

County Hunter News

February 1, 2006

Volume 2, Issue 2

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 or can be accessed via www.countyhunter.com

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)

Notes from the Editor

This month we have news of County Hunting on 80/75 meters, an article from Ray, WG6X on Mobile Installation, the Year End CW Stats from Elwood, KA3MMM, and news of Operating Events of interest to county hunters. We've had positive feedback on the larger type size, so we will continue to use it most of the time.

Gasoline prices seem to have started up, and many feel that we'll be lucky if we are only paying \$3/gallon by summer time as demand continues to rise and worldwide tensions increase. Spring is often the time of lowest demand. In Texas, prices bottomed out near \$2.10 for regular, and now have

moved up to \$2.25/gal. Fortunately, a mild winter has moderated the very high natural gas prices, but there is no solution in sight for the natural gas shortfall other than more 'demand destruction' with high prices. Prices are up more than 500% in just a few years, and likely to stay up. The USA appetite for energy keeps rising and rising.

We have included the Jan weekly blog from James Kunstler, who has presented a dire situation in his well respected book, the Long Emergency. His outlook is for a period of very disturbing long term dislocation of current systems as we finally adopt to a new energy regime over a period of many decades. If you only want 'good news', skip the article.

Well, at the end of the year, I totaled things up.....good year...down to 10 to finish up Second Time All CW (which is also 6th time, but after 5, sort of is overkill, hi hi).....down to about 90 for doing all on 30m....needless to say, new counties are getting tougher and tougher to find! On the transmitted side, up to 1903 transmitted counties the second time around - chasing after Gene, W1TEE, who has done it twice already. For the new award, Masters Platinum, the count is up to 1,234, but since I don't get on SSB much and miss the other MG holders who run only on SSB, I suspect others are well ahead of me working toward that one.

If you sent your year end CW stats in to Elwood, they're included in this issue. Many folks have joined in the fun on cw this year, with many good runs by mobiles giving out the counties on 30M.

Sadly, we lose some senior county hunters this month. Morris, KB4IT passed away according to Dale, KB5MI, and the post on the K3IMC forum:

"It is with deep regret I relay that Morris Johnson KB4IT became a silent key this morning Dale km5ms" (Posted 1/12/06)

Eleanor, KD4NFE, sent in the following for publication about Walt, K4ELK, who recently passed away.

"Walter E. Morris, 90, Became a Silent Key on December 11, 2005. Mr. Morris was a 5th generation Floridian. Born in Arcadia, FL, and grew up in Seminole County, FL...Walt was first licensed, as a ham in 1934 as W4CRS, and became K4ELK in 1955. Major ham interests were: DX, County Hunting, and seeking awards. He was a long time active member of

the Silver Springs Radio Club, in Ocala, Florida, after retirement. He belonged to the Macon Radio Club, in Macon, Georgia, after moving to Macon in 2000. He was a member of IAAH, QCWA, OOTC, SOWP, MARAC, FCC, and AARL. He held both phone and telegraph FCC commercial licenses, Extra Class Ham, and FAA Flight Dispatcher tickets. He was a member of The Society of Wireless Pioneers, and a former member of the AMA, CA, ALCIC, and the Advising Committee on Land Mobile Service, to the FCC. His Wife Eleanor, KD4NFE, a son Glen Morris, Sister Grace Polhamus, and nephew, Bob Polhamus, N2BP, survive him.”

Hugh, K8GPC, also left us recently. All were active county hunters and will be missed.

There’s now a very good possibility of getting Kalawao, HI on 30M. Larry, W0QE posted:

“I have been in communication with Merv, K9FD/KH6 who is a permanent resident on Maui recently. He ran Kalawao last month on 20m CW and SSB but didn't have a 30m antenna. Well he and I just had a 30m QSO with 579 both ways and he could also copy a guy in KY. He has been trying to decide what time of the day to run it to get the most US coverage and has decided that he will run it at 0000Z and will let me know a week before he goes. He said it will be within the month and I will post it as soon as I hear. By the way he is an excellent CW op so the resulting pileup will not scare him away. I have been in communication with Merv, K9FD/KH6 who is a permanent resident on Maui recently. He ran Kalawao last month on 20m CW and SSB but didn't have a 30m antenna. Well he and I just had a 30m QSO with 579 both ways and he could also copy a guy in KY. He has been trying to decide what time of the day to run it to get the most US coverage and has decided that he will run it at 0000Z and will let me know a week before he goes. He said it will be within the month and I will post it as soon as I hear. By the way he is an excellent CW op so the resulting pileup will not scare him away.”

Coming up this month is the South Central mini in far south Texas. It’s shaping up to be a good event, and the weather is usually quite nice – no snow for sure.

CW activity has been good, especially on the weekends, and when folks are on trips. N9JF, W0GXQ, N4CD, AI5P, NA7W, W4GNS, N0KV, K5AX, KA3MMM, K3IMC, W6TMD, and many others put out counties for us.

Awards Issued

MARAC Five Star #23, KC6AWX, Bob, 12/30/05
Second Time, #358, K0TVY, Gordon, 1/9/06
Third Time, #191, VE4AGT, Lloyd, 1/11/06
USACA #1131. NN9K, Pete, 1/26/06
USACA#1132, AB7RW, Phil, 1/26/06

Info from Ray, WG6X – Mobile Installation

Hi Bob,

After finding the loose mounting bolts causing the radio and antenna problem on my truck, and getting the antenna installation and testing finished on the car, I started on figuring how to install the radio and cw key in the car. One main thing I wanted was to be able to remove the radio equipment from the car quickly when not using it for county hunting trips.

Since there was no easy way I could find to mount the radio as a unit, I had to settle on remoting the radio. I considered mounting the radio and tuner in the trunk area, but since I do some team operating and wanted to run two mike setups along with wanting to be able to remove the radio equipment when not using the car for county hunting, I gave up on that idea. After kicking around many possibilities, I settled on mounting the radio and the tuner on a thin metal plate, because I would have to bend the mounting plate to get it under the passenger's seat. I am not sure that I will use the antenna tuner, but I made the mount to cover both units. I attached a ground lead on the mounting plate and grounded it to one of the bolts holding the passenger's seat to the body.

I have several iambic keys, but found they were a little to big to install in the

small car in my opinion. After trying several locations while out on recent trips, I gave up on the cw keys I had presently. I purchased a K9LU BD2 magnetic base Iambic key which is quite small Iambic cw key and takes up very little room inside the car.

The next project was to find a mount setup that both was quick removal and would put the cw key where I could use it both comfortable and safe while driving. I spent a couple days looking at parts and trying several things from PVC and metal plumbing parts, which due to the size of the coffee cup holder on my center console, just didn't fit tight. The hole in the coffee cup holder is smaller than 3 inches and larger than 2 1/2 inches. I kept looking and trying things and then I found something that meet both of my requirements in a small hardware store near my house which should most likely be in stock at the larger hardware stores.

The cw mount is made up of a 3 inch Metal Wing Nut Test Plug (William H. Harvery Co. Part # 014015) and a 3/8-16 threaded 6 inch carriage bolt, a 3/8-16 coupling, a 4 inch threaded 3/8-16 rod, and a 3/8-16 U type speed nut. The carriage bolt and the coupling nut, 4 in. rod, and the speed nut were purchased at Lowe's hardware. After removing the original carriage bolt from the Test Plug, I replaced it with the 6 inch carriage bolt. To add some more height, I added a coupling and a 4 inch rod. On top of the rod, I screwed on the Speed nut which is the base for the magnetic Iambic key. The height puts the cw key at a nice level to my center armrest which is part of the center console unit. This mount sits inside my coffee cup holder and to tighten it up or for removal, I use the wing nut on top of the Test plug which expands or deflates the bellows on the Test plug. I did notice there were two types of this test plug with one having the bellows with ridges and one with plain side. I chose the one with the ridges for my use in making this cw mount setup.

This mount setup could be used for remote mounting the 706 head and like my choice, would give you quick removal. I would think that you would want to use maybe a 5in. 3/8-16 threaded carriage bolt so to lower the center of gravity. You would have to make up some kind of a bracket to mount on the carriage bolt like angle iron or V shape and drill a 3/8 in. hole for mounting it to the carriage bolt.

For a rental car this might be something you might be able to use.

Ray



Native American Counties Award

As most readers of the CHNews are aware, different awards are sponsored by different groups for county hunting. CQ Magazine is the sponsor of the prestigious USACA award. Various organizations offer state Worked All Counties Awards – see www.countyhunter.com under State WAC Awards. MARAC offers multiple awards for those continuing on, and has taken over (Basically by duplicating) awards that were started by others, but now it essentially controls, such as Bingo, YL award, 2nd-nth time).

Many of the most sought after awards were started by the B&B shop and other folks (see previous issues for discussion on the Master's Gold Award), and B&B awards were taken over by the D&J Shop. MARAC then muscled in when the “Joisey Gang” took over, and started to issue duplicate awards (maybe that is why there is all that loot just sitting in the MARAC treasury?) in a power grab, and requiring folks to pay membership dues to obtain the lower rate award prices.

Duane, WV2B, sponsors the Native American Counties Award (NACA). There are 418 USA counties with Native American derived names. You can read up on this at:

<http://www.stpaulisland.net/NACA.html>

There's a link to a page where the names of all 418 counties are listed along with the possible derivation of the name. Indian River, FL isn't too hard to figure out, but it might take you a while on your own to learn that Piscataquis, (ME) is an Abnaki word for ‘Divided Tidal River’.

Texas has Cherokee, Wichita, Comanche, Pecos, Nacogdoches, and Panola counties. .

OK...an N4CD pop Quiz!.....now how many states do not have Native American County names in them???? (Hint: Over 42 states have Native American County Names. Alaska, with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Judicial Districts is certainly one state without a Native American county name. Delaware has Kent, Sussex, and New Castle – all seemingly from British origins. How many others?)

CW County Hunters Do It Again – now 3556.5!

For years and years, folks have been yearning for a net on 785/80M. Lots of talk about ‘the way it was’. Way back when (20-30 years ago), much of the county hunting was done on 75M late at night, as well as on 40M in the evenings (before the invasion of the foreign broadcasters). Of course, on SSB, the problem finding a frequency to operate that isn’t already taken by someone on 75M. It’s very challenging on SSB on 75M other than during the daytime hours, where CH have used 3903 for short range contacts. It seems the same groups have been using the same frequencies for decades, and finding one to use is darn near impossible on SSB.

We have mobiles out there who routinely QSY to 15 meters, one or two who go to 17M, and a small handful of mobiles that go to 10 meters (KN4Y, KB4XK) or 15 meters, and put out the counties on those bands. With the sunspot cycle headed for the bottom (or bouncing along in the bottom now), it’s hard for many other than on the coasts to get much ‘action’ on 15 and 10 meters.

Less than 2 years ago, the CW county hunters started up on 30 meters, and it has turned out to be great band. In the late afternoons/evenings, the skip on 30 starts to lengthen out, and by a hour after sunset, for most, is no longer a good county hunting band. 40M usually fades away not much after that.

In the mornings, 40M is useful early, followed shortly thereafter by 30, then an hour or two later on 20M. In the middle of the country, 10M seems to seldom open to anywhere other than south America or the far tips of the continental USA. So, if you are a county hunter looking for action after sunset, where do you go then?

In the beginning of January, several county hunters decided to try 80M CW, and the first few nights saw activity by a handful of mobiles (NM2L, AA8R, W4GNS, W0QE, WA7SLD, W0GXQ, NN9K, W8LSV) and a good number at fixed stations (KS5A, W6RK, AA9KH, WB2ABD, KM9X, W0QE, K5RPC, KY0E, W2SR, KB6UF, KB6TAL, KE3VV plus more).

KS5A posted on forum: “What a surprise ... thanks to all that came down on 80 CW tonite for our impromptu get-together. Guess the net ran for about

one and a half hours. I copied 26 different stations participating, including 4 mobiles putting out 6 counties. There was probably a few more, mainly in the east that I did not hear here in the west. And as always, the mobiles make it fun, and we really appreciate their efforts. Thanks.”

That’s like the old days when there were ‘activity days’ when a county hunter net met for a few hours, hoping for new fixed station check-ins to give them new counties. Then, as we had mobiles out there, it became a more regular ‘net’. So far, it looks like Tuesdays are 80M CW net days.

Larry, W0QE had to improvise a mobile antenna. Here’s what he did that first night: “I ran a 40m hamstick with a 4' solid piece of aluminum on the bottom followed by the hamstick bottom section and then a 9' CB whip on top, with a 3' piece of #14 wire to make the beast resonate. Matched it with my usual 1uH coil to ground. Mounted it on the roof of my 4Runner resulting in a total height of about 23'. Was pretty easy to take apart and move but definitely not mobile. Still had a good time.” - No pics available...was dark! I guess you’d call his set-up ‘portable’. The antenna would have to be disassembled and re assembled at a new county location.

W0GXQ posted: “I was surprised how well my screwdriver worked on 80 “

Now how did we wind up on 3556.5? Seems a bunch of the folks started listening to see which freqs were not used at night. The ‘old’ freq of 3670 is in the middle of traffic net territory. Antennas for SSB aren’t going to tune down there, or lower – meaning you need a dedicated CW antenna or have a screwdriver that can be adjusted anyway. Also, it seems CH can remember 056.5 easily ($14.0565, 3.500 \text{ plus } 0565 = 3556.5, 28.0565, 21.0565$). The rule doesn’t seem to hold on 40M as 7056.5 is in the middle of digital stuff. Why not? It seems to work!

On January 24th, it was time for N4CD to join in on the fun. Long, long ago I wound up with an old adjustable antenna, 8-9 foot in length, which I bought at a radio club auction sale. On the side, it had a slider adjustment for a coil further up in the antenna. I’d guess there was about a 3 foot long bottom section, then a coil section, then a couple foot long ‘stinger’. I had never used it, and it was out in the garage along with lots of other antenna parts and pieces for years.

I found an old 4 magnet mount that I didn't really like for normal use, and put it on the back of the Buick, and screwed in the 9 foot antenna (it was 9 foot long on 3556.5). Using the MFJ Antenna Analyzer, it quickly was brought to best match (about 3:1). I noted that it also would cover 60M SSB, which is why I bought it in the first place. The normal ground strap worked OK. I discovered lots of noise in the neighborhood. S9 noise everywhere within 2 miles. I headed down the road toward the 'quiet area' of my home town, where there are no overhead power lines or houses (just big company HQ buildings), and it got somewhat quieter. First I ran my home county, Collin, then I zipped the 7 miles over to Denton, TX, and ran it. Normally, I'm holed up in the motel or house at the time when 80M gets going, but who knows? There are others on the road, and the other bands have long faded by a hour after sunset for most. Now we see spots for 80cw.

So far, we've yet to hear anything about 60M mobile for county hunting. No CW on 60M yet, so I'm not worried about it, but it would be interesting if the SSB types who keep complaining about rotten 20M propagation, and Radio Moscow on 40M SSB, would even try something different. Who knows, it might be a fun band. You can run 50W ERP, so with a typical mobile antenna, you can even run a 300W output amp, and have a signal as loud as any base station in the country. (Maybe 15-20% efficiency at 5MHz on your mobile antenna?). I'm sure if we had CW privileges on 60M, the CW county hunters would be using it to have even more bands to work counties in the mornings/evenings. Maybe in the future?

PA QSO Party Adds Digital Modes

http://lists.contesting.com/_cq-contest/2005-12/msg00088.html

The Pennsylvania QSO Party will be undergoing some additions for next October's event. We have always tried to encourage fun over cutthroat competitiveness, and to encourage modes such as CW.

In the spirit of the party, starting next season, we will add digital modes. - PSK31 and RTTY.

Each QSO will count for 2 points, and count as a separate mode, just as you can contact someone once per each band on SSB, and CW, you will be able to do the same for PSK and RTTY.

We have always tried to spice things up a bit, such as adding multiple location special event stations, without massively affecting the records.

One of the big complaints and one that I have experienced is the "Sunday Doldrums", when the bands are pretty much worked out, and lots of CQ calling, but only dupes to be had. Okay, get that computer out, and do some RTTY or PSK31!

PSK31 and RTTY will be the digital modes allowed.

- 73 de Mike KB3EIA – “

February Operating Events

Looks like a good month for county hunters! Good time to go hunting for counties, bands, prefixes, modes, etc. Please spot the ones you hear/work for others to help out.

Vermont QSO Party	0000Z, Feb 4 to 2400Z, Feb 5
Minnesota QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, Feb 4
Delaware QSO Party	1700Z, Feb 4 to 0500Z, Feb 5 and
New Hampshire QSO Party	0001Z, Feb 11 to 0001Z, Feb 13
Louisiana QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 11 to 0300Z, Feb 12
OMISS QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 11 to 1459Z, Feb 12
Mississippi QSO Party	1500Z, Feb 25 to 0300Z, Feb 26
North Carolina QSO Party	1700Z, Feb 26 to 0300Z, Feb 27

Jim Kunstler's 2006 Prediction

Jim Kunstler is the author of the Long Emergency. He publishes a weekly blog at: http://www.kunstler.com/mags_diary16.html This has nothing to do with county hunting, other than his predictions (\$3-4/gal gasoline).

“January 2, 2006

First, a little background briefing on *where we are at* -- to use some of the bad grammar now normative in American life -- before I make predictions (i.e. guesses) about the year ahead.

You can only introduce so much perversity into an economic system before distortions cripple it. From 2001 through 2005, consumer spending and residential construction had together accounted for 90 percent of the *total growth* in GDP, while over two-fifths of all private sector jobs created since 2001 were in housing-related sectors, such as construction, real estate and mortgage brokering. Much of the money spent did not really exist except as credit -- incomes as yet unearned, hallucinated liquidity, wished-for wealth, all based on the expectation that house values would continue to rise at 10 to 20 percent a year forever. It became a reckless racket, all predicated on sustaining an economy that had lost its other means for generating wealth -- foremost its infrastructure for making things besides suburban houses.

This housing bubble economy represented, holistically speaking, the wish to maintain a sense of normality in American life, under conditions of disintegrating *normality*, and it is no symbolic accident that it centered on the images of hearth and home, because fundamental comforts were what many Americans actually stand to lose in a reality-based future. The decay of standards and norms in banking behavior applied-to-housing started, as in the case of the proverbial rotting dead fish, at the head, the federal reserve, and infected every lowly loan officer through the body until, in effect, lending standards ceased to exist.

The suburban housing bubble and its related activities were predicated on the idea that we could continue building out a living arrangement dependent on cheap oil and methane gas, and that all the subdivisions and strip malls would retain value for decades to come. Of course, this was the central delusion of the suburban sprawl economy, because it was obvious to anyone who gave the situation more than a cursory glance that cheap oil and gas were the things we were *least likely* to have in the decades to

come.

This reality had begun to penetrate the American collective consciousness and will be represented in 2006 by millions of individual choices to *not buy* a new suburban house, either because the individuals fear the expense of long commutes or they fear the cost of heating a 4000 square foot house occupied by only a few people (or both). As the inventory of unsold new houses mounts up, the prices of all houses, new and old, will start to go down. There will be enormous psychological resistance to this reality, expressed in a lag of correct pricing, as the owners of these value-shedding "investments" wait for the bubble behavior (anticipated 10 to 20 percent asset appreciation) to return. Eventually they will get the picture.

The velocity of change in the housing bubble (and the psychology involved) will be greatly affected by oil and gas prices. It seemed to many of us watching the energy markets that the world may indeed have passed through its all-time oil production peak in 2005. Production in 2005 was nearly flat over 2004. The world was producing and also using roughly 82 million barrels of oil a day. Oil coming into new production was not making up for signs of depletion showing among virtually all the world's major producers. Iran, Russia, Mexico, Venezuela, the North Sea, and, of course, the USA, were all past peak. The big mystery was Saudi Arabia, but their inability to boost production from the 50-year-old fields that comprised their main reserves suggested that they were topping out, too. Which left an energy-hungry world with the need to either A.) make other arrangements for powering industrial economies, or B.) contesting for control of the remaining oil reserves, which were substantially concentrated in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Here, I hasten to remind the reader that peak is peak, meaning right now we are all operating on the basis of a lot of oil flowing around the world. The comfort level is still high. The factories are still humming in China, and the six-lane commuting corridors are still full of big cars around Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, and Minneapolis. The problem is that the oil supply will soon steadily diminish at a rate of at least three percent a year, and that necking down of supply is likely to be expressed in greater geopolitical friction and turmoil between the great nations who crave oil. The US entered into the military phase of this turbulence before any other nation. We used our superpower status to set up a centrally-located Middle East garrison in Iraq, under the idealistic cover story that we were removing a dangerous head-of-state and helping to set up a model democracy that would invite us to stick around the vicinity indefinitely, and thus retain some control over the department of other oil-rich states in the region.

The foregoing is the background of my predictions for 2006, which will be the year that the hardships and difficulties I lump together as *The Long Emergency* get some serious traction.

The world oil allocation system is now so fragile that any disturbance in one producing region can send damaging shock waves around the planet. There is no more "swing producer." The US squeaked through the huge loss of oil production capacity this fall by taking oil from our own strategic petroleum reserves and from Europe's. These actions kept oil prices in the high fifty-dollar-range through the holidays, giving Americans a false sense of festive security. Those withdrawals are now over. Global demand for oil is still increasing. The strategic reserves will now have to be refilled (they're called strategic reserves for a reason). This will start oil prices moving upward again -- they already have moved above \$61 as of this morning.

I can't predict whether some maniac will drive a Zodiac boat into a tanker in the straits of Hormuz, or fire a shoulder-launched missile at an Arabian refinery. If nothing like that happens, the first year of post-peak will express itself in turbulent oil markets. Fear of not getting enough will rule. Futures will be overbought and then dumped or shorted and then overbought again. This will at least increase the violence of the ratcheting effect in the markets. Overall I expect to see \$100-a-barrel oil at some point this year. Last year I made a bet with a friend that oil would end 2005 at \$75. I lost the bet. But it is a fact that the price of oil altogether ended the year 40 percent higher than 2004, so it is not as if the markets did not show extraordinary stress.

New laws regulating gasoline mixtures will also contribute substantially to higher gasoline prices (perhaps as much as 40 cents a gallon). So I will predict gasoline breaking through the \$4-a-gallon mark sometime this year.

Our natural gas situation is pretty dire. Prices shot up for a while above \$17 (per one million btu's), but that was the energy equivalent of \$100-a-barrel oil) and based at the time on the enormous damage in the Gulf of Mexico prior to the start of the heating season. The heating season so far as been abnormally mild in the northern US and prices have slumped back to the \$11 range -- which is still a lot higher than the \$7 range in 2004. Unlike oil, we will get no quick relief from international gas sources if the rest of winter turns sharply colder. We're short of terminals to receive significant quantities of imported liquefied natural gas and they cannot be built quickly (or cheaply). The natural gas markets in the US respond very sharply to current conditions. A warm week and the prices sink. A cold one and the price shoots up. Our gas storage for the year is slightly below 2004 levels. Even if we have a mild winter overall, there will be spikes of cold. Our production is still crippled in the Gulf. Therefore, I'll predict that methane gas

prices will spike above \$20 sometime before May.

High gasoline, heating oil, and methane gas prices will absolutely kill the housing bubble for reasons I've already outlined. The production home builders will be idle, stuck with huge inventories in places that never should have been suburbanized in the first place. A lot of Americans holding "creative" mortgages -- no money down, interest only, adjustable rate, what-have-you -- will be crushed by the expense of their obligations. Many of them will go bankrupt under new bankruptcy laws that leave no wiggle room for escaping partial repayment. Their houses will flood the real estate markets in an orgy of distress selling. "Greater fools" will snap up these "bargains," failing to realize that many of the logistical liabilities will remain -- namely remote locations and huge heating costs of enormous McHouses -- even if the ownership terms are less hazardous than the previous owner's. At some point in the future, after several flippings perhaps, all those 4000 square foot houses 44 miles outside Denver (or Cleveland, or Seattle) will be seen as the mistakes that they are, and their cash value will reflect that.

With the cratering of the housing bubble, the US economy has to fall on its ass. The global economy is likely to fall on its ass, too, since so much of it depends on the decisions of Americans to take out exotic loans for buying houses they can't afford. Large numbers of jobs will vanish in construction, remodeling, real estate sales, and the various mortgage rackets -- those things precisely related to the recent gains in GDP.

The sheer falloff in new mortgages will send a tsunami through financial markets addicted to continuous supplies of new "money" to preserve the illusion of expansion. I'd called for a Dow-4000 late in 2005. I think that was just an error in timing, and still call for the Dow to sink into that range, or worse, in 2006. This will represent a moment of painful clarity for market professionals, as they realize that an industrial economy and the finance that serves it must be based on the expectation of generating real future wealth, not on zero-sum rackets, games of monetary musical chairs, or casino legerdemain. Hedge funds, which depend on predictable stability, will be especially vulnerable. They will certainly take some large banks down with them when they go. I'll call for the so-called *government sponsored entities* of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to groan under and then drown in a sea of non-performing loans, probably with overtones of criminal irresponsibility.

If these things occur, ugly things would happen to the dollar. I would predict an episode something short of hyperinflation -- say a rapid 30 percent drop in dollar value -- with a later deflation in the price of things like houses, paintings by Childe Hassam, and many consumer goods. Which means that standards of living will fall across the board as incomes vanish

with jobs and food and energy prices rise -- while Americans try to shed their houses, at the same time that consumer products sit unsold on the shelves of WalMart, Target, and Best Buy. This will spell the beginning of the end for the chain store universe.

The commercial airline industry is already whirling around the drain. 2006 will send it decisively down that drain. Since we cannot do without aviation in a nation as large as the US (with train service on the level with Bolivia) then the government may have to take over the crippled air routes. If that happens, then service will certainly be greatly diminished. Fewer people will be flying under the circumstances, anyway, but there is no reason to believe that this will all occur smoothly. Among other things, huge pension obligations would remain to be worked out.

By similar reasoning, I see an excellent chance for General Motors and Ford to go out of business in 2006. Sales of their stupid SUVs were already tailing off in the second half of last year, and they are not positioned to offer much of anything else. Anyway, a middle class groaning under insupportable debt and bankruptcy is not likely to be assuming new time payments for exactly the kinds of vehicles they would be insane to depend on.

As America roils in economic pain, factory workers in China will be thrown out of work. They will be extremely pissed off, and as their appeals go unappeased, they might start making political trouble in their country. That could easily stimulate Chinese leaders to divert their nation's attention with a compelling military project -- say some moves into the oil-rich former Soviet lands to China's west. Sooner or later, China eventually will go cuckoo from a shortage of fossil fuels. It only remains to be seen how this will express itself. So far it has only done so in terms of an aggressive outreach in oil contracts with producers like Venezuela and Canada. But those arrangements were based on a peaceful world and a peaceful China.

I have no idea what will happen with Iran. Their leader Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is clearly a maniac -- calling for Israel to be removed to Alaska, for instance. But here I invoke my allergy to conspiracy theories by saying I do not necessarily expect any US or Israeli strikes against that country. One could argue that Iran could comfortably kick back and watch America get tortured by the insurgency next door in Iraq, and I think they will do just that through 2006. The nuclear card is wild, however, and anything could happen if they keep slapping it on the table.

Which brings us to the extremely sore subject of Iraq. I maintain that our reasons for being there have not changed one bit, namely to make sure that we don't lose access to Middle East oil in any shape or form. Now my stating

that does not mean I think we will necessarily succeed. The creation of a constitution in Iraq and holding elections based on it amounted to an admirable stunt, but I tend to think this experiment will dissolve into sectarian violence and civil war, probably within 2006, no matter what else we do. I predict that circumstances will impel us to withdraw from the Iraqi cities but that we will not give up large bases near the oil production areas of the north and south, and that we will continue to control the air space over Baghdad. Our position in that country would then devolve to a sort of Fort Apache situation. I imagine the vast emptiness of the desert combined with air cover will afford us some protection. But our presence there will only inspire more turmoil, hatred, and jihad elsewhere.

King Abdullah seems to be in pretty good health, but he is going on 82. I predict that there will be fissures in the kingdom, and continued confusion about their oil production capacity. But by the end of the year it ought to be clear that they have not increased their output. Peak for Saudi Arabia may be the beginning of the end of the Saud kingdom -- since peak itself is highly destabilizing.

In Europe, we are beginning to see some of the first tectonic heavings over energy as Russia jerks poor Ukraine around on their natural gas shipments. England has managed to piss away all the former advantage of their North Sea oil bonanza and they now face a future of dependence on Russian gas plus the bankruptcy of their remaining industrial base. France enters 2006 somewhat more energy self-sufficient, at least as far electricity is concerned, since 70 percent of it comes from nuclear reactors. The other nations of Europe are apt to get restive this year, and may more actively join the worldwide contest for access to fossil fuels. At the same time, they will be struggling to contain large Muslim immigrant populations and I would be surprised if there were fewer problems in 2006 than last year -- with the riots in France and the London subway bombings. We tend to write off Europe as a region of sclerotic cafe layabouts, but for the time being many of these nations can still mobilize potent military forces if they have to defend vital interests. Generally, I predict 2006 will see a shift in power to the big energy bear, Russia. It's industrial infrastructure is otherwise decrepit. It's armed forces are bankrupt. But it has at least enough nuclear arms to blow up the world a few times over, so that, combined with its oil-and-gas assets, require us to take it very seriously.

Japan has nearly been forgotten. It now imports 95 percent of the fossil fuel it needs to run itself. God knows what they will do if geopolitical turmoil shuts down the shipping lanes that bring a steady stream of oil tankers to the islands. They are capable of mobilizing to defend their vital interests. We

just haven't seen them do it since the 1940s. What role Japan will play in the Pacific remains a mystery, especially in relation to the growing power of China. Perhaps some of this oriental mystery will be revealed in 2006. Perhaps Japan will enter into some kind of Asian co-prosperity sphere alliance. Japan's economy will otherwise be subject to the severe economic strains emanating out of America.

South America is going loco on us. They will probably never amount to a united front, but one-by-one they will become more hostile to us, in the manner of Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and the newly elected Evo Morales of Bolivia, a former coca farmer who aims not to allow America any more say in what crops his people can grow. Chavez can jerk America around on oil imports if he wants to, but probably not without risking his health and position. Mexico's economy is dependent on ours, only Mexico will suffer by another order of magnitude if the US economy turns down in a big way. In 2006 I think we'll see the first signs of overt hostility between our two nations as the US desperately tries to come to grips with the flow of illegal immigrants, and Mexico attempts to divert its suffering peoples' attention by making threats of incursion and reviving claims to lands along the border. We could see the first shots of what could turn into a huge ongoing border nuisance, perhaps even a quasi-war. Meanwhile, Mexico's premier oil field, Canterall, has entered depletion. They depend on imports of natural gas from us, and under the rather insane terms of NAFTA, we in the US depend on imports of gas from Canada to make up for the stuff we have to sell to Mexico. Those relationships may be subject to review.

Here in USA, I predict that we will be diverted by a fantastic circus of congressional hearings and court proceedings. It will be scandal-o-rama for the Bush administration and the Republican party. The domestic spying issue will be a huge stink (I recognize I defended it on this blog), but it raises issues that our political system cannot digest right now. The Abramoff scandal is going to be huge and may take down twenty congressmen. Karl Rove will probably join Lewis "Scooter" Libby in the indictment pen for the Valarie Plame incident. Tom Delay is going to have a very ugly trial in Texas, and senate majority leader Bill Frist may end up being prosecuted for stock sale irregularities. These shows may so successfully entertain the public -- and the cable news impresarios -- that we will fail to notice the rising predicament of oil and gas prices and the cratering of the suburban sprawl economy (just as Watergate -- a very satisfying melodrama for those of us who were young reporters in 1973-4 -- diverted the US from the first throes of the oil crisis). All this activity will tend to degrade the standing of the Republican party to "junk" status. But there is no sign that the Democrats

offer an alternative world-view to the "non-negotiable American way of life."

Political circuses will not completely divert the middle class from its own suffering, as their mortgages devour what is left of their financial lives. But as they sink in fortune and hope, I predict we will see a turning of all the recent celebrity envy -- and the infotainment value spun off it -- into a vicious hatred of the rich and famous and a new desire not to emulate them, but to punish them. Look out, Nicole Ritchie and the Donald Trump. The grandchildren of Ozzie and Harriet will be looking to eat you for dinner starting in 2006"

Sunspot Numbers and Propagation

From the ARRL propagation bulletin 1 of 2006:

"Average daily sunspot numbers for the years 1999 through 2005 were 136.3, 173, 170.3, 176.6, 109.2, 68.6 and 48.9. Average daily solar flux for the same years was 153.7, 179.6, 181.6, 179.5, 129.2, 106.6 and 91.9. The steady decline over each calendar year since the 2000-2002 period should continue through the end of this year. Two years from now we should know when trends turned around".

In other words, you'll know you've reached the bottom after you have gotten there, and have started up and the trend continues up. The bottom is likely last quarter 2006, or first quarter 2007, but it can vary.

New Postage Rates

After January 8, 2006, postage rates went up to the following levels:

First class	39 cents
Post Cards/add ounces	24 cents
Overseas	84 cents
Canada/Mexico	63 cents

Picture Gallery – Feb 2006



Tyler, WV (trying the last WBOW for AB7RW)

Unfortunately, it didn't work out for N4CD/AB7RW. Fortunately, W9MSE could take a detour and give AB7RW a contact for last WBOW!



KB6TAL/m in Storey, NV, in Virginia City

Sometimes you just can't stop to take a CL picture. This was a LC for N4CD.

Want to see some BIG mobile antennas? How about a 40 foot high 160M antenna? Check out: <http://www.kg4nbl.com/THE%20MOBILES/KG4NBL%20mobiles.htm>

Getting the Last Few

It was getting to be 'desperation time'. I was down to under 12 to finish up, and decided it was time to start twisting arms, pulling legs, making skeds, and digging contacts out to finish up. Usually, when I get under 20, it is time to take decisive action to try to get to the end. Otherwise, it can drag out for months, even years! The more challenging the award, the tougher they get – USACA/nth time you can work anyone. Bingo needs special characteristics. Masters Gold is even tougher since you must work someone who has Bingo, and that will likely only be a regular county hunter. All I needed was a cw operator in the county.

All the ones I still missing in the log were in NY state and TX. In the past, I had succeeded in using the Callbook, HamCall CD Rom, QRZ.com, and other sources to identify hams in a county, then try to contact them via email, and set up a sked. I had even looked up phone numbers and called a few folks the last time around, with some success, when email provided nothing. With 'free long distance' on most cellphone plans, it's an option these days, if you can find a telephone number.

Now, you have www.switchboard, Google, and others on line to track down phone numbers if they are publicly listed. If not, sometimes you can call someone else in town with same last name to see if they are related, and how to get in touch with 'the ham radio operator'. That only works in small towns, not major towns or cities – hi hi

It seems things get worse with time. Using HamCall, and cross checking with QRZ.com for email addresses, I sent out over 100 emails. 90% of them came back as bad addresses – bounced. Of 100 sent out, to the counties where I could find a general class or higher for a cw contact, only 5 or 6 eventually resulted in contacts.

In one case, a ham referred me to a friend (who did not have email listed), and that worked out. I made skeds for Schoharie, NY; Greene, NY; Kings, NY; Delaware, NY; and Walker, TX. NO2W volunteered to go mobile and get me Wayne, NY.

I tried for weeks to find someone in East Feliciana, LA, but everyone was either bad address, or gone – relocated due to hurricane damage, or hadn't got their station back on the air, or had no gear. Finally, Ron, KB6UF gave me that one. That left only TX and NY.

There are a few hams listed in Lewis NY. Only 2 believed active, and one is primarily SSB, and hard to get answers from. George, KR5C put me on to KA2SJG, Jack, who is a novice licensee. I had not bothered to contact novice operators by email, since most are, unfortunately, not active, or on 223 MHz FM. My mistake. Jack is FB operator, and we had a nice QSO on 7122 in the 40M novice band. He's been a novice for 23 years! That finished off NY state, leaving only 3 in TX. Even more amazingly, the other active ham in Lewis, and who is not on cw, thought the 'other ham' was in another county, so didn't mention him when I exchanged emails with him. Turns out Jack, KA2SJG, lives outside the town in the right county (I checked it out on the maps program), but when you have small towns, people can have street addresses and live 15 miles outside of town (been there, done that as N4CD in VA). QRZ.com and the others had it right.

One thing to do when you are closing in is to start asking for suggestions as to who might help with the counties. Sometimes someone lives right next door, but isn't on too often, but might be persuaded to go mobile for the county. Or they think it is run all the time, and don't go there. Or they need an excuse to get out and run it. Maybe someone knows a fixed station there who hangs out on the Century Club or traffic nets. Or maybe someone else just had the problem and can recommend a

station for a sked. Sometimes checking the state QSO parties results will show which fixed stations filed logs from what counties.

Few had run cw mobile in NY in the past year. (N4CD was one of the few). It seems its either feast or famine, and now NY is a big black hole for cw mobile operators. Of course, for ID, MT, SD, ND, you need to wait for a cw county hunter to go there!

Fortunately, in county hunting, if you get desperate enough, you can go on a 'road trip' with a fellow county hunter to get really needed counties. Charlie, W0RRY, volunteered to ride along on a two day trip to west Texas to get Martin, Irion, and Mason, TX. We headed out ahead of schedule on Sunday, January 22, going out the interstate. Rain! We hadn't seen much of that in months, and still need another 18 inches of rain to get back to normal. It didn't slow us down too much, but did hurt the gas mileage some. Just a few miles of bad rain static.

We were well ahead of planned sked, so it was off to get more off the Interstate counties (Reagan, Glasscock, Irion) before sunset. It seems the number of contacts double when you get off the "Green Stamp" (interstate counties) ones, to places where few travel and there are few people/towns or reason to go there. Some of the short distance interstate counties (Martin) will also generate a good pileup. We ran some of Monday's planned counties on Sunday, when more folks are around. After 500 miles on the road, we pulled into the Motel 6 in Big Springs, TX for the night, and enjoyed dinner at the truck stop next door. I'm not a fan of driving in the dark on back roads. In some cases, we traveled 30-40 miles before seeing another car on the roads in the middle of the day. Your towing insurance better be good for 100 miles of tow, because often in Texas, you can be 50-100 miles from any town with repair facilities if you break down.

Since we had run about 6 counties we planned on for the second day, but on the first day, we could leave early – 6:30 am, and get to newer counties by the time the band opened. I'm also working on Master Platinum, and need to work another Master Gold holder to give me credit for the county – and likely none of them around too early either. We headed off slowly, though, as there were 'watch out for the deer' signs everywhere plus many dead deer in the road. I didn't want to help that count, and as you are aware, one managed to get me in MO back in November, and worse yet, one did in N9JF's car in December in a bad accident. After sunrise, Charlie kept pointing out deer off to the sides of the road in the fields – must have been several dozen in the first 4 hours. A few turkeys were sighted. However, we had no problems, and the road was good, so we headed toward Mason – on a mission.

As usual, W6TMD was up bright and early (middle of the night California time) to work us on 40 meters in most of the counties with a good signal. Conditions weren't too great on 20m, but we did work DL5AWI, heard PA3ARM once, but didn't get him, and had just a few good runs on 20M. Most of the activity was on 30M, and also on 40M with some excellent runs there. W0NAC, N8KIE, and others were there on cw to snag needed counties.

Occasionally, we listened on 20SSB, and barely heard the mobiles running, if at all, except in a few cases. Charlie, W0RRY worked a few mobiles. From the middle of the country, often you don't hear anything within 1000 miles on 20m, and that is more than half the counties. The others are often fairly weak, too!

On Sunday, there was essentially nothing on 40M SSB. It's long way to anywhere from West TX on 40M, and folks need to be listening for you to get heard. Many nets up and down a few KHz and loud, too. Monday, KA0SHC kept 7238 going and Charlie put out many of the counties on 40M SSB on the return trip.

When we got to Mason, TX, we stopped on the county line to take a picture, and worked each other on 30M with the MFJ QRP 30M rig. We normally make a QSO in every county since if he makes no other, that one is sufficient for 'transmitted county' credit toward his Master's Gold. Of course, if 40M is hopping, or the situation on 20M is favorable, we'll run there as well. If a needed county runs on cw, he jumps right in. On this trip, I needed 7 of the counties on 30M cw. I was busy giving them out, and needed them myself, so the QRP contact helps.

Charlie is getting down on his 5th time, and on his Master's Gold trying to finish them up. He's also working on all cw, and 30M counties as well.

Since it was a weekday, and we had to go the 'long way' (75 miles) through the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, we didn't dawdle and run more counties, but instead made a beeline back to Denton county, where Charlie has relatives, and where he was staying. I then headed home before the major rush hour commenced.

Here are some stats from the trip.

County	40cw	30cw	20cw	40MSSB	20MSSB
Denton		5	3		
Tarrant	2	12	2		

Parker	10	13	6		
Palo Pinto	13	14	7		
Erath	5	6	6		
Eastland	3	18	8		
Callahan	2	29	4		1
Taylor	5	23	0		2
Nolan	10	26	9		
Fisher	10	9*	2		
Mitchell	0	28	2		
Sterling	6	28	3		
TomGreen/Irion	6	40	12		
Reagan	7	21	20		
Glasscock	4	15	8		
Midland	0	8	0		
Martin	17	36	0		
Howard	9	16	0		
Glasscock(agn)	4	15	8		
Coke	2	5	0		
TomGrn(agn)	2	0	2		
Concho	9	28	0	4	
Menard	5	24	1	6	
Mason	9	31	3	4	
McMullen	11	34	1	10	1
Brown	3	26	0	3	1
Comanche	6	23	1	6	
Eastland				6	
Erath				8	
Palo Pinto				7	
Parker				9	
Tarrant				6	

* off freq

About 950 miles, success on the 3 needed counties, and bunch of new Master Platinum thanks to W6TMD being there for contacts, almost finishing off 30M in TX, plus a couple hundred contacts giving out the counties to the folks. Gas averaged about \$2.20/gal, and we got about 29 mpg. Motel \$36, Dinner buffet \$8 each. Misc food - \$15.

About 110Q on 40m cw, 365 on 30m cw, 104 or about 580 cw QSO. 71 on SSB, for a grand total of about 650Q in 2 days. I'm sure if we had hit more counties instead of zipping home quickly before sunset on the second day, we could have made another couple hundred more, but the main mission was accomplished with the least amount of hassle.

More counties coming up! Let's see...how many extra miles can one go on the way to Weslaco? There's the 'short route' and the 'county hunter route'.

So many counties, so little time!...

De N4CD

Peak Oil News

Some interesting peak oil news this past month. **The Big Story of the month is suddenly Reuters had an article about Kuwait's oil reserves being 'only' half of what they had claimed.**

Off theYahoo! CWEI message board:

"Nov 1985 - In a chilly morning the people of Kuwait and the world woke up to some great news. The little Emirate of Kuwait has just issued a communiqué stating that its oil reserves are now standing at 90 billion bbl, revised upward from 64 billion bbl just the night before. The Kuwaitis did not really know or hear that a new giant oil field has been discovered lately or their colossal field Burgan has just doubled in size but that did not concern them, after all this is a time to celebrate not to ask questions. Overnight Kuwait became the most important OPEC country in terms of reserves, just after Saudi Arabia, accounting for more reserves than Iran and Iraq combined. "

'In 1987 oil ministers from the UAE, Iran, Iraq, Venezuela, and SA are gathering in a winter resort outside Geneva to discuss ways to dissuade Kuwait and make it reconsider its new reserves numbers and hence scale back its daily production. "This is a bad precedent" said the Iraqi envoy. "Oil prices are down 65% since the day we attacked Iran, no offence Mr. minister". "No offense taken and for once we do agree with you, the war end is near and we will need every dollar to rebuild our countries" replied the envoy from Iran.

The next day, The Emir was very upset that his country was not invited to Geneva and ordered that Kuwait raise again its proven reserves to 92 billion bbls. That was the last straw that broke the Camel's back. An angry Venezuela raised its reserves from 25 billions bbls to 58. All other countries, overnight and literally overnight, followed suit. The UAE reported 92 billion bbls of proven reserves from 31 a night before. The same day, Iran updated its reserves from 49 to 93 billions, never mind its reserves shrank from 58 billions in 1980 to 48 billions by 1986. Simultaneously Iraq reserves jumped from 47 billions to 100. None of these countries gave an explanation to the new numbers except Venezuela that rationalized the new numbers as "reclassification" of its heavy oil as proven reserves."

" During those 2 years, SA share of production within OPEC collapsed from a high of 44% in 1981 to just under 23% in 1989. In that same year 1989, SA revised its reserves from 170 to 257 billion bbls and its share of production jumped accordingly to 35% within one year.

Between 1985 and 1989, Kuwait, the UAE, Iran, Iraq, SA, and Venezuela added 302 billion bbls of PROVED RESERVES. To put that into perspective, that's 42 years of US consumption or equivalent to Ghawar, Burgan, Cantarell, Bolivar Coastal, Shafaniya, Rumaila, Tengiz, Ahwaz, Kirkuk, Marun, Gashsaran, and Aghajari COMBINED. Those are the largest 11 fields in the world. Are they telling me that in the space of 4 years these countries discovered proved reserves equivalent to the biggest 11 fields in the world? And guess what! Not one single ribbon was cut to celebrate those discoveries and of course all respectable energy publications and the press missed to report those colossal discoveries.

In 1984 the world total oil proven reserves stood at 762 billion bbls. At the end of 2004 it stood at 1190 billion bbls (not counting Canadian tar sand) equivalent to an R/P of 40 years. So in the space of 20 years not only we replaced the world production (average of 27 billion per year or 540 billion bbls cumulative) we added another 428 billion bbls!!! That's what they're telling us. Now let's think about that for a minute. These published numbers from upstreamonline, BP,... suggest that the world has discovered during the past 20 years 48.4 billion bbls each year!!!

The truth is that for the past 20 years the world has discovered only 6 billion bbls per year, offsetting just about 25% of consumption. If you account for OPEC fictional numbers, the reserves at the end of 2004 can be no more than 888 billion bbls, or 32 years of current production. These estimates I am sharing with you are echoed by others. The Oil & Gas Journal says 1180, a large discrepancy.

Petroconsultants puts Proven Reserves for the world at 850 billion bbls, very close indeed to 888.

When it comes to reserves there are no reliable numbers except for those in the US, Canada, Norway, and the UK. Funny enough when there is reliable data, peak oil has occurred for those countries, perhaps with the exception of Canada.

Since we have produced more than 1 trillion barrel so far and only 888 is still to produce this can only tell me that we've passed Hubbert peak. As far as I'm concerned we've passed peak oil. If that's the case, watch out for a steep decline in world production coming very, very soon.

boukha99" (Jean Paul Belmondo)

One country started the 'reserve inflation' and everyone had to follow. The reserve numbers doubled, and never dropped even though lots of oil was produced.

Suddenly, Kuwait halved its claimed reserves. That followed shortly after they admitted that their 'giant' oilfield, Burgan, had peaked and would be producing less per year, every year, from now on.

Of course, those that tracked the 'discoveries' and the production long suspected the reserve claims. If you only find 100 billion barrels, and produce half of it, and sell it, one is suspect to claim you still have 100 billion barrels of reserves. However, all the OPEC countries have done that for the past 20 years.

The sad part is that some US government agencies, looking to paint a rosey picture, blindly accepted those 'official government numbers' and concluded there was 'lots of oil' to go around. Had they bothered to do more detailed analysis, they would have found that the data was highly suspect.

Not long ago, Royal Dutch had stunned the world when it chopped its reserve numbers by 25%, admitting it didn't have what it claimed it had for over a decade. The stock market punished the stock. RD claimed it was just 'cleaning up the books'.

Now, in January, the Spanish company Repsol again upset the apple cart when it wrote down its reserves by 25%. Both Royal Dutch and Repsol are publicly traded companies, and finally the newly implemented required accounting standards and

practices caught up with them, and they had to come clean. Kuwait is a government owned oil company, but since its main oil field peaked, they had to come clean, too.

See a trend? Suddenly all that oil for the future is disappearing on paper. Kuwait had claimed 10% of the entire worlds known reserves. Suddenly, it is only 5%, and the world's reserves dropped by 5%. That is very significant. Not only that, but of their claimed reserves, only half is 'proven' (which means they suspect they have the rest, but never have tried to produce it).

Boukha99 further posts: "If Kuwait is any indication of the greater ME fizzy numbers and correct accordingly for other super four countries, you will end up "losing" 593.5 billion bbls of non-existent reserves. Let's put that into perspective. That is equivalent to 19 years of current world production of 84 million per day. Now if you read respectable journals about peak oil you'll see that they all agree about it but only differ about the possible dates, putting it between 2010 and 2025. Let's take 2025 for the sake of argument and to be optimistic, take out the 19 years and you'll end up in 2006. That's today. That point in the future that we have to prepare for is already the present time. If the world is counting on these reserves for a rainy day are we in for a shock!

Did you ever ask why it is KOC(Kuwait Oil Company) and Iran going to Africa, Mexico, etc., to pay millions for blocks for exploration rights? Doesn't make sense to produce what they have first in their own backyard? When they're asked about the reasons for that they say to diversify their sources of production! Diversify what? The answer for me is simple; they don't have as much as they suppose to have in their backyard and the remaining reserves will be very costly to produce."

Matt Simmons, in his book, *Twilight in the Desert*, makes a strong case for the Saudi reserve numbers also to be highly inflated. As you are well aware, they have a very significant amount of the 'future' oil that people plan to have. If they have much less, then that throws off all the Cornucopian's projections of lots of cheap oil and plentiful oil.

Now, the instability in Nigeria, and the Iranian situation are also throwing much doubt into the world situation. Each country produces more than 3% of what the world needs today. Keep in mind the gas lines and problems of gas rationing in the USA was caused by ONLY a 4% shortfall in the 1970s. It doesn't take much to upset the apple cart.

At peak oil, you will likely have a plateau that lasts for several years, perhaps up to 6 or 8. Then, inevitably, the total amount of oil produced from conventional sources will decline at more than 2%/yr, perhaps as much as 3-5% per year, every year thereafter. Keep in mind that the 'oil sands' are expected, with over 60 billion in investment, to produce only 3 billion bbl of oil a year by 2015! That is less than Nigeria or Iran produce today, and not even enough to compensate for 2 years decline in conventional oil supplies. What do you do for the next 2 years?

Fortunately, the winter has been mild for most, so oil demand for heating is way down. If you heat with natural gas, you saw your gas bills spike to \$15 per thousand cubic feet, and likely double last year's bills. Gas prices have stabilized due to lower demand, shut down industry, and a mild winter, and now are half of the peak prices.

The increasing US debt is devaluing the dollar. Gold prices keep rising (meaning the dollar is worth less). Ford is downsizing by 25%, laying off 30,000, closing plants around the USA. I guess not too many want to own a 10mpg SUV gas hog these days.

Russia and the FSU are playing power games, and entire countries are freezing with natural gas shutoffs, massive country wide power blackouts (Georgia). Most of Europe has sold its soul to the Soviets as their future natural gas supplier, and the Soviets are turning out to be unreliable suppliers. Can you imagine most of Europe with no heat, no electricity, no industry able to run? Not a pretty picture.

Congress keeps making noises about 'windfall profits taxes' on oil companies, who are investing about as much each year as they make. It makes good politics to go after oil companies, yet MSFT makes about as much, and you don't hear Congress going after 'windfall software profits taxes'. If Congress passes a new tax on oil company profits or on 'reserves', head for the hills as the situation will get much worse much faster. Oil companies will simply turn down their USA projects and invest elsewhere. Then imports will climb, and the financial situation will worsen even faster.

So what does this mean? The Chinese economy is growing at 9% per year. Their need for oil and natural gas is growing at the same rate. Very soon, the world's ability to keep producing more oil per year, to satisfy all that increasing demand, is likely to be very challenged.

The continued reserve write-downs is not good news. Much of what is claimed for reserves in Iraq may be paper numbers. Same for Russia.

These disappearing reserves bode ill for the future. If you recall, at Hubbert's Peak, which is roughly producing HALF of your initial reserves, the supply will peak, and then decline each year after the peak, inevitably. Nothing can stop it.

CW Stats from Elwood for 2006

STATUS OF COUNTIES WORKED ON CW AS OF THE END OF EACH YEAR **2006**

CALL	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
KR1B			2499	2421		1983	1552
VE1BES		1930	1796	1342	925		
AD1C	2954	2857	2609	2087	1141	526	
KT1M						2507	2490
KA1Q	1350 #2	1320 #2	1235 #2	1161 #2	901 #2	500 #2	3075
VO1SF		2929	2987				
W1TEE			2583 #2	2282 #2	1864 #2	239 #2	3074
KO1U	3033	2881	2122	1378			
KL1V	1441	1269	612	506	313		
WA2AKB	1621	1614	1579	1400	526		
N2CQ			1489	1385	923		
N2CWG					2315 #3	163 #3	3070 #2
WA2EYA				2810	2798	2798	
W2EZ			3075 #2	3065 #2	2997 #2		
K2HVN					3037	3025	2922
NM2L	2213	1695	764				
AB2LS	449						
N2MH	634	46					
K2NJ	2083		1675				
OK2PAY							1800
K2RP	1730	1410	1000				
NO2W	1589	1589	1566		1310		
N3AHA	2309			2222			
W3BBO					1586		
DL3DD		3059	3056	3051	3039	3026	
W3DYA	3056 #2	3051 #2	3046 #2	3036 #2	3030 #2	2978 #2	2899 #2
WA3GNW	1737	1604	1511				
WU3H	2946 #3	2445 #3	163 #3	3005 #2	1126 #2	2999	2954

N3HOO		1821	1500				
OH3JF		2922	2903	2869	2823	2709	2682
VE3KZE		3035	3031	3016	2987	2864	2831
KA3MMM	3048 #5	2643 #5	3075 #4	2959 #4	2128 #4	3069 #3	2722 #3
VA3NN	2714	2063	1462	993	938	766	757
WD3P	712 #3	678 #3	297 #3	3075 #2	3041 #2	2962 #2	2770 #2
WA3QNT	2634		2573	2563	2542	2522	2461
KE3VV	2535	2134	1365				
KC3X	170 #2	30 #2	2695	1693	1449	1174	
N3XX	3067	3061	3054	3027	2966	2848	2028
AE3Z	1593	1395	1297	1187	850		
W3ZUH		1645	800	1631			
VK4AAR			1058				
N4AKP	1489		1264 #2	3072	3024	2886	2548
N4CD	3065 #2	2715 #2	3056	3013	2769	2496	1923
DJ4GJ				2389	2143		
N4HIM					2268	1875	1262
KA4IFF				2812 #2	2769 #2		2461 #2
WA4KER				2023 #2	2298 #2	2247 #2	2000 #2
G4KHG	1374	1182		1033	916	861	725
W4NBS			665				
KR4OE	1313	1216	1177	1135	1082	722	639
WD4OIN	2539	2138	1369	660			
W4RKV	2788	2682 #2	2588 #2	2482 #2	2386 #2	2317 #2	1958 #2
N4RS	2225 #3	3075 #2	2973 #2	2645 #2	2004 #2	3050	2982
WD4SIG		3030	3030	3030	3030	3030	3030
K4UNF		820					
KW4V	3073						
WB4VFN	2667	2301	500				
AA4VN		1619	1364	1078	853	830	290
W4VQ	947	471 #2	3058	3035	2939		
KM4W					1674	1452	
K4XI	3050	3011	2956	2844	2620		
KB4XK	2443	2261	2147	1892	1698	1494	1216
KN4XP	1155	108					
W4XT	2184	2167	1931	138			
KN4Y	2634 #4	1760 #4	3070 #3	2988 #3	2789 #3	2333 #3	809 #3
W4YDY	2462	2175	1513	786			
K4YFH	2819	2577	1575				
AB4YZ	2685	2214	1900 #2	1380 #2	2489		
KS5A	2983	2883	2427	2038	833		
K5AAR	2362 #2	493 #2	3055	2899	2074		
W5AL	2805			2174	2001		
DL5AWI	2317	2140	2006				
NN5B					2676		2676
KR5C	3071	3034	2940	2701	2282	2087	1776
WC5D		834 #2	500 #2	3077	3071		3069
N5DKW	3015	3015	3015		3015		
N5EBD	1833	1248					
KT5H	924						
KG5J					3063 #2	3029 #2	3075
K5OT	2902	2669	1801				
WB5P				1125	569		

N5PR	910						
N5XG	3066	3052	3004	3004	2878	2671	2318
K5XY		343	211	48		21	12
KC6AWX	1202	1025	871	881	770		
WD6CKT	3063	3035	2871	3003	2983	2919	2916
NA6E			2523			1193	
NV6I	721	430	2010	LOST	BUNCH	OF LOGS	
W6IYS				1113 #2	823 #2		2999
DL6KVA	2140	1937	1525				
W6OUL	1680	1606	1265				
W6RK	1856	993					
NW6S		2556	2278	1235			
SM6TEU					1829	1758	1692
W6TMD	2742 #2	2286 #2	876 #2	3062		3001	2821
KB6UF	1531		500				
KE6US		1125					
SM6VR	2665	2419	1853				
AD6Z	3030	2890	2777	2484	2180	1715	
K7DM	2777	2622	2312	2028	1230	894	
K7DZE			1727	2514	1448		
KL7GN	2607	2543	2521	2483	2483	2387	2377
K7INA	2764	2705	2500	2120	1528		
WA7JHQ	1065 #2	3059	2922	2740	2297	2176	2010
KG7Q		2887		1897			
K7REL	1865 #2	2915	1458				
AB7RW	3076	3062	2943	2776	2144		
WA7SLD	1660						
W7SSM					1978		
W7TSM	2247	2290	1934	1697	1388	810	95
K7VAY	3042	3002	2963	2853	2356		
NA7W	1258	660	660	249			
KI7WO	1030	802					
N7WO	1599	1198					
KK7X		1760	1637	1632	1558	1512	
AK8A	2649	2385	2172	0 - fire	1927	1829	1750
W8CE	3003	2951	2845	2611	2257	1324	
K8CW	3074 #2			2927 #2		2829 #2	
K8GSA			515	12			
KD8HB	3064 #4	2983 #4	2589 #4	3066 #3	2672 #3		
K8IW	2838	2724	2495	1934	1340		
W8JJ	510	391					
W8LSV	2100						
K8MFO	1939 #2						
K8MW			3006 20/m	2969 20/m	2914 20/m	2651 20/m	
K8OHC	1797	1756	1687	1590	1429	1385	1199
KB8OMG	3027	2862	1659				
W8OP	1017	836	788	397			
W8PN	2886 #2	2869 #2	2863 #2	2855 #2	2852 #2	2830 #2	2790 #2
W8QOI	2147	1748	1006				
AA8R	2464	2307	1848	427	285		
KM8U	2870	2825	2796	2739	2775	2651	2531
AD8W	1950	1677	684				

W8WVU	3056		3050	3047	3038	3022	3000
W8YL	3040		3040	3038	3028	3009	2974
K8ZZ	2319	1478					
NF9A	2863	2848		2719	2222	1882	
N9AG	2545	2506	2460				
WD9BCG	3003 #2	3003 #2	3001 #2	2974 #2			
VE9DH	2425	1954					
AB9E		1947	1564				
W9GBH	2332	2300	2045	1907	1513	1060	
W9HR				2932	2682	2268	1739
KA9JAC	1747	1158		412			
N9JF				<1000	>1000		
NN9K	3072	2748	2101	1368	1070	630	
AA9KH	2631 #2	1731 #2	547 #2	6 #2	2970	2194	
ND9M	3044	2923		2811			
W9MSE	3041 #3	2913 #3	2277 #3	3074 #2	2982 #2	2859 #2	2478 #2
W9MY Y			2834 #2	2831 #2	2741 #2		2733 #2
N9STL	1666	49					
K9WA	2815 #2	2525 #2	1390 #2	3069			
DL9YC			424	407	325		
AA9ZZ	1925						
K0CO					7		
KY0E	1789	680					
W0GXQ	2893 #3	3077 #2	2726 #2	1201 #2		2978	2698
KB0GZR					1082		
AA0IP	2720 #3	942 #3	3062 #2	3007 #2	2785 #2	2362 #2	1061 #2
KC0JG	2947	2725	2472	2156	1711	684	
K0LG		1186	888	789		587	587
NF0N	1862	1403	820				
K0PY	1079	1190	1042	1008	785	1250	1200
W0QE	2723 #2	3073	2787	2110			
W0RRY	2952	2782	2242	1916	1677	1108	481
NF0X		3064 #2	3063 #2	3060 #2			3055 #2
NX0X	1608	1233	488				
N0ZA	3068	3069	3039	2950	2711	2031	569
K0ZT	3062	3055	3001	2773	2541	2334	2100
Updated 01-14-06 KA3MMM							

That's it for this month. See you next month

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