

County Hunter News

July 1, 2010

Volume 6, Issue 7

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 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.

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188/7185 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18135 or 18.132.5 for occasional 17M SSB runs.

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.W6RK.com

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

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

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

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

http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

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

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor



N4CD Bob USACA #883

1) N4CD Rumblings

a) **The WPX CW Contest** provided opportunities for band counties. 10M was open for some of the louder stations (big big beams and amps), and 15 provided some HI counties. There were lots of W7s and 6s and 4's. Ed, KN4Y, was busy chasing counties on 10M. There were loads of stations on 20 and 40 and 80 for those hunting band counties, call combos, prefixes, etc. Some of the contesters had over 2000 contacts in the 48 hour period.

b) **Move Over Law** - In most states, it is now the law that when you come up upon a police or ambulance stopped on the side of the road, that you "Move Over" to the center lane on a 4 lane highway, or if a two

lane highway, slow down to at least 20 mph under the speed limit. That's true now in 47 states, and there are some big fines if you don't comply.

Each year dozens of police and emergency workers are killed by drivers failing to stay out of the way. So when you see those flashing lights ahead, be slowing down and ready to change lanes to give those folks some room to work in, and some safety margin. It's also a wise idea to give a wide berth to stopped cars since you never know if a door will suddenly come flying open right in front of you.

c) Sunspots

It's been disappointing – at the end of the month, sunspot numbers were actually dropping. We haven't seen a major rise in sunspot activity yet. Still waiting for excitement to start happening.

2) Mobile Activity

June has been a busy month, starting with the return of mobiles from Dayton in late May. The weather is good up north, and folks have kids out of school, so there is time to travel. It's vacation season.

W0GXQ, Jerry - Iowa Trip Report - “ Four days on the road - 2,510 contacts with some nice short skip on the higher frequency bands (17 thru 10). Over 20% of my contacts (524) were on these bands. I picked up 42 new band/counties myself! Sorry I did not run as much SSB as I had hoped, but I couldn't pass up the higher band openings.

First trip with DeLorme Street Atlas installed on my notebook computer (no wrong turns this trip). When I visited with NN9K Saturday night, he gave me some good tips for laying out a route which minimizes "back talk" from the computer voice. :-)

Dan, KM9X couldn't be at the radio for Iowa and Osceola, but I did get Ron, KB6UF and myself finished up for Master Platinum. Ninety eight to go for my MP.”

Gene, **K5GE**, completed his trip from TX up through LA, to MO, then over to KS, OK, and into the panhandle of TX. He was trying to make at least 3 contacts on each of 2 bands, and trying to work a Master Platinum holder from each county he went through in anticipation of the new Mobile Diamond Award — that was detailed at the Dayton Hamvention by AA8R, Randy, at the forum where he talked about current and new proposed MARAC Awards.

It was tough time for Gene with the A index up at 26 on Sunday, but it seemed to work out. 40M contacts were especially hard to come by. He got several needed MP counties for Jack, N7ID, who is closing in on MP. Also some for Dan, KM9X for MP.

Ray, **AB4YZ** made a trip over to PA and back. With the high A index, he was tough copy from TX, and this was the weekend of the CW WPX contest so 20M CW frequency was buried in QRM. He was working on his MP needs, too.

Clyde, **N8CBW** was headed west through CO. Jimmy, **K4YFH** was in OK and TX – and headed further west for the summer. He wound up in AZ for a while, and will head to the west coast to put them out.

Joyce, **WB9NUL**, and Barry, **W9UCW**, headed to IL and back. They ran only on 20M SSB most of the time.

Seth, **N3MRA**, was spotted many times. **N7JPF** made a few trips out west.

WA1IEE seen up in ME on 30M. It's been a long time between runs for him. Maybe he'll be more active.

Jeff, **W9MSE**, was running the 'coastal' counties – all along the border – ran up to Maine, then back to OH, then back to WI... a long trip.

Ron, **KB6UF**, headed back from ME to LA hitting many he needed for MP, too. He's getting closer to his MP.

His trip report on K3IMC:

Well, I made it home- Had a good trip, lots of rain in NY and PA. Met with N3HOO and N2OCW at HOO's house, so if any of you go through Franklin

Co, PA stop in get a good and tasty Root Beer Float, also met up with K1SO and W1VA in Roanoke, VA at a Hardee's at the junction of I-81 and Alt 220.

Had a nice Chat. Conditions were not the greatest on the way back, but I made all my MP contacts that I had posted. I would like to give a special thanks to N5UZW, he was a great help while I was enroute to Maine, while I was there and my return. he kept me abreast of those counties that I needed MP contacts and would call me to let me know that they were running, so I could get to my truck for the contact, he also stuck with me during to and from Maine, staying late into the night ensuring that I would get a MP contact. Special mention to WQ7A and N4UJK and KC3X and N4CD for other late night MP contacts.

Now the ugly part, I had to listen to all you CH'ers once, now I have to listen to you again as I transcribe my data to my log book and then into Logger program. YUK. See you again in the near future, looks like some LA needs need to be filled for you CH'ers. “

Later in the month, he was out putting out the northern LA counties.

NS5J was spotted running counties on 20M CW in southeast TX.

Art, **N4PJ**, took a trip from FL up through GA to SC, then ran all over in SC, then headed back home. He had a stone wipe out windshield and he lost a day of county hunting waiting for repair. Later he made another trip to run counties in GA.

Jim, **N4JT** made a quick trip up to NJ area and back running them both ways. He'll be headed to TX in July for the convention.

Lloyd, **K0GEN**/Gayle, **KI4WHK** spotted out mobile, as well as Jim, **WB5YDH** and Ben, **W6PXE**, who ran up to MT.

Mike, **W0MU** and Brenden, **W0TOL** headed out on a trip in MT, and later another one over to Teton, WY to get the LC WBOW for Scottie, N4AAT.

Ed, **K8ZZ**, took a trip back east running through OH and doing much of WV.

Lowell, **KB0BA**, and Sandra, **N0XYL**, were out in OH mobile.

Pete, **NN9K**, was over in IA running a bunch.

Phil, **AB7RW**, took a trip down to CA from his home in WA, running through many in OR, and the top half of CA.

W8TCD/WB6OOA were spotted out in CO mobile.

Greg, **NM2L**, was out in GA running counties for the folks.

Chuck, **W4QNW** was seen in the spots in SC running counties.

Quent, **K5TVC**, was seen out in CA.

Randy, **AA8R**, headed to IL, Jeff, **W9MSE** was noted out in WI, and Alan, **W8OP** was out in the WV QSO Party.

W4FNW, and Erwin, **WB7ATT** were off a trip in IL headed west.

Jim, **K0ARS** was spotted in many states. He now has 17M as well.

KM5RA was seen in TX on 20M SSB, and **K9JWV** was seen mobile out in NV on cw. Bob, **N5KUC** noted in WV.

Don, **AE3Z**, was seen out in NY running counties.

Jerry, **W0GXQ**, with new sidekick **N0CIT**, took a trip along the top of ND and returned one tier below. That added a 'no star' capability to the expedition and maybe got a new person recruited into county hunting.

Jim, **W4HSA**, headed over to Dare, NC and back.

5) **Second AK – KL7HBK** – now retired permanently OOC

Art, **N4PJ**, passed on an email from **KL7HBK** – which explains why we haven't heard him on lately

“Hi Art..

Sorry, I retired last summer from my job in 2nd District and will probably never return. AL7R is on from Prudhoe Bay but I think only 160 and 80. There is an active ham in Barrow, but I can't remember his call. Wish I could be of more help. Anyway, good luck!!

73,

John KL7HBK “

6) Flagpole buddy mount

If you go out in an RV, and are looking for a quick way to put up a mast to hold an antenna, you might check out

http://www.flagpolebuddy.com/Ham_Radio_81Q6.html

They were exhibiting at Dayton Hamvention. I don't think the plastic devices would be good moving down the road (not good for a mobile antenna set up) but if you park for days or weeks, it might be an interesting way to get up a mast quick.

7) QSO Parties

There were two state QSO Parties in June – AL and WV. We report on each one separately.

8) Bogus Prefix Stations

Two bogus stations were out this month. W1BQL, club call, and NA7XX, club call. Neither count for the prefix award according to the rules.

MARAC Award Rules Page 31

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

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

In the case of Percy, KA1JPR, he does not 'hold' the W1BQL call sign. That is assigned to an 'entity', not him. It is not 'his' callsign. It does not qualify.

Chinese Super Computers

A Chinese supercomputer has ranked as the world's second fastest machine, surpassing European and Japanese systems and underscoring China's aggressive commitment to science and technology. The Dawning Nebulae, based at the National Supercomputing Center in Shenzhen, China, has achieved a sustained computing speed of 1.27 petaflops — the equivalent of one thousand trillion mathematical operations per second — in the twice annual ranking of the world's fastest 500 hundred computers.

The newest Top 500 ranking was made public on Monday at the International Supercomputer Conference in Hamburg, Germany. The Chinese machine is actually now ranked as the world's fastest in terms of theoretical peak performance, but that is considered a less significant measure than the actual computing speed achieved on a standardized computing test.

The world's fastest computer remains the Cray Jaguar supercomputer, based at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. Last November it was measured at 1.75 petaflops.

In the previous year's ranking, the Chinese had the fifth fastest computer, a system that was based at a National Supercomputing Center in Tianjin, China. That machine has now dropped to seventh in the rankings.

The U.S. continues to be both the dominant manufacturer as well as the nation with the most supercomputers on the Top 500 ranking. This year, the U.S. had 282 of the world's fastest 500 computers, an increase from 277 last November. However, the Chinese appear to be intent on challenging U.S. dominance. There had been some expectation that they would make an effort to complete a system based on Chinese designed components in time for the June ranking. The Nebulae is based on chips from Intel and Nvidia.

The new system, which is based on a microprocessor that has been designed and manufactured in China, is now expected later this year. A number of supercomputing industry scientists and engineers said that it is possible that the new machine will claim the title of world's fastest.

“The one development that is really clear is that the Chinese are pushing at the high end,” said Horst Simon, associate laboratory director for computing science at Lawrence Berkeley laboratory.

“I wouldn't be surprised if by the end of this year they surpass the scientific computing power of the EU countries combined and have a computer system with an achieved performance to reach the number one position on the Top 500,” said Jack Dongarra, a computer scientist at the University of Tennessee and one of the researchers who has organized the Top 500 ranking.

The U.S. designed the first machines that were defined as supercomputers during the 1960s and has rarely been dislodged from his controlling position as technology leader. In 2002, however, the Japanese Government's Earth Simulator set off shockwaves in Washington D.C. when that system briefly claimed the number one position on the Top 500 list.

The U.S. began investing heavily in the computing systems which are used for scientific and engineering problems ranging from climate simulation to automotive design. The U.S. broke the petaflop barrier in 2008 and is now preparing to launch another sustained push to build systems capable of computing at what is known as exascale performance — one thousand times faster than today's fastest systems. The goal is to reach that technology generation sometime between 2018 and 2020.

Computational scientists in various areas, such as climate, nuclear energy, combustion, advanced material CO2 sequestration etc., have made the case that they need an exascale system to advance their fields.

Source: NY Times

17M and Up

Who has been running on 17M lately? From the W6RK spots page for the past month, we see:

KA4RRU, N4CD, W0GXQ, AA8R, K0ARS, K8ZZ, W0MU, N9JF, W9MSE, NM2L, AB7RW, N4JT, N4PJ, and W0NAC spotted.

How about on 15 meters mobile?

W0GXQ, K8ZZ, N9JF, and W4SIG.

Well, how about 12 meters?

W0GXQ

Shall we look on 10 meters?

W0GXQ and W4SIG – only a few spots – band just not there yet.

It looks like 17M is now a great band. From my last trip to WY, MT, ND – I had contacts on 17M in nearly every county – just missing some very early run counties here and there. Up to 24 stations made it in the log in a county.

Jerry, W0GXQ, was real busy on 17M on his trip across the top of ND, too!

On the Road with N4CD I

Summer was here, but Thursday June 3 was going to be near normal temps, so I checked the needs page. Kirby, W8DCD, was down to 8 to finish up the first time. He's been working real hard trying to get done. One of them was Marshall, OK, which is about 90 miles up the road from my QTH in Collin County, TX. I decided to make a day trip to OK.

I headed out after a quick breakfast, leaving at 7:30am. I had the five way stack of resonators on the 6 foot mast, and a 40M SSB hamstick for the day.

It took about 90 minutes to get to Marshall, and I ran the county. No W8DCD. It seems he had to work the night before, hit the sack after 3am after working, and was sound asleep while I was in Marshall. Oh well! We called his number...but no answer. I had to stand outside the car to get cell service where I ran the county – out in the boonies a bit. I had to leave and run some others. Some you just don't get.

Silver, N9QS, needed Johnston OK for a LC, so I headed there next – it's a short distance, and I likely needed to run that for the hopefully soon to be new Mobile Diamond award that Randy talked about at the MARAC presentation on awards in Dayton. That award is awaiting action by the Board of Directors at the current time. In anticipation, I was trying to work another MP holder, and also make at least 3 contacts or more on 2 different bands. Gene, K5GE, and Joyce, N9STL were around to help out with the MP contact. (I've been trying to get some of the others finished up, too!)

Of course, the main focus of my trips for the past two years has been helping folks get finished off – from first time to Natural Bingo to Nth time whatever, or MG or MP. So many counties, so little time. I've put 35,000 miles on the car in a little over 16 months.

Now, from the proposed rules that Randy, AA8R, linked to on the MARAC pages, , everyone can probably be collecting Mobile Diamond counties by working someone with Master Platinum after July 3, 2008 (the date the first MP was issued). So if you work any of those with MP, those contacts probably will count toward the Mobile Diamond award. The awards committee spend months carefully crafting the award after working with other representatives of the CH community as well and set the start date of July 2, 2008.

In addition, if a MP holder works another from the county, he/she gets credit for it, just as Master Gold, or Master Platinum work. The new twist is a new requirement that you transmit from 500 counties after you get your Master Platinum, making at least 3 contacts each on two different bands, and work a MP holder from that county. Tough, but it makes sure the county is 'put out' and not just run on one band, or with one contact. (some folks working on Master Gold or Master Platinum simply worked Net Control – the 'one who is always there for a 'easy contact' and never put it out for the

folks. They got credit, but no one else did.) That won't be the case with MD if they want credit for one of the required 500 transmitted counties.

Each award gets a bit tougher. Well, it should be that way – the top award should be the toughest to get!

I ran 20M cw and SSB (friendly net on Tues and Thursdays usually on 20M SSB) , ran 17M cw, went to 30M a few times (the antenna was not happy there), and to 40M cw, and 40M SSB. Once I went to 17M SSB and worked a half dozen stations on 18.130 MHz. Tony, WA9DLB, ran the 20M net with help from Ed, N3HOO and others.

Frosty W0FP was on 40M SSB helping out most of the time, and I got quickly spotted on 20 and 17cw by the county hunters. There were lots of good runs on 17M cw – from 4 or 5 up to 14 at times. I tried 15M, but it wasn't too good. 40M SSB wasn't all that great either, but for those too close on 20M, it saved the day for them. Kirby, W8DCD showed up an hour and a half after I left Marshall. His phone call caught up to me six hours later in voice mail. Verizon doesn't do well in relaying missed calls or voice mail in many coverage areas.

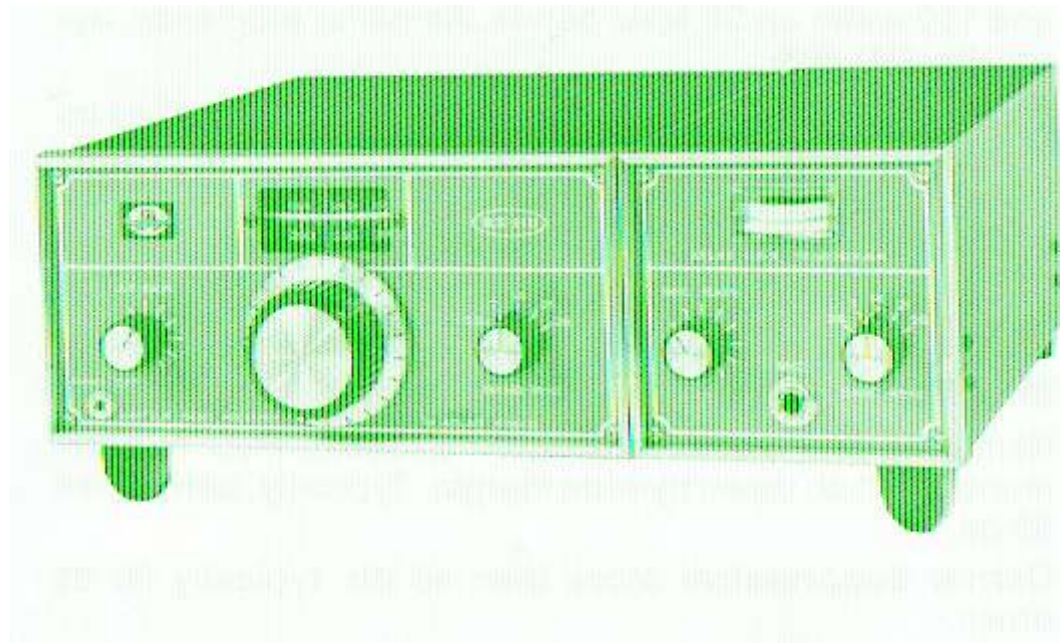
I caught up with Silver, N9QS, in Johnston, for his LC, then kept going north until noon time. That got me up to Hughes where I turned east and headed over to Latimer (always someone needs it), then over to Le Flore. My plans got messed up when I got there and discovered 271 south was closed, so had to backtrack a bit and lost 20 minutes, but not to worry. This was just a casual day trip. The weather was overcast – which is great for county hunting. I goofed and left the nav system at home, but with a good map, well, you don't need one. There aren't that many roads to choose in OKLA, either! In the eastern part of OK, it's hilly and some of the roads really wind around a bit, especially going north/south. At times you are down to 30 mph for five miles twisting back and forth.

It was down through Pushmataha County, to Choctaw – a last county for N3HOO, and then back east to Bryan. Since W8DCD was around, and the weather was good...the car was running fine – I decided to head back to Marshall – a 30 mile detour – to get it for Kirby. We exchanged reports, I ran the county again quickly for those that missed it in the morning, then pointed the car toward home. At 6pm, I pulled into Chubby's Restaurant to

enjoy a turkey and dressing dinner (my usual Thursday stop). Then it was just a few miles on to home.

The trip was 10 ½ hours – 490 miles of driving. The car got 31.5 mpg including half a dozen stops to run with the engine running. Average speed was 49 mph. 12 counties run, plus 3 of them a second time. A couple hundred contacts including working N0KV/N0DXE in a bunch in IA. Jim, K0ARS, was also out mobile, Dick NG9L, was in TX, Jeff, W9MSE, was up in Maine – worked him on 17cw a few times. AC0B was out in MN. Not bad for a Thursday spur of the moment run, and there was enough activity to keep it interesting.

Some Rarer Things from Ebay



Atlas RX 110 and TX-110 Receiver/Transmitter

Mobile Diamond Award

The MARAC awards committee, after months of careful consideration, has approved the following new award and submitted it to the BOD for approval at the July 10, 2010 annual meeting.

Award Name: Mobile Diamond Award

OBJECTIVE: To make Valid Contacts in All USA Counties with mobile operators who have earned the MARAC Master Platinum Award, including contacts while transmitting from at least 500 counties on at least two different bands after the applicant has earned the Master Platinum Award.

SPECIAL RULES:

All Valid Contacts for this award must have been made on or after July 3, 2008.

An applicant must make contacts with holders of the Master Platinum Award in All USA Counties (Master Platinum contacts) - - After having earned the Master Platinum Award and both operators may count both counties.

After the date of the applicant's Master Platinum Award, the applicant must make additional Valid Contacts while transmitting from at least five hundred (500) different counties. In each of the 500 transmitted counties, the applicant must use at least (2) different Bands and

make at least three (3) Valid Contacts with different stations on each Band.

While transmitting from at least five hundred (500) different counties, at least one (1) of the Valid Contracts must be with another holder of the Master Platinum Award. The contact may be on either of the two bands.

The two Master Platinum Award holders must be in separate counties (or countries) at the time a Valid Contact is made.

AWARD LEVELS: The Mobile Diamond is awarded for making Master Platinum contacts in All USA Counties and making multiple contacts while transmitting from at least 500 different counties on at least two Bands as a Master Platinum holder.

APPLICATION AND FEES: Standard application and logs. There are no fees for MARAC members for this award. Standard fees apply to non-members.

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The Controversy

Recently, some alleged “controversy” over the start date that was chosen carefully by the awards committee has arisen. One of the arguments put forward is:

“There is a debate going on about a start date for the Mobile Diamond Award proposal that the BOD will be voting on at the Annual meeting in July. The Awards Committee approved a July 3, 2008 start date, which was the date of the first Master Platinum.

Now there is an “effort” to change that date to the date the BOD approves the proposal. The claim is that any of the MP holders that have put out any counties since being awarded MP is getting a unfair jump on the rest of the MP holders. At present, this effects only the 7 MP holders and no other County Hunter.”

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Let’s analyze that argument a bit.

1) There are now 7 MP holders going back to Gene, K5GE, Number 1. Only 4 of them have been out running much since they got their MP. People need counties for every award – for Masters Gold, for Platinum, for Five Star, for prefixes, for First Time, Bingo, and Nth time. If folks got their MP, and sat on their butts at home, well, that is really THEIR problem, and they shouldn’t use the award committee to ‘catch up’. Not that the others who haven’t been out much will catch up since they have seldom been heard on the county hunter nets working mobiles in six months.

Let’s look at the activity of the MP holders.

Ray, WG6X, MP #7, has not been spotted in 9 months, about the time he got his MP. He ran on multiple bands then.

Bob, N8KIE has run over 100 counties after getting his MP. He ran on multiple bands, too. He spends winters in HI, so he was not on for that period, but is back and planning on a lot more.

Darrel, W6TMD, has run 100 plus counties since getting his MP, but has been very inactive for the last nine months. He ran and made contacts on multiple bands. He’s off chasing DX now.

Scottie, N4AAT, has run 100 plus counties as well since he got his MP.

Of course, N9STL, N4CD, and K5GE have been out and about and there are many spots recently – and going back for years.

Now, the question is – would any of these MP holders gone out even more than they did? Not likely. And even more telling, they would have likely run the counties within a few hundred miles – and once you run them, you

can't run them again for credit. It's not like they shut off their radio while traveling.

So the claim that folks sat at home rather than running counties seems to be bogus from the 'get go'.

2) For the first month, K5GE had no one to talk to give him credit for a transmitted MD county. Same for N4CD, who for months might only get credit if K5GE was around. Number 3 wasn't issued until the following spring - N9STL - Did that stop N4CD from running counties for everyone else to fill in THEIR awards needs and help finish them up? Heck no, and N4AAT and N9STL finished up MP with tens of thousands of miles of driving.

For the past year, there has been a 'few' MP holders around to give credit, but before that, you might get credit for less than one third of what you ran. Sometimes less. So, why should someone who DID NOT run counties after they got MP, now be 'helped' by delaying the start date? It was their lack of interest in running counties for the 300 or more active county hunters. Despite the claim, all of the MP holders have been out mobile since they got their MP, but a few slacked off or have medical problems limiting operation, or just aren't interested any longer in CH.

The reason only 4 have been out – well, WG6X has lady friend who is 100% totally intolerant of radio, either at home or in the car. He is QRT of all ham radio activity at his point. W6TMD got burned out and is now seriously chasing DX for the past six months. N8KIE spends half a year in HI so it's tough to run much during that time or be on the CH net from his location in HI. Despite that, he has put out 100 plus counties and intends to run at least another 100 in July 2010. Same for W6TMD who ran many.

On the other hand, that made it even harder for those out to get a qualifying MD contact, no?

So why would anyone want to punish the active mobiles, and reward those who haven't been out? (and most have been out)

That seems to be the justification for changing what the Awards Committee recommended after months of careful consideration and discussion.

3) It's not only the MP holders that will be effected if the start date is moved to July 12, 2010 or August 1, 2010. The hundreds of county hunters out there who have worked any of the active MP holders will 'lose' all those contacts if the start date is changed from what the Awards Committee proposed after careful consideration. Over 700 counties have been run between N4AAT, K5GE, N9STL, W6TMD, and N8KIE.

The awards committee spent months, and consulted others on this outside the normal committee to craft the best possible award. It is going to be a tough award and likely, like MP and MG, take at least five years from first started.

Proposals for an Award 'beyond Platinum' have been put forth for two years now. It should not be news to anyone who has read the County Hunter News. Indeed, Randy, AA8R, MARAC Awards Chairman, mentioned that the Awards Committee had finalized the award at the Dayton Hamvention with the start date in 2008(100 in attendance) , and sent it on to the BOD for approval. At least 100 knew then what the proposed rules and start date was to be, plus of course, it was covered in the CHNews to the rest of the county hunting community.

By why would the board consider changing the start date to punish the active mobiles, and reward the lazy ones who got MP and sat at home by moving the start date so they were no longer 'behind' due to their own activity? That really is the question!

4) There will always be folks 'starting late'. If someone gets MP in six months from now, they'll be at least six months behind everyone else. That is the way the awards work! If you finish Masters Gold now, you are 'behind' the 40 others ahead of you who have done it. You'll not be number one to Platinum either as 7 others have done it, and the best you could do would be number 8. Same for Bingo – until you get your bingo, which 300 plus have done, you can't even start on MG. So the new award recipients will be 'behind'.

It's interesting to note that those who have been mobile (MP holders), they've also been active at home, helping on nets or running them – 40/20 and spotting mobiles. It's not the active ones not participating.

So why would MARAC expect that there will never be 'latecomers' to the awards? He/She who finishes MG tomorrow is 'way behind' those who finished five years before. So?

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Soapbox from the K3IMC Forum:

N8KIE (MP holder) : " My personal feelings on this are that a couple of people have spent their time and money running counties based on what the awards committee approved. There is always a risk that it won't pass as written, but it really does not seem fair to alter the rules."

"It levels the playing field for me but I still oppose it."

From email:

N9STL (MP Holder) : "I would like to see the start date of the MASTER DIAMOND award be the date that K5GE received the first Master Platinum award, July 3, 2008. The committee spent a lot of time coming up with the rules and start date and I would hate to see their hard work changed."

N4AAT (MP Holder): " I finished MP on 5-20-09. Since then I have run numerous counties, giving out MP contacts, and working for the new award that was proposed. I have drove thousands of miles, spend thousands of dollars for fuel, hotels, food, vehicle upkeep, and now some are saying this is all for nothing? (by changing the start date)

I have run all over the country to get my MP award, helping myself and everybody else. If all the people that are complaining about the start date, would go out there and help themselves, and others, instead of sitting back and collecting instead of giving, we wouldn't have this debate. I have worked hard for 34 years to get my awards, and god only knows how much money I have put into this hobby of ours, and now we're maybe we're punished for it? I have put over a million miles on my vehicles, running counties, who else can say that. Looks like I might have to give my vehicle

and me a rest, and quit running counties, and helping others get there awards. To bad it's come to this.”

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So where did this idea of punishing the active mobiles and rewarding the inactive mobiles come from? Who is behind wanting to CHANGE the carefully crafted rules of the Awards Committee after the fact scrumptiously? Blindside folks?

Ya got it. It was KZ2P, and his mini-me friend K2JG, who talked about it in the W5UGD Chat Room with KA9JAC, telling him how he intended to offer a proposal immediately after the award was accepted at the annual board meeting, proposing a motion changing the start date to 2010. He didn't plan to tell a soul ahead of time, especially the Platinum holders, but spring it on the rest at the Board Meeting July 10, and quickly getting it passed since no MARAC member (not one who holds Master Platinum) could even comment on it then. And without input from the membership, the Directors likely would have 'gone along' with the 'suggestion' to change the start date to 2010. Only Directors and Officers get to speak at the MARAC official meetings, and they would have no input from the membership with this 'surprise' plan on his. Or the awards committee who had worked diligently for months.

Despite denials of his mouthpieces that he started this , the evidence was clear this idea to immediately “amend” what the awards committee had decided started with James, KZ2P. The trail leads right back to him and his chatroom comments.

Let your Directors know which way you feel on this. Should the active mobiles be punished for being active mobiles? Should inactive mobiles be rewarded for NOT going out and giving folks counties for the various MARAC awards? There are 41 different MARAC awards (not including endorsements or bands). Just look how many have finished up in the past year. That's not because folks sat on their butts waiting for new things to be

created, or just sat back and ‘collected counties’. It was mobiles that make it happen.

Should KZ2P get ‘his way’ on delaying the start date and punish the active mobiles, after the awards committee spend months and lots of effort carefully crafting the award and rules, and then proposing the original start date of July 3, 2008?

The majority of Master Platinum holders agree the start date should be in 2008, not 2010. Let your Director know, and CC the Officers.

Here’s the list to contact your Director, and the Officers:

Great Lakes Division: PA, WV, OH, IN, MI, VE3 - Randy AA8R

[greatlakes\(at\)marac.org](mailto:greatlakes(at)marac.org)

NorthEast Division: CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT, VE1, VE2, VE9, VY2, Europe Carol-Ann- AB2LS

[northeast\(at\)marac.org](mailto:northeast(at)marac.org)

South Central AR, CO, KS, LA, MO, NM, TX, Central and South America – NOZA

[southcentral\(at\)marac.org](mailto:southcentral(at)marac.org)

Southeast Division: AL, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, Africa, Caribbean Dave KE3VV

[southeast\(at\)marac.org](mailto:southeast(at)marac.org)

Pacific AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, UT, WA, VE7, VE8, VY1, VY3, Asia, Pacific

KC6AXW – Bob

[pacific\(at\)marac.org](mailto:pacific(at)marac.org)

North Central : IA, IL, MN, MT, ND, NE, SD, WI, WY, VE4, VE5, VE6
– AC0B, Cliff

northcentral@marac.org

The Officers

President – WB9NUL

president@marac.org

Vice President – Chuck AD8W

vicepresident@marac.org

Treasurer, WQ7A Terry

treasurer@marac.org

The large consensus is that The Board should accept, and not modify, the
proposed Mobile Diamond award from the Award Committee.

Alabama QSO Party

This was a great QSO Party with lots of activity, lots of fixed stations on the
air, and a great bunch of mobiles out there. County Hunter KN4Y was busy
putting them out, as well as several other very active mobiles – NY4N,
W4NZ – who run multiple QSO parties a year.

I needed 2 counties to finish up the state on CW, and luckily caught both. I
snagged Cullman, then decided to check the AQP web page for planned

county activations, and saw that W4NZ was headed to the last one I needed (Talladega) next – so I really listened to see when he got there. He moved up 1 KHz when he came back to 20M there, and snagged him before the pile up got too big. K4AMC got his last six in the QSO Party, and made 125 QSOs. Jerry, W0GXQ knocked off a bunch of his needs. It was a fun day.

There were hundreds of spots – and probably all the counties were on the air for the contest. 20M was decent, but only a few spots on 15M seen – either no one was spotting, or there just wasn't any activity there to speak of. The A index was 18 (not good) and the solar flux was 73. I heard nothing on 15 – no AL, and no one calling AZ mobiles either. Same for 10M. Reports on the 3830 reflector indicated just a few 15M contacts – the band just wasn't there, and for some, 20M wasn't very good either for some.

Activity shifted to 40M in the late afternoon, and then to 80M at night. There was high QRN with thunderstorms over the state, but still dozens and dozens of spots there on both SSB and CW on 80M.

It looks like many other county hunters whittled down their needs or eliminated them during the contest. I heard dozens of CH on for the event – including KS5A, K7REL, KA3QLF, K4AMC, W0GXQ, K4XI, AA4GT.....at times there were some big pileups – especially after a new county was started or when spotted. The state QSO regulars turned out in force – N6MU, K5NA, NO5W, W0BH, W0OXJ, etc. It was a busy, busy QSO Party with fun for all.

There were some Natural Bingo counties, like N4JF in Jefferson, AL, lots of 1x2 calls to chase, prefixes, cw contacts, SSB contacts, call combos, etc. Something for everyone to chase for different awards even if you had 'finished the state' for Nth time, all cw, etc. I worked a lot of mobiles just to give them points – I'll figure out if I need them for anything later. The spots were flying along with 30-40 or more an hour when things were going strong! (seems the spotters got tired after a few hours!)

From the 3830 reflector:

W4AN (with KU8E)/m : The car battery died in first county (RSSL), so I decided to throw in the towel. Luckily I was close enough to home that my

wife came and rescued me. The car started right up when we jumped the battery, but didn't want to risk being stranded in the middle of nowhere if I continued on.

I guess I need to get a heavy duty battery or put another one in parallel with the car battery since it must be drawing too much current to keep it charged when I am just sitting and operating with the engine idling.

The good news - The MFJ battery booster that K4BAI bought in Dayton seems to have got rid of the chirp/buzz problem we were having in GQP/FQP. Thanks K5KG for the tip. I also used N1MM for the first time in the state QSO party rover mode and it worked great. I need to get K4BAI to switch over for next year.

The roving "season" is over for this year. K4BAI and I made over 4000+ QSO's in our efforts in GQP/FQP and mine in AQP. Hopefully we gave out some new counties to those participating. Thanks for the QSO's (and pileups!) and we will see everyone starting with the GQP in April 2011. “

W4W/M (WA4LR, WA4WLI, ops) 128 cw 69 ssb - : “Less than optimal band conditions, lots of rain, lots of fun and camaraderie. It's always a learning experience. Thanks for the chance to join in the fray.”

N4ZZ/m multi-op: N4ZZ, AD4EB, KI4HVY : “This was the second mobile operation for our team, with Don and Jim operating, and Melody driving/navigating. We were able to cover 28 counties by following our planned route of 550 miles (750 total including from/to TN).

We drove our 2000 Montana van, with 2 Hustler verticals roof mounted. We swapped the 20m coil with 80m at 0000z. Radio was a ProIII, and used N1MM logging software. A Garmin GPS was used to alert us as we approached each county line, based on coordinates extracted from Google Earth. Everything worked flawlessly.

We drove thru a couple of rain and thunderstorms starting at 2100z, which made copy quite difficult. But for the most part propagation was good, especially during evening hours on 40m. Only saw one other team, K4ZGB Tom, and "WIFE" Charlotte at a gas station/cafe at the intersection of Hwys 118 and 13 (had a nice but quick chat).

We frequently swapped bands just as soon as the rates started to decrease, trying to land on the same frequencies every time (except when they became occupied). This seemed to work well, and folks seemed to find us quickly. The pileups were huge, but everyone was very professional which made them a pleasure on our end. Very few repeats of our call/county were ever required.

Here is a short list of the stations who we worked most often: W0BH 38, K9EU 30, NO5W 24, W2LHL 24, K4BSK 21, N4ARO 21, W70M 21, DL3DXX 20, then a whole bunch of 19's, 18's, and 17's. We really want to thank everyone for all the QSOs, it sure made for an adrenaline filled trip.

Thanks to Jim KC4HW for helping make this contest possible. Also a special thanks to my wife Melody KI4HVY for driving so many miles and helping us prepare for this adventure. And Don, thanks for getting me interested in mobiling, you said it would be fun, fast and furious, but I had no idea how much. “

KC4HW/m: “Conditions were not to good! Tried to get on 40m early in the day, but there just was not any activity. It seemed that QSOs were coming in just as strong from short distances as from long distances. So stuck it out on 20m as long as I could. Both 20 and 40 just seemed horrible sometimes.

WX was rough in the afternoon. We really ran into some tough WX in Greene, Wilcox, Dallas counties and all the way home. We managed 13 counties. Bless her, but unfortunately Ms Bonnie, is not able to drive at night. So at 7:30PM with stormy WX I took over the driving. We got our last two counties by just driving there and operating some in each county.

We drove home from there about 125 miles. BTW, we drove 176 miles just to get to our starting point. All total about 625 miles. Unfortunately I could not make it to Pike County.

Worked DL3DXX several times with a great signal. Also worked KP2/K3TEJ and thanks for hanging in there with me while I sorted out your call. Your signal was good, just confusion on my part.

At this writing there are 76 logs already submitted.(6/6) I will confirm all of those later this week. Please submit your log!

K4WI/Cort happened upon us close to his place in Uniontown, AL and stopped by to say hello.

I also saw KN4Y/m coming through the intersection of CR 10 and 221 just outside of Camden in Wilcox county. Unfortunately did not get to talk with Ed, but saw that White Van with FL plates and a top hat antenna on the roof. Thanks Ed for coming and support our event again this year.

We had 12 mobiles that were participating. Not sure if they all made it, but it was great to see this support from neighbors in TN, FL, GA and the AL mobiles. All those mobiles had to make it fun for those folks outside of Alabama. “

W4NZ/m Multi OP: This was our team's first attempt at mobiling in the AQP. Starting in Dekalb County on I-59 we crossed 22 counties, just about all the ones in the North half of the state, traveling around 550 miles. Ended the party in Jackson County on the way home to Chattanooga. Rates were very slow in the afternoon until nearly sundown when propagation improved. Weather was good for the most part except for one thunder shower that we ran through fairly quickly.

QSO leaders were: W0BH(29), WD0T(18), K4BSK(18), K4LTA(17), DL3DXX(15, 6 on 40m!), N4ARO(15), N4VV(14), N4DW(13)

Mults missed: AK, HI, ND, NE, RI, VT, NV, UT, VE1(Mar), VE5,6,7,8.

We had fun and would like to thank everyone for all the QSO's, especially those who followed us county to county and band to band. Thanks for letting us TCGers come play in your yard. Maybe you can come play in ours this September?

73, from the W4NZ/m team: Mark K0EJ, Gary K4VIG and Ted W4NZ”

NO5W (TX) : “Another Alabama QSO Party is in the log books. And what a fun one it was. I think it even surpassed the 2009 event. At least my score saw a better than 25% improvement with two fewer mults but 37 more Qs.

Thanks to all of the Alabama stations and volunteers from out of state who made the party a great success.

Special thanks to the following mobiles who kept it interesting throughout the party: N4ZZ(24), N5WR(19), NY4N(17), W4NZ(16), W4AQP(11), KN4Y(8), and K4K(3).

NV4B (Franklin AL) "Conditions were about as rough as they could be for this one -- lots of QSB, poor propagation on 20, QRN from thunderstorms on 40 late... I think I wore out the "?" key on my keyboard.

Many, many thanks to those who had the patience to work me. I was particularly hoping for some decent condx on 10 & 15 this year, but it wasn't to be.

I can't give Jim Johnson, KC4HW enough credit for making the Alabama QSO Party into one of the bigger state parties. The AQP is becoming a real "can't-miss" event. Credit is also due Tom Hardison, K4ZGB for the excellent job he's done publicizing the AQP, and the rest of the Alabama Contest Group for their support. In fact, the AQP has drummed up an incredible amount of contest activity in the state that didn't exist 10 years ago. "

WX4LEE (fixed): MARY WX4MM, CONNIE KJ4UNA, DEEDIE KI4ERR

We had originally planned a Mixed (SSB/CW) Hi Pwr effort with the YLs running SSB and us two guys (Tom WX4TM and Jeff KE4UNA) putting in a token CW effort. But after only a single CW contact in the first 2 hrs, the YLs took over both radios and let us know that it would NOW be an ALL YL event on SSB only! We MEN got no respect! So in reversing 'normal roles', we became the cheerleaders and support staff providing drink and food. Even then we couldn't do it right – we got complaints for not providing Margaritas! Geez!

Two of the gals were a little late arriving so Mary kicked it off with a blazing 132 Q's on 20M SSB in the FIRST HOUR! Deedie and Connie arrived shortly and they were off to the races on two radios. The only bands worked were 20 and 40M SSB. We couldn't believe the pile ups they had for almost the entire contest.

Taking an hour and a half off for dinner and thunderstorms resulted in 10.5 hrs on 20M and 8.5 hrs on 40M.

A big BIG congratulations to these ladies for such a fine effort representing the Lee County EMA ARC in the AQP. They really had a great good natured good time; often with whoops of "war eagle" when a new multi was logged.

Though Writelog gave the team a total score of 77870, I think the WL AQP module has a glitch in it. They got 1198 Q's with 57 Multi's missing only (NT) Northwest Territory. So $1198 \times 57 = 68286$ claimed score.

I have to tell you we're mighty proud of these ladies. Most of you know that Mary is an experienced contester. Few know that Connie has only a few contests under her belt but has very fast become a capable and dependable contester. Deedie doesn't have the opportunity to get on a radio very often but, I tell ya, she's a fast learner and a real 'war eagle' behind the mike. I'd be proud to have any of them on my team any time!

Station setup: Using the WX4MM WX4TM home station - 20M SSB was on FT950, AL80B AMP set at 600 Watts, and a TH-11 Antenna at 85ft that began pointed due North and was moved only once around 2PM to the Northwest. 40M SSB was with an FT2000, QRO amp set at 1KW, and full size 40M vertical at 45 ft w/8 elevated radials. Both radios used Shack-Lan bandpass filters with the antennas separated approximately 250ft. Hope everyone had as much fun as we did. 73, -- Tom WX4TM

W4AQP/M(K4ZGB – opr): “Very poor conditions for me. QSB/QRN. Storms while in Coosa/Autauga counties then again from Butler to Baldwin county, so I missed many that were calling. Thanks for participating this year.”

W0BH (KS) : The AQP seems to be getting better every year! For once it was nice and quiet here in Kansas, but it sounds like storm QRN was a problem in-state, so hats off for hanging in there. Like last year, 15, 20, and 40 were all open into AL from Kansas at the start, but just couldn't find stations to work on 15. I tried moving a number of mobiles up there, but the ones I asked weren't able to go, so I only made one contact with a loud NE4M (also my only 4 band contact).

Overall, I worked a combined 63/67 counties, missing Barber, Bullock, Coffee, and Escambia (also missed Henry on CW). This year I spend a lot less time on SSB and concentrated more on picking up multi-band mobile contacts. It paid off in total score compared to last year, a 40% increase. Several of the mobiles were really predictable and easy to find as they switched bands, and the unsolicited next county timing info was especially helpful:

Counties/Mobile

39 N4ZZ/m

32 N5WR/m

27 W4NZ/m

25 NY4N/m

18 W4AQP/m

15 KN4Y/m

10 KC4HW/m

09 K4K/m

03 K4NO/r W4W/r

02 WA4UHC/m (just driving along)

01 W4AN/m

Consistently loudest mobile signal into Kansas award goes to N4ZZ/m this year, although N5WR/m was a close second. I think last year was N5WR's first try at mobile contesting, and I have to compliment Erik on another outstanding job.

I did manage one contact with W4AN/m and was expecting many more but it was not to be. After reading Jeff's post, I'm glad to hear that it was only a battery issue. More than once, I've had to jump my van from a spare battery after a really good run.

Excellent work coordinating the AQP, Jim, and thanks to the ACG and the Alabama hams who made this so much fun!"

MARAC 2010 Contest Results

The CW results are at:

<http://www.marac.org/cwresults.htm>

W9MSE, W3DYA, W4SIG were top mobiles, and we had KJ9C, KS5A, KA3QSL, WC5D, W0GXQ, WB2ABD, KG4VBK, and KN4Y out mobile as well.

The SSB results are at

<http://www.marac.org/ssbresults.htm>

KJ9C, NX4W and KA3QLF were the top mobiles

PSK County Hunting Contest

I received an email from WX6Y, Eddie, about this contest. Ready your computer and get set for a PSK31 County Hunting Contest! How many counties can you work?

<http://www.pskcontesting.com/contests/county-hunt/>

Sponsored by: HREG and PSKcontesting.com

Last Update: 02 SEP 2009

Overview: To work as many of the 3077 U.S. counties as possible using PSK31 / PSK63.

Next Run: 17 JUL 2010 @ 0000z thru 2359z (always the 3rd Saturday in July).

Exchange: County & State Abbreviation (example: Oconee SC).

Modes: PSK31, PSK63 only.

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, & 6 meters. NO WARC BANDS!
All contacts must be 2-way PSK31 or

PSK63. No repeater, cross-mode, or cross-band contacts.

Use of station spotting (cluster, internet, emails, txt msg, ect) is permitted.

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Rules: Single Operator / Single Transmitter Categories - HIGH (100w max), LOW (50w max), QRP (5w max), Rover (100w max).
You MUST use only ONE of the above categories. NO MIXING!

Rover - A rover is comprised of a station that moves among two or more counties during the course of this contest. The rover may only transmit one (1) signal at any given time.
Rover vehicles must transport all the equipment, power supplies, and antennas used at each operating site. Rovers must move the entire operating site at least 100 feet into the new county ("Line Sitting" is NOT allowed).

Rovers MUST sign "/R" to their call sign. HREG members can participate in this contest, however HREG member's scores will not be posted with the results.

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Points: Stations can be worked once per mode, per band.
Each valid QSO counts as 1 point per band / per mode.
Each different county counts as 1 multiplier per band / per mode.

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Score: QSO Points (PSK31+PSK63) x Multipliers (Counties) = Claimed Score

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Entries: All entries must be received within ten (10) days after the contest ends.
Email your report (include your Name, Callsign, Class, County, Claimed Score and Summary)
to countyhuntcontest@gmail.com
Incomplete reports will be scored as "Check-Logs". All entries are subject to verification. Do NOT send logs! Logs must be furnished ONLY if requested!

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Contest results can be viewed at www.PSKcontesting.com/contests/county-hunt/results.html

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Notice: Ham Radio Expeditionary Group (HREG) reserves the right to disqualify entries deemed not in accordance with the above rules, or contrary to the spirit of this contest.

The decisions of the PSK County Hunt contest manager are final.

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Comments should be sent to the contest manager at:
countyhuntcontest@gmail.com

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Scram-Jet Goes Mach 6

Experimental 'scramjet' sets hypersonic record as it flies at six times the speed of sound

Arcing through the hazy air above California, this is the incredible sight of a scramjet as it flies at six times the speed of sound. The experimental aircraft set a record for hypersonic flight, blazing through the air for more than three minutes at Mach 6, or more than 4,500 mph. The X-51A Waverider scramjet was released from a B-52 bomber last week before its engine took it to Mach 6 and it flew autonomously for 200 seconds. Scramjets work by using oxygen rushing in through the engine at supersonic speeds to ignite hydrogen fuel.

In a conventional jet engine, spinning blades suck air into the engine and compress it for combustion. The next step up is the ramjet engine, powered by fuel burning after subsonic air is forced into the engine by the speed of the aircraft. But in scramjets, so-called because they are 'supersonic combustion ramjets', airflow throughout the engine remains supersonic - using the oxygen in the incoming air to ignite hydrogen fuel.

The expanding hot gases from combustion accelerate the exhaust air to create tremendous thrust. The engines could slash satellite launch costs, because there is no need for liquid oxygen as fuel. The U.S. space shuttle has to carry more than a million pounds of liquid oxygen each time it lifts off.

The U.S Air Force said the previous record for a hypersonic scramjet burn was 12 seconds. 'We are ecstatic to have accomplished many of the X-51A test points during its first hypersonic mission,' said Charlie Brink, an X-51A

program manager with the Air Force Research Laboratory. 'We equate this leap in engine technology as equivalent to the post-World War II jump from propeller-driven aircraft to jet engines,' Mr Brink said.

A passenger plane traveling at Mach 6 would cut the flight time from London to Sydney to little more than two hours. Dr Andrew Coates, of the Mullard Space Science Lab at University College London, said the effects for passengers aboard a scramjet-powered plane would be 'more akin to space travel than airline travel'. They would need protective clothing to counteract the effects of the G-forces pressing on the body during acceleration to 5,000mph. British scientists have worked on designs for scramjets but do not expect one to be available for commercial flights until at least 2020.

Source: UK Daily Mail

That New Mobile - \$\$\$\$

New Federal standards for higher average gas-mileage in vehicles sold from now to 2015 will save consumers money on fuel. But the cars themselves are likely to cost more, according to a study released yesterday by the National Research Council. Regular readers know we've been saying that it'll be a combination of smaller, more efficient engines, lighter weight, aerodynamics, and electronic smarts that'll let future cars go further on that precious gallon of gasoline. Or, yes, maybe diesel.

At the request of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the NRC panel took three years to assess the merits of different methods for improving gas mileage over a base 2007 vehicle. They confirm that combining various technologies will increase fuel efficiency without compromising either safety or performance.

Better gas engines: 29 percent

Updating standard gasoline engines with technologies like direct injection, turbocharging, and cylinder deactivation would reduce gasoline burned by 29 percent, at a cost to consumers of \$2,200.

This is the approach taken by Ford, with its EcoBoost line of downsized, direct-injected, turbocharged engines offered in vehicles from the Lincoln MKT seven-seat crossover to the redesigned 2011 Ford Edge, plus a version of the upcoming 2012 Ford Explorer.

The 2011 Chevrolet Cruze Eco uses a small 1.4-liter turbocharged four to deliver the power previously offered by a 2.2-liter conventional gasoline engine. It costs \$2,000 more than a base Cruze LS, which is fitted with a larger, less fuel efficient 1.8-liter four.

From gas to diesel: 37 percent

Replacing gasoline engines with diesel engines of equivalent power would cut fuel consumption by 37 percent, at an average added cost of approximately \$5,900 per vehicle. Part of the cost is due to the more complex equipment needed to make them clean enough to meet more stringent U.S. emissions standards.

German makers Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen have sold diesels in the States for years. More recently, they have been joined by Audi and BMW.

Hybrids: 43 percent

Adding hybrid powertrains instead would cut fuel consumption slightly more, a total of 43 percent, at a cost of \$6,000. Here, obviously, Toyota is far and away the leader.

Acknowledging the reality that petroleum fuels will continue to power the vast majority of vehicles over the next decade and beyond, the panel said hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles "will not represent a significant fraction of light-duty vehicles on the road in the next 15 years."

EVs in "next decade" ??

As for the role of plug-in vehicles (from plug-in hybrids through pure battery electric cars), the report "predicted" that "small, limited-range battery electric vehicles" will be offered to car buyers "in the next decade". Given that the 2011 Nissan Leaf will reach dealerships before the end of this year, that seems a fairly safe prediction. But the study did not assess the

reduction in "wells-to-wheels" carbon output from driving on grid power, leaving that to other studies.

Payback not studied

The panel was specifically not charged with assessing payback periods for the various technologies; that task will fall to the regulatory agencies who will use the study, among other input, in writing the requirements.

It did, however, call for gas-mileage testing cycles to be updated from their present 1970s methods, to reflect real-world driving patterns and use of accessories in modern cars.

But don't just take our word for it. We encourage you to download a copy of the full report, entitled Assessment of [Fuel Economy Technologies for Light-Duty Vehicles](#), and read it for yourself.

Source: Fox News

Working Counties on Six Meters By Jim, AD1C

The main form of propagation on 6 meters this time of year is Sporadic E (E-skip), which tends to peak during May and June, with a smaller opening in December. Those are approximate dates; who can forget the 2006 CQ VHF Contest in mid-July, when the band was open just about around the clock both Saturday and Sunday? Openings range from a few hundred miles out to about 800-1000 miles on a single "hop", and all the way across the country (or Atlantic ocean) using double-hop or more. The majority of the stations you'll work on 6 meters are in the 600-800 mile range. Shorter distances occur when the E "cloud" is very dense (this can signal the start of 2 meter E-skip), but it's less common. All of this, of course, depends on both propagation and population density. There are many more active VHFers east of the Mississippi, and lots of places with no active VHF population out west.

Most of the activity is on SSB, though during a good opening, you'll hear many signals in the CW portion of the band. Some people even operate RTTY or PSK, but unless someone KNOWS you're going to be there, there aren't a lot of casual stations that happen to tune by.

On 6 meters, people tend to chase "grid squares" towards the ARRL VHF/UHF Century Club award. One thing to keep in mind is that there are 488 grid squares in the continental US (and there is a special award for working all of them), but over 3000 counties. That means that there is an average of six counties for every grid square. Thus, if you want to work counties on 6 meters, you will be working the same grid squares many times over. Therefore, it's important not to dismiss a potential QSO because you've already worked that grid.

The key word to note here is "sporadic". A frequency can be dead, then stations may pop up out of nowhere, sometimes becoming VERY strong (S9+), then disappear back into the noise, all within a few minutes (or less). Therefore, it may not be a good band for a mobile station, because you might lose propagation when you drive into a county, then have it again as soon as you drive out. I will note that KC0W has been operating mobile from North Dakota recently while his new home station is under construction. He uses a screwdriver antenna and a Kenwood TS-480 (200 watts), and operates CW only from the mobile.

To date, I have worked over 400 counties and 400 grids (including DX) on 6 meters. Much of that was from New England, but a few years ago I moved to Colorado. I have a very modest setup - ICOM IC-756 Pro III (100W) and a half-size G5RV in the attic. I also have a HyGain AV-640 vertical which I temporarily erect in the backyard for special occasions, like contests (gotta love those home owner associations).

I made my first 6-meter QSO from Colorado in May 2009. I worked fewer than 50 stations that year, but did pick up some new grid squares, and of course a few new counties. This year, we have had some excellent conditions on 6 meters, at least from Colorado. Starting May 23, I've made over 300 QSOs so far, working 58 new grids and 124 new band counties! As I need fewer than twenty (20) counties to finish all-CW and all-SSB, I haven't worked an all-time new one on 6 meters.

Many radios nowadays have 6 meters built in, I believe the IC-706 and its successors do. Antennas are small compared to the HF bands. It's pretty easy to make a dipole or vertical for your home station. As you can see above, a screwdriver antenna can tune down to 6 meters. When the band is open, small stations can be just as affective as large stations (I've received "big signal" reports when using the indoor dipole!). It would be interesting to see a mobile give 6 meters a try!

On the Road with N4CD – II

The temps were hitting 100 degrees in TX, with the low going down maybe to near 80 degrees day after day. I was tired of hibernating much of the day to get away from the heat, so I decided it was time to head north to cooler climates. The car hadn't gone far since the return from Dayton in May. There were counties to run. Sunspots were doing much, either.

I looked at what I had to run for second time transmit – it's mainly west coast – WA, OR, ID, half of CA, plus a few scattered here and there. There isn't much within 1000 miles so this would be a few thousand mile trip. So with a little bit of planning, I decided to almost finish off WY by running 4 there, then get one of the 3 I need to run in MT, and finish off ND and SD totally. Maybe more would get run depending upon the weather, roads, band conditions, etc, and how exhausted I was after the first part.

I checked the needs list, and there were many needing counties in WY, MT and along the way. Jerry, W0GXQ needed 3 in OK for MP, and I could get two on the way north, so I routed the trip up through Roger Mills and Texas, OK.



Texas OK for W0GXQ

Joe, WB0CQO desperately needed Washakie, WY for MG. Jerry also needed a bunch in WY. It seemed there were lots of needs for Meagher, Petroleum, and counties in that neck of the woods. I could get them between the WY counties and heading up to Daniels, MT, which got stranded all by itself up there – right next to Canada. I had been within 30 miles, but missed it for one reason or another. Those stranded counties require then 300 miles to run the next time, and I try not to have too many of them.

At this time of year, you can have nasty weather in the Plains, so the trip was just on the fly sort of planning – go from A to B to C via whatever looks good at the time. Also, in the summer, going north on the east side of CO is usually a hassle. The roads have been under construction for 20 years, never get finished, and you can have ½ hour or hour delays there so I try to avoid that! I’ve waited too many times for the pilot vehicles to go back and forth, with sometimes over 20 mile one way stretches! (hour or more delay).

I left a bit after 6am in the morning headed toward the TX panhandle, but I zipped up through OK to get Roger Mills. The GPS said the fastest way to Texas OK was up through the panhandle again so that is how I went. Sandra, N0XYL, needed Roberts, TX, but she wasn’t around for one of her last ten, so I skipped the ten mile detour to get it. This was a unplanned trip between the few I needed to run on the way north. Oh, well, it will get run again.

I ran Texas, OK, then headed up into KS, making a few zig zags – as one road was ‘closed’ ahead so that meant a dog leg west. I made it up to Shiloh Springs, KS (Wallace KS) and found a nice motel there – Oak Hill Motel – apparently a chain - \$60. . I think I stayed across the way in a cheaper place the last time in the same town. It looked very familiar. Dinner was at the 24 hour diner there. They have home made potato chips, which is something you don’t see every day.

I hit the hay early as that town is on Mountain Standard Time – I was tired after 650 plus miles the first day. There, 8:30 local time, 9:30 CDST. Out like a light. It had been a busy day with lots of contacts on 20 meters and up to 24 QSOs on 17M cw from each county.

The sun was starting to rise at 5am MDST, so I got up and had a nice breakfast at the diner next door. Pancakes, eggs, sausage patties, bacon, hash browns, coffee was very filling. The windows face east, so the morning glow turned into nice sunrise. I loaded up the car and off I went. That was a good stopping point.

Then it was north until I hit Dundy, NE, then over to Yuma, CO and up to NE again, a bit west to Cheyenne, then northwest through Scotts Bluff. There is about six hundred feet of Sioux, NE along the highway 26 going northwest. There are no signs for it, but having been there before, and having checked it on Maquest, you just have to remember – stop at state line and you are in Sioux NE when on highway 26. Fortunately Jerry, W0GXQ reminded me when he asked if I was going to Sioux! Yep, he jogged the memory cells and I made sure to stop. That is one county you can’t do ‘on the run’ and have more than 2 or 3 contacts as it’s 600 feet long or so.

Here’s a link to the map

http://www.mapquest.com/mq/1-eVO4QebFr7KJgI*L

Folks needed Goshen, Platte, Niobrara WY - that’s a lot of driving – those counties are BIG in WY. Then another 150 miles loop to get Campbell and Johnson. I think I did about 300 miles to run 5 counties winding around through Campbell and Johnson, two of the five I needed to transmit from a

second time, then to Natrona for the night at the Motel 6 in Casper. I didn't realize it, but I had stayed there before too. Déjà vu all over again, as Yogi Bear would say. I had the digital camera along and snapped a bunch of pictures on the trip - 'percy pics'.....

Dinner was at a Chinese Buffet place - \$10. I like buffet places because you can get some fruit and veggies for a balanced diet - well, you better like broccoli if you go Chinese, but they usually have melon and bananas and other fruit. I really don't enjoy waiting for dinner to get cooked in a restaurant when I travel. I've had enough waiting for a day at stop lights, construction zones, and slow moving vehicles in front of me, plus, of course time spent sitting on county lines. Some Chinese places have green beans, too. . The Motel 6 was 55 bucks including tax. I'll take a Golden Corral, Ryans Steak place or similar over waiting at an Appleby's or Red Lobstah or similar. I don't travel to eat out in fancy places, and there is no XYL to please with sit down service and a fawning waitperson.

So that was the end of the second day - temps in the 70s today - nice. And this morning it was 54 degrees. In TX, it is going to be near 100 degrees all week. For the first few days, 17m has been working well, with almost as many contacts there as on 20m CW much of the time. So far, I've made at least 3 contacts on each of 2 bands - usually five times that - the easiest two bands are 14 and 17 MHz. Sometimes 30M is good, sometimes it is rotten. I made a few runs on 20M SSB, but I've been pushing hard most of the time to make tracks. Then again, it seems folks like 20M SSB and a few of the new county hunters haven't converted to working mobiles on cw yet. That's Just a matter of time for most if they want the maximum number of counties. Sharon, N0LXJ is now a regular on CW. Dan, KM9X, has been showing up more and more on that 'dreaded cw mode' - hi hi. Bob, KR1B is back chasing counties on cw once again.

Gene, K5GE, told me he bought a 17M resonator, so look for him to be on 17M SSB in the future. I tried 17M SSB once or twice - worked OK during the week - can get busy on the band on weekends with more activity. Usually 18.130 fills up first, so down 3 or up 3 usually works, and if you have folks looking for you, someone will usually find you and spot you. Almost no one listens full time to 17M cw, either, so you QSY there from 20M, self spot, or have other arrangements to get spotted. Doing the bands in order seems to work well. Run on 20M, then QSY to 17, and up if you

have it, then down to 30 and 40M. If early in the morning before 20M is open, start on 40 and work your way up. The DX might hear you on 20M.

I worked Alan, VK4AAR on 20M a few times, and on 30M early in the morning a few times (grey line propagation). He's the only active station down under these days, and it is tough.

The DX was in during the afternoon with DL3DXX, OK1VD, DL5MYK calling in. Phil, AB7RW was out in OR, and Jim, W4HSA put out a few in NC. Otherwise, not much other mobile activity on cw heard. Jim, K0ARS made a few contacts. He's now on 17M along with Ed, K8ZZ, who is a regular there now. Barry, N0KV/Pat, N0DXE were headed west from WI to AK.

Saturday I decided to do something different. My CW antenna is tuned for the low end of 20M. Now that I have five resonators on the one mast, I have a spare mag mount, so I put a separate 20M SSB antenna on it to get full power. Instead of maybe 5 or 10w, I'm now running full power on 14.329 or .336. Joe, WB0CQO needed Washakie WY for last county WBOW so I wanted to be sure that if we needed 20M to do it, we had the best shot at it. Of course, it also made it easier for others as well, and I ran quite a few counties on SSB on Saturday as I wound up through Fremont, Hot Springs, Washakie, Big Horn and Park WY. Still Teton, WY to run, but it is close to ID where I need to run half the state – someday in the future.

Joe, WB0CQO and I had success on .329. Joyce, N9STL was spotting runs off frequency in the mornings and later in the day, I ran on .336 when friendly folks took over NC. Joe finished up his Master's Gold Award with Washakie.



Washakie, WY - LC WBOW MG for WB0CQO

It's a long way, but I made it up to Carbon, MT, then up to Yellowstone MT and north from there. After getting wound around on city streets by the GPS in Billings, I made it out of town headed up to Golden Valley. Dang – construction zones were everywhere with pilot cars and long waits – 25 minutes one time, and 15 minutes a second time. The third time was only a few minutes. Even worse, at the long wait, I could see the next county line 500 feet ahead, but, alas, had to wait and wait to get there! I finally got to Golden Valley, then a quick east leg to Musselshell. Wow, I started on 17m and what a pileup with over 20 stations in the log on cw there. I ran 20SSB and of course, 20, 30, 40cw. Not much action on 40M, but for the folks who could not hear me on other bands, that's all the difference in the world, even if there are only 2 or 3 contacts on 40CW.

While in Yellowstone, I had called ahead to the Corral Motel in Wheatland. With a reservation so I knew I could stay there. I ran Wheatland on the way there, checked into motel (Corral Motel \$55), then headed more west to Meagher. Jerry, W0GXQ desperately needed that one for last WBOW for 4th time. We made it on 30M.



Meager MT – LC WBOW for W0GXQ 4th Time

I ran the bands, then pointed the car back to the motel 22 miles back. Hmm...rain, lighting, road full of water, and a rainbow. I slowed down, and got back into town, gassed up the car, hauled the things into the room, and went off to the Café for dinner. Not too many choices here- like two places for dinner, or a fast food joint or two. I had the pot roast – it was very good. Hit the sack early.

The weather had been nice 72 degrees and sun all day long, but the evening showers cooled it off quickly to 53 degrees. Not a bad motel with free wireless internet, and \$55 including tax. Probably been here for 60 years. So that's the end of day 3 Seth, M3MRA was in PA and WV mobile, N0KV and N0DXE were running across the top of MT headed to AK for a big adventure there. They ran Daniels, MT, needed desperately by N0LXJ, but she was not around.

In the morning after nice breakfast at the 'Café', which opened at 6am, it was up to Judith Basin/Fergus, across through Petroleum, Garfield, Roosevelt, to Daniels. (No N0LXJ despite it being listed in the planned trips section). Missed it twice in two days. It might not get run for a long, long time now.

There was an interesting article in one the papers about the town of Scobey (Daniels County) – a small town with a single doctor – who provides the medical services there – otherwise, it's a few hundred miles to Billings for care! He's your young GP, who decided to live in the boonies in a rural

small town, and gets called on for everything and anything – it's not much different than Sicily, AK – and Northern Exposure.

There was nothing open in Scobey – it was Sunday, so I just zipped on through the town, heading east to North Dakota. I had 10 to run in ND to finish it off. So far the weather had been good. The storms had been 'elsewhere' other than for a few nasty showers.

The next day turned into a very long day. I got carried away, and it was 8:30 pm before I got to the motel in Minot (Super 8) that I had called ahead 4 hours ahead. Too many miles - but I was having fun. So far, the conditions were 'OK' most of the day, and 17M was gangbusters for much of the day with 12-20 contacts per county. 20M was good, with KH6G, OK1VD, OK2EC, G4RRU, KL1V, PA3ARM, DL3DXX, DL6KVA in the log consistently, plus 30 on cw and 30 on SSB.

It was Sunday, and it was late, but I ordered a Papa Johns pizza delivery – I had done enough driving that day. Dinner at 9:15, and I crashed at about 10pm. I 'lost' an hour going from WY(MDST) to ND(central time). So it was even later. Oh well, the log book was filling up, and I had success hitting the ones I needed. A few roads were closed for short distances, and some minor delays, but you could usually get from here to there. That's not always the case with less than a hundred mile detour out west.

That night the skies open, and lightning flashed for a few hours with some nasty storms. Glad I was inside. North of me there were tornado watches and severe storm alerts. The storms woke me up at 4am and flashed away for an hour. Glad I wasn't out in it!

Monday morning the direction was south winding through the counties, winding up in SD. I had a few scattered around to run for second time. I ran Dewey – it's another county that is an Indian Reservation – few roads like many in ND and SD – I ran along 20, and there was a sign 40 feet off the road. The road is not a C/L road – but there was a commercial driveway right next to one of the signs – so I could park in it inside the county with no problem and run it!

I headed to Walworth and the town of Moberly – 4 motels and only one had a room left, and it was \$110! It's right on a lake with lots of boating and recreation. No thanks. One of the motel folks mentioned there were two

motels 20 miles east in Selby – I took a chance rather than paying \$110! These were not in the GPS database either. I had to run east 50 miles to get McPherson, another stranded county all by itself anyway, so 20 miles east would cut that distance down.

Fortunately, the better motel in Selby had a room for \$55, so I checked in, then ran 30 miles over to Edmunds and McPherson line, spent half an hour running the line, then headed back to the motel at 7:30 pm. Two choices for dinner - the drive in, or the Main Street Café. I chose the latter –it was decent and right across the street from the Opera House built in 1908. At some point, this town of 1000 people had enough money to build an opera house! The town was on the railroad line, and was a prosperous farming area. The population is declining decade after decade as the younger folks move away to the places they can find jobs.

There were about 20 power line construction people staying at the motel. An F4 tornado had gone across the road 10 miles north, taking out a string of the high voltage line towers – and they had been there for two months in beautiful (boring) Selby SD putting up new towers. There isn't much to do there for excitement other than watch the grass grow, and the rain shower. They were bored to death after hours and curious about 'all those antennas'. Every time I stopped at a store or gas station, it was 'what are those antennas on the car for?' I guess you have 'enough antenna' when that happens all the time, hi hi.

After a quick continental breakfast (bread and coffee/juice), it was south to finish off SD with Sully, Hughes and Stanley. That's done, so I don't have to head back any time soon. I decided to head on home since I'd accomplished the mission – finish off WY, ND, and SD, and get Joe his last WBOW for MG along with W0GXQ. I also whacked a few needs for W8DCD, and would have gotten him more, but his cellphone battery went dead and he missed the alert for Meager, MT! Oh well.....keep those batteries charged up! I need to run a bunch in MN, but that can wait for another time. At this time, the controversy on the Mobile Diamond start date arose, so why burn gas when I might have to do it again later? (One never knows what KZ2P and his cronies will come up with next!) The mission to finish off two states for TX counties was completed, the special contacts done, and over 100 counties put out on the trip.

Joyce, N9STL was spotting off freq runs on Monday , and the 20M SSB net was in friendly session for part of the day with N3HOO doing NC duties, and everyone stepping in as needed to run the mobiles east to west. CW was hopping with N4PJ running them in GA, K0ARS out in CO and KS, and east.

On Tuesday, W0MU/W0TOL ran out to run Teton, WY which was a last WBOW for W4YDY, and I'm sure he collected some LC for WY too as 2/3rds the state had been run. They are both good for No Star award.

Barry, N0KV and Pat, N0KV had run across the top of MT on Sunday, so that gave a lot of MT out too. They're headed up through Canada to Alaska where they will run all the districts. They were working mobiles signing /VE6.

I wound my way down through NE starting with Keya Paha and Brown....I was planning on taking 183, but mother nature had closed the road with major flooding and road washouts, so it was a 40 mile detour west around through Blaine County, then to Loup then back on 183 for a while. N7JPF was headed across the interstate. I had stopped at the truck stop at interstate just as he started to run the county – Buffalo, NE – and he was 60 over pinning the meter – well, maximum bars – loud type loud. I told him which exit we could meet at - but he sailed right on by it just after we set up an eyeball, and didn't realize it. He started dropping in strength. In two minutes, it was obviously he missed the exit.

I figured it was a bust. I checked the map. I had a request for Kearney, so I headed out....figuring N7JPF was dropping like a rock as he put miles between us – he was really making tracks. I got on the interstate to get to Kearney. It was wanted on CW. Yep, at the end of N7JPF/s run, he finally realized he had sailed right on by the exit was another 20 miles further east – No eyeball this time. Oh well. I was 10 miles behind him for a short distance.

I crossed the Platte River and started running Platte county. Dang...it took me five minutes to realize when you go east, then south, you hit Kearney where I wanted to be. One of the CH straightened me out. Hopefully that all got straightened out in folks logs. Too many miles that day, and there is a Platte County, but I wasn't in it! The trip home had just been a 'follow the road' trip and I didn't have my copies of the Coloring book pages which

I use when I am out filling in counties. I didn't even know if I would come home through NE or head to MN to run some there.

I made it to the line of Kearney and Phelps, ran it , then checked for a motel. I was getting tired (when you run the wrong county after 12 hours of driving it is time to stop!)...., and looking at the map, there wasn't much in the way of towns on 183 south. I drove toward town (Holdrege, NE) – the Super 8 was full, but the nice lady mentioned the 'other' motel in town and gave me the phone number, and lucky for me, they had just had a cancellation, so I got the last no smoking room for \$55 including tax. I hit a Chinese restaurant for dinner. No wireless internet at the motel, so it's watching TV and updating the travelogue.

It turned out there were motels on 183 headed south every 25 miles...but it's not obvious from the maps. Then again, they might have been full, too!

17M was very good with up to 22 contacts in the log. NM2L mobile, K8ZZ mobile, OK1VD, N3HOO, K4XI, K7REL, K5GE, W4GNS, N4AAT, K0ARS/m, NW6S, N9STL, N9QS, W0GXQ, WD4OIN, KN4Y, KW4V, AB7RW, and lots of others in there. N2OCW was out mobile, N7JPF put out a bunch on Tuesday and naturally, there was a full day of 'friendly net' with no one run off.

Wow...some calls from the past with K0EVE/0 showing up. Dennis, KK7X gets every now and then. Elwood, KA3MMM was on a bit chasing ones he needs. Larry, N2OCW was mobile in PA. I heard Mitch, W4RKV once. N8BNI was in there too – haven't worked him a while. W1WLW, too.

Oh.....funny.....it seems that "James' get very upset if 'someone' courteously makes a contact on,'ahem', 'his net'. He spends 15 seconds of valuable net time at the end of each run telling a nice YL in IL, who goes mobile, unlike him, and puts out counties for the folks, to ' please QSY, I don't like to hear you' type remarks. That is putting it nicely on the constant berating. It makes you wonder about someone's sanity. There's nothing funnier to watch someone bash their head against the wall for years. Let's see....is Joyce, N9STL happily making contacts on 14.336? Does everyone else enjoy having her there? Does she do a great job of helping/running the net on 40M and on 20M on you-know-who's days off? Does she help out with spotting and running mobiles off frequency? You

bet. So the more ‘someone’ ‘coughs’ over her signal reports and wastes ‘valuable net time’, so folks need to ask for repeats, and the more time he spends berating people....well..... it just helps solidify folks opinions. Why would he waste so much of that ‘valuable’ net time? **Idiocy is doing the same thing over and over again with no chance of success.**

Several times while he was making a fool of himself for his 15 second spiel, I just moved myself off frequency. Half the east coast can barely hear him, so five or six stations would pick up the move info and spot it. Worked like a charm. While he was bloviating, N4CD was saying ‘XYZ County going to 329 with N4CD’. The folks back east heard me no problem. He’s barely above the noise for many on the east coast. Might as well make use of that ‘valuable’ net time of his! Hope he keeps up the stupidity. It will make it easy for folks to move themselves! Everyone else seems to love to hear N9STL, Joyce. Joyce is having too much fun to not be around.

Weather has been good so far. This time of year, you need to be flexible with the weather situations which can develop and derail your plans. Folks here in NE are complaining about ‘the humidity’ with the higher temps. Everything is water logged around here. The sides of roads are full of water in ditches and there are lots of lakes in low areas that normally don’t have lakes. Some secondary roads are flooded out. It was been a wet winter with excessive rain, and the showers continue. Half the land in much of this area cannot yet be planted - too wet. It has also flooded out many roads – some of them major roads as I have found out the hard way! Be prepared for route changes, and sometimes there aren’t easy way around the problem area, either! Just leave extra time – you’ll need some of it. .

On Wednesday, I headed down route 183 to the interstate in KS, then east on the interstate. There’s only a dozen or so miles of Lincoln, KS on the interstate – I had to stop to finish running two bands – then I decided after 5 minutes of being stopped to skip the other bands – not supposed to stop on interstates and I didn’t want to push my luck – hi hi.

I was making a beeline to Washington County, OK for W0GXQ – I had already got the other two he needed in OKLA on the way north, so that would finish him off for Platinum for the state. Kirby, W8DCD, needed Adair, OK for one of his last few for WBOW, so that was next and another 3-4 hours down the road to get there! I wound up getting there at 5pm, and 20M was beginning to fade. He had bad local thunderstorms on top of that,

but with help from friends, we exchanged 55 reports from the county line of Adair and Delaware.



Adair/Delaware for W8DCD – LC OKLA
He's getting closer to finishing!

Naturally I took a pic – a percy pic – at the county line. When I am on secondary roads and can stop, I often take pics of the county signs. It gets me out of the car for a quick break, I get to stretch my legs for a few minutes, and I have a pic in case it is a last county for someone. You can get blood clots and other problems from sitting and sitting all day while driving. I usually stop every two hours or so for a break – for second breakfast, or afternoon snack, and naturally a lunch break. Sometimes to get gas. Otherwise, with a full tank, you could drive for 6 or 7 hours straight. Pics are cheap on a digital camera. Ron, KB6UF also needed Adair for an LC, so that worked out well, too.

The temp gauge hit 100 when I entered OKLA. I was getting back to 'hot country', and there were also major storms developing to the NW. Fortunately, they stayed there, at least until I got out of there.

You can tell when the spot hits...or you sit and call and call on 30M or 40M, and no one other than W9MSE/m shows up half the time! A few follow me band to band...but alas, their 'spotters' are not working! Come on guys! It doesn't take that long to spot.

Adair and Cherokee are part of the 'hills' of eastern OKLA. Along the Illinois River in Cherokee, they have rafting and kayaking, and there are lots of places to go on trips and rent canoes, kayaks, inner tubes and join a group on a raft for a trip. Also campgrounds and some bunk houses and lodging, but only one motel, and it is a 'resort' with 70 buck a night prices for a fairly old place. I wound up in the town (Talihouah) for \$45 motel rate including tax. There are no places to eat along the river either – you bring your own – or drive into town to eat. Dinner was at a Chinese Buffet - not too many other choices other than Mexican, Pizza Hut, or fast food places.

On Thursday it was a few hundred miles to home, but I took the county hunter way going through the rarer counties of Haskell, Latimer, Pushmataha, then to home. I'd just been to most of them, but some missed me last time, and I could run on 14.336 today as no one was running mobiles off the frequency.

4200 miles of driving in 8 days – gas prices up to near \$3.00, but mostly \$2.55-\$2.85 range. Only had about an hour of 'bad weather' the whole trip while I was out, so it was a success. I gave out 3 WBOW, and likely 10-15 LCs for the folks, plus whittled down the needs list for many closing in on first time and other awards.

County Hunting and DX hunting. – de AB7RW

The 2009 DXCC Yearbook has arrived and I became curious about how many CW County Hunters are also DXers. So I went up and down the lists and picked out the call signs that I recognize from the CH frequencies that are in use and jotted them down. Here are the ones I pulled out. Please, it is very easy to miss a callsign or to pull one off the page that is in error. Each page in the DXCC Yearbook has eleven columns of print using a type size of ten or so.

Here are the ones I pulled out. The first digits are the number of DX countries that have been confirmed and credit given to that call sign.

347 W9DC USA-CA 688
346 K0DEQ and K8CW USA-CA 539
345 K5NA
343 W6TMD USA-CA 729
342 KW4V USA-CA 1052
341 K8MW USA-CA 449 and NW6S USA-CA 1090
340 W6OUL
337 N7TT USA-CA 191
336 N5XG USA-CA 934 and W6RLL USA-CW 109
335 W9OP USA-CA 748
334 K8RYU
331 N7WO
325 K9JF
310 N0KV USA-CA 1151
298 KN4Y USA-CA 757
275 AB7RW USA-CA 1132
254 KM6HB USA-CA 1149

Possible 60 meter changes

Wow – maybe CW on 60 meters? That would be fun. Now it is only SSB on ‘channels’.

QST QST QST From ARRL, Newington CT 06111

05/08/2010

Acting on a [2006 Petition for Rulemaking filed by the ARRL](#), the FCC has issued a *Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM)*, [ET Docket No 10-98](#) to modify the rules that govern amateurs’ secondary use of five channels in the 5 MHz frequency range known as 60 meters. The proposed changes would substitute a new channel for one that is seldom available because of occupancy by the fixed service, which is primary in this range. Also proposed is an increase in power from 50 to 100 W effective radiated power (ERP) and the addition of CW, PSK31 and PACTOR-III modes with provisions to ensure that such operations would be compatible with the

primary service. The proposed changes can be found beginning on page 8 of the *NPRM*.

“The ARRL is pleased that the Commission has opened this proceeding to increase the usefulness of the limited 5 MHz Amateur Service allocation,” said ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ. “We are gratified that the Commission and the NTIA agree that the responsible manner in which amateurs have been using the five USB channels warrants some expansion of privileges so that the Amateur Service can be even better prepared for service to the public.”

Background

The 60 meter band is part of the larger 5060-5450 kHz band that is allocated to the fixed service on a primary basis for Federal and non-Federal use, and to the mobile (except aeronautical mobile service) on a secondary basis for Federal and non-Federal use. Per footnote US381 to the Allocation Table, this makes five frequencies in this band -- 5332 kHz, 5348 kHz, 5368 kHz, 5373 kHz and 5405 kHz -- available to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis. In addition, footnote US340 authorizes Federal and non-Federal maritime and aeronautical mobile stations to use the 2-30 MHz band (which includes the 60 meter band) for measuring the quality of reception on radio channels on a non-interference basis; however, actual communication by these stations is limited to frequencies specifically allocated to these services.

In 2003, the FCC added the Amateur Service secondary allocation to this band after determining that such frequencies could be useful to the Amateur Radio Service for completing disaster communications links at times when existing frequencies in the 80, 75 and 40 meter bands are not available due to ionospheric conditions. The FCC concluded “that such an allocation represented the best compromise available to give the Amateur Radio Service access to new spectrum for a wide range of radio communications, while assuring that incumbent operations are protected.”

At the request of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration ([NTIA](#)), the FCC restricted the use of these five channels to single sideband suppressed carrier voice using only the upper sideband transmission, and a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 50 W peak

envelope power (PEP). The Commission adopted these operating restrictions to decrease the interference potential between amateur stations and federal stations.

On October 20, 2006, ARRL filed a [Petition for Rulemaking](#), seeking certain modifications to the rules governing Amateur Radio use of the 60 meter band. Seven weeks later, the FCC issued a [Public Notice](#) to seek comments on the ARRL's *Petition*, but none were received. In its *Petition*, the ARRL requested that the FCC make three modifications to the existing rules governing Amateur Radio use of the 60 meter band, specifically [Section 2.106](#), footnote US381 of the Rule and [Section 97.303](#) of the Rules, in order to increase the flexibility in the use of the band and to facilitate emergency communications provided by the Amateur Radio Service:

- One of the available channels, 5368 kHz, be replaced with 5358.5 kHz.
- Three additional emission designators -- 150HA1A, 60H0J2B and 2K80J2D -- be authorized in the 60 meter band, provided that the operators using these modes utilize great care to limit the length of transmissions so as to avoid interference with Federal operations.
- The maximum ERP on channels in the 60 meter band be increased from 50 to 100 W PEP, provided that amateurs utilize Voice-Operated Transmit (VOX) while in the single sideband emission mode, so as to permit the amateur operator to bear an attempt by another station, which may be a Federal user, to utilize the channel.

The ARRL *Petition* argued that a successful history of sharing with Federal users -- together with its amateurs' strong desire to improve Amateur Service use of the band -- merited a grant of greater flexibility in the use of these frequencies: "Because of strong admonitions provided by ARRL to Amateur Radio operators relative to their obligations vis-à-vis Federal agency primary use of and access to these few channels, the access provided for the Amateur Service with the assistance of NTIA in the past three years has been successful without qualification. Neither ARRL, nor, apparently NTIA, is aware of a single reported instance of interference to a Federal user by a radio amateur operating at 5 MHz to date." The proposals contained in the ARRL *Petition* were based on these discussions and a May 12, 2006 letter from the NTIA, indicating that it would "look favorably" on the above-described modifications should ARRL choose to pursue rule changes with the Commission.

On March 11, 2010, the FCC adopted a [Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order](#) that made certain amendments to correct the Amateur Service rules and to conform the rules to prior Commission decisions. The FCC's proposals are based on the current rules, as modified by that action.

Discussion

The existing Amateur Service use of the 60 meter band represents what the FCC calls "a balancing of important interests -- the desire to provide amateur operators with frequencies that could be used to complete disaster communications links when other bands are not available, and the need to protect important primary Federal operations in the 60 meter band." The ARRL's *Petition* seeking to modify "the existing spectrum sharing scenario in a manner that appears to be consistent with the interests of both Federal and amateur users in the band, and we tentatively conclude that the changes to footnote US381 and Section 97.303 of our Rules that are proposed by ARRL should be adopted."

One of the available channels, 5368 kHz, be replaced with 5358.5 kHz

The ARRL, in its *Petition*, pointed out that its request to replace the 5368 kHz channel with 5358.5 kHz is based on reports from amateur operators of frequent interference from a digital signal on the existing authorized channel. "Based on this information, we tentatively agree that the proposed modification would eliminate interference and enhance Amateur Radio operations and that it should be implemented." The FCC noted that most non-Federal licensees in the 60 meter band are licensed across the larger band 5005-5450 kHz and that many are also licensed across other bands, as well: "Therefore, we believe that our proposal to exchange one amateur channel for another in the 60 meter band will have a *de minimis* impact on these licensees, while benefiting Amateur Radio users who have a limited number of channels in the band on which they may operate and reducing the potential for interference from amateur operations to the primary Federal stations operating in the 5330.6-5406.4 kHz band."

Three additional emission designators -- 150HA1A, 60H0J2B and 2K80J2D -- be authorized in the 60 meter band, provided that the operators using these modes utilize great care to limit the length of transmissions so as to avoid interference with Federal operations.

In its *Petition*, the ARRL explained that it had conducted a survey of Amateur Radio operators who use the 60 meter band. The League found that there is significant demand for modulation techniques that would allow telegraphy and data transmissions in addition to the one that is currently permitted for voice transmissions (single sideband suppressed carrier upper sideband, emission type 2K80J3E). Specifically, ARRL maintained that Morse code telegraphy by means of on-off keying (emission designator 150HA1A) continues to be used by amateur stations, due to its reliability in difficult propagation conditions. The ARRL also stated that the other requested emission designators -- 60H0J2B (generally known as PSK31) and 2K80J2D (generally known as PACTOR-III) -- are popular narrowband data modes.

In its *NPRM*, the FCC proposed to add these three emission designators that would allow four permissible emission types to be used in the 60 meter band. It also proposed to permit “any additional modulation techniques that we adopt to be used on all assigned frequencies within the 60 meter band, including the assigned frequency 5368 kHz in the event that we do not adopt our proposal to replace the assigned frequency 5368 kHz with 5358.5 kHz.” The ARRL pointed out that FCC could require amateur operators to limit the length of transmissions in the two data emission modes “in order to better position amateur operators to avoid causing harmful interference to primary operations and suggests adopting a rule that incorporates a general requirement to limit the duration of data transmissions.”

As such, the FCC is seeking comments as to whether a rule addressing transmission limits “would help ensure that in the currently infrequent instances in which Federal agencies exercise their primary use of the 60 meter band frequencies, those amateur licensees who have been operating on a secondary basis will be better positioned to avoid causing harmful interference, which is prohibited.”

If commenters support a specific time limit, the FCC wants to know whether a transmission length of three minutes would be sufficient; if not, what limits should the Commission adopt?

In addition, the FCC is also seeking comment on whether “amateur stations should be permitted to transmit emission types in addition to the four

discussed above in the 60 meter band without increasing the likelihood of interference to primary users.” To the extent that commenters identify such emission designators, the FCC would like them to discuss their “use and benefits and, in particular, how the use of those emission designators can be balanced with our continuing interest in protecting primary stations in the 60 meter band.”

The maximum ERP on channels in the 60 meter band be increased from 50 to 100 W PEP, provided that amateurs utilize Voice-Operated Transmit (VOX) while in the single sideband emission mode, so as to permit the amateur operator to bear an attempt by another station, which may be a Federal user, to utilize the channel

The ARRL asserted in its *Petition* that the typical transmitter output power in modern Amateur Radio transceivers is 100 W PEP, and that the present 50 W PEP transmitter output power limit compromises communication reliability in the 60 meter band. At certain times of the year, and more often in the southern latitudes, there are high static levels in this frequency range. It is the ARRL’s position that a slightly higher transmitter power output would bolster reliability, especially in connection with emergency communications.

The ARRL also suggested that amateur operators be required to use Voice-Operated Transmit (VOX) in the phone emission mode, saying that by adopting this requirement in conjunction with an increased transmitter output power limit would permit a Federal user to interrupt an amateur station’s transmission quickly and easily without waiting for an unpredictable end of the transmission. The FCC is seeking comments on these proposals, specifically comments on “whether a VOX mode of operation might increase the potential for interference because of its susceptibility to keying a radio to transmit under high surrounding noise environments such as might be found in an emergency operations center.” In its proposed rules to implement the changes as discussed above, the FCC has, in some cases, incorporated editorial revisions intended to make the rules easier to read and to ensure that control operators have the necessary information to easily determine their proper operating requirements on the 60 meter band frequencies. Also, at the request of NTIA, the FCC is soliciting comments on whether amateur operators who provide emergency communications using the 60 meter band should be encouraged to add a

sound card-generated Automatic Link Establishment ([ALE](#)) capability to their stations.”

From:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-proposes-additions-changes-to-amateur-5-mhz-allocation>

If you are interested in learning more about 60 meter operation, please read the FAQ at:

<http://www.arrl.org/60-meter-faq>

West Virginia QSO Party

From the 3830 reflector:

N8Q/m (ops N2WN, K1TA):” Well Murphy rode shotgun with us from the get go... I had a problem with N1MM due to operator error, it still thought I was in TN versus WV (sorry to the pileup) had to reboot the logger. Problem solved and we moved along. Weren't in WAY very long, MGO was a bit tougher due to the terrain and conditions did not seem all that great. Things improved thru LOG and BOO with more QSOs.

In BOO, I accidentally shut the vehicle off (was running it for air conditioning) and went to start, got a loud "THUNK" then nothing. Battery seemed fine, so we kept working for a few minutes. I drive a standard, so figured I could get it started. Rita doesn't so trying to get it started was not going well. A young couple from WV stopped and helped and off we went. (Thanks OHIO!) We went to LIN next and made sure to stop on a slope, wanted to see if it was something simple. It wouldn't start, so did the ol' roll start.

Drove into Charleston It was pushing 4PM looking for, at least, an auto parts

store. Found one. They tell me the starter is probably gone. I'm thinking it's the relay (which they didn't have) and the nearest place open that had one was a half hour drive in the wrong direction. I gamble and pull the starter in the 90+ degree parking lot. It's no fun pulling a Tacoma starter. Well need to "be sure" so have them check it. It works like a champ. S**T! Well it went in much easier than it came out. I ask him to call and make sure the other place has the relay. He suggests trying to jump start our truck, and we try. VROOOM!

Battery had gone south and only put out like 15A. New battery we're back on the road... three hours later.

Rita has been calling her heart out on SSB while I drive from county to county. Thank you very much to those who had patience (Thanks Rick WB8JUI) and our apologies to the couple of folks lost as we rounded a mountain. Rita would get excited when someone would call, mostly because she wasn't hearing too well.

She managed 12 QSOs and wasn't completely turned off. I let her listen to the CW pileups near the end, and she asked how can you pick anything out of the mess :o)

WIR was our best county, we almost didn't go, but Rita insisted and found a nice spot high up. Nice to work DL3DXX and UA3AGW a couple times. Didn't hear CU2JT who's usually a regular.

We did manage a couple in-state QSOs and one mobile. Wonder what happened to W8V, as I didn't see any reports of QSO with Kyle.

Many many thanks to the QSO Party regulars and the TCG folks who showed up in force.

We'll be doing a card for N8Q, SASE please. All contacts will be uploaded by county to LOTW when we get back to TN.

Thanks All it was loads of fun, even with Murphy along for the ride.

Rig: Elecraft K3 with ATU and a three pack of Hustlers (tried 10, 15 and 80/75 for 0 QSOs, this was definitely a two band contest for us)"

NO5W: (TX): “Conditions between WV and Houston were very poor and considering that 75% of my QSOs were with mobiles, and one of them QRP, it was challenging but fun as always. I thought the pileups late in the day were rather unruly. With the weak signals from the mobiles it was tough to hear, through the constant callers, who the station came back to. Probably my most difficult QSO was with N8Q/M in WIRt. That one took some perseverance -- thanks to Julius for pulling me through.

Thanks to the mobiles for keeping it interesting: N8II/M(6), K8RYU/M(2), K8MR/M(2), N8Q/M(2). I don't recall any other QSO party that has different point credit for working a mobile vs fixed station so I had to make sure and include the /M something I normally don't include.”

W4UCW (NC): “Bands and participation much better than last year. Thanks to the mobiles for all the QSOs; K8RYU (13), N8II (9), K8MR (7), W8OP (5) and N8Q (2).”

K4BAI (GA): “Good activity, particularly by mobiles. 20M was short enough for QSOs in WV for almost the entire contest period. 15M was open from GA to WV for most of the afternoon, but only N8II/M seemed to know it. Nothing heard on 10M. 40 was quite good for the entire contest period. 80M seemed to be OK, but with significant QRN. No mobiles heard there. If there was 75M phone activity other than from K8JQ, I never found it. Again, I must suggest that a specific frequency or range of frequencies be suggested. Tuning the entire General class band on some bands looking for a lost WV station seems senseless when most QSO parties specify center frequencies so that in-state stations have a starting point and out-of-state stations aren't discouraged by not knowing where to tune. Also, it should be noted that the summary sheet is inconsistent with the rules as to QSO point value for contacts with mobiles on phone. I think the rule should govern and the point value in probably intended to be 2 rather than 1 as shown on the summary sheet. Thanks to the sponsors and to all the WV stations for QSOs, particularly the mobiles. A very FB job by all.”

On the Way to Weslaco

Some additional things to consider on your journey to TX for the Annual MARAC meeting. Texas has 620 miles of shoreline, and here are a few things along the Gulf coast to enjoy!

South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center: This new center has a five story tower with spectacular views, plus a mile long boardwalk over mudflats to the edge of the Laguna Madre, where you may see blue herons, bitterns, ducks, pelicans and hundreds of other water birds. 6801 Padre Blvd, South Padre Island.

Sea Turtles, Inc – Sea turtles injured by boats, nets, dredges or predators are given loving care at this hospital. Those that recover are released back into the wild. View about 25 Kemp Ridley, Atlantic green, loggerhead and hawksbill turtles in large tanks. 6617 Padre Island Blvd, South Padre Island town.

Museum of Science and History, Corpus Christi, The history part of this museum showcases two shipwrecks, the 1554 convoy of Spanish ship wrecked off the Padre Island and 1686 wreck of the La Belle, French explorer La Salle's ship, with an extensive display of artifacts from the ships excavation. 1900 N Chaparral St, Corpus Christi Tues-Sat 10-5pm.
www.ccmuseum.com

USS Lexington: Tour the WW era aircraft carrier's 11 decks and see 20 vintage aircraft. Thrill to combat flight simulator. 2914 SHorline Blvd, Corpus Christi, 9-6pm, www.uslexington.com

Texas Maritime Museum, Rockport – Center focuses on the development of coastal communities and a part of the story of French explorer La Salle's brief encounter with the TX coast. www.texasmaritimemuseum.org

Museum of the Coastal Bend – French explorer LaSalle established a temporary settlement on a bluff near Victoria in the mid 1680s. This museum presents the story of that short-lived colony through artifacts including iron cannons that were excavated in the mid-1990s. 2200 E Red River ST, Victoria – Tues-Sat 10-4pm www.museumofthecoastalbend.org

Spindletop – Gladys City Boomtown Museum – The discover of oil at SPindletop in 1901 set off an orgy of oil-felid activity that transformed the region into a petroleum powerhouse. Replicas of the buildings of Gladys City, the boomtown that sprang up on the site overnight, are the heart of this museum. On highway 69 at University Drive Beaumont, www.spindletop.org

Space Center Houston – The official visitor center for NASA’s Johnson Space Center invites you to feel what it is like to blat off, to learn the history of American space flight and what living in space is like for astronauts, and to take a tram tour of the space center itself. See the website for the Level 9 Tour, a four to five hour exploration of astronaut training.

<http://www.spacecenter.org/>

San Jacinto Battleground/Battleship Texas – a 2 ½ mile walking tour of the battleground explains events related to the 18 minute battle that insured Texas’ independence. See the 600 foot high monument.

Tour the Battleship Texas - 3523 Battleground Road, La Porte.

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/battleship_texas/

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/san_jacinto_battleground/

That’s just a few of the things to do on the way/to from TX. See the past few issues for even more ideas on what to do and enjoy.

Of course, for those attending the National, there will be a visit to the King Ranch, and a trip to go Dolphin watching off Padre Island.

Reaching the Goal – USACA

These folks are getting REAL REAL close to finishing first time. Can you help get them to the goal?

NT2A - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/24/2010
email: nt2a.nyc@gmail.com Ph. 718 980 6787 de NT2A/Gene

AR: Baxter

IA: Van Buren

MT: Beaverhead

NU4C - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/22/2010
29 to go, 10 have been worked but not yet confirmed (marked with *). If you plan to run any, please drop an email to nu4c at [bellsouth.net](mailto:nu4c@bellsouth.net) or phone 386 441 6981

CO: San Miguel

GA: Bacon, Pierce, Randolph

IA: Audubon*, Buena Vista*, Butler*, Cass*, Hardin* Humboldt

ID: Teton

KY: Hart, Henry, Larue, Mercer, Robertson

MT: Meagher, Ravalli*

ND: Burke*, Grant*, Nelson, Renville*, Sargent*

SD: Mellette

TX: Bailey, Crane, Panola, Reagan, Upton

W4SIG - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/22/2010

GA:Johnson

KY:Ohio, Owsley, Wayne, Webster

NC:Alamance, Forsyth, Gates, Stanly, Stokes

SD:Bonhomme, McPherson

Email to kerrylong@comcast.net

W6OUL - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/08/2010

AR:Clay

GA:Jones, Montgomery

IN:Benton

KY:Bell, Casey, Menifee

NC:Columbus

Email to jimw6oul@impulse.net

W8DCD - USACA using SSB - Updated: 06/23/2010

I ONLY need ** 5 ** more. Call me anytime. cell 847-651-7065

CA: Monterrey

MT: Meagher, Pondera, Powder River, Treasure

W8JJ - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/25/2010

I work M-F during the day but can leave my office to make a contact on occasion. Please call me at 810.730.9666 if you can help with any of these counties.

AL: Choctaw, Tallapoosa

AR: Dallas, Greene, Pike

CA: Glenn, Lassen

ID: Butte

KS: Rice

MT: Pondera, Teton

NC: Union

SD: Bennett, Faulk

TX: Archer, Freestone, Upton

Email to w8jj@comcast.net

KG8N - USACA using SSB - Updated: 06/21/2010

CA:San Francisco

CO:Rio Blanco

HI:Kalawao

ID:Gem, Owyhee, Bingham

IL:Shelby

KS:Grant

KY:Cumberland, Taylor, Wayne, Adair, Clay, Lee, McLean

MS:Greene

MT:Meagher

NC:Graham

ND:Burke, McHenry, Mountrail

NV:Lincoln

OH:Henery, Williams, Clinton

PA:Westmorland

TX:Hill, San Patrico, Upton

WV:Brooke

Email to jturning@charter.net

K9EN - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 06/14/2010

MO:Pike

Email to kenneth.ebnetter@verizon.net

NØXYL - USACA using SSB - Updated: 06/24/2010

EMAIL: KB0BA@ATT.NET OR Instennyson@att.net 563-381-3711

CA: San Mateo

CT: Litchfield, Tolland

HI: Kalawao, Maui

MT: Daniels, Deer Lodge, Golden Valley, Musselshell

OR: Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Malheur

TX: Roberts

UT: Juab

WA: Kitsap

The thrill of finishing up is close for these folks. Can you get the last counties for them? Finish off a state or knock one or two or five off the list?

Awards

8 th Time #6	Scottie, N4AAT	June 22, 2010
Bingo #317	Slick, AA1VA	June 18, 2010
Bingo II #69	Dave, W4YDY	June 20, 2010
Masters Gold #40	Joe, WB0CQO	June 19, 2010
Fourth Time #147	Jerry, W0GXQ	June 19, 2010

Upcoming Contests/Events

There are no scheduled State QSO Parties in July. Enjoy a month of pure county hunting chasing mobiles.

Annual MARAC Convention will be held in Weslaco TX