

County Hunter News

September 1, 2012
Volume 8, Issue 9

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, there is 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 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

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:

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

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

<http://pages.suddenlink.net/w4ydy/hamlinks.html#County>

Download the file to a flash card that fits in your GPS unit, turn it on, and the county lines should appear!

De N4CD, Editor (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

August has been a good month for snagging counties. We had many QSO parties that put hundreds of counties on the air. Mobiles were out running from coast to coast. The summer travel season was still in swing.

Propagation wasn't good – or bad. Many days had high A indexes which didn't help. We don't really seem to be headed toward a sunspot peak very fast. You take what mother nature deals out.

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I heard from Chuck, N1SPX. He wrote:

Hello.

“It's been a long time since we ran into you on the nets.

One small correction in the 8/2012 newsletter. My XYL is Amber, KD0BQR. You had KB0. As I'm still working on the 1st time, I need all the cards I can get. LoTW would be real nice if they get to it. I have 603 counties if I count LoTW and paper, but only 61 if I count just the

paper.”

Mobile Activity in late July and month of August

Mike, NF0N, showed up as W0R, special event station as part of a bike event he was participating in – in IA and NE.

Bill, K2HVN, headed from the east coast going west – through PA, OH, IN, IL He'd spend time out west and return later.

KF0RQ was spotted out in WY on SSB.

W7IN spotted in MT

Bob, W0BH put out a few while on vacation in UT.

Brian, NX0X, was spotted out in WI.

Joyce, WB9NUL and Barry, W9UCW, spotted in a few in TX.

Jim, N8HAM, spotted out in MI

W9COP spotted out and about in WI.

WA4JA spotted in KY and TN in a few.

W7ZB spotted out on SSB in OR.

Dick, K5VYT started in ND and headed home to CO.

Tony, WA9DLB, was noted running counties in WI.

Phil, AB7RW, noted in OR.

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Dick, K5VYT commented

“Many thanks to all the stations, net controls and mobiles who rode along with me on my recent trip to Minnesota. Trip was only four days, but worked 1069 on 59 runs and gave out 5 last counties. Not bad with the bands in not the greatest shape. Only worked a few on 40... really noisy.”

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Bob, N8KIE, noted after his big trip to the National in Vancouver, then down to CA where he took a plane to HI for a few weeks, then return from CA via NV, UT, WY, IA, IL, IN back to MI:

“home again after 8700 miles plus 5000 in a airplane “

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Paul, WB2ABD, ran in a few in NY state.

Mike, W0MU, returned back from MT – ran on SSB while pulling a trailer.

Frosty, W0FP, spotted up in IA

Bill, K2HVN continued his trek cross country slowly heading back east.

Chuck and Amber, N1SPX/KD0BQR spotted out and about in MO

Mary, AB7NK, and Neil, K7SEN, took a trip to TX from AZ.

Bob, K7TM, spotted out in WA state.

Don, N5XG, ran some in TX

NU0Q was out in IA WY, ID, and SD running counties.

Jack, WD4OIN, spotted out running counties in NC. Then headed to FL and back. Ran a lot of FL counties.

Ed, K8ZZ, spotted out in MI. Then headed over to PA to run much of the state to finish off transmitting from the state.

Ace, N3AHA, noted in some VA counties.

The team of W8FNW/W4FNW noted out in OH and IN counties. (SSB)

Jeff, W9MSE, headed over to OH....ran in the OH QSO Party. Then headed back to WI
Ed, N8OYY, spotted out in WV on SSB.

WY4D headed out from home running counties as he headed west.

Greg, NM2L, headed north once again from GA running on 40m cw.

K8JWV noted out in several UT counties

W7GQK, Abe, spotted out in AL counties. (SSB)

Jim, N4JT, spotted out in NC

Ron, KB6UF, made a trip over from LA to TX. Then headed west to CA.

Joyce, N9STL, headed over to MO and KS to work on her Mobile Diamond Transmits –
needing 3 contacts on each of 2 bands. She had great success.

WB5LFO spotted in many western counties.

AB4YZ, Ray, and the split personality disorder 'mee too' club call, headed out from VA to SD,
ND, MT putting out counties for Mobile Diamond credit.

USQP Counties Party

It was a busy weekend. Better yet, mobiles hit counties for the LC WBOW this weekend for four people!

1 - Mike, NF0N went out for a short trip to get the LC WBOW for Scottie, N4AAT, 10th time. Wasn't in the QP. Just ran 2 counties on SSB net.

2 - Paul WB2ABD got the LC WBOW for Master's Gold for Dick, N8CIJ.

3 - Norm, W3DYA, added an unscheduled county and stumbled into a LC in Trinity, TX – LC WBOW for N9STL 7th Time.

4 - And Dave, KW1DX headed to VT for a LC WBOW for Mike W0MU – Bingo. Can't get much better than that!

That was quite a weekend.

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We could talk about conditions – which weren't too bad Saturday morning with a fairly low A and K index. Then around noon, an M Class solar flare hit, and after the band almost died...and took a while to recover, the A index worked its way up to 9, then to 11 for Sunday meaning spotty, QSB laden conditions. It was hard to hear some of the mobiles out west – mostly in the noise here in TX on my vertical. Others had better luck. Even W0GXQ and W9MSE were going from S0 to S5 all the time like a yo-yo. You had to time your call if you could.

Then we had 100 plus deg temps in TX, OK and much of the midwest – extending over to the east coast with 100 deg in Wash DC. Some places in OK and north hit over 110. It was even 100 deg up in SD.

The weekend started out with an IOTA contest – a few of the IOTAs were actually counties you could use but the IOTA folks were busy working Europeans by the gazillions, but you had a chance for a few 'counties' if you could figure out which county they were in. W1VSJ in Dukes, MA was on. Another one was on NA-139 – which is an island that spans two counties (and a National Park) – MD and VA. Which one was he in? Maybe an email will get an answer.

Later in the day, the NJ QSO Party started – and there were about 3 NJ counties on looking for

contacts. I heard one other NJ station in Bergen working a few mobiles but never CQ'ing himself – on 20M. I didn't get to work him. Full report on NJ QSO Party later in the newsletter.

So who were out mobile in the 'contest'?

Jerry, W0GXQ was on the road for 2 days returning from CO – going through NE, SD, ND and back to MN. It was hot the whole way back.

Phil, AB7RW was down in CA and headed back to OR. It was tough working those western mobiles.

Bob, K7TM put out some in ID.

Norm, W3DYA, put out dozens in TX. Never heard a peep out of him at my TX QTH, and 40M was dead the whole contest it seems till late in the evening. He was busy most of the time.



W3DYA Freestone/Leon, TX
Note the Flying Saucer Antennas

Jeff, W9MSE, on the first day headed over to WV from Stark, OH, and ran a bunch there and in OH. Next day, Sunday, he headed to west from Stark to the border and circled back again.

Paul, WB2ABD, ran some in western NY and northern PA.

Van, WC5D, put out some in North TX and southern OK.

Carl, W9OO put out a few in IA.

Bill, NU0Q, was busy in IA both days putting them out.

Mike, NT7R ran a few in MT.

Ed, KN4Y was busy in GA and northern FL for 2 days.

K5CM, Connie, was out in southern OKLA.

Alan, N5NA was out in western TX

Justin, , KG4V рK, ran a few in TN.

K4ZGB was seen in a few AL counties.

Maybe 30 fixed stations were on – some for hours, some for only an hour the whole contest.

At the N4CD, I put over 200 contacts (counties) in the log so it was a successful county snagging event. Missed all from N5NA, W3DYA, K5CM – just 'too close' for 20M skip and never heard anything on 40M. So likely another 50 counties or more were up for grabs if you were in the right place to hear them.

from the 3830 reflector:

N6MU (CA) 215 QSO 193 counties

Part time effort. Conditions were bad Saturday and worse Sunday. Kudos to the myriad of mobiles who hung in there both days. Top mobiles for me with at least 10 Qs were: W3DYA-28, W9MSE-26, W0GXQ-23, NU0Q-19, N5NA-12 and KN4Y-11. 73..

VE5KS – 94 contacts/QSOs

Had a great contest despite the poor conditions. Many thanks to all the mobiles out there, without you it would have been a much lower scoring contest. The only band that was open to me was 20, everything else was either too noisy or

dead.

Worked W9MSE for 14, NU0Q for 12, W3DYA for 8, W0GXQ for 7, KN4Y for 6, W9OO for 5 counties. Thank you very much for all your hard driving.

Rig: Kenwood TS 140S, antenna Crushcraft A3S up at 25 feet, and for doing the code a rigblaster advantage.

KN4Y – Mobile – FL/GA – 410 QSOs on 20M, 2 on 40M. Ed noted that this was a 20M event. He didn't hear or work folks on any other band – just nothing there.

Norm, W3DYA reported the following logs sent in:

AA8IA, AB7RW, AD8J, AE1T
K1BV, K4AMC, K4ZGB, K6CSL, KC2WUF, KC7YE, KG4PRK, KN4Y, KW3F
LY2FN
N0AC, N3KR, N3RC, N9AUG, NT7R, NU0Q
PA3ARM
VE1OP, VE5KS
W7GVE, W9KB, WB2ABD, WY4Y

W7FEN Trip Report

As many of you already know Rita and I got out of Woodland Park early due to Waldo Canyon Fire. We were planning on starting our trek to the National on Saturday morning, so had been getting things packed for the trip. When the notice came through on NIXLE to prepare for evacuation in Woodland Park and all east of US 24 and Rampart Range Rd were under mandatory evacuation orders.

We are only a little over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Rampart Range Rd, so we finished up packing and loaded pictures and some other things we definitely didn't want to lose in Rita's Jeep Liberty. I got the car all loaded and we departed Woodland Park westbound on US 24. First stop was to park the Jeep at a friend's place that was several miles west of home and in a meadow with no trees

nearby. Spent our first night in Gunnison, Gunnison, CO and had dinner at the Twisted Fork. The meal was different but very tasty.

6/28 Thursday morning it was westward until we got to Montrose, CO. There we detoured south to San Miguel County to fulfill requests for such county. WOGXQ, Jerry was standing by for his LC in CO and with his QSP help managed to complete contact with LY5A for his LC in CO. There were a few other LC's there and we were parked in the county pointed east for over 45 minutes. I ran it on 40, 20 SSB and then 40, 30, 20, 17 CW. At times I felt like what some DX stations must experience.

Back up to US 50 and continued on up to I-70 and west bound. We spent the night in Richfield, Sevier, UT where we had a great evening meal. We had noticed the nice looking farms and lots of hay fields in the area so I ask the waitress what the main economy was. Her answer sure surprise me as it was coal mining as the biggie.

6/29 Friday morning we set out when it got to be 13:00 I let WE7G know that I was on the air. Wayne needed Sevier for his LC in UT. He couldn't hear me on 40 M so I stopped and put the 80 M Resonator on and got the job done. W9SUQ and called advising me that Sanpete, UT was his next to the last for WBOW. We made a slight adjustment to our route and were able to get it for Larry. After the contact with Larry I was bombarded by county-hunters on SSB and CW. It was just like the county hadn't been put out for some time. I checked on W6RK site and see it had been run by KA3DRO and AB7RW in 2012. I didn't go back to run Millard, UT as I'd run it in the past. It just turned out on our eastward trip we were in Millard for a few miles, so nothing lost.

Band conditions were fairly good that day and got to work several of the other mobiles that were headed for the Pacific Northwest. From Sanpete County we continues to I-15 and traveled north to I-84 were we turned NW into Idaho. Everything went very smoothly and we arrived in Nampa, Canyon, ID just shortly after 4PM. We had only been in the motel room about 15 minutes when I received a call from the manager of the facility where our motor home is stored. She called to let us know that they had been spared by the fire and it had come with-in about half a mile of their RV Park/Motel/Storage facility.

After we got freshened up a bit we went out to my cousin's place and had a great visit with him and his wife. I hadn't seen them since June 2009 and Rita got to meet some more members of my extended family. After visiting for a couple of hours or so we all went back into Nampa to the Outback. I was a great evening and back to the motel for rest..

6/30 Saturday morning we continued over to Payette, ID and picked up US 95 northbound. Upon entering the town of Cambridge, ID I noticed the sign for Hells Canyon Recreation Area. Rita had never been down into Hells Canyon, so topped off the fuel tank and down into the canyon we went. I knew it would happen and it did, I lost communications with the outside world. We got to the Snake River at Brownlee Dam, crossed over into Oregon and continued

down river to just north of Ox-Bow Dam were we crossed back into Idaho. It is about a 26 mile drive from there on down to the end of the road just 1 ½ miles pass Hell's Canyon Dam. It was a very crooked road so did make very good time but it was very scenic. There had been more than the normal amount of rainfall this spring so lots of flowers and canyon walls where green where every there was enough soil to support grass. Coming back from Hell's Canyon Dam I did manage to make contacts with AA9JJ/N9QPQ and K3IMC and they were both close together in California.

Just after getting back into Oregon side of the canyon we found a restaurant to have lunch at. While eating it was decided instead of taking a Forest Service road that would bring us out at Joseph, Wallowa, OR, we'd continue on west on OR 86 to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, arriving there just in time for their after show on the Oregon Trail. A fellow that called himself Buffalo Bill and his lady told the history of the trail using story, projected pictures and songs of that era. Was very interesting and one has to cross the tracks of the Oregon Trail to get to the Center and back out to the highway. The history of the Oregon Trail was of interest to me as my mother's uncle was born near Old Fort Boise. The wagon train took a break and everyone got to rest including the animals. Then they continued on into Willamette Valley. After browsing for awhile and Rita buying a book about the Trail, we continued on to I-84 just north of Baker City (Baker). In La Grande (Union) I picked up OR 82 which took us to Enterprise where we turned north on OR 3. When we got to the top of the hill to start down to the Grande Ronde River, I noted the mileage and it was just over 6 miles to the river. We arrived at Boggan's Oasis five minutes past closing time, so had to do without their great milk shakes.

As we started up the Rattlesnake Grade there was a doe with a set of twins and one other fawn, evidently she had adopted it. Sometimes doe's will do this when something has happened to the fawn's mother. Yes the grade was a 6 mile climb and then we had the grade down into Asotin, Asotin, WA which is 5 miles. So you can see almost half of the distances to drive from the north to get into Wallowa County is up and down curvy

roads which a flatlander will average about 25 MPH but us hillbillies make better time than that.

We got into our motel in Lewiston, Nez Perce, ID at about 7:00PM. We just ordered Pizza in and relaxed.

7/1 Sunday I got up early and took a 5 mile walk along the Clearwater River. Due to the time change I woke up a little after 4 and was out on the path by a little after 5. When I got back Rita was getting ready for Church. We made the 0800 Mass at Holy Family in Clarkston and then on our way back over to Lewiston we stopped by Wal Mart for Rita to pick-up something and on the way back to the car her right knee popped and has been giving her pain ever since. I went to the valley and after lunch went out and put out some counties. I took one of the loops I'd taken several times. The route started with Nez Perce, Lewis, Idaho, and then Lewis/Clearwater line, then on to Latah County and back to motel.

7/2 Monday morning I went to visit my brother at his place of business, he's a cobbler and I hadn't seen him for over a year and a half, stopped by three other places to do business and visit with old friends. In the afternoon, Rita and I took a short run into the country side and ran Asotin, Garfield, Whitman Washington and Nez Perce and Latah Idaho.

7/3 Tuesday was spent visiting friends in Lewiston and Clarkston and that evening had dinner at my brother Gordon's. His wife is a great cook and twelve of us sat down to a feast. My nephew and his family from Wilsonville, OR, Gordon's son and his family were also there. It was a very enjoyable evening and then Rita and I topped it off by going to the Senior Center in Clarkston and dancing for awhile. Got to see several there that we'd danced with when we spent the winter of 10/11 in Clarkston.

7/4 Wednesday continued our trip westward to Vancouver. In Benton County instead of crossing over and taking I-84 to Portland, we stayed on the Washington side and took WA-14 which took us within a mile of the hotel for the National. For lunch we stopped in a Layton, WA at the Country Café and had a great lunch topped off with fresh strawberry short cake for Rita and I had a rhubarb/apple crumble. The strongest signal I had on a mobile that day was when N0KV/N0DXE ran Hood River, OR and I was just across the river in Skamania, WA. The band wasn't very good that day but they were better than 40 over S9.

7/7 Saturday up early and drove down to Lincoln City, OR for a picnic. On the way down and back I ran Washington, Yamhill, Polk, Tillamook, and Lincoln counties. Rita got to see the shortest river in the world (D-River) The DipSea Net a social group that meets on 3.940 every morning from 8-9 and then every afternoon 5-6 and is one of the oldest nets to running was having their annual Picnic. It has been held at the Elks

Wapiti Park just south of Lincoln City for over 15 years. I got to see ones that I've known as far back as 1977. I am sure glad that we made the trip down there as I don't expect to see them again as several are pushing 90 and some are in their 90's. By taking this trip we did miss the photo sessions, but it was more important getting to spend some time with old friends.

I know that some on my way back to the National from Lincoln City were unhappy that they missed a couple of counties. One evidently missed the spot right away and when he called on the cell-phone I was up the road several miles from that county and I had to hurry to get back to Vancouver. The other one I was only in the county long enough to run it on one band and I happened to be on CW when I crossed into it and I ran it until I came to the county line. The station didn't know how to work me on CW. As it was Rita and I just had time to change clothes and get down to the Banquet Room.

7/8 Sunday, Traveled on I-5 North to Cowlitz county and crossed into Oregon at Longview, WA and on down to Clatsop County Oregon on US 30. We did travel south of Astoria to Fort Clatsop where Lewis and Clark spent the winter before heading back to Washington DC. At 9:30 I got to watch the flag raising ceremony they have at the fort. They used a replica of the Flag that Lewis and Clark had with them and flew. They had several of the flags and passed them out along their journey. It has 15 stars and 15 stripes on it, it also is the flag that flew over Ft McHenry when The Star Spangled Banner was written. That flag design was the only one that had 15 stripes on it and a red strip next to the field of blue. The strips represented the original 13 plus VT and KY. It was seen that they were going to run into trouble if a stripe was added for each new state, so congress passed a law that the flag would only contain 13 stripes and a star for each state. It was a very impressive ceremony and a tidbit of history I'd never heard before. I did take pictures of the ceremony.

From Fort Clatsop we returned to Astoria and crossed the 3 ½ mile long bridge into Washington and ran on up to Clallam County where we spent five nights with Rita's daughter and husband. While there Rita and I traveled out to the most western part of the lower 48. It was a very foggy drive that morning but by the time we got almost to Cape Flattery it cleared off and was a beautiful morning. Was a side trip that was very well worth the time and was the first day that I witnessed the band flares.

7/13 Friday on our way over to King County to visit my Son and family we stopped in Poulsbo, Kitsap, WA for some of the famous Poulsbo bread and Swedish fruit cookies, then onto Mt Rainier. It was beautiful up there but at Paradise Visitors Center you couldn't go up any of the trails unless you had snow boots. I couldn't believe how much snow that was there. When we head to my son's place we went around onto the east side of Rainier into Kent, WA.

7/16 Monday we started our journey home I wasn't able to get a contact in Pierce or Thurston Counties and those were the one two on the way home About all I can say about running counties on the way home is that the bands stunk except for the last day which wasn't too bad until mid afternoon.

Rita was able to get a good look at Crater Lake this time and we enjoyed our trip down the California Coast driving through the Red Woods. We spent most of one day visiting Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon. From there we made a bee-line for home. Ended up drive about 5500 miles with-out any problems and we enjoyed our entire trip except for the bad band conditions.

3M – Don't Miss Out!

STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR OLD TIMERS MMM

If you are wondering what to do the last weekend of September.... how about considering a trip to Murfreesboro, Tennessee? KM4W, (who just had his 90th birthday!) convener of the famous MMM meetings for 25 years reminds County Hunters that there is still time to register for the meetings set for September 27-30. The host hotel, formerly a Holidome with a great layout and atrium area to socialize is now a redecorated and updated Clarion hotel. A special rate has been negotiated by the committee, KM4W, W9GBH, KA3DRO, W4RKV, KG5J that includes waiver of the pet fee if you are wanting to bring one..... as well as a nice hot breakfast buffet each morning. NOTE: THIS IS NOT A MARAC EVENT and as such will include no meetings, no voting, no programs, and no awards ceremony.... nor will any dues be collected. There will be 4 days (and nights) filled with great socializing, rag-chews, eyeball QSO's, and friendship with people that you have probably not seen for many years..... ! There will be golf available, as well as a number of Cribbage challenges. There are literally hundreds of places to eat in the immediate area including Cracker Barrel just 100 yards away as well as some fast foods and a complete dining area within the hotel. Additionally, a traditional Mary BoBo's dining experience (real southern home cooking!) has been set up by W9GBH for Friday morning..... check ASAP to see if any seats are left available. For reservations, contact the hotel via direct phone: 615-896-2420 and let them know you are with the Radio Group... mention Bill Bells name!). If you are interested in sharing the drive to

reduce expenses and actual driving, contact W9GBH as he will try to set up a "carpool" to join you up with others who desire the same. These meets are not held yearly.... last one was about 5 years ago..... so if you want to have a great time with a great bunch of Old Timers County Hunters.... this is the time to attend! Hope we see y'all there

Here's the info from Feb Issue:

MMM REUNION Announcement.....

We are pleased to announce the formation of the latest " Old Timers Reunion" !!! The location has been expanded, because we sold out the last one, and we have relocated it to the scene of the biggest reunions..... MURFREESBORO, Tenn.

The old Holiday inn Holodome has been bought by Choice Hotels and has been totally renovated and improved and we have reserved 50 rooms. It's now a Clarion Inn. Date is set for September 27-30 (Thursday-Sunday) . Rates are \$70/night dbl occupancy. (note to pet lovers: pets, up to 2, are welcome and the \$12 fee is waived for attendees) You can view the hotel and amenities such as the indoor heated spa and pool, elevated balcony in the atrium, and large rooms and extra size parking areas in the website for Choice Hotels, here:

<http://tinyurl.com/7pcdlqc>

take the virtual tour!

Past attendees also recall proximity of Cracker Barrel just 100 yards away and the many golf courses in the area as well as abundant other restaurants and shopping.

When making reservations, you must mention " 3M REUNION" for this rate. Phone 615-896-2420 for reservations. More information to be added soon but please circle the date and make plans for this great County Hunter event.

NOTE: THIS IS NOT A MARAC SPONSORED EVENT and never has been. Additional info available from KA3DRO, KM4W, W4RKV, W9GBH. You do not have to be an MMM alumni to attend.

Mary Bobo's – Chow Down with Herb, W9GBH

MARY BOBO'S/MMM REUNION

DATE: Friday, September 28, 2012 @ 11:00 a.m.

6

PLACE: Mary Bobo's Lynchburg, TN

COST: \$20.81 per person tax incl. Gratuity extra

THOSE WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE LUNCHEON MUST DO THE FOLLOWING

ASAP!!

1. Each county hunter shall call MARY BOBO'S (1-931-759-7394} and make your own reservation/s with a valid credit card and tell them you are with the AMATEUR RADIO GROUP.

2. You must also e-mail me (hm315pka@gmail.com) and give me your NAME AND CALL. This allows me to track the number/s signed up and paid with a credit card. CALLING ME DOES NOT MAKE YOU A RESERVATION. YOU MUST CALL MARY BOBO'S.

3. It is imperative you call MARY BOBO'S NOW to lock up your reservation/s. You cannot wait as we currently have 40 seats. Herb W9GBH
If you've never been there, check out

<http://huntsville.about.com/cs/daytrips/a/bobo.htm>

Should be a great one! Don't miss out!

NJ QSO Party

The NJ QSO Party was going on at the same times as the US Counties QSO Party, so you had the opportunity to snag some NJ counties along with the counties from county hunter mobiles out for the weekend, and many fixed county hunter stations who got on for a few hours from the home station. I did not hear any mobiles, nor see any spotted although some could have run on 40M and just never spotted.

From the 3830 and the W6RK spot page, we have:

W2RKD was on in Gloucester, NJ on SSB.

N2CQ was on CW from Gloucester with 115 QSOs.

K2TD was a bonus station. He worked a few others calling CQ. Never saw him spotted.

K3EL was in Monmouth (CW), much of the day. Big signal. 199 CW and 14 SSB contacts.

K2JT spotted only on 40cw in Bergen, NJ

K2SQS on from Burlington (CW), N2MK (CW) , N2MM (SSB),

W2MWI was on from Cape May (he is good for the Natural Bingo there) – on CW

W2SA was CW in Mercer, NJ.

Traveling Salesman Revisited

Last month, we talked about the 'traveling salesman' problem. While some might have just found it an interesting exercise, the problem has almost daily applications to situations in life. The 'optimization' of just about everything is a major computational problem dealt with on a daily basis.

If you do a bit of history search on the traveling salesman problem (TSP) you will find out it goes back to the early 1800s or earlier. There were lots of traveling salesmen – and of course, post office delivery people, and government officials needing to visit town centers, the tax collectors, etc.

It was kept alive through generations as means were tried to develop algorithms that would provide answers to the question. Back in the 1800s, they didn't have computers to figure out the answer. For just 48 cities, the number of combinations comes it at: 48!

1.24139 times 10 to the 61st power. Which is about 1.2 followed by 61 zeroes.

You aren't going to do that with paper and pencil. So you aren't going to solve this problem without a BIG computer, or a small computer with hours of computing time. (or a modern machine – and even there it takes a while).

You can start with the post office. In any region, you have daily delivery. What is the optimum way for a postman to plan his route, and what is the optimum plan for a region to have multiple mailmen to deliver that mail to hundreds, thousands, or hundreds of thousands of

addresses?

For airlines, it's how many passengers, from how many airports, through how many hubs, to get the maximum number of people from their start to their destination with the least use of resources (fuel, pilot time, number of pilots, number of planes) etc.

Various algorithms have been devised that provide solutions in much less time – but they might be up to 50% longer. Of course, once you get past 50 cities or points, the problem quickly escalates. A brute force answer for 500 cities would be 488! (488 factorial, or $488 \times 487 \times 486 \times 485$ – etc). Or 50,000 mailboxes on thousands of streets. That comes out to numbers that are so large that you don't even want to think about trying it. You won't be alive long enough to see the answer on your PC machine. Even at 1 million floating ops per second, that's only 10 to the sixth power. It's going to take a lot of seconds (trillions of them) to get to 50,000!

I came across an interesting news article. The interest in the problem is still alive to find the optimum or near optimum answer without the 'brute force' method of having to calculate every possible route then select the shortest.

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Now a computer scientist at Washington University in St. Louis has developed and tested an algorithm that might at least have made Loman's road traveled a little easier.

Weixiong Zhang, Ph. D., associate professor of computer science at Washington University, has developed an algorithm that attacks an old problem in the computing and business worlds known as the Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP). An algorithm is the backbone of computer operations; it is a step-wise mathematical formula, similar to a recipe, that solves a problem or reaches an otherwise desired end. The Traveling Salesman Problem is actually an umbrella term for a whole host of planning and scheduling problems, often involving routes; a classic one being a postman's route, for instance.

Zhang currently is working with an AT&T Bell Labs collaborator David S. Johnson, Ph.D., a pioneer and widely acknowledged leading expert in the area of computational complexity. They have applied the algorithm bearing Zhang's name to ten theoretical Traveling Salesman Problems and found it to be the best solution for half the problems, including one the AT&T Bell Labs is focusing on. The Zhang algorithm can be applied to a host of real-life problems.

One of the problems that AT&T Bell Labs is concerned with is one that involves the routes of payphone coin collectors. Zhang's algorithm, in the case of payphone coin collectors, maps a route through these different phone booths enabling the service person to avoid backtracking, one-way streets, or visiting the same booth twice, getting him back to the office at a reasonable time. In the business world, this saves a company time and expense.

Zhang and his collaborator tested his algorithm on four different classes of coin collecting

routes, with routes of 100, 316, 1,000, and 3,162 different payphones. Compared with six other algorithms tested, the Zhang algorithm found the shortest, most efficient, or cost-effective route in each case. The algorithm is scalable and robust; it can compute for up to half million "nodes," in this case payphones, and it computed some routes in a matter of seconds.

Beyond the phone booth problem, the Zhang algorithm and the others were tested on a category called "No-wait flowshop problems." Picture an automobile paint shop with multiple stations for painting different portions of a car. The algorithm maps the most efficient route from start-to-finish. Also computed were routes for tiny disk drive readers inside a computer and routes for moving heavy oil-drilling equipment on a large field. In the case of the disk drive reader, a short route must be chosen to minimize the distances that the reader must "travel" to speed up data access operations. In the case of the drilling equipment, a short route means a short "travel" distance for the equipment. The algorithm also can be applied to what is called very large scale integration (VLSI). For such a problem, a route is needed that will connect all the minuscule components on a computer chip so that they can interface and function together.

Each of the TSPs tested are considered asymmetrical, which takes into account that the distance from place A to place B is not the same as that from B to A. Asymmetrical problems more closely reflect real-world situations. For instance, traveling on a freeway, you might be able to get on and reach a destination without paying a toll, but on the way back you might have to cross a bridge that has a toll. Thus, the cost in one direction is not the same as that going back. The Zhang algorithm factors in these real-life asymmetries.

The work is partially funded by the National Science Foundation. "The Traveling Salesman Problem is one of the first computer science problems to be approached in the past century, and it is one of the first problems shown to be in the class called NP-Complete," said Zhang.

Loosely speaking, NP-Complete is a class of problems that are believed unsolvable within a reasonable amount of time in the worst case. Thus, approximation algorithms are very important for solving real-world problems such as the payphone coin collector problem. Zhang's algorithm is considered to be one of the two best approximation algorithms for the Asymmetric Traveling Salesman Problem. The other is what is called the Kanellakis-Papdimitriou local search algorithm, named after two noted computer scientists.

Algorithms such as Zhang's are memory-efficient and meant to be embedded in hardware as a small but essential part of what's called mechanical electronic manufactured systems (MEMs). Zhang currently is working on algorithms that are meant to run on smart devices, with very small memory and limited power.

"Memory is a very big issue today," Zhang said. "With MEMs, you bundle the software so it's very tightly integrated with the hardware and each smart device, with just a few thousand bits of memory and small amounts of data, all connect with each other to build and run a larger application. Running time-and space-efficient algorithms, you build a big system out of these small smart devices."

Source: Science Daily 2001

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Of course, there are many algorithms devised that will likely provide a solution in a reasonable time in a thousandth of the time – but it may be far from optimum. Depending upon the problem, many algorithms will come in within a few percent of the 'optimum', and once you start putting other constraints on the problem (asymmetrical – like one way streets, tolls, bridges, ferries, congestion, hours of work/time traveled, etc) you really need something other than brute force.

For county hunting, we have the constraints of – the roads have to go there (or an airplane and rental car), it's got to be a spot where you can hear and transmit from (and stop if needed), XYL considerations, food and lodging, etc. So that leaves a lot up to the human.

Someday, some computer geek county hunter will likely write an 'app' for your iPhone or Android machine that will compute the optimum way to run a distant state in the fewest miles. Unlike the TSP original problem, you can backtrack and be in a county a second or third time if that is the optimum way to do it, and you can just hit the border of counties. I'm not sure what good it would do, but it would make an interesting college term project – hi hi.

OH QSO Party

Wow...N4CD found himself accidentally in the middle of the OH QSO Party. I gave out a few contacts as I passed through counties, and worked a few OH stations.....but putting out the counties on Net Freq and chasing the KS counties was top priority. It was tough to find a frequency on 20m to start a run...and 40M wasn't much better. Too many loud strong fixed stations and too many pileups for my little IC-706 that jumped off the seat a few times from the LOUD LOUD stations and pileups that pinned the S meter all the way over. But it was fun. What can you say? 3 QSO parties going on at the same time, zipping along the interstate going through the counties, trying to tune in stations and fight the pile ups? You got to be nuts to do it all.....

from the 3830 reflector:

Lots of folks filed scores, but almost no one commented. :(

So we don't have much in the way of 'soapbox' for OH.

K1LT – Fairfield OH

I tried to set up for an SO2R operation, which I usually do with two instances of Writelog networked together. However, just before the contest I upgraded to Writelog v11, hoping to see the new DX multiplier. Writelog did not include the new multiplier, which is probably because no one maintains the OQP plug-in. Also, 2 instances of Writelog can no longer talk to each other because of some strange error message about incompatibilities between "local exchange columns". So, no SO2R.

I put up the NVIS dipole for 80 meters about 20 feet above the ground in the middle. However, most of the activity was on 40 meters, even more so than last year. It didn't take long for my full-sized ground-mounted 40 meter vertical to show its DX properties (or lack of NVIS capabilities). So I moved the 80 meter NVIS dipole from the useless second radio to the main station radio and tuned it up with the antenna tuner. That change made an significant difference.

I looked on 10 meters at the appointed time (top of the even GMT hour) once just to see what was going on. The band was dead except for KV8Q who was my one and only 10 meter QSO, and I never got around to checking 15 meters.

Finally, I discovered that there is another "mode", which makes use of this "microphone" and a lot of squawking. I made a lot of contacts on SSB, more that on CW, which only happens in phone-only contest. I was harassed once on 75 by some clod who insisted I was operating in the "DX window". While I normally try to avoid feeding the trolls, I did tell him that I was willing to work DX. Trolls and other malcontents are one big reason why I don't like phone.

Many thanks to the mobiles for making the contest more interesting. I worked:

K8MR in CARR, NOBL, PICK, TUSC, UNIO, and VINT

K8RYU in PIKE, SCIO, GALL, JACK, and LAWR

K9TM in MADI, MEDI, MIAM, MORR, SUMM, WARR, WILL, and WOOD

W8O in ALLE, SENE, DEFI, FULT, HENR, LUCA, OTTA, PAUL, SAND, and WILL

W9MSE in DELA, HARD, ASHL, RICH, and STAR

I missed AUGL, BELM, HARR, KNOX, LOGA, MONR, ROSS and VT, and a bunch of provinces.

I wonder if a "standby mobile" could be dispatched to the appropriate counties near the end of the contest. There would need to be some sort of "most needed" counties list, which shouldn't be available until after the first 2/3s of the contest. Maybe the whole idea isn't very practical. Maybe I should operate for 8 hours, and then jump in the car and drive to the closest county I've haven't worked. In my case this year that would be Ross county. Just a thought.

Solar Subsidies

Solar Subsidies: Misdirecting Industry and Consumers

by

David Bergeron

In a recent Economist on-line debate, the affirmative motion “This house believes that subsidizing renewable energy is a good way to wean the world off fossil fuels” was surprisingly defeated.

In his closing remarks, the moderator softened his strident opposition to the negative case, even admitting that “subsidizing renewable energy, is wasteful and perhaps inadequate to address climate-change concerns.”

Beyond the Climate Debate

The debate, indeed, reopened the question whether anthropogenic greenhouse-gas forcing was

a serious planetary environmental concern. But such focus short-changed what I think is the more important question for the Economist. Not only are the renewable-energy subsidies (such as for solar) wasteful and potentially insufficient, they are outright diabolical if indeed there is a looming environmental crisis.

I am not evaluating whether anthropogenic global warming is real and potentially cataclysmic; I'm arguing that if there is a valid concern about the enhanced greenhouse gas effect, not only will the subsidies not solve the problem, but may very well prevent or postpone a legitimate solution.

Grid Solar: Radically Uneconomic, Intermittent

I've written before about why on-grid solar power is absurdly uneconomic and has almost no hope of becoming a viable alternative to current generation technology — or even competitive with other more viable renewable technologies. I'm asking the reader to accept this position for the sake of understanding the potential implication of my claim.

I think it is safe to say that public opinion towards solar is very positive, and there are many in the field claiming that on-grid solar is at or near grid parity. But it only appears this way because of massive governmental subsidies/ratepayer surcharges for installing and using solar PV. In reality, it is hopelessly inefficient from an economic sense to be a fix for our CO₂ concerns.

The Real Problem of Subsidies

Here is the real problem: Subsidies make solar appear viable today, so where is the motivation for an entrepreneur to risk money, or even focus on developing real energy alternatives when solar is “almost” there? How can an inventor justify striving with the effort it takes to really develop something great when he is competing against a straw man technology which can provide power at almost the same cost of traditional power sources today? But of course it really doesn't.

The answer is he can't justify the effort, so the next great thing is not developing, at least not with the sense of urgency it should be. Why enter a contest when you are competing against someone with an unfair advantage? You may be the faster swimmer, but your competitor is using flippers.

Solar subsidies are a placebo which is giving the general public a sense of security about our energy future and is robbing the motivation of those entrepreneurs that could actually address our energy problems. Subsidies are much worse than just wasteful, they're diabolical. They lull us into thinking we have almost solved the problem and they hinder us from seeking the real solutions.

An Analogy to Leprosy

“Necessity is the mother of invention,” and it’s fairly easy to see this is often the case. Need is a great motivator. We need to feel the pain of our situation to really be challenged and change it.

Leprosy maims its victims by robbing them of their sense of pain. The leper can put his hand on a hot surface and not feel the heat. He can twist an angle and will keep walking.

In the same way, on-grid solar subsidies will allow a homeowner to continue using much more electricity than he can afford (or the planet can sustain) and he will not know it. If he felt the pain of the real cost, he would use less power.

But he does not feel it, since subsidies hide the pain, like leprosy.

Summary

Subsidies defeat market forces on both sides of the equation. They reduce potential supply by hindering entrepreneurs from developing new energy supplies, and they increase demand by artificially keeping the price of energy down. There could hardly be a more cleverly disguised means of exacerbating a potential climate issue.

If solar PV does not develop into a viable alternative, which I believe it won’t for many decades, not only will we have wasted billions of dollars; far worse, we would have defeated normal protective market forces which would have better prepared us for a potential necessary change in energy use.

In the near term, perhaps our bigger concern than climate change is anthropogenic energy policy.

Some Goodies from Ebay

On the regen trail..... some interesting stuff shows up on Ebay. Here's a WW2 relic – but a nicely executed copy



From his description on the Ebay ad and more thrown in;

This is a copy of the famous WWII British spy radio called the Paraset. These were dropped behind enemy lines through out Europe to provide resistance groups with a means to communicate with England. These used a simple but effective one tube(valve) regenerative receiver circuit with one stage of audio amplification. Two 6SK7 metal pentode tubes in the receiver. (note: The 'reaction' control is the regen control. The Brits and Aussies refer to regeneration controls as the 'reaction control').

The transmitter consisted of a single crystal controlled 6V6 oscillator coupled to the wire antenna. It ran a few watts output. (replicas might use a 6L6 transmitter tube for a few more watts).

The frequency range was 3 to 8 MHz. It took an external power supply. The transceiver was about the size of a Kleenex box, and the power supply about half that size.

The receiver is very sensitive and can copy AM,CW and SSB modes. The transmitter is CW only and will run about 5 watts output on 80 and 40 meters. This can use any fundamental frequency crystal for 80 or 40 meters.

There's a whole web site dedicated to those who preserve and make copies of the Paraset radio!

<http://www.paraset.co.uk/>

Here's another guy who built a duplicate. Interesting read to see how he accumulated the parts and built a faithful replica!

http://www.qsl.net/ik0moz/paraset_eng.htm

Stick Shift Cars

Stick Shift Autos On Their Way Toward Extinction

Twenty years ago, a quarter of all cars sold in the United States had manual transmissions. By last year, that figure dropped off to a measly 3 percent.

Though sales of cars equipped with stick shifts saw a jump this year—automotive industry information firm Edmunds.com recently reported that 7 percent of vehicles sold this year had 'four on the floor'—over the next 15 to 20 years, analysts say sticks shifts will be all but obsolete.

Among other things, stick-shift snobs can blame increasingly efficient automatic transmissions and the onset of more hybrid and electric cars for the death of manual transmissions. According to Edmunds.com Industry Analyst Ivan Drury there's only one hybrid vehicle on the market, the Honda Civic, that offers a stick shift option.

"As more vehicles become hybridized or fully electric, there's just no purpose [for manual transmissions]," he says.

It also has to do with the dwindling number of drivers who even know how to drive stick, he adds. Comparatively fewer new drivers are taught the tricks of the trade when it comes to manual transmissions these days and automatic transmissions are arguably easier to drive. So what explains the recent jump in purchases of vehicles with manual transmissions?

"We've just had the perfect storm," Drury says, pointing to the increasing number of drivers trading in significantly older cars for newer models. "We had the right segment, the right buyer, and price-wise these stick shifts are still cheaper for some automakers."

But while stick-shift loyalists vehemently defend the appeal and benefits of manual transmissions, many of their arguments against automatic transmissions don't hold water anymore.

For starters, while manual transmissions generally get better gas mileage than automatics, that isn't always the case. Some compact automatic cars such as the 2012 Ford Focus and 2012 Honda Fit, perform better than their manual siblings when it comes to fuel efficiency. Another boon for stick-shift drivers has been the price break. Traditionally, cars with automatic transmissions were pricier than their manual transmission counterparts, but again, that's not always the case anymore. Many GM models price automatic and manual transmissions the same.

With automatic transmissions leveling the price and gas mileage playing fields, stick-shifts are decreasingly relevant alternatives for budget conscious car buyers. And so, the temporary uptick in purchase of vehicles with manual transmissions this year is just that, temporary. One shred of good news for stick-shift diehards? Drury says some of the sportier models will likely keep a manual transmission option for nostalgia's sake.

Source: <http://www.usnews.com>

Carbon Trading Fraud

So, how's that carbon-trading thing going? Big Carbon set up shop in the European Union in 2005, and is scheduled to make its North American-franchise debut in California in January. How goes the trade?

Eurozombie

The answer in Europe is: not well. Carbon trading is a zombie in Europe. It's going to start eating flesh pretty soon. It's on a rampage stirring up the airline industry overseas right now (on which more later), but its "life" inside the Union is creepy and inverted.

Since the inauguration of the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), 97 percent of emissions certificates – "permits" to emit carbon dioxide – have been given away to commercial users. The certificates actually being sold were going for over 14 euros each in 2010, but their price has fallen by 60% in the last year. The stock exchange in Bavaria closed its ETS trading operation on 30 June, due in part to its pointlessness.

What this means, just to be clear, is that there isn't enough demand for any of the things you

have to buy carbon permits for to justify buying them. If you can get them for free, great. But if you have to pay for them, you can't earn enough to make that worthwhile.

Starting in 2013, however, European power generating companies will have to buy all their permits. Consumer rates and prices in general will therefore go up. Germany, with the continent's biggest economy, is also reportedly planning to cut the number of permit freebies by 56 percent next year, which will force more businesses to pay for their permits.

To be clear, one more time: From 2005 to 2012, the EU economies have not had to absorb the full cost of carbon trading. Three percent out of 100 is not representative of the actual scope of the cost. The EU hasn't truly implemented ETS, so the record to date is not an indicator of what will happen when ETS is being paid for by everyone. (That said, the estimated cost to the European consumer so far was about 210 billion euros as of mid-2011 – for zero reduction in carbon emissions.)

We have learned what a boon ETS can be for fraudsters. Ingenious criminals have been buying up permits and charging a VAT when they sell them in another country, but pocketing the VAT revenue instead of handing it over the authorities. The fraud has amounted to billions of euros.

There have been other forms of criminal activity. ICE Futures, Europe's biggest trading exchange for carbon permits, suspended prompt trading in permits in early 2011 due to the high incidence of fraud. Prompt trading remains suspended, and apparently no one but the crooks has missed it.

At least one industry slated to be hit with new carbon costs is the airline industry – and non-European airlines aren't taking it lying down. China and India have already made policies that prohibit their airlines from paying the EU-imposed carbon-permit fees. Russia opposes the carbon fee as well, and the US is leading a consortium of nations pressuring the EU not to go ahead with the plan. The House has approved a law prohibiting US airlines from complying with the EU requirement, and the Senate is to vote on the matter soon. (Don't take too much heart from this: the US-led group wants to proceed with a global, UN-sponsored plan, rather than the regional EU plan. It's a dodge in terms of the current EU issue, but it keeps the door open to a globalized carbon-tax scheme that would gouge Americans the hardest.)

Airlines are warning the EU that the airline carbon tax will drive away business and stifle economic growth, but of course, the airlines are just hateful, racist, capitalist fat-cats who only care about killing old ladies and puppies with evil profits. (Interestingly, the ETS giveaways have set up a number of European companies with big stockpiles of carbon credits, which they can theoretically sell someday for a profit, if anyone wants to buy them. As described at the JoNova link in the third paragraph, enterprising Irish power producers have already passed on their future carbon-credit costs to their consumers. They've been getting the giveaways that will end in 2013. The Irish parliament, appalled at this, added a profits tax to keep the power producers in their place. Naturally, the option of simply not doing any of this doesn't occur to

anyone.)

The UN's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is tied closely to the EU ETS, getting much of its cash from ETS sales to the disadvantaged carbon emitters: the three percenters who haven't been getting freebies up to now. The problem with the nascent "global market" in carbon offsets is that it, like the EU market, is vastly oversupplied. The CDM works as follows:

[G]overnments and companies in developed countries can earn emissions offsets (CERs) by investing in low-carbon projects in developing countries. They can use the credits to achieve their Kyoto targets.

We may note that the way CDM works doesn't reduce the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, it just induces investment money into low-carbon projects in developing countries. Investing in this manner is counted as a reduction in carbon emissions, even though that's not what it is. This is basically a whole bunch of snake oil.

But interest in it has flagged dramatically anyway. Emissions offsets, called CERs under the CDM scheme, have lost 70% of their value in the last year.

US carbon trading

Carbon trading has plummeted into an abyss of disinterest, even the Chicago Carbon Exchange having gone belly-up in 2010. (It's now being sued for fraud, since its investors were attracted with promises of futures, and now there aren't any.)

The Northeast's Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) has also seen plunging demand for carbon permits. New Jersey pulled out of RGGI in 2011, and New Hampshire is considering it as well. The New Hampshire legislature passed a new law last week requiring the state executive to get approval from the legislature for participation in any more carbon schemes. The big complaints? RGGI has driven up utility rates for consumers and isn't making much money for the state treasuries. (This site has a good history of the sluggish sales at RGGI's auctions.)

You have to be really, really stinking-drunk rich to play pretend with carbon trading, and fewer and fewer nations (or states) can afford it with each passing month.

California's big adventure

So what's the overextended, under-revened state of California planning to do? That's right: open its carbon-credit market for business in 2013. Oh, and Quebec is joining in California's suicidal plunge. Eight US Western states that were originally signed up for the Western Climate Initiative (the state-chartered operator of the carbon-credit exchange) have dropped

out, but Quebec – on the other side of the continent – is hanging tough.

Governor Jerry Brown and his carbon bean-counters have already baked \$1 billion in projected carbon-credit revenue into his 2012-13 budget proposal. That's an optimistic projection, to be sure, but a characteristic one. In the Unhatched Chickens Sweepstakes, the state also assumed \$1.9 billion in revenue from the Facebook IPO (I'm not kidding) for the same budget proposal. And those two highly risky assumptions still leave California with a \$16 billion current deficit on paper.

Now it's time to guess which state-chartered agency has been exempted, with a legislative sneak-by in 2012, from California's "open-meetings" law, which stretches back to 1967 and explicitly includes state-chartered semi-private organizations. Yes, it's the Western Climate Initiative. This agency that's going to implement policy on taxing carbon emissions gets to meet in secret, without public scrutiny, to make its decisions.

Keep in mind, carbon-trading is an entirely artificial activity, created out of no concrete need, but from an abstract and unproven theory about catastrophic warming. Each one of the points made publicly in furtherance of the theory has been proved to not be based on observable fact: there are four to five times as many polar bears now as there were 40 years ago; the globe has not warmed at all in the last 20 years, but has cooled slightly; the Antarctic ice pack is bigger than it was 30 years ago, even though the Arctic ice pack has receded (but is regaining thickness again in the last 3 years, a prelude to horizontal expansion); the globe was demonstrably – based on actual temperature observations – warmer from the 1920s to the 1940s than it has been for the last 20 years, yet human carbon emissions were dramatically lower in the earlier period; the famous "hockey-stick" graph was based on falsification of data, and the globe was in fact warmer in the Medieval Warm Period than it has been at any time since; and in any case, the UN's own scientists have said that we don't even have a method of observing or analyzing the "feedback" mechanism that is believed to create a warming danger for the earth, much less for predicting its effects in the future.

The case for catastrophic anthropogenic global warming and/or climate change has fallen apart on examination so far. Therefore, the whole carbon-trading scheme is based on a false premise. It is an excellent moral lesson that nothing can go right with a policy that is based on falsifying and misrepresenting data. From criminal fraud to tremendous loss of putative value in the exchange unit, this is what you get when you impose artificial requirements that meet no valid real-world need on the people. Nothing good can ever come of it – and this has been, so far, only a very small dose. Any bigger ones will be much worse.

On the Road with N4CD I

It was still summer with lots of long days of sunshine. The temps in TX were hitting 100 deg day after day and the worse part is that at 9pm, it's still hot at 95 deg with a low of, if you are lucky, 82 deg at 6am. Those cooler temps up north sure looked nice.

The days were getting a bit shorter, but it was still prime travel season, there was no snow in any forecast, and I had to urge to run a few more counties. There were also a few good excuses to go traveling. So another N4CD was planned back east with the following objectives

1 - Try to finish running all the counties in the lower 48 for second time transmit. There were 7 left to run – way way back 'east'.

2 - Try and finish off some states for Mobile Diamond Award. Some are down to about 100 or less to go, but I still needed over 190 to go. I could finish off WV and PA and NY. Some of those may not have been run by anyone. Also MA and RI.

3 – Attend the annual Antique Wireless Association convention in Henrietta, NY (Monroe County) for 3 or 4 days.

4 - Have fun and escape some TX hot muggy August weeks.

If you're a regular newsletter reader, you probably read last month that it was down to 15 counties to finish up all second time transmit, including 1 in NH, 5 in MA, plus AK and HI. So you might have suspected the trip was going to include Dukes and Nantucket if possible. You never know where N4CD will wind up. All of the MD folks were alerted to the possibility of a trip out to 'the islands'. Or those who figured out that 'eastern MA' included Dukes and Nantucket. Reservations for the motel and ferry had been made. It was still a long trip back to the east coast and lots could go wrong. So I only listed part of the trip on the planned trip page. A lot of the trip was 'follow the GPS' to connect the dots needed.

So it was off on the boring interstate roads – up I-30 to Little Rock, AR (Pulaski County) over to I-40 for the next 500 miles to get to Virginia. Monday night was Super 8 motel at \$45 and dinner at a Chinese buffet place nearby. I started a bit late due to early morning doc appointment. Then the next day it was up into WV. For Alan, VK4AAR, I'll throw in a few roads. You make good time all the way up to WV...then it is off the beaten path and interstates onto WV back roads where you average about 30 mph on a good day and it seems to take 100% more miles with the roads full of twists, turns, switchbacks, small towns with 20mph speed limits, etc.

Alan, VK4AAR, has his home up for sale. When it is done, the big beam will come down, and he'll be operating from a retirement home type place with probably just a vertical or wire antennas. It will be a lot harder for him to work those counties. Taking care of a residential property was becoming too much of a chore for him and his wife. At least he can follow along vicariously in the newsletter.

First it was up I-77 – to Fayette, WV. All of WV had been run for MD, but I never could hear AB4YZ in the hills of WV and he seldom runs on cw these days. So I'd run them myself. Then it was time to head on over on I-64 over to Lewisburg in Greenbrier County. Uh Oh. Around 4pm, after running Fayette, I pulled out my little spotting pad and tried to find a motel over in Lewisburg. Called the Super 8. Yep, they had a room, but it was \$110. Ouch! I asked what was going on, and they said 'State Fair'. OK.....tried the Motel 6. Full. Tried another one. Hmm. \$140/night special rate. Well, it was late enough not to worry about another 100 miles, so I found a motel in Beckley and the junction of I-77 and I-64 – tons of motels and rooms available at normal rates. Econolodge. Dinner at the nearby Cracker Barrel.

Next morning it was over to Lewisburg, then heading north on the 2 lane windy roams up route 219 to Pocahontas, then west on 55 which hits Nicholas and Webster – slow going. Sections where you go over ridges and average 20 mph maybe with miles of turns and twists going up the ridge, then down the other side. Lots of small towns with 25 mph speed limits for a mile or so.





Webster WV – You really have to want to go there!
Sort of like Wallowa, OR.

Eventually you wind up back on the interstate after hours of winding slow roads at 30 mph average type speeds. “Scenic!” - Ha... The Mobile Diamond folks were around to give me contacts. I really don't want to go back there too often. Once every 10 years is about right. Been there half a dozen times, including a late night trip with Mark, WB9OOG – one of my first county hunting trips back in the mid 1990s....to get the LC WBOW for Sam, NX5Z. We got stuck in the ditch at the county line and had to get a big tow truck to get us out. Webster, WV – won't forget that county any time soon!

Then it was up to PA with a few zigs and zags. Nothing to get excited about. That night stayed in Centre, PA in College Station. Dang – motels were full again. Seems a big convention was going on and everything was full. Full. Full. Tried six motels on the phone. Nope. Nothing available. Finally called the Super 8. They had one room left at \$100. Took it. I arrived 30 minutes later. There was a lady behind me hoping to score a room. I got the last one and she was out of luck. Whew. That motel must have had 250 or 300 rooms, too. Walked across the street to the Italian restaurant for dinner. Good. So far motels had become a problem. You never know, but summer time is convention time for many – or State Fairs or other events like car shows, ag festivals, that fill up motels for 25 miles around the site. If you stay more in the boonies – you have better luck. I usually don't have my trips that well planned. Some do. In mid afternoon I figure out where I'll wind up, and try to find a place at 3 or 4pm for another 2 hours of driving. Sometimes that puts you right where the State Fair or other event is. Hmm.... they you hit places where every motel is 10% full. You never know.

In the morning, it was time to hit Mifflin. The roads looked familiar. Been there. Done that a

few times. Seems that was a LC for K7REL a few years back on a special trip. You hit the county line at the top of the hill. It's divided road and there is nice parking area on other side of road. No way to get to it.....it's down the hill for 7 or 8 miles to the next exit....then back up the hill to the parking area high up. Run it.....then head back north to get to the northeast corner of PA. I needed to run two in NY...so it was up to Tompkins and Schuyler...been there before. Parked in the same spot, too. It was a good 15 years ago. Hasn't changed a bit in all that time. House on other side of street. You can park either side.

Next, down and back east on route 17 at the bottom edge of NY over to get Wayne, PA. You look across the river as you head south..and have to go another 10 or 15 miles to get to a bridge....to get back into PA.



Tompkins/Schuyler, NY

Next I headed up to Warren County NY to the QTH on Lake George to visit with BIL and niece for a day or two. She's expecting in Nov and I hadn't seen her since the wedding two years ago. I could chill for two nights before heading over to MA to run there. And the 'room rates' are cheap!.... hi hi. Called ahead to let them know I was on the way.

So late in the evening I pulled into Warren, NY and went QRT for the next day. Time for a rest. And a bit more planning..

Continued

Kansas QSO Party

There were 1x1 calls by the dozens. You could likely finish off the state with 1x1 calls. There weren't too many other calls at all in the contest! Seems everyone was using a 1x1 other than NU0Q/mobile who was putting them out for everyone.

From the 3830 reflector:

N5DO (TX)

Fun weekend. I decided at the last minute to participate and was somewhat undecided at the start as to how seriously I was going to operate. After about 20 minutes most people had left 40M and moved to 20M, and I couldn't hear any KS stations, although I could hear lots of people working them. I stopped for 30 minutes and then came back and checked 20M and found that I could work the east Kansas stations, so I started up again and the band got better and better for me.

The website for this contest was great, with lots of good info. Chasing 1 x 1 calls for special awards was an added bonus. Chasing the mobiles from county to county is always fun and allowed me to come close to the sweep. Some of the top mobiles in my log were K0S with 51 contacts, N0R with 47, N0U and W0O (22), K0E and NU0Q (21), and N0K (18).

N6MU (CA) - 163 sssb 220 cw all 105 multipliers!

What a weekend! 1x1s galore and at least a dozen very active mobiles to chase. Top mobile for me was K0S with 67 Qs followed by N0R(39), N0U/K0O(36), K0WHY(30), N0K(25), NU0Q(24), K0E(22) and W0O(21).

Only needed 13 counties after Saturday and they were all on planned routes except LEA. Special thanks to Jon, W0O/W0ZQ, who changed his route Sunday to include LEA. My sweep was impossible without him. It's that kind of comradeship that makes these things so much fun. My last four were BOU, LCN, LEA and CRA.

I worked both bonus stations and 30 of the 33 1x1s. Looking forward to the neat stamps.

Another tip of the hat to Bob, W0BH, who spearheaded the tremendous turnout.
73...

W4UCW (GA) 99 mults 180 cw

This years KSQP for me was like going fishin' and catching so many that you filled up your fish bucket and over-ran your beer cooler. The hits just kept on coming. What a tour de force from the mobiles!

Thanks to Real/Stage Name :

N5NA/NO5W (N0R) - 32

W0BH (K0S) - 26

K5CM (N0U) - 22

NU0Q (Birth Name) - 22

W0ZQ (W0O) - 18

AD0DX (K0E) - 17

K0HNC (N0K) - 12

THose 1x1's are like a Halloween party where you know who they are but still need to keep track of their masks and costumes. Gotta' stay sober.

I was running my usual Voice of America Clear Channel setup of a K3 barefoot into a 55' random wire up 10' so was astonished to have bagged 99 of 105 counties. Which brings me to

As in the Academy Awards where all the showboat actors step up for glory and thank all the "little people" who made it happen (roads and bridges), it's hard to understate how much work and coordination had to go into getting all 105 counties lit up in a 2.9 Million person state with a median county size of 7,053 and 65 of the 105 counties with less than 10,000 people. Both CW and SSB, no less ... so a sub-primitave station could log 99 counties.

So, from Georgia with 159 counties, I respectfully pop a Colt 45 in tribute to the Producers/organizers ... W0BH and others. Thanks for the show.

N0JK: Douglas KS QRP

Initially got on Saturday just to make a couple of contacts, then kind of got hooked by the contest. I ran QRP and loaded up the "rain gutter" on our duplex

in Lawrence. An inefficient antenna. Could not get any runs going as HF condx poor, and T-storm static heavy on the low bands. I did "search and pounce." The fun part was chasing the Kansas "1x1" calls and KS counties. Almost got a "SUNFLOWER" -- thanks to K0F for trying hard Sunday on 80 CW. QRN due to thunderstorms just too high. Great mobile signals from N0K, N0R and NU0Q on 40 Saturday evening.

Some observations. Consider a portable category for KS stations. Many ops like myself in in "C C & R" restricted areas. Portable categories would let single ops, multi-ops (and clubs) set up in rare KS counties and operate "Field Day" style.

Perhaps just one day for the contest -- Saturday from 10a - 10P ? Activity seemed down Sunday.

Some of the "1x1" contest calls seemed rare, ie. "A" and "F." Chasing them is part of the challenge, but hopefully all the "1x1" call letters are "on the air" on all modes and bands to be fair to contestants. The "KANSAS" and "SUNFLOWER" are unique awards to this contest. Suggest the "1x1"s operate some on 75/80 and 40 for the nearby states and in-state ops. KS0KS did a good job Saturday with their bonus station.

Too bad 6M was not open. Had good Es on 6M Aug 22 - 23. I could have done some damage there with my portable yagi. :-) Thanks for an interesting contest.

K0N (K0VXU opr)

Great fun once again. Thanks to all who provided the QSOs.

Strategy this year was to kick back and take it easy but put the K0N call on the air for those seeking the 'KANSAS' and 'SUNFLOWER' certificates.

Operation was mostly SSB on 20 meters but, thanks to the alert from KH6LC, made some QSOs and 15 and 10 the first day with the HQP boys. 15 and 10 produced very little. The second day most of the 15 meter QSOs were with Europe DX. Missed 4 Canadian mults: NT, NU, PE, and YT.

In the last 3 hours I had to operate at low power as the linear gave up the ghost. Still I made around 125 QSOs running low power in those last hours.

Overall the conditions were fair. 15 and 10 were mostly unoccupied (notice I said unoccupied and NOT dead). It was surprising to hear stations on 20 meters only 500-600 miles away with S9+20-30 dB signals at the same time hearing signals 1200-1500 miles with S9+20 dB.

40 meter activity on Saturday was chaotic with the OQP and HQP guys there too. It was hard to find a place to settle for running. I listened briefly on 80 and 160 but the QRN level was too high for any serious effort as we had rain showers come through during the evening....YES...I did say RAIN. Unfortunately the rain didn't amount to much...just watered the weeds....but it did make things difficult on the low bands.

W0ZQ mobile – as W0O

The good news this year was that it was a full 30 degrees cooler compared to last year ... more like the MnQP ! The bad news was that Saturday was a tough day for me with only so-so band condx's and with heavy rain later in the day. Running 11 counties netted only 511 Q's for an average of 46.4 Q/Cty.

While in LYO I heard rolling thunder and saw a big black cloud to my SW. I knew that there was no severe wx forecasted, but they were talking heavy rains and I typically operate right at the county lines ala dirt roads and I have a lot of respect for KS mud, so I decide to try to stay ahead of the cloud as I headed for my overnight in Topeka. I did manage to operate from WAB before the cloud caught me, but WAB only produced 35 Q's and lots of rain static.

Sunday was a better day with decreasing rain showers & mist and better band conditions. While sitting at JAC/JEF/ATC on Sunday morning John, N6MU, asked me if I had plans to make LEA at that time I had not. However, a quick read of the map and my master plan for the day showed that if I skipped 40m operations mid day from a few cty's that I could carve out some time to make LEA at the very end, so I said "sure". As I said, Sunday was better with 464 Q's in just six hours over 7 counties, for an average rate of 66.3 Q/Cty, or an nearly 20 Q's better than Saturday, and that includes not having run 40m from two of the seven ctys on Sunday. Best numbers also occurred late Sunday afternoon with 72 20m Q's from DON and 61 20m Q's from LEA a lot of fun from the front seat of a 2004 Subaru Forester. So in the end, despite having a poor Saturday, Sunday came through and that allowed me to beat my score from last year, so I'm good with that. Many thanks to the KS QSO Party sponsors and I hope that I did a good job representing the O's 73, Jon

K0L mobile with KC0CL opr

Wow, KSQP was quite an experience. I was scheduled to work in 33 counties. On Saturday I got all but the last one. On Sunday I think they moved the County line so I missed one. All told I worked 31 counties and drove through 33. To work all those counties I found myself on back roads, muddy roads, rocky roads, single lane roads, unimproved roads, paved roads and a few major highways. I found it hard to believe that the roads in Kansas were this bad. With all the things that seem to be going wrong, radio set up wrong, logger not set up correctly, navigation not completely setup, bad roads, rain and lightning, it was still a lot of fun and I learned a lot

K0W with K0AP Dragon, OPR - fixed

I was happy to provide the "W" letter to spell SUNFLOWER. Based on the cluster I was not seeing spots on phone (SSB) for the other two "W" stations (W0W and N0W). So thought I should concentrate more on phone to give those guys who don't operate CW a fair share of the fun. Had some really good runs on phone, 4-5 Qso's per minute. Overall, I think the band conditions were worse compared to 2011. 15m Qso's were mostly with EU stations. My goal was to make at least 500 Qso's as I did not expect to operate the entire time due to some family obligations. Ended up with almost 800 Qso's which I think is not too bad. Was not on the air for about 5 hours on Saturday and 2 hours on Sunday. All in all, great fun and already looking forward to KSQP 2013.

K0F with OPR KR0L - fixed

I had a good time working KSQP as N0F once again this year. My second year working pretty much the full contest. Phone activity, to me at least, seemed to be down from last year. I made fewer phone QSOs, but turned in a higher score due to more digital QSOs, and even several DX QSOs on 15m with South America - they had no idea about KSQP beforehand, but we worked each other anyhow.

When I have a 1x1 call, I have considered it my job to be available to contestants as much as possible. I therefore spent a lot of time calling CQ and relatively little hunting others. I did work a number of 1x1 stations, but didn't bother tallying whether I had enough to spell KANSAS or SUNFLOWER, so I

honestly don't know. It is typically difficult to do that from my QTH in the middle of the state, however.

The spotting board was a really nifty thing. I was glad to see people leaving comments there as it went along. I was also pleased to see someone hunting for an F, whom I knew was within 2m simplex range, so I sat a radio on 146.52 and posted it there. He was the only taker, but 20 and 40 weren't doing it for him to reach me, I believe.

I am still learning how to do PSK31 with this contest. It is an odd experience. I have worked RTTY contests before, and the exchange there is typically brief and to the point like contest exchanges are. For whatever reason, switch to PSK31 and you get the name of their rig, when they were licensed, the weather, and the like, before they get to their QTH. I did try calling CQ with RTTY briefly, but got no takers (I did work one other Kansas station I saw using RTTY, but from what I saw, there were few takers there either.) I worked a fair bit of PSK63, and the improved speed of that mode makes these things take far less time.

I looked over my 3830 submission for this contest from last year, and commented on much the same. Last year, I had commented that my typical brief contest digital CQ wasn't working, so I decided that if people wanted to chat, I'd chat, and adopted a more verbose CQ on digital. This year, I tweaked that more verbose CQ slightly, and typically only used it after nobody showed up with the more brief one. However, I'd say that judging by how people responded to my CQ, less than 20% of my digital QSOs were seasoned contestants (at least on digital). So I did go ahead and chat briefly with them, making my response more verbose (I can type way faster than PSK31 can transmit, so it is easy to hit my "exchange" macro button and pepper the exchange with personal bits on the fly).

I had a very strange phenomenon crop up this year though. I commented on it briefly last year, but it happened much more often this year. I'd call CQ, see someone's call, and respond with a greeting, report, etc. Then there'd be silence. I'd wait maybe 30 seconds, nothing. So I'd resend the exchange, with a "do you copy?" THEN I'd get a quick response. I tried tweaking my exchange to look less like a contest exchange and more like a PSK31 QSO, which seemed to help marginally. I'm convinced I didn't have an equipment issue on this end. I continued to get instant responses from people that seemed to be contestants throughout. I didn't ask anyone about it, though one person apologized for being slow. It wasn't a big problem, but it was quite unclear several times if there was still a person on the other end of the waterfall.

I slightly forgot how I logged digital QSOs in fldigi last year; this year, I put the entire received exchange in the exchange box (rather than the RST in its own box). This made my import job into N1MM a touch trickier. My shell script for converting from the fldigi ADIF to N1MM ADIF, therefore, was this:

```
sed -e 's/<XCHG1:6>599 /<APP_N1MM_EXCHANGE1:2>/g' \
-e 's/<XCHG1:7>599 /<APP_N1MM_EXCHANGE1:3>/g' \
| unix2dos
```

still easily enough done.

This was my first KSQP operating with the RigExpert TI-5 instead of a SignaLink USB. I really like the TI-5, and in particular the fact that you can key PTT by asserting RTS on the USB-emulated RS-232 port (the SignaLink offers only VOX to key PTT, which leads to all sorts of contortions when using it for voice keying.)

A few days before the contest, I whipped up some quick programs to do voice keying with this, and posted my source code here:

<https://changelog.complete.org/archives/7632-voice-keying-with-bash-sox-and-aplay>

This continued to work pretty well for me. Next year, I think I will bind a keyboard key to my shell script so I can toggle the voice keying on and off more easily; right now, I keep a Linux shell window open next to my Windows VM running N1MM, and simply start CQ from there and hit Ctrl-C, then quickly change windows, when I hear someone. That works well enough, since I then type the person's call while I repeat it back, and shift windows while I'm listening, but it does require some quick movements.

I had tried N1MM's fldigi integration for Field Day, and was completely disappointed. It seemed to want to pretty much "take over" the fldigi interface and replaced it with an interface far, far worse. So I have continued to abandon the idea of directly logging digital contests with N1MM, only importing data into it for scoring.

A random soapbox moment follows: I am disappointed that ham radio culture, which is so insistent on being open, open when it comes to hardware, tolerates and encourages closed-source software. I am particularly disappointed with this when it comes to contest loggers, which of necessity are somewhat complex beasts. I would love to be able to port N1MM, or at least its scoring engines, to Linux, but the source is completely closed and it's not possible. As I have always done with my software, my source code is always available for anyone to

tweak freely. Our radios are, so I wish the things that control them were, too. end of soapbox

A couple of funny moments:

* Heard someone tuning over a person calling CQ. When the tuning finished, someone else called out, "59 on your tuneup"

* I heard the Windows startup or shutdown sound played more than once at 14.070. Strictly illegal, but I'm assuming this was due to malconfigured sound routing and purely accidental. Windows does not get to touch the audio part of my TI-5, so I guarantee you it wasn't me ;-)

K0E mobile with AD0DX K1BRR ops

This was our second year in the Kansas QSO party as mobile. It was a lot of fun, despite the rain and having our truck die about an hour from home after the contest ended. Special thanks to Bob K1BBR for providing the truck and the radio and driving; without Bob we could not have been K0E/M.

Last year I sent cw using my paddle and keyer; this year I used the laptop to send and N1MM for logging. Last year I made 300 qso's, and this year my goal was t least 600. We made 720 qso's and doubled our score from last year so I'm really happy with that.

We started out in the rain on Sat morning, and I'm surprised how many contacts we made. At one point W4UC? called me and I answered with W4UCZ and then I lost him so I couldn't log the qso. It's hard to hear in the truck in the rain.

This year our plan was to spend less time in eastern Kansas to allow more time in western Kansas and make available the more desired western counties. Everything was going according to plan. We entered Marysville, KS and commented on the large Walmart as we entered town. We stopped for gas / snacks and stretched our legs a little. Then back in the truck and I was back to the radio. 40 min later Bob realized that we had had a senior moment... we were driving east... not west. We had crossed into Nemaha county, but we had skipped it for POT and so I didn't realize it was the county to the east and not to the west. Neither of us could believe that we drove past the large Walmart in this small town and didn't notice it. Unfortunately that cost us an hour and 20 min that we had planned to spend on some county lines in western

Kansas.

We had a lot of fun working the CHY / RAW / SMN county line at the end of the day on Sat. I have to confess I have a hard time on SSB in these contests as a mobile. I still haven't got the knack of finding a good freq to call cq when I can't hear the other stations out there due to the small mobile antenna. I would ask 'is the freq in use', start calling cq, and then find out that there was someone else on the freq after 4 or 5 unproductive cq's. So back to cw. I never did make a contact on 40m ssb, but it wasn't for a lack of trying.

I used N1MM for logging, which isn't really set up for operating on county lines. But I make it work by keeping track of the stations worked while on the county line and manually editing my cabrillo log file after the contest. Last year I had the pleasure of entering the Texas and Iowa qso parties with Bob/W0BH and he taught me the ins and outs of mobile contesting; thanks Bob!

I put my route up on my web site as screen shots of a map showing my route for Sat and Sun. I'm curious to know if this was helpful because it took a few hours to create the map etc. If you found the maps helpful please drop me a short email at ad0dx@yahoo.com with any suggestions to make them better for next year.

It was fun to work some dx during the contest. DL3GA even caught me on a county line and was able to break through the pile up.

I worked a number of stations on 15m. It seemed like 15 was open but very few stations were listening.

I also tried calling cq on 80m cw at 8:45pm local on Sat evening but no takers. Last year I worked a few stations in CO on 80mtrs late on Sat.

Thanks to Bob/W0BH for running a great contest and for proving the chance to have a 1x1 callsign for the contest, it really adds to the fun. My goal for next year is to make 900 qso's and I'm already looking forward to it.

On the Road with N4CD II

Now was the time for more adventure. On Saturday morning I left Warren, NY headed for 'Cape Cod' area with about a dozen counties I had to run. I took the quick route down 'the Northway' interstate to Albany, then over on Mass turnpike. Then it was off on back roads (slow) to get to the ones I needed to run for second time transmit and Mobile Diamond. I had to hit one in NH, one in RI for MD, and of course get out to the 'islands'.

Before I left home, I assembled the 'rental car' station. There was a small case that held the IC-706 and paddles and mic. I had the SWR analyzer in another small case to protect it. The antenna consisted of the W9UCW special used 10 years ago to visit HI and AK. I had 18 inch sections that would total up to over 7 feet and would fit nicely inside a small suitcase. Back then you could carry on a mag mount, antenna parts, tools, etc. No longer but I wasn't going to be flying. I took the spare 20M resonator and 40M resonator....and at the last minute decided to take the 17M resonator along. The Hustler 30M one is too clunky. Wish I had not lost the W9UCW version – a lot smaller.

Before I left, I used a small tape measure to note the length of the resonator tip. Then took them apart so they fit inside the small suitcase (about 18 wide, 2 feet long, and maybe 7 inch thick soft sided one). I had to bend the 40M resonator whip a bit to fit it in. I took the spare power cable and hooked up two medium size clip leads to hook onto a battery terminal.

Other than the small tape measure, the tools included pliers, screwdrivers in several sizes, wrenches that fit the mag mount, wire strippers, tape, a small volt/ohm meter. The suitcase probably weighed 25 lbs – not light for sure, but it was a 'wheelie' type bag. I had no intention of carrying it more than 10 feet.

I checked and tuned the antennas at home. Checked the spare power cable. Double checked. Triple checked. No room for mistakes. I would use the mag mount for the 20M SSB setup I usually use.

I made good time and wound up in Rockingham, NH and had to head south. Barry, N0KV, had needed Suffolk, MA for his Master's Gold for a LONG time. He talked about a trip back east to finish off the few he needed – and that was last year when I dropped by for a visit. I checked the map and saw I could head on down through Boston (Suffolk County) to get down to 'Cape Cod' that way. The 'interstate' ran right through the city and it was a Saturday so there would be no rush hour traffic. Oops.....NOT.

Well, getting to Suffolk proved to be no problem. The traffic moved along at 60 mph right to the bridge where you head into Boston – and arrive at the "Big Dig" which is where they buried

the interstate and lots of interconnecting streets under the city! All of a sudden the traffic comes to a crawl in the miles long tunnel system, and for the next few miles it is 5 mph. Then you emerge from the tunnel and it is another five miles of traffic – even on Saturday. Maybe there was something going on? Or just normal traffic? YUK!

The slow traffic is 'good' radio wise because normally you zip right on through and run out of the county before you finish your runs. No problem there. The bad news is that it took half an hour to get out of Suffolk County and still it crept along south of town for another 10 miles. It was a bit nerve wracking to say the least. Drivers weaving in and out trying to get 15 feet ahead in the 5 mph 8 lanes of traffic creeping along.

I finally got moving again, and headed down to Newport, RI, another I had missed for MD, and needed to run. I started looking for motels. Nope....full up. Full here. Full there. Conventions. Festivals. Weddings. No hope for Providence – big city but big convention going on. So it was further down the route.

The night was in Days Inn along the interstate after 30 miles of trying to find a room. . Same problem. Big Ag show going on in Providence RI.....motels full or \$150 a night price tags! Ouch. Proceeded east on interstate 30 miles away and found a Days Inn in New Bedford, MA. Not cheap once again. \$90-100 type motels were denting the budget!. Dinner nearby at a great Italian restaurant. Lasagna. Delicious.

I had room reservations for the next two nights. You don't want to not plan ahead on 'Cape Cod' in the summer time, but it turned out there were lots of rooms around as the tourists were sort of staying home doing 'home cations' in the Obama economy and folks were already getting set for 'back to school'. Most were further out on the peninsula in the Wellfleet area – lots of 'vacancy' signs. Didn't check prices. Had some great lobster rolls for lunch!

I had a day to enjoy sightseeing on Cape Cod. So I headed out to the Marconi site in the morning out at Wellfleet.

Marconi built one of the first wireless stations in the US to talk to ships in Wellfleet. Here's some info on the site.

<http://www.stormfax.com/wireless.htm>

It stayed in operation until WW1 when it was taken over by the Navy. Marconi lost all the US assets (he refused to license patents so the US gov't simply 'confiscated' the US rights and gave them to RCA to make wireless equipment.

The only thing that remains there are the bases of the four gigantic towers that were installed when the facility was built. Think tens of KW of spark – that, even with a insulated noise reducing building could be heard for four or five miles at night. Loud!



This is the information kiosk at the Marconi site. You can see several of the tower bases as you wander around on the high cliff side. The edge is slowly dropping off into the sea – which is also why the site was abandoned before 1920. From here it is a clear shot to EU. Be a nice place for a ham to live – hi hi – but there are square miles of National Park/Sea shore here.

The site stayed in operation for many years – and was finally shut down when 'spark' became obsolete. Before that, it was one of the loudest stations to work all the ships at sea.

After visiting there for a while and enjoying the cool New England weather, I went to see the WCC site in Chatham MA. They've got a nice museum and it is the successor site to the Marconi Wellfleet site. It opens at 1pm on Sundays. It's got a lot of interesting displays to see including the role of the station during WW2 – code breaking/copying stations. Originally it had a 340 foot high mast that held antennas from 177 KHz up through 22 MHz, and had six rhombics pointed in various directions. It covered 20 acres, but now all but 2 are gone to development. Chatham is one of the most exclusive (expensive) areas of Cape Cod now.



WCC Museum in Chatham, MA

More info here:

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

They have a nice club station there, too...WA1WCC. If you need Barnstable County you might drop them an email for a sked. I listened for a while – the band was FULL of Europeans on 20M....hundreds of them on the cw band.

After two hours there, it was time to check into the Super 8 in West Yarmouth for the next two nights. (\$100/night including tax). It was also time to do some detective work to figure out the best way to get to the parking for the ferry to Nantucket. It turns out if you are a walker, it's about a mile to walk to the ferry from the motel. A long mile. The ferry parking lot is a short mile from the motel, and opens at 6:30 in the morning. Checked that out. Carefully. It fills up quickly and by 7:30 or so, you are out of luck or riding shuttles from five or ten miles away.

That night, I took out the clothes and everything else from the small bag I use each night. Packed it with the radio and accessories, log book, pens, mag mount (3 magnet one – heavy), resonators, power cable, tool bag (heavy – maybe 4 lbs). Checked it twice. Checked it 3 times to be sure I had everything. You don't get to run to Radio Shack. Oh, and had spare fuses too just in case. Decided to throw in the 17m resonator, too, but had to take it off the main mast

on the car. NO spare one to use.

In the morning, it was up before 6am. Threw the bag into the car, took the camera, and it was off to Nantucket for the day. I had reserved that ferry two weeks ahead of time. If you want to take a car and pay the BIG BUCKS for that privilege, it is usually necessary to reserve 3 or 4 months ahead of time! And a 350 buck or more price tag. Plus you ride the slow ferry that doesn't give you much time on the island.

I was over at the lot at 6:20 waiting first in line for a parking spot. According to the attendant I talked to the previous day, typically they'll have 15-20 spots open in the morning. When those are gone, they close the lot till five or ten leave, then open it again. You could miss your ferry. Get there early. It opens at 6:30. No problem. Got a space.

From there it is about a 1200 foot walk down to the ferry departure. It's along streets and sidewalks and some cobble stones. The wheelie bag worked OK. Bigger wheels would be better.

I took the fast ferry which leaves at 8am and takes about 45 minutes. While I was waiting, they loaded the slow ferry which leaves at 7am. There were about six cars that made it onto the ferry, and 15 trucks. Most of the trucks were short 10 wheelers. No separate tractor/trailers. There was one 14 wheel truck and exactly one 18 wheel truck that were loaded on the ferry. It left at 7am.

When it was time to board the fast ferry, the 'suitcase' had to go into the luggage containers. Oops....it you carried stuff in a 'back pack' or or canvas bag type tote case, those went right on to the ferry with you. Dang...I didn't want to see the suitcase going into the luggage carts...there were about 8 or so by the time they were done. The folks boarded the ferry - it must hold about 300 plus people. Two decks with nice comfy seats. Snack bar on board too if you want to pay double normal prices. Fast ferry for seniors was \$50 round trip. Parking for the car was \$12. The ferry seemed only half full.



MV Iyanough – Fast Ferry

This is one of a few ships they use for the 'fast ferry'. Zips along at 40 mph!

From the Mass Steamship Authority

“She serves the 26 mile route between Hyannis and Nantucket since March 28, 2007 with a one hour crossing time. An all aluminum catamaran constructed by Gladding-Hearn Shipbuilding of Somerset, MA to a design by Incat-Crowther PTY. Ltd of Sydney, Australia. She has a 154' length with a beam of 39.04'. She is powered by 4 MTU 12 V 4000 engines delivering a total of 9,400 HP with a service speed of 35 knots. She is capable of carrying a total of 393 passengers. Luggage room has space for 30 luggage carts or 20 luggage carts and 3 bicycle carts (10 bicycles per cart). Passenger amenities include 350 indoor seats, flat panel LCD TV’s, a snack bar area and Free Wi-Fi internet access. “

They loaded the luggage carts at the end. Hope the radio survived.....hmmmm..... well, near the end of our trip, we zip by the slow ferry, which takes two hours and 15 minutes or so and arrive before 9am on Nantucket at “Nantucket Village”. Wow...talk about tourist town and clutter. The island is ancient with teeny horse wagon width streets and horrendous congestion.

I had a rental car at “Affordable Rentals”. The only thing available when I reserved two weeks before was a Dodge Journey, which is a nice but large (mid size) vehicle and the price tag was \$160/day. Ouch. Double Ouch. Barely 'affordable' but you only do this once or twice in your life, so it was time to bite the bullet and pay. It was a 1000 foot or so walk off the end of the ferry and I hustled over there. They rent Jeeps, off road vehicles and zillions of motor bikes and cycles.

The other car rental places were out at the airport and have a 20% airport surcharge on top of high rental prices, too, plus it is five miles out there and it takes 30 minutes or more with all the congestion in the downtown area to get there by taxi. If you rent for a few days, they'll pick you up at the ferry, but rooms on the island start at \$380/night in the 'season'!

AS usual, I walked around the vehicle before driving off. Good thing as the front bumper was very damaged on the right side but not that visible. Had the attendant not only note it, but took pics of HIM pointing to the damage and took a bunch of pics to establish it was existing damage. (probably \$1000 worth). OK....ALWAYS ALWAYS check the rental car before you drive off!



The bumper was slightly detached – good 1/2 inch gap offset. On the front was a small 1x1 inch deep indentation and some black marks. If you brought a car like this back to Hertz or other rental car companies, you'd get a bill in the mail for \$1500 to repair it charged on your credit card.

Also tried to open the hood to get to battery. Oops....not obvious. Had to call someone else to find out how to release the hood. OK...got it open. A bit different lever to release it from the front than I was used to. No battery in sight, but there was a jump start terminal that would do.

I hopped into car after getting directions to Siaconsett – and drove out to the light house , the best spot I found before. It's on the east end of the island. There's a parking lot there, it's quiet and it is high up. Maybe 15 mile drive.

Parking is a major problem and there are noisy powerlines everywhere. The roads are narrow. They don't mark the roads well. All the cross streets are marked but you have no idea what

road you are on. I managed to navigate out of the village after half an hour of 5 mph traffic! Horrendous – creep and crawl. No parking spaces, folks drive around and around looking for one, and the streets are narrow. Fortunately, I lucked out on the right street going the right way, but there were no signs anywhere. I guess you are just supposed to know. Or bring a GPS or iPhone or equivalent with maps on it.

I found the light house road. I parked and got out the bag. Assembled the big antenna and put it on the roof, which is a big one and high up. Great for radio work. Hooked up the power cable to the jumper post. The battery was buried down in the lower front corner of the car. You could see it and you could see the terminals but it would have been hard to get a clamp onto the terminals. I hooked the ground to a convenient other ground screw.



Nantucket – Dodge Journey – 7 foot ant

Oops....for some reason, antenna wanted to resonate at 14.6 MHz. I dunno. So had to tune it down. Maybe I had tuned it on the back deck of the Malibu vs a big flat roof top? Carefully got it off, tuned it down a bit. Hmm...still high but good on 14336 area. So why not run SSB first. Hmm.....not the greatest signal . Made a run, then moved the ground point to another place that was protected by a plastic ring. That worked a whole lot better.



Battery Hookup – Dodge Journey – Clip Leads

Since KZ2P was 'occupying' 14.336, I simply called N9STL on the cellphone and we started out all the excitement on 14.343. Joyce and others helped with relays and the page filled up quickly. I could barely write fast enough. Fun!.....It had been a couple years since someone had been there and even longer since someone ran it on cw.

Later I stuck on the 17m resonator – it was 'close enough' so I didn't bother to tweak it again.

There's one station there , K2LEK, who gets on and runs in the New England QSO party, but only on 80 and 40M. He's been spotted once on 20m. I've never caught him. You might get an occasional visitor for the NE QP....but rarely. So Nantucket remains rare. (W1ACT, a big contest station, goes out to Dukes every New England QSO Party making it easy to get that one).

Then tweaked the antenna yet again and got near full power on cw. Ran cw on 20/40/17. Sat there for about 2 1/2 hours and ran a few times. The log filled up. Super quiet location and the Dodge had near zero noise with the engine running. By the last run, there weren't many new takers, so I disassembled things, headed on into the town to 'the store' and grabbed a sandwich and soda (\$10) and headed back into town.

There are 3 gas stations on the island. If you didn't know exactly where they were, you'd never find them. The pumps are covered by a wood type shed. You can see the pumps if you look real hard. No sign for a gas station. Fortunately, the car didn't need much gas – at \$4.85 gal. They pump – only full service available. Put in 2.3 gallons.

Brought the car back to the rental place and turned it in. That was about 1:30 or so. Had reservations on the 3:15 ferry headed back and planned to be on it. 1000 foot walk back to the ferry terminal and waiting until they loaded. Past all the ticky tacky tourist shops, \$8 ice cream

cone places, \$6/slice pizza places, and tee shirt and trinket shops. The places were mobbed, too. There must have been 200 people in line at the ice cream place. Crazy! Lots of folks make day trips there to visit or just play tourist.

Then had to 'check' the bag and ride the 40 mph hydro foil back to the mainland. Bag carts were waiting when you got off the ferry – super good service so it wasn't a problem other than parting with the bag full of stuff for the trip. And the end, the bag was right there as you got off. It was a 1200 foot walk up hill dragging the bag but with a few rest stops made it back to the car and then back to the motel. Whew. Exciting day and worn out.

Success on Day 1 – Nantucket. A big dent in the budget, but you only do that a few times in your life. Likely if you reserve a smaller car (they have some) you can get it for \$120 a day – or less maybe in the off season. According to the folks, tourism is already down. End of season and folks headed back to school, but from the traffic in 'the town' you'd never know it. Rates drop in October if you are economy minded.

There are lots of regulars – work people who live on the mainland and commute to Nantucket. Plumbers, electricians, etc. You can't find a cheap place to live on Nantucket. Lots of folks commute daily. Even more so on Martha's Vineyard. I hate to think what they charge per job or hour.

Back to the Super 8 motel. Tired out. Had a light dinner.

Come Tuesday morning and I was up at 5:15. It's 22 miles over to the Palmer street lot in Falmouth, the nearest place that has spots. You can call ahead to find out. It's 45 minutes to get there and the GPS knew the way. I got there a bit before 6:30....and they had lots of spaces but cars were pulling in quickly. Must be 500 plus cars in the lots. It turns out there are hundreds of commuters to the island. You take the shuttle bus for the 4.5 miles down to the ferry landing. Had the bag of radio/antennas, etc with me. Actually easier than Nantucket since you only walk a few hundred feet.

The big ferry arrives. No reservations needed for walk on – they don't take them. I buy a ticket. Cheap. \$12/r t. Parking was \$12 too. There must be a couple hundred folks riding the ferry at 8am. It's about the 3rd one that day. They load maybe 20 cars. It's a short trip out to Vineyard Haven.



The ferry to Dukes (Martha's Vineyard)

from the website:

“The SSA took delivery of the M/V M.V. from Atlantic Marine, Jacksonville, Florida in 1993. She is assigned to Woods Hole - Martha’s Vineyard service and is classed as a conventional, diesel, twin-screw, passenger/vehicle ferry. A quick look reveals a basic similarity in hull dimensions, speed and capacities to the 1974 vintage M/V NANTUCKET. Her 230’ length, 60’ beam, 3000 HP EMD powerplant, 14-knot speed, and vehicle deck load generally mirror the older vessel. “

The sister ship Island Home , which was the return ferry, carries 1000 passengers. Getting a spot is not a problem. (maybe on a holiday weekend it will be close to full!).

The ferry runs to two places out there so be sure you get to the right destination. The rental car was a Hertz 'small car' for \$93/day plus, of course, taxes that ran it up to over \$100. This car was supposed to be a Toyota Corolla but I got a Subura Legacy. Checked it out before taking it. Nice car. Had TN plates - apparently up there for the summer months. Ihertz is right off the end of the ferry so it is very convenient. There isn't the congestion as there is on Nantucket. A few short blocks and you are on good roads. Dukes is a lot bigger.

I headed to the best spot folks have found – the Tisley Park and Ride lot. I missed the turn the first time – small sign but asked and found it on the way back. Same routine – assemble antenna, hook up power cables. This car had a big battery easy to hook to. That's good because the car when running really produced a lot of hash on 20M SSB, giving you a steady S5 noise level. Bad bad bad, Subaru. Think long and hard before buying one of these!.....nasty. However, you could run with the engine off just fine. Not a problem on 40M and of course,

less of a problem on CW but noise with engine running still there wiping out the weak ones. Remember: Subaru Legacy – bad news!....Don't buy one!



N4CD Tisley Park and Ride Lot – Dukes

Things went well. You can take your car out to the island if you reserve far enough ahead. About \$160 in 'season' and less off season. I found I could get my car to the island, but not back. Hmm.....that wouldn't be good! Didn't plan far enough ahead. Or picked the wrong day.

Well, I ran it a few times and the pile dropped to near zero. I was hungry, so I disconnected the power cables, took the antenna part way apart – taking off the resonators.....and headed into town for a second breakfast. Then back to the parking lot, another couple runs on SSB and CW. Joe, N5UZW, was running the net on 14.336 so no problems there. After a couple more runs, the pile was down to near zero. So it was time to head on back to the mainland. If you slept in out west, you missed it.

I turned in the car after putting 2 gallons of gas in it. It was a very short walk over to the ferry terminal and I waited for the ferry to come. Mission accomplished. All of MA done, all of New England finished for Mobile Diamond, and all of the US lower 48 done for second time transmit. Time to celebrate. But I had places to be – so it was on the road again!

After getting back to the parking lot, I decided to head part way over to the Rochester NY area for the AWA convention. I made it to Lee, MA in Berkshire County before I pooped out. There's a Super 8 there so I stopped for the night. It had been a long day with lots of excitement so far. From there it was an easy drive over to Monroe, NY.

To be continued.

Dark Days for Oregon Solar

Dark days for SolarWorld, anchor of Oregon's solar sector

http://www.oregonlive.com/business/index.ssf/2012/08/dark_days_for_solarworld.html#incart_river_default

Five years ago, Oregon officials saw green energy as an economic beacon. They lined up hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks and, for a while, watched the industry grow. The showpiece of that push is SolarWorld, the German company that transformed an empty semiconductor plant in Hillsboro [a Portland suburb] into a state-of-the-art solar panel factory. Spurred by the promise of more than \$100 million in state and local tax incentives, SolarWorld invested about \$600 million in the site, turning it into one of the largest solar plants in the U.S. and creating at least 1,000 jobs.

An investigation by The Oregonian involving dozens of interviews and hundreds of pages of documents indicates SolarWorld is on increasingly shaky ground. The company's revenues and employment are sliding, and its share price is in a tailspin. Former employees in Hillsboro, including managers, depict an operation that is not only under intense pressure to cut costs but also has failed to fulfill expectations. Most troubling, several industry analysts say SolarWorld's technology no longer justifies its higher panel prices. Some question whether the company can survive.

"The reality is, this company has nothing to offer the American consumer that a Chinese company does not," said Jesse Pichel, an analyst with Jefferies Group Inc., in one of the gloomier assessments. At risk are hundreds of local jobs and millions of dollars in taxpayer investments. The company's precarious position also calls into question the wisdom of those investments, the bulk of which were extended to SolarWorld by state officials in the form of tax

credits. Oregonians are already on the hook to forgo \$57 million in tax revenues over the next five years to help SolarWorld's bottom line, and that figure is on track to nearly double by the end of the decade.

de N4CD

Over \$100 million in tax breaks to create 1,000 jobs. How much is that per job? Help me out here... carry the 4... OK, I've got it. It's \$100k per job. That's why more economic activities should be left to the states -- when Obama creates green jobs it costs the taxpayer closer to \$700k per job.

On the Road with N4CD III

One of the main purposes of the N4CD trip was to attend the Annual Convention of the Antique Wireless Association. Not only do they run a world class museum (and the new bigger one is going to open next summer), they have a fantastic reference library, put out a monthly magazine and Quarterly Journal, but have a great well attended convention with book dealers, flea market, 3 days of programs and activities. It had been a lot of years since I last attended.

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

Check out the free Gateway magazine on the page above.

I arrived on Wednesday after an 8 hour drive over from 'eastern MA' with a stop in Lee, MA at the Super 8 Motel there on Tuesday night. It was a five more hours on Wed to get there. Seems like there were a dozen motels in Lee, MA, and most were nearly barren of tourists. The summer season was 'over' and the kids were headed back to school already. Prices, however, weren't any lower! Hi hi.

The convention is held at the Rochester Institute of Technology Conference center. It looks

like it was about a 250 room Holiday Inn at one time – 4 stories high. Nice meeting facilities and a huge parking lot out back for the flea market. Rooms were – yep, \$100 bucks a night or so. That was getting to be the 'normal number' it seemed for motels/hotels. Well, the rooms were fine, the food was actually decent and not too much of a rip off, and there was no need to even drive elsewhere during the 3 days.

On Thursday there was a flea market. It was disappointing as fewer and fewer seem to show up. If you had some big bucks, you could buy:



Lewis and Camel Back keys – 1860s/1870s



Early Telegraph Register

The telegraph 'register' is what Morse used to start his telegraph system. It imprinted the dots and dashes on a paper tape. It took 15 plus years before the switchover to 'sounders'. The bean counters liked the 'paper record' but the operators hated the need to copy the letters on the tape to a message form when they could do it directly as the code was received. If you have lots of thousands of dollars, you can buy yourself a genuine telegraph register from way back. (\$4000 and up with some over 20K depending on rarity).

The theme this year was the Titanic and pre 1912 Wireless. Jim Kreuzer brought his Marconi instruments for display. He also has a set at the Branson Titanic Exhibit. Now, just for a reference point....he paid \$23,000 at an auction in England for his 'Marconi Three Circuit Tuner' that was 'new' in the original box 20 years ago. Likely its double that now. . That is just one of about 10 important pieces (and one of the most critical) for the Titanic receiving system. That, and the 'magnetic detector' or Maggie as it was known, are the two main items. You can see all ORIGINAL equipment of the era at the Branson Titanic attraction.

You know why Marconi had a wireless empire? First, he did a lot of work to develop the technology. Then, he patented the 'tuned circuit'. The famous patent, number 7777, known in the industry as the Four Sevens, locked up 'tuned circuits'. Spark was broadband, but still using tuned circuits improved your range by factors of 10 or more. No one else could build a receiver with a tuned circuit, and he didn't license it to many and not his competitors. He had the monopoly on sea communications for all intents and purposes.

As you'll recall, the Titanic had giant radio masts that held a 4 wire array 250 feet above sea level. It was 450 feet long, 20 feet wide, and had a natural resonance of 930 KHz, one of the two frequencies the Titanic was equipped to use. The other was 500 KHz (600 Meters) which it used 100% of the time on its one way trip. Couple that with a 5 KW synchronous rotary

spark gap transmitter, one of the most powerful ever put on a passenger ship, and you had the set up. There were half a dozen auxiliary boxes – tuning capacitors/loading coil, switch box, lightning protectors, etc. You can see it all in Branson if you head there for a visit. Well, you can see the Marconi room. The 'silent room' with the spark gap transmitter isn't there.

One of the topics for discussion was an exact layout of the Titanic equipment. It seems there was one and only one photo taken of the radio room by a passenger who debarked in Ireland. Normally the radio room was 'off limits' to all but the Marconi folks and select crew members. So, for years and years, it had been assumed that the layout of the Titanic was the same as the sister ship Olympic. The one picture was also double exposed! But folks used it as the 'reference point' for the layout. There were lots of pictures and documentation of that sister ship.

Well....it turns out, not so. On one of the recent dives to the wreck of the Titanic, a small robotic cameras (Elwood and Jake) went into the Marconi room (and the adjoining 'silent room' that held the spark gap transmitter) and found that certain pieces of equipment, not visible in the 'one' photo, were actually in the silent room and not in the main room. Different from the Olympic. They were the control panels for the motor generator and voltage regulators. Most of the wood has deteriorated but one can pick out all of the remains of all the parts of the transmitter and receiver and their locations. There were some surprises. There were half a dozen talks on the technology of the Titanic radio, the exact message traffic exchanged, etc, plus an interesting talk on how all of the pieces had been assembled for the Branson museum exhibit. That took years and years of collecting to assemble. One of the important items comes up for sale (or trade) maybe once every 10 years.



Marconi Magnetic Detector - Maggie

The Maggie was the most sensitive detector at the time – better than the Fleming Valve (which it had) that was a diode detector.

The Marconi company only 'leased' equipment and never sold it, so finding originals is very difficult and expensive.

Here's a reproduction of a Titanic style key- 100 were made in England and sold for \$1000 each.



Note the lever on the left edge of the key. It is NOT a shorting switch. It is just the opposite. In the event your key contacts fuse, you can lift the lever on the left edge of the key to break the circuit and unkey the transmitter. Way back when, you had many amps of current – maybe 5 or 10 or 20, flowing through the key contacts at several hundred volts. On the Titanic with the 5KW spark rig, they used a separate keying relay in the 'silent room' to keep the HV away from the operators. With a metal desk, metal walls, metal floor, you really didn't want to have HV on your key! By the way, the 'silent room' was insulated with 3 inches of cork insulation to deaden the deafening noise of the spark gap transmitter.

Tom, W1TP, gave an interesting talk on what you find at the German Friedrickshaven Hamfest. This is the 'Dayton' of Europe with tens of thousands attending. Lots of former Soviet country radio equipment, including spy radios and encryption equipment, shows up for sale there. He recently acquired a Fialka machine – which is still used by some governments in Europe – the later much updated version, technology wise, of the ancient but valuable Enigma machines. He brought along half a dozen items, including his Enigma machine (worth about \$90,000 these days) and told how he got the Fialka machine out of Germany. (he paid \$10,000 for it – not working). You just don't waltz top secret encryption machines, even ancient ones, through customs.



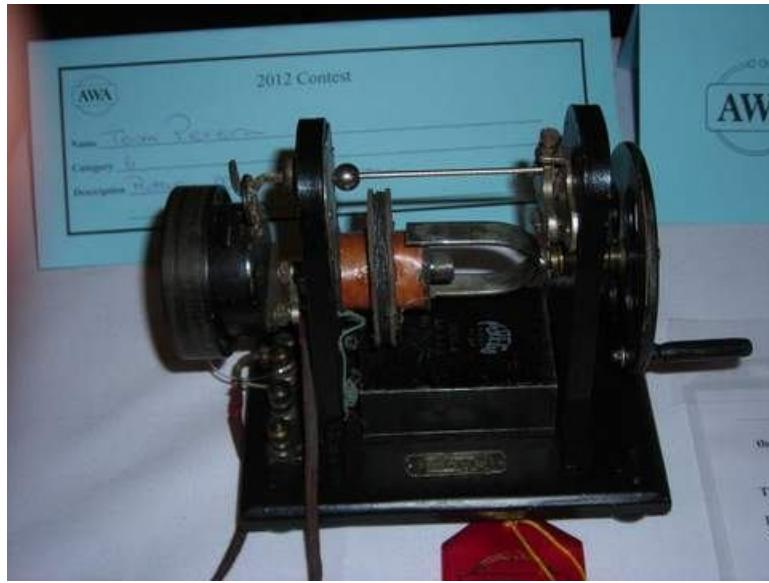
Still 'secret' Cold War era Russian Cipher Machine

It seems in mindless Soviet style 'efficiency' they put all their machines that no longer work into a big pile, pour gas over them and light the pile. After a while, the Sargent sees it burning and goes off to goof off. The workers pull some of the machines out from the bottom of the pile....they are singed on the covers, but the gasoline burns up, not down.....and these show up on the black market for big bucks. The 'soviet machine' apparat still functions like before. Everything is 'under the table'. Some wind up at the Friedrickshaven hamfest if you have the bucks to buy them. They don't work, and you probably have zero chance of getting one to work, no less decode messages, but collectors love them. Note the rotor wheels inside the device.

Never heard of an Enigma machine from WW2? Here's the scoop

<http://w1tp.com/enigma/>

Here's another goodie he found in Germany. This is a VERY early magnetic detector – one of the earliest ever found. It is hand cranked.



Super rare Magnetic Detector found by W1TP

The Marconi Maggie used a clockwork spring to turn the iron wire that was used in the detector . It was essentially a 'wire recorder' type device.

There was an equipment display and award for 'best of'. Some very interesting early radio and paper displays were there. Dozens of newspapers from 1912 and the Titanic sinking. All sorts of documentation, including the original government documents on the Inquiry into the sinking – both US and British inquiries.

Over a year was spent with very detailed analysis to find out what had gone wrong, what decisions had been made that sealed the fate of the ship, and what could have been done differently. As you all know, shortly thereafter all ships with 50 or more passengers had to have lifeboats for all, plus 2 radio operators who maintained a 24 hour a day watch. In addition, there were changes up and down the line to prevent a re-occurrence. Most of the documentation is 'rare'. In addition, there were other categories for awarding prizes, including early TV, mechanical TV, test equipment, radio accessories, etc. Most of these folks are into pre -1930s radio.

One of the presentations was on the EverReady Air Cell battery. Never heard of it? Me either!

http://www.radiomuseum.org/r/eveready_a600.html

Back in the 1930s, nearly half of all radios sold were 'farm radios' for use on farms or rural houses without electricity. By the mid 1930s, the technology had advanced to super het radios – and they had 7 or 8 tubes in them that required a fair amount of power to run the filaments.

Eveready came up with the Air Cell Battery. With the typical drain of a superhet low current

tube set, taking up to 675ma of battery voltage to run the filaments, a very heavy duty battery was needed. EverReady came up with the Air Cell which was GUARANTEED, when used in a 'certified radio' like the farm oriented Atwater Kent, that it would run the filaments for at least 1000 hours. Let's just pick 1/2 an amp – for 1000 hours- that is 500 AH! This from a throw away battery. They sold for about 6 bucks in 1935, but you wouldn't need to buy another one for years and years. They were about the size of a small car battery, but carbon zinc. They had 'open air' construction where they needed no depolarizer chemicals. As the farm radio need faded, there was no longer a need for the giant 'dry cell' type batteries and there seems to be no advertising after 1937. The REA – rural electrification administration was rapidly hooking up everyone to the grid.



3v 600 Amp Hour Plus Battery "Dry Cell"

One of the collectors managed to find most of a battery case, and using 3D modeling, came up with the remaining pieces and cast them. He spent hours and hours getting it just right, including making up the decals for the sides of the battery. Amazing what some folks will do to preserve history. Naturally, with throw away after use batteries, none survived. AK and others sold farm radios with 2v tubes – and you had a slider resistor adjustment so even as your battery faded you could operate it. These still put out over 2.75 volts for over 1000 hours at a typical drain of 400-600 ma.

Many of the farm radios were 32v ones, built to run off wind chargers on windmill towers with 32v rechargeable batteries. The filament string totaled up to 32v.

They had a 'film festival' showing many of the Titanic disaster films. There were two silent era films, plus the Nazi Titanic we've mentioned before....plus the other two famous ones – including A Night to Remember.

After the awards banquet, they had an auction preview. Dang...didn't see anything I had to have, so decided to leave a day early on Saturday morning and skip the auction. Seems the goodies brought decline year after year. I'm not into expensive radios – some were likely \$800 and \$1000 radios and up, and not much interest to a regen SW kit collector there. In any event, the auction would only likely take a few hours, but no need to hang around. Somewhat disappointing. Attendance, according to the folks was down about 20% over last year. Prices – the room, gas at \$3.85 in NY state, food, etc.....and of course, with Obama dollar devaluation and 1% interest rates, seniors trying to get by on CD interest are hurting badly. It's down 80% from the 5% interest rates when you can only get 1.2% on your CDs. If I remember right, the last time I was there, there were at least twice as many folks and many had to stay at nearly overflow facilities (including me). Still, I had a good time, bought some small items in the flea market, bought some pamphlets, ate a lot of good food, and yakked with a lot of other collectors. Overdosed on Titanic again for a while.

It was time to be getting on home.

Morse Code on Planet Mars



Mars Science Laboratory, Curiosity Rover vehicle tires have tread patterns that imprint the acronym JPL in Morse Code in the dusty soil of the Mars surface. The wheel tread pattern is made by square and rectangular holes in the wheels. When in motion riding around the sandy Gale Crater, this pattern is viewed by the driver using some of the 17 cameras aboard this interplanetary SUV. It takes about 14 minutes for radio waves to travel from the red planet to earth, through the Mars Odyssey orbiter relay satellite using UHF. Since there is a more than a 30 minute round trip delay between the driving commands and finding out the result of the measured moves, there is a need for the earth-bound drivers to maintain visual orientation and checks of distance traveled... this can be gauged by incremental count of the tread pattern repeats. Curiosity has 6 of these morse-coded wheels, and uses a rocker-bogie suspension, enabling it to climb obstacles. Who knows how many years these tread patterns will last on Mars? Perhaps when future Martian archaeologists study these strange fossil tread patterns a few hundred years from now, they will try to find someone studied in ancient radio lore to decode the meaning.

QRZ.com news – post by KQ6XA

Maryland/DC QSO Party

Yes, there was a MDC QSO Party this month. I noted only a few spots for counties on W6RK

– maybe 7 counties including Wicomico and Somerset. Only 3 folks reported scores on the 3830 contest reflector. I guess if you called CQ MDC you could scare a few up out of the woodwork but most folks were busy working the NA QSO Party – and maybe you scored a few counties accidentally if you worked someone in MD or DC.

One who listed a score had nearly 40 contacts into MDC. Here, I heard two. Nothing to write home about. These folks need to take a few lessons from KS or TX for QSO parties.

On the Road with N4CD IV

The convention was over. On Friday night, they had a preview for the auction. There was nothing of interest that would keep me there another day to stick around for the auction. In reality, there weren't that many things showing up in the preview – and only one early regen set and it was a fairly common National SW-3 complete with the power supply and sets of coils- but with a 'reserve price' that was likely to be well north of \$300. I didn't need one. So I could leave a day earlier than planned, and save the \$100 hotel room rate.

The 20M SSB antenna was still disassembled – I used the parts for the temporary antenna that went out on the ferry to the islands and the rental cars. With the cw tuned antenna, I could get maybe 5 or 10 w on the SSB freq. It was going to be a quick trip home.

So bright and early at 6 am or so I was on the road for the 150 miles down to Warren, PA – to finish off that state for Mobile Diamond. Quite a few others needed Warren, PA – but no reason to get there too early as the band wouldn't be open. After a few hundred miles I reached the county line, but alas, no place to stop. I ran down the road a few miles hunting for a good place to stop as there was a high hill to the west. The further I went, the worse it got with big hill to the west, so went back near the county line, pulled over and ran it. Then back into NY and a bee-line course down to Bedford, TN, which turned out to be the LC WBOW for N0KV for his Master's Gold. He needed Suffolk, MA which we got, and Abe, W7GQK, headed off for on in AL. That left Bedford TN for WBOW.

I punched in the next destination – into the GPS and let it guide me. It turned out through the middle of OH, down in to KY and down to Nashville – nearly all on interstates.

Whoa....I was accidentally in the middle of the OH QSO party. Not only was the KS QSO Party

in full swing, but so was the OH QSO Party! (and HI later on!). Well, I wasn't set to run.....and most of the activity was on 40M, and I was hearing next to nil naturally on 20M in OH other than a few loud locals. So I put out a few counties but didn't get much of a following. Worked 50-60 OH stations and not too many from out of state. I just popped in and out as I had spare time from running the counties myself on net. By the time I ran 3 or 4 bands, hunted for new KS stations (I need everything again!), hunting on 40M for new OH stations, there wasn't much time to call OQP!....but I did every now and then. Talk about busy! And I caught two HI stations on 20cw that day too. I could have used a driver to focus on the radio 100% of the time.

That night I made it down to Elizabethtown, KY (Hardin KY). It was about 6pm (eastern time still) and I was a bit tired. When an exit with a dozen motels came up – Motel 6, Super 8, etc, plus a dozen good places to eat – I pulled over and went QRT fast. The Motel 6 had a room for \$40 including tax – a nice break from what I had been paying night after night back east. Gas was also getting down to more reasonable levels, too – at \$3.55/gal or so compared to another 30-40 cents back east. Without the 20M SSB antenna on top, the car was getting 33-34 mpg, too. Hmm...seems I might need to 'streamline' some antenna setups here.

That night, I visited the Cracker Barrel for a nice County Ham dinner, then early to bed at 9pm. I was worn out. The next morning I was up and awake at 4:30 am. Hmm. Too early to run counties so it was over the Denny's for a nice Value Slam (\$4) and some \$1 AARP coffee, hitting the road at about 5:15 am local time. No one was around, but I had places to be and a county way down the road to run. I ran through about 3 or 4 counties with no contacts, then Hollis, KC3X with his good ears picked me up on 40CW – and still only one or two around early in the morning. A few hours later I was down in the Nashville area (Davidson, TN) and then down to Bedford, TN for Barry, N0KV. Success.



Bedford County TN – LC WBOW MG for N0KV

I punched in 'Home' on the GPS and it said the fastest route home was....dang...backup 24 to Nashville, then I 40 all the way to Little Rock, AR (Pulaski) and I-30 home. I'd been on that route too many times – so I decided to take the 'scenic route' home. There was no need to be home – I could take an extra day if I wanted.

So I wandered on down to route 64 which runs across the bottom of TN. Then you zig a bit into the top of MS for a few counties – and finally over to I-40 once again and the same boring counties on the interstate across AR to TX. There were a few showers that slowed traffic down to 40mph for a few miles – nothing serious.

Along the bottom of TN, you pass through the Shiloh National Monument. Shiloh was one of the biggest and bloodiest battles in the Civil War. There's square miles over which the battle took place that have been preserved and a visitor center.

Here's some info on the battle

On the morning of April 6, 1862, 40,000 Confederate soldiers under the command of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston poured out of the nearby woods and struck a line of Union soldiers occupying ground near Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. The overpowering Confederate offensive drove the unprepared Federal forces from their camps and threatened to overwhelm Ulysses S. Grant's entire command. Some Federals made determined stands and by afternoon, they had established a battle line at the sunken road, known as the "Hornet's Nest." Repeated Rebel attacks failed to carry the Hornet's Nest, but massed artillery helped to turn the tide as Confederates surrounded the Union troops and captured, killed, or wounded most. During the first day's attacks, Gen. Johnston was mortally wounded and was replaced by P.G.T. Beauregard. Fighting continued until after dark, but the Federals held. By the next morning, the reinforced Federal army numbered about 40,000, outnumbering Beauregard's army of less than 30,000. Grant's April 7th counteroffensive overpowered the weakened Confederate forces and Beauregard's army retired from the field. The two day battle at Shiloh produced more than 23,000 casualties and was the bloodiest battle in American history at its time.

Source: <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/shiloh.html>

Here's a link to the National Park site

<http://www.nps.gov/shil/index.htm>

Here's the wiki link for detailed history

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Shiloh

Not much to report other than once I got to the Memphis area – Shelby County – it seemed I could get home by 9pm if I kept 'the pedal to the metal'. That's what I decided to do since it was the same boring interstate counties – and it was a Sunday with reasonable traffic. I was zipping along at 70 plus in AR....and when you hit TX, it is a speed limit of 75 and traffic moves at least that fast. (hint: 80 mph).

It all went well until I hit Titus County TX - then the sky ahead was black. There was a big 'lowering' and anvil shaped cloud indicative of strong thunderstorms (and worse). It was getting to be an hour from sunset. Lightning was flashing ahead – big cloud to ground discharges. At 7:30PM it was 'dark'. I had to focus on the driving so no radio activity in Titus. I switched the antenna switch to an unused position to reduce the chances of a lightning zap to the radio.

Then it was 20 miles of not so great conditions with heavy rain. Traffic was moving 40 mph with everyone using their flashers as visibility was maybe 100 feet or so. Over 40mph and the car got squirrely since there was so much water on the road. A few trucks decided to run faster and naturally gave you a bath of blinding rain kicked up by the tires while they passed you by. It's no fun driving in that. A few folks had pulled over. There were a few unfortunate motorcycle drivers huddled under under passes but still getting soaked with the blowing gusty wind. Oh well, TX needs the rain!

After a half hour of nasty weather, it was back to good conditions and 75 mph the rest of the way home, arriving at 8:45 pm central time (gained an hour). What's that ? About 16 hours on the road and 900 miles or so? One of these days I've got to slow down a bit. I grabbed a chicken club sandwich at McDonalds, unloaded the car, and hit the hay. No pizza this night – too worn out. I'll interchange with Tuesday night for regular pizza night.

Hope I hit something you needed. I did finish running all the counties in the 'lower 48' now for second time transmit – so that is done and what remains are AK and HI. Looks like I better keep the rental car set up handy just in case I get the travel urge again! Filled in a bunch of Mobile Diamonds, too, with a few left in OH, MI, GA and AL. (and lots out west). CA still needs lots, there's a handful in NV, half a dozen in CO, 20 or more in MT, half of WY, 4 in OR,... so you can figure out where the MD might head.

4825 miles of driving in 2 weeks. Lots of gas and motel bills. Time to rest up for the next trip! My car is 3 1/2 years old and has 102,209 miles on it. County hunting miles. Hope it makes it to 200K plus. We'll see. Almost time for a second set of tires. That size on my

car only lasts 55K-60K.

Hawaii QSO Party

The HI QSO Party was going on at the same time as the KS and OH parties. I was on the road, and still heard two of the HI stations - KH6LC – HIL and Merv, K9FD/KH6 on Molokai. (Maui County) Worked both from the mobile, but didn't have 15m working so probably missed many from back east From TX, 15M is usually the best band.

I did not see Kalawao spotted or mentioned. KH6BB (Ford Island Multiplier), plus Kauai and Maui and Hawaii and Honolulu were on the air.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

K6CSL: (19 ssb, 3 cw)

Wow! This was the largest group of KH6's I've heard at one time,in an HIQP. tHIS WAS FUN. I hope to see more next year. Bert, K6CSL

VE6BMX: 26 ssb 9 cw 1 rtty 1 psk

Was really fun with 3 qso parties and 1 qrp contest going on this weekend. Fun x 4 = a blast! Hope to see you next year!

W0RIC (CO) 42 ssb 11 cw

15M was the money band. Best KH6 cond's in a long time. Nice to see a lot of great signals. Nice showing of KH6 stations. Fun QSO party!

Awards Issued

USACA 1231	Richard, W5IL	August 14, 2012
USACA 1232	Rich, W5QP	August 15, 2012
Seventh Time #19	Joyce, N9STL	July 29, 2012
Tenth Time #3	Scottie, N4AAT	July 29, 2012
Bingo #343	Mike, W0MU	July 29, 2012
Bingo II #89	Barry, N0KV	August 18, 2012
USA CW V #4	Jerry, W0GXQ	August 11, 2012
USA-PA -N #16	Jim, N1BY	July 25, 2012
USA-PA-N #!7	Chuck, W3CR	August 24, 2012
Master Gold #54	Dick, N8CIJ	July 29, 2012

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

Sept 1-3

Colorado QSO Party

Call sign, name, and county or S/P/C

www.ppraa.org/coqp

Sep 1, 1200Z - Sep 2, 0400Z

CW--50 kHz above band edge; Phone--1.870, 3.850, 7.250, 14.250, 21.350, 28.450.

Tennessee QSO Party

RS(T) and county or S/P/C

www.tnqp.org

Sep 2, 1800Z - Sep 3, 0300Z See website.

Sept 8

Arkansas QSO Party

1400Z to 0200 Z

<http://arkanhams.org/ARQSO/2012/AQP%202012%20Rules.pdf>

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Sept 15

South Carolina QSO Party

RS(T) and county or S/P/C

scqso.com

Sep 15, 1400Z - Sep 16, 0300Z

CW--1.815, 3.545, 7.045, 14.045, 21.045, 28.045, 50.095; Phone--1.865, 3.810, 7.190, 14.250, 21.300, 28.450, 50.135.

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Sept 29/30

Texas QSO Party

RS(T), county or S/P/C

www.txqp.net

Sep 29, 1400Z - See website

Multiple operating periods; CW--20 to 50 kHz above band edge; Phone--25 kHz above edge of General segment.

Don't forget the 3M Re-union in Murphreesboro, TN!

8/28/2012 end date