reserves. The four Persian Gulf states are among the six nations with the greatest listed proven reserves. (Canada and Iraq are the other two.) "I don't know if they're overstating their reserves," Clinton replied. He added that he expects oil prices will reach US\$100 per barrel "in five years or less".....

At the AAN convention, Clinton delivered a detailed scientific explanation of some of the problems with the Ghawar oil reservoir. Clinton echoed Simmons's claim that massive amounts of water have been injected into Ghawar to maintain oil pressure. "It implies less oil than we previously thought," Clinton said.

Clinton also recommended that everyone at the convention read *The Empty Tank: Oil, Gas, Hot Air, and the Coming Global Financial Catastrophe* (Random House, 2005), by Jeremy Leggett, a petroleum

geologist and international campaigner for Greenpeace. (For more information on the book, see the *Straight*'s January 5-12, 2006, edition at www.straight.com/.) Clinton also emphasized the importance of developing the alternative-energy industry and weaning his country off its dependence on imported oil.

He claimed that promoting renewable power would also stimulate the American economy. "Unlike us, the U.K. has found a source of new jobs in this decade," he said, referring to the Blair government's efforts in this area. "The implications are dire if we don't do something." "

Trip Report to the National Convention – de N4CD

Joining a hundred other mobiles, N4CD headed 'north' for the Annual MARAC Convention in Appleton, WI. Leaving 'hot' Texas, N4CD first headed to Tulsa, OK on Saturday while a big CW contest was underway. Thank goodness for 30M with no contest activity for being able to run counties on the way to Tulsa, and a visit with W0RRY. The next morning, N4CD headed up through MO, 'connecting the dots' to try and finish running all of MO for a second time, and filling in some of the missing Master Platinum counties. My goal on the way up was to run some I had not been in for a long time, while headed generally north. After running about 30 counties in MO, it was then time to do the same in the Northwest corner of IL to fill in those counties, plus give out the counties, plus try and get Master Platinum contacts for N4CD as well. There was lots of activity with the fixed stations working the many mobiles, the mobiles trying to find and work each other, and some DX coming through on 20M for half the day. The weather cooperated. After running about 40 counties in IL, I headed off to WI, to run about 30 there – likely going through the same counties as many other mobiles had done already!

Eddie, G4KHG was off running many western USA counties – going through some 'rare ones' out west on CW and 30M, while several others were coming from long distances (KS5A, K2NJ, AB4YZ, AA9JJ, just to mention a few) running dozens and dozens of counties. Lots and lots of counties to be worked on 20, 30, and 40M CW. Oh, and AA9JJ/N9QPQ and N7AKT giving out Master Platinum counties on SSB as well, although

Scottie, traveling at what seems like 80-85 mph, popped up about every 7th or 9th county to run one! He travels fast in that vehicle!

Over 100 folks attended the National Convention, with county hunters from over 40 states, from at least 3 countries. The facilities were excellent, the food at the hotel restaurant was excellent (quite unusual!) with gigantic proportions, and the weather was great – maybe a bit warm for the locals (90 degrees) but fine for Texans – cooler than normal summer temps.

After five days of putting out counties, I headed to Appleton and the Best Western after spending Wednesday night about 100 miles away at a lower cost motel.

I arrived Thursday morning about 9am, and just as I walked through the door at the hotel to register, Joyce, WB9NUL pointed to me and said “There he is!” – I was confused! It seems I had signed up for the Thursday tour event and had completely forgotten about it. Two others were ‘late’, and a last minute catch the tour shuttle bus car trip by the convention hosts helpers caught up with the regular bus, and fortuitously, the ‘late bunch’ managed to join the tour in progress – the tour of the two local towns to see the historic homes, a visit to the famous ‘Paperweight’ museum, and enjoy a nice lunch at a historical tavern. The convention host group went all out to make sure everything went smoothly!

Friday was the tour to the Experimental Aircraft museum – well worth the visit with hundreds of airplanes on display – with an excellent tour through the facility – and later that day, a visit to the Game Preserve/Farm of Phil, the owner of A.E.S. in Milwaukee, for a ‘Brat’ fest, tour of the facility, and visit to his personal collection of restored John Deere tractors. Wow – some folks collect telegraph keys, some stamps, but Phil acquires and restores large John Deere tractors – to ‘mint’ condition – and they all run. Each year, he sponsors a John Deere day – and all the tractors are checked out, and put on display and operated. All the county hunters filled up on good food, and were entertained with good country-western music from a live band.

On Saturday, we had the annual MARAC meeting. Joyce, WB9NUL, re-elected as President for the next two years, announced that Gene, KD9ZP, had submitted his resignation as Awards Chairperson, and that KC5QCB, Janet, would be taking over as Awards Chairperson effective October 1, 2006. Some of the other election results:

Vice President – Mark, W9OP



Mark, W9OP, Vice President, active on CW

New South Central Director – N0ZA, Ross

New Secretary – Jerry, W0GXQ



W0GXQ – Best CW Mobile and CW Net Control of the Year 2006

First to work all counties on 30M

New Vice President – Chuck, AD8W

New Treasurer – Terry, WQ7A

Re-elected as Southeast Director, Dave, KE3VV

Re-elected Great Lakes Director, Bob, N8KIE



N8KIE, Bob, Great Lakes Director, CHOTY SSB 2006, active on CW

At the annual Awards Dinner, the following CW awards were announced:

CW County Hunter of the Year – W0QE – Larry

CW Mobile of the Year – W0GXQ – Jerry

CW Net Control of the Year – W0GXQ – Jerry

And we should mention – best team – AA9JJ/N9QPQ, Frank and Kay –
(Frank good for the MP award)

Best SSB Mobile of the Year – N8KIE, Bob (also active on CW)

After the convention, N4CD/m took a side trip to Canada to visit YL friend for few days, then headed back to TX with only a few side trips to run a few in MI and IN, otherwise, straight down interstates – 1600 miles in 2.5 days. It seems that big storms weren't far away. In Canada, near Kawartha Lakes – tens of thousands of folks out of power with violent thunderstorms one night – and on the way home, I stopped in IL about 50 miles from St. Louis, and found most motels nearly full as people from St. Louis areas were looking for motel rooms since a half million people in St. Louis were without power from storms the night before, and likely to be out of power for 5 days.

KQ0B took a direct hit from the storms, wiping out antennas. Fortunately, no major damage to house (according to post on K3IMC forum). Silver reports one dipole down, and tower looks like it might have a 'kink' in it.

Now N4CD/m back home doing paperwork, and looking at all the bills for county hunting – with gas at \$3/gal, it's getting more expensive all the time to take big, long county hunting trips, even at 30mpg in the Buick LeSabre – and not including the repairs and upkeep on the vehicle – those miles add up. A funny little 'mechanical noise' started on the way home – hmmm...stopped by the Buick place late in the afternoon- they suggested it might be chain tensioner or water pump related. Not good. But it only happens after 2-3 hours of hard driving. Doesn't do it while cool – we'll see what develops, hopefully around town, not in the boondocks somewhere on a Sunday.

Sooo many counties, so little time.

Awards

4th Time #127, N0ZA, Ross, 6/26/2006

USCA #1137, RK2FWA, Kaliningrad Club, 6/27/2006

USCA #1138, KL7D, Bruce, 6/29/06 – all 20M, all mobile

USACA #1140, KO1U, Mark, July 21, 2006

Bingo II #42, K7REL, Tom, July 20, 2006

USACW #6, W9MSE, Jeff, July 11, 2006

3rd Time #193, W9MSE, Jeff, July 11, 2006

USACA #1139, HB9BYZ, Peter, July 20, 2006

4th Time #128, K7REL, Tom, July 9, 2006

Bingo III #8, KC0JG, Silver, July 7, 2006
USA-CW #84, KO1U, Mark, 7/21/2006
3rd Time #194, KG0BB, Tom, 7/22/2006
USACA #1141, LY2ZZ, Jonas, 7/22/2006

August Picture Gallery



Jeff, W9MSE – only active on CW

Jeff is now RETIRED.....so lots more time to spend on the radio, putting out counties, and having fun!



At the Brat-fest Dinner at Phil's Game Farm
CW Bunch – AI5P (W6XLR-ssb), W3DYA, KS5A, W0GXQ, W9MSE



K2NJ at the Convention – Bill is off on a 6 week trip across the country putting out counties on 30, 40, and 20 CW. No “tu-tu” reports from him, ever! On the MARAC board as ‘ex-President’.



Victor, UA2FM and Vlad, UA2FF working AJ5ZX/m
In Winkler County TX – LC WBOW
From the RK2FWA Club Station, USCA #1137
First Station in UA land to earn USCA!
Picture from Cellphone Cam

And that is what it is all about – about putting out the counties – not running them off – about mobiles going for the LAST WBOW – not going out of the way NOT to give a last WBOW! Getting folks finished up, not banishing them for late responses to emails, or banishing folks for GIVING a LC WBOW to someone.

August County Hunter Events

It's back to normal with lots of activity for CW folks in QSO Parties and other contests. From ARRL Contest Corral, Aug QST, by ARRL, Newington CT:

August 5-6

North American QSO Party – CW – you need to read the rules carefully on this one. Fun contest. 1800Z to 0600Z. Jan QST p 101, or www.ncjweb.com

August 12-13

Maryland/DC QSO Party (well, both CW and SSB) – 1600Z Aug 12 to 0400Z August 13, and 1600-2359Z on August 13. www.w3cwc.org/rules.html

August 19

New Jersey QSO Party – 2000Z Aug 19 to 0700 Aug 20, and 1300Z Aug 20 to 0200 Z August 21. www.qsl.net/w2rj

August 27-28

Ohio QSO Party 1600Z Aug 26 to 0400Z Aug 27. www.oqp.us

Hawaii QSO Party – 0700 Z Aug 26 to 2200Z Aug 27. www.karc.us/hi_qso_party.html

That's it for this month. If you have interesting stories, pics, report on the convention, upcoming events, let the CHNews know.

De N4CD