

# County Hunter News

January 1, 2006

Volume 2, Issue 1

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation. This month we are at our new URL, [www.chnewsonline.com](http://www.chnewsonline.com) The CHNews starts its second year of publication.

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

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

We hope you will enjoy the new County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all (except to MARAC, Inc, or Officers/Directors of MARAC), provided credit is given.

De N4CD (email: [telegraphy@prodigy.net](mailto:telegraphy@prodigy.net))

## On the Road with N4CD

It was time for another trip in the Buick. Off to Florida for some sun and fun. Naturally, the only 'county hunter' way to get there is to drive, and go through some back roads on the way there. I checked my counties run book, and plotted a route through southern LA, across MS, AL, into GA, and then down the east side of Florida to run those I hadn't run second time. It turned out to be a formidable challenge.

Normally, I just head off, and find motels along the way to stay at, maybe planning 2 hours from the end of the day where I would wind up. From watching the national TV news, and even the local news where many of the local hotels in Texas still had hundreds of refugees from Katrina/Rita staying, I suspected it might be difficult to find rooms in the affected areas. That turns out to be an understatement. Many of the motels within 100 miles of the coast are 'out of business' - gone - damaged - not open...others that survived are completely booked by refugees, or by contractors or government employees. About as far south as I could find rooms was half way down LA and MS. So I plotted a route down and around, then back up to catch a motel room, in order to get to the south LA counties and then find a place to stay.

You don't see much damage on the main roads - although there are trees down everywhere, and some roofs torn off buildings. Signs are missing. I stuck to the main roads hoping they would be in good shape, and for the most part, they are. Just watch out around New Orleans - the Interstate bridges are damaged and traffic backs up for miles in each direction. I had to get down to Terrebonne, La Fourche, and Plaquamines to finish off that area of LA, then back up to Orleans and St. Bernard.

N9STL needed La Fourche, LA for her last WBOW for Five Star, so that had to be run, and we were successful. She's been catching lots on CW.

Lots of activity with WB7A, KA9JAC, KA0SHC, AB2LS, WD4OIN, N2JJ, W9ZXJ, WC7V, W0NAC, K3IMC, N9STL, plus 50-60 regulars joining in on the cw fun. Don, K3IMC, must have put up some good antennas at his new QTH in GA. Good signals.

No problems until I got off I-10 onto Route 39 headed east to St. Bernard...oops....I'm not sure what 'ward' of New Orleans this is, but it didn't look good. Every house was abandoned. The traffic signals didn't work - there were temporary stop signs every 1/4 mile it seems. There were gigantic piles of garbage (clothes, carpets, mattresses, furniture) in front of every house, and I don't think any of them were occupied. Mile after mile. I guess I stumbled into one of the flooded areas. Not much traffic, no one around, no signs of life. Just a handful of people on the streets. It's one thing to see it on TV. It's another to be going through the area - mile after mile, in any direction you look on cross streets.

Then route 39 had a bridge, which was closed...oops....a quick map check, and I found route 46 parallel. It was OK, so I headed to St Bernard 10 miles down the road. (power seemed OK there). Very depressing – thousands of houses flooded out. Hand painted signs everywhere for ‘home gutting’ ....’home repair estimates’, refuse hauling.

Well, it was off to circle around the lake, then head north 100 miles or more to find a motel room. Ugh...Interstates crawling with damaged bridges, one lane traffic. Finally, I made it up around and up through Tangipoha, all the way up to I-20 in MS. The next day it was back southeast to get more counties, and across AL to GA. It was then southeast for a day zigging and zagging in GA – every time you turn around you hit another county there.

With 30, 20m and 40M cw, it can take 25-30 minutes to run the county – if it is a ‘dead end’ county, then time really goes by quick, and you can only run 15-20 counties a day. Eventually, I got to Ft. Lauderdale (Broward County). I had some time before my friend Sue arrived – and she had changed her flight to an earlier one arriving at Miami airport, so I headed down to run Monroe county (almost out to Key Largo – 100 miles r.t., run just over the Monroe line at Pelican Bay Yacht Club (quiet)), then had time to backtrack to the airport (Miami Dade) and wait for Sue. After that it was quiet time for 5-6 days. Sue is radio-phobic. Besides, I needed a break from radio. We stayed at nice little hotel 300 feet from the ocean.

After soaking up sun and surf, it was time to head back. The trips back are usually quicker and shorter – it was up the west coast of Florida, running the counties I had not run the second time. Then across into AL. Even 100 miles inland, you saw 100 year old tress lying across a likely 60-80 year old house, having fallen on it and done major damage (totaled it in many cases). Sad. I ran across southern MS through George, Stone, and Pearl River – a lifetime of firewood sitting everywhere...trees down...piles just waiting to be hauled away, or just sitting there. Temporary exit signs and road signs. Across into LA.

Everything was going hunky dory till I got to the ferry to get to Pointe Coupee....oops....sat in line for an hour....ferry not moving....Someone mentioned it broke down last night, and didn’t run for 6 hours. I decided it was time to take a 40 mile detour to go around, and I could catch 2 more counties in the process. So it was off on a detour, and finally getting to run

Pointe Coupee, then further north to catch a motel. Across TX toward Dallas and home.

Every now and then I would listen on 14.336 after the runs on cw. Probaby 80-90% of the time in LA, MS, AL, GA, and FL, I could barely tell any net control was there. Most folks would call it a 2x0 report...didn't move the meter, if you didn't know what the spiel was, you wouldn't know what was being said. I'm sure NC wouldn't be hearing mobiles in those states most of the time. That's about 25% of the US population. Heck, W7KQZ is 55 or better copy in all of those states. A few times I worked the mobile running just to give them my county. It seems the Atlantic Club crew always seems to 'sneeze' or 'cough' or 'blabber' when I give the county. Intentional interference. I'm sure if you listen on SSB you hear it. I'll give you a hint. It comes out of FL. Happens to me and N9STL and KA3DRO- if a mobile tries to announce a move or their county, they are 'stepped on'. Amazing, how ONLY then you hear a cough or sneeze. Well, what do you expect? A net control you can't hear in much of the country, plus the games on 336. More than half the folks on .336 are also now CW county hunters.

One mobile mentioned that NC should try to have someone else look for relays, and was nearly 'summarily dismissed' for even 'suggesting' that. Of course, the mobile knew a good part of the country wasn't hearing the NC station. Another mobile likely to 'give it up' soon.

Some days it got real busy with mobiles running on 30, 40 and 20, moving off freq. Lots of activity to chase and lots of counties put out. 40M started early in the morning - the early bird W6TMD on at 4:30am his time to catch me on 40m in the eastern counties in AL, GA, FL. Unlike 20M SSB, where the first mobile might run at 1500Z or later, the cw folks are chasing counties at 1300Z, and there isn't much of a problem with foreign broadcast on 7038.5.

There was some excitement with the KP5 expedition. Hope you managed to work it. Heard them work the W5 county hunter in SC. Heard others calling from the county hunter bunch. Thousands in the pile up! Yuk! More fun county hunting and you don't have to wait 20 years for a country to show up!

December was a good month – lots of trips - activities. Hope you managed to snag a few. The mini in South Texas coming up in Feb, so that is a good excuse to plan another county hunting trip..

## Awards Issued

W0DSY, Randy, 6<sup>th</sup> Time #25, 12/19/2005  
KA5AGM, USACA #1130, December 24, 2005  
N9STL, Joyce, Five Star #22, 12/17/2005  
W8TZA, Bill, USACA #1129, 12/13/05

## County Name Trivia

By NOZA, Ross

I generally only wonder how a U.S. County received its name when I'm driving through it. That, of course, is about the worst time to worry about such a matter as you are far from any reference material and the internet. By the time I arrive back home, I've forgotten the entire matter. Some years ago I heard a station commenting about the rather frequent occurrence of counties named 'Jasper' and 'Newton' and that frequently were noted to be county line pairs. This was probably W3CR, but he or who-ever it was provided no further explanation. I finally got around to investigating this and other curious matters county name etymologies.

The counties named 'Jasper' and 'Newton' would seem to be a good starting point. There are Jasper Counties in GA, IL, IN, IA, MS, MO, SC, and TX. They are all named for Sgt. William Jasper, a hero of the Revolutionary War. He displayed an unusual degree of courage at the Battle of Sullivan's Island (sometimes called the Battle of Ft. Moultrie) in South Carolina. He was killed in action during a later battle. Newton appears as a county name in six states; they are: AR, GA, IN, MS, MO, and TX. Four of these are named in honor of John Newton, a hero of the Revolutionary War. Both men served under General Francis Marion who was known as "the Swamp Fox." The Newton County in Mississippi is named for English Scientist and Philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton. The Newton County in Arkansas is named for Thomas W. Newton, congressman from

the mid-nineteenth century. Of interest is the fact that there are Jasper/Newton county lines in GA, IN, MS, MO and TX.

Early in my county hunting career I learned to work any county with a name like Adams, Washington, Jefferson, Madison or Monroe. They are just too numerous to keep in your head, and if you pass them by, you will surely miss something. The most common county name in the United States is Washington -- there are 41 of them. They are all named for President George Washington, and are found in all states except AK, HI, ND, NM, SC, SD, WA, and WV. The folks in the state of Washington probably thought it would be redundant to name a county after our first president, and West Virginia was part of Virginia when most of the counties were named.

There are Van Buren Counties in AR, IA, MI, and TN. They are all named for President Martin Van Buren.

That's probably enough for a first edition. There are two U. S. counties named Louisa -- one in Virginia, one in Iowa. Do you think they have any thing in common??

## Message from W4OV

Hi Bob,

Last year it was the tree through the roof, this year was my 6 meter quad going for swim !! See picture. I am getting short on antennas. Guess I will have to go back to mobile.

Bruce W4OV/m



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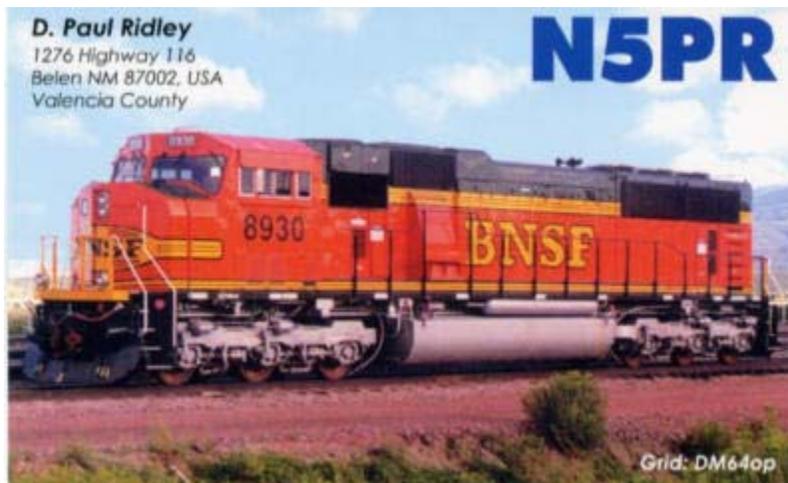
## N5PR – Fairly New Call - 30M CHN

From his QRZ.com bio:

I have been licensed since 1976, when I was assigned the call of WD5BTB, which I detested on both cw and phone. I quickly upgraded and received the call of KB5DQ, which I kept for many years. When the vanity program started, I requested only one call, my initials, N5PR. The call had never been issued before.

I am a DX'er at heart, and have worked and confirmed all countries except for VU4 and SV2/A. Hopefully, they will be on soon. I use cw, phone, PSK31, RTTY on bands 80-10 meters. I primarily work low power, 100 watts and also some QRP.

After 42 years as a locomotive electrician with the Santa Fe Railroad, I am now retired and enjoying my hobbies. My qsl card reminds me of the work I did on these locomotives. If you hear me on the bands, give me a shout, I would love to talk to you.



Paul writes,

I started chasing counties in 1987 on the SSB net as KB5DQ. Couldn't stay on very long at a time, as I was working full time as a locomotive electrician for the Santa Fe RR and we also had a sideline honey business with 120 hives of bees. It took me all of nine years to finish and be awarded USACA-896.

Almost ten years ago, after completing USACA-SSB, I swore I was finished with collecting counties. I was tired of the chase, tired of the same people on the SSB net trying to set-up their next county with every mobile, even if they still needed hundreds of counties yet. To me it was a childish and selfish

way to act and I was tired of it. It had taken nine years and I needed to get away from it. So, on to other things....CW, DX, QRP, RTTY, PSK.

Then, in early November of 2005, while chasing DX on 30 meters I ran across mobiles giving out counties. What the heck, I'll collect a few of them and maybe in the process improve my cw and contesting skills. Well, reel me in....I'm hooked! Of course when we first start we need every county, so can work every mobile, but I'm already over 500 counties, all cw. A hearty thanks go to each mobile out there running. And, I hope my cw has improved from where I was several months ago. The cw bands are truly a gentleman's playground and the cw operators on the net are true gentlemen and ladies. Also, it's different this time around as I'm now retired from the RR and only a hobbyist beekeeper with five hives and can spend more time around the radio. Right now, I'm only working toward the cw award, but who knows, I might start keeping records for the different bands.



Hopefully, before long I can get out and try my hand at putting out some of the surrounding counties cw mobile. If you hear me as N5PR/m, take it easy

on me, as it will probably be my first time on the other end of the cw pile-up and I'm not skilled at pulling out a call when more than one call at a time!



73,  
Paul Ridley, N5PR

## The Wyndham Hotel Billing Fiasco

Many county hunters headed to the National Convention in Roanoke in July. The total was well over 100. Apparently, the Wyndham Hotel installed some new billing systems that went haywire in November. They started double (and worse) billing to those who had stayed there in July, and the charges appeared again in November. They got me, Ray, WG6X, Terry, WQ7A, N8STF, AF3X, and many, many others with charges again in November on the credit card for things paid for back in July.

The Roanoke HQ blamed 'corporate', but apparently corporate has been downsized and outsourced (to India?) so there appears to be no one at corporate to find or fix any problems. It's like "No one is home – and they don't have a light on at corporate HQ." Any messages sent to 'corporate' are instantly forwarded to the hotel in question, when the hotel in question says it's a corporate problem. You can't communicate with corporate. The Officers there are 'insulated' from anything. Maybe it is "Hear no evil, see no evil, get no customer complaints?". There seems to be no one in corporate left. All the functions, other than the senior management, doesn't seem to have a collective brain left, or to respond to emails, problems, or other situations from corporate HQ. Then again you wonder. Apparently, the hotel properties are owned by one entity, the Wyndham name by other.

Emails sent to corporate get forwarded to the hotel. Obviously, if the hotel can't fix corporate billing systems, since it is a 'corporate function', and there is no one left at corporate other than management interesting in 'leveraging stock holder value', buyouts, golden parachutes, then you have to wonder. I guess we'll never know.

One of the emails received was:

I just received your billing issues and want to apologize for any inconveniences you have encountered. I want you to know that these issues did not come from our hotel in Roanoke, but from our Corporate Offices. I have been assured by our offices in Dallas that any duplicate charges will be reversed within 5 business days for all customers who had the same problems you did. We have tried to reverse all charges we have come across at our hotel, but have had to wait to hear from our guests as the issues appear, due to duplicate charges not showing on our in-house system. Again, I apologize on behalf of the Wyndham Roanoke Hotel. If any of your group has not seen a reverse of charges within 5 business days, please feel free to contact me and I can do some research to find what is being done on each account. Please accept my apologies and we do hope to see you again in the future! Have a wonderful day!

Kara Stewart  
ByRequest Manager  
Wyndham Roanoke Hotel  
2801 Hershberger Rd  
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

540-561-7964  
kastewart@wyndham.com

A previous email sent to corporate was replied to as:

**Response (Raquel Garcia)**

12/07/2005 09:41 AM

Dear Mr. Voss,

Thank you for contacting us. Your inquiry has been forwarded to the hotel for response. Someone directly from the hotel will be in contact with you.

Best Regards,

Raquel Garcia, Help Desk Coordinator  
Wyndham Central Reservation Help Desk  
1-866-850-4011 toll free  
wyndham@custhelp.com

**Customer (Robert A. Voss)**

12/06/2005 10:41 PM

So what did the MARAC sponsors for this do? Apparently MARAC, the organization that convened this convention, collected the 'convention registration' money for it, is just sitting on its behind doing nothing. Not a word appeared in the December RoadRunner to alert folks to look out for the double charges. Some folks are NOT on line, and haven't read the comments in the K3IMC web page. The only way they'll find out about it, if not active on the 20M net (if that is ever discussed there), would be to read about it in the RoadRunner. And it said not a word.

They reversed my double billing, but it shouldn't be up to every single person affected to have to complain. Wyndham should have the manpower/systems to find and reverse all the double billings, without folks having to wait for everyone to contact them. What happens about folks who overlook it, or aren't made aware of it?

The December RoadRunner was silent on this issue, yet it had surfaced in Mid November. MARAC had the attendee list and could have attempted to contact all those who attended to warn them to look out for the overcharges. Instead, all we got to see was The South Central Director disclaiming that MARAC was "Not involved at all". Same for the 'Chat Room' crowd. The message I sensed was "MARAC doesn't care". By the way, this is the same Director running around looking for 'issues' all the time to take an run

with. Now how much work would it have been to go over the attendee list and get in contact with the folks?

Over half the MARAC members get their news only via the printed RoadRunner.

Jerry, K1SO wrote:

“I have been keeping up with all the information on the K3IMC Forum and CW news, about the problems the Wyndham Hotel had re-billing the MARAC Convention 2005 guest. As luck would have it, we were not the only group that got re-charged for that weekend.

In defense of the Convention Committee - Once I found out about the problems, I contacted the Wyndham Hotel Convention Department, with whom the Committee had all of our contacts. Ms. Domingize, returned my call and ask for a list of those over charged. I could not provide a complete list since I did not know the magnitude of the problem at that point. I suggested that she pull the check-in records and find out who had stayed at the hotel on the dates of our convention. She assured me that she would do this and contact the accounting people at the hotel. I was again asked about the problem (on the SSB net) and was told that some folks had been charged three times. I then went to the hotel and tried to talk with the manager who was not in town on that day. I talked with the same party (Ms. Domingize) and was told the local Hotel had contacted the home office. No explanation was given as to what had happen at that time. I was also told that a number of those over charged had called the Hotel and they were trying to get their issues handled at that time.

Three days later, I ask Ray/AB4YZ to stop by the hotel and see what he could find out. He was told, it was being handled. At this point, there was nothing else we could do for anyone. It was up to the Wyndham Hotel and the

Credit/Debit card companies to credit the victims of the gross error made by the Hotel.

I know I speak for the entire Convention Committee when I say, we are sorry for the problem, but we could not have foreseen these problems and surely would not have booked the hotel if we had known we would have such problems. I apologize for the inconvenience this has caused and hope the all will be resolved very soon.

Best regards,  
Jerry Haislip/K1SO"

Yep, it seems that Wyndham went 'brain dead'. Maybe the MARAC Roadrunner will have something about it, it BIG type, to alert folks to be aware they may have been double billed. MARAC "corporate" seems to have gone just as 'brain dead' and uncaring, too.

## 40M CW

One of the readers asked about hearing about CW near the 40M SSB frequency. For the past year, several county hunters have been running 40M cw after the SSB runs on the net frequency, or if the net is busy, up a few KHz (7241 or 7243 or 44). That has helped a lot of the 40M SSB folks get their feet wet on cw, since they know who and where already. KA0SHC, N9STL, KA9JAC, KD4HXM, and a bunch of others have done that. Occasionally, other cw folks will be watching the spots, and jump in on CW there as well.

Jim ND9M often uses a 40M CW frequency of 7244. He'll run on 30M, 20M on the normal freqs (one antenna will cover both SSB and CW there), and then to 7244 CW, and then 7238/43 SSB. Most antennas will not tune both SSB and CW on 30M, even with most tuners.

When I go out, I sometimes carry a separate antenna (and mount) for 40M SSB since my main mode is usually CW. It's a hamstick mounted on the roof of the Buick LeSabre. It does require switching back and forth with a simple antenna switch.

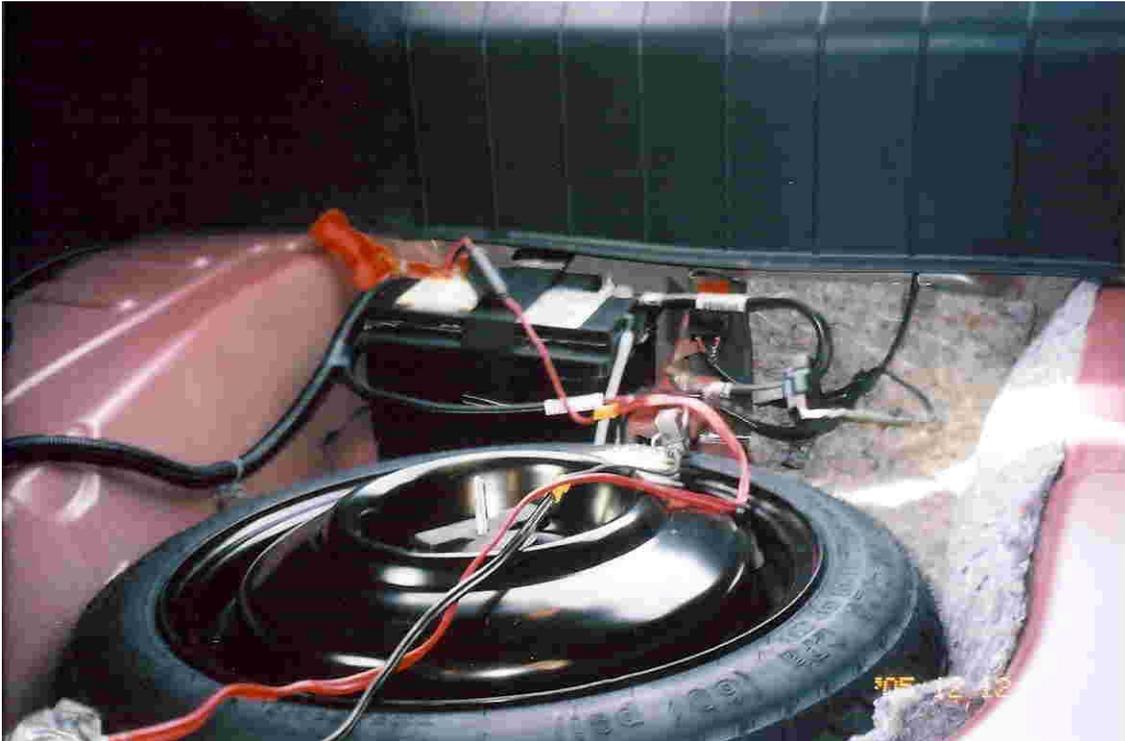
## The Rental Car – Chevy Cobalt 2005

The 2001 Buick LeSabre went into the shop in early December to repair the 'deer damage' from the trip in MO for 5 business days. While it was in the shop, I rented a 2005 Chevy Cobalt, a small car. Naturally, any county hunter examines a new car for possibilities of county hunting. It had a 2.2L engine and auto transmission. A/C and radio/CD player. That was about it – everything else was 'basic'. No remote door locks. No power windows, no power seats.



N4CD/m on the County Line of Wood/Rains, TX

In the past, cars have had the battery in the front, along side the engine, in front of the engine, behind the engine. Some cars had batteries under the rear passenger seat (rear engine WV Bugs, and the Buick LeSabres among others). In the Cobalt, you had better look in the trunk! It's about as far back as you can put it, right in front of the rear bumper. To get to the spare tire under the floor mat, (a compact one), you reach over the battery. That was the first 'trunk mounted' battery I have ever seen, other than for the occasional high power fanatic who runs a second or third battery stashed away there along with the high powered amps. It's under the floor board/carpet, so you wouldn't know it was there unless someone pointed it out. The car rental people wanted to make sure the spare was there, so I got to see where the battery was the easy way. Otherwise, one might spend a long time looking for it!



The Battery is in the trunk in the Chevy Cobalt!

The car has a very narrow trunk deck, maybe 20 inches, so the mag mount barely fits there. Fortunately, it is flat. Likely, it is not a very good R.F. ground due to the small size, and I did not take the time to ground the mag mount as I do on the regular car. This was going to be a typical 'rental car'

installation. I connected up a standard length ICOM power cable using a small hose clamp on the negative lead, and had to use an alligator clip on the positive side. Not easy to get the hose clamp around anything firmly on the positive side. It worked OK for the one day of running around I did.

The split rear seat folds forward easily, so the power cable could be routed quickly up to the front of the car. I put the IC-706 on the passenger seat, in a cut away half cardboard box to allow it to have air circulation. Also, I put an external speaker and key paddles up front.

The coax was brought back through a slightly opened rear window. The door fit is very tight – may not be able to get a coax through there. Heavy nylon twine was used to guy the antenna to the two coat hooks, and I tied down the rear of the mag mount to the license plate (looped around the license plate) to keep it from kicking forward. The paddles are on a small board that I put under my right leg.

It had the normal antenna system I use on the big car – 6 foot of mast, with 20/30/40 cw resonators mounted horizontal. On earlier trips where I had to fly to get somewhere, I had a six foot total length mast that comes in small sections – 2 foot each section. That fits easily into a suitcase.



### The N4CD Temporary Set Up

It's a small car, and with an ungrounded mag mount on a very small trunk deck, performance was not quite as good as the full size car. However, I did have good runs, working 12-30 stations per county on 30M, plus more on 40M and 20M. Occasionally I'd pop up on 20M SSB and work the mobile running just to let the SSB folks know where I was (those few that actually still listen to 14.336 rather than just watch the spots). Also, the mobiles need contacts from the counties.

The car gives a very choppy ride at slow speeds, especially on rough roads. In this area, there are lots of concrete streets, with boundaries between concrete sections, and often rough surface. You feel it all. It's better riding on the interstates and main roads than around town.

One thing that was interesting is that the car comes with Halogen lights standard - Excellent headlights at night for driving. It's the first car I've used with Halogens, and now quite likely the next car will have them. It's a very big difference in performance. I've read you need 10 times more light at age 60 vs. 18 to see the same. (or you see less with the same amount of light).

The car was fairly quiet (a GM feature it seems that Ford has yet to emulate). Not much difference between engine on and off at idle, and only S1 noise or so when moving on cw, more on SSB. With radio/antenna grounding, I suspect there would be no noise at all. The radio didn't seem to interfere with anything (did not have cruise control) which is also good, except you heard some weak thumping in the speakers when you keyed.

I suspect that is intended to be marketed toward the young sporty car minded folks who are on a budget. The one I rented was fire engine red, likely to attract lots of attention. Not bad if you need a rental car and want to do some mobiling, but if the XYL wants to come along, there isn't much room for her and the radio!

De N4CD

## The W6RK Spotting Site

One of the nifty things you can do on the W6RK spotting site is to plot the route of a mobile on a trip. You can do this for the past few hours to see which way and how the mobile is proceeding, or you can do it for an entire trip.

Dave, W4YDY sent me the following pic of the November N4CD trip from Dallas, to Denver to Washington DC and back, going the 'county hunter way'. Each little balloon represents a county spotting during the run.



Expand selection:

Mobile Call	Start Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	End Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Map It!
N4CD	2005-11-01	2005-11-30	Map it!

This is just one of the nifty features on Risto’s site. In addition, you can search back for mobiles calls, the county a mobile ran, what counties were run on what dates. You can search to see who has run a county in the past year (maybe they do it regularly if you need to work it). Risto also compiles running stats of the mobiles each month and how many counties they have run, by mode or in total.

If you are not a user of Risto’s site, check it out at: [ch.w6rk.com](http://ch.w6rk.com)

This is the spotting line at W6RK. It works considerably better than the one in the on-line spotting function at: <http://spots.superhosts.net/> One of the nifty things you can do is UNSPOT. As soon as you spot, you (and you alone) have an ‘unspot’ box which appears, allowing you to make a correction. Unlike the spots seen all the time by one SSB NC, with another spot often a few minutes later and the word (correction) – which leaves the original wrong spot still in the system, when you realize you have made a

mistake it is easy to respot and then eliminate the wrong spot with a single button click.

In addition, the information remains after you spot in the entire line, so if you want to change just a part of it, you don't have to retype the entire line! You correct the field that was wrong (ie, the county name, for example) and click the 'spot' button. Then you go to the line where the wrong spot was, click the 'unspot' button, and it vanishes from the system. No need to keep seeing 'corrections' after correction.

In the Superhosts on line spotting function, the information vanishes as soon as you do the spot, there is no way to 'unspot', and a correct spots requires typing in the whole set of information again, including mobile, frequency. I don't believe there is a way to unspot from the web spotting. If you are logged into the chat room, there is a whole line that you must type in exactly correctly, with the 'wrong spot' including time, date, to get it out of the system. Many times the 'chat room' seems just like 14.336, with people being 'reprimanded' or 'banned' or similar, so that wouldn't even necessarily work for some folks.

For those who help out on the 10.114 net, you just leave 10.114 in there, not having to enter it every single time. If the mobile changes counties during a run, you don't have to retype the mobile call, frequency, and counties like on Superhosts. You just change the county field, and click on 'spot' and away it goes for the new spot.

The W6RK site updates twice as often as Superhosts, so things appear more quickly. I find it much more user friendly as do many of the cw folks. You also have the map/route instantly available to see where a mobile has been, and is likely headed.

Spotter Call	FQ (kHz)	Mobile Call	Comments (County, State)		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Add spot	Clear Values

This is the W6RK spotting field at W6RK. Once you type in the info, it is retained even after you hit spot. Thus, you can make changes quickly. If the mobile runs on 30m, and goes to 40m and you want to spot the mobile, just change the freq box, and hit 'add spot' and away it goes. No need to type it all in again.

Of course, if you go to a field, and start typing, the old info vanishes instantly. So if a new mobile starts running, you just go to the 'call' field, type it in, hit tab, type in the county, and hit 'spot'. The frequency and spotting station information are retained.

If you miss a county/mobile, or forgot to log it, you can use the search function for many different things and in different ways.

Right below the spot line are the search boxes. You enter a call or date or county, and hit 'search'

Spotter	FQ (kHz)	Min FQ	Max	Mode	
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Call		(kHz)	FQ (kHz)		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Any <input type="checkbox"/> CW <input type="checkbox"/> SSB <input type="checkbox"/> data	<input type="button" value="Clear Values"/>
Mobile Call	Comments (County, State)	Date (yyyy- mo-da)	UTC (min)	UTC (max)	Show 10 <input type="text"/> spots
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/>

You can search by just band, mobile, county, date, mode, etc. Very convenient. Most of the 'queries' heard on net can easily be answered by referring to the W6RK spot site, then you won't have to be trying to copy the county name, mobile name at 33 levels from NC that isn't heard in half the country much of the time.

If you want to know who has run Knox, NE, type it in, and out pop the last ten runs spotted there. If you only want CW, put in cw, then Knox, NE, hit search, and it will give you the last 10 (or whatever you select) number of cw runs spotted in Knox, NE.

## New Year's Resolution from Larry, W0QE

As we near the end of another year and think about resolutions for the upcoming year, please consider this resolution.

I will give more to the CW county hunting community than I take in 2006.

**Examples of Giving:**

- 1.) Acting as Net Control
- 2.) Announcing the mobile to the entire net if you work the mobile first
- 3.) Offering to give relays if there is no NCS or if NCS doesn't hear a station
- 4.) Operating mobile and putting out counties
- 5.) Elmering others who need help with operating, mobile setup, their transmissions, or any other county hunting topic.
- 6.) Taking a local "old timer" who may no longer feel comfortable operating mobile out with you for the day (give each other counties along the way).
- 7.) Speaking nicely of other county hunters or say nothing
- 8.) Actively looking to help others with counties they may need
- 9.) Volunteering in some county hunting activity such as a convention, MARAC, etc.

**Examples of Taking:**

- 1.) Taking relays
- 2.) Not paying attention to the net and/or interrupting the net
- 3.) Treating or speaking badly to or about other county hunters
- 4.) Operating on the air in some manner that draws negative attention to us as a group
- 5.) Operating mobile and not putting out a county just because someone is already running. Moving off frequency is too easy to do and someone may have been waiting all day for you to run the county.
- 6.) Having CW skills that need improving and not actively doing anything about it. Getting the mobile's call sign from the Internet and only needing to copy a signal report will probably never improve your CW skills.
- 7.) Only watching the Internet spots, working a station, and then vanishing
- 8.) Never operating mobile. If you don't have a mobile setup then find someone to ride along with. Most mobiles need the counties they put out for others.

### **So where do you stand?**

Certainly we all need relays occasionally and most of us use

the Internet especially if an upcoming needed county is expected to be weak but some only do this. Newcomers often feel timid about helping and my suggestion would be for them to get one of the regular folks to Elmer them. However by the time someone has worked all the counties or has worked them all on CW there is no longer any excuse for someone else to have to do all the work. I believe it would be good for county hunting in general if all the MARAC awards had some sort of a service requirement in addition to just working the 3077 counties. County hunting is all about the mobile stations and most mobiles like having a NCS and appreciate the relays and company that an active net provides.

For those who need improvement on their CW skills there is a lot of interaction that happens on the net that you are missing. Much of this interaction involves abbreviations and shortcuts (for efficiency) and being part of this does make you feel more like part of the net. In addition mobiles often will adjust their routes to help you with a county especially if you are helping them. So in closing if you think you take more from the net than you give, how about making the resolution and doing your best to keep it. Happy New Year to All!

## POSTAGE INCREASE!

The US Postal Service rates increase to 39 cents effective January 8<sup>th</sup>. If you have MRCs sitting around, mail them back before then, otherwise you'll have to add 2 cents more postage. If you are busy confirming contacts, be sure you stick 39 cents in stamps on the return envelopes.

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That's it for this months County Hunter News! Have a good 2006!