

County Hunter News

July 1, 2008
Volume 4, Issue 7

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

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

The County Hunter News will attempt to provide you with interesting, thought provoking articles, articles of county hunting history, or about county hunters or events, ham radio or electronics history, general ham radio interest, and provide news of upcoming operating events.

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

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and **7056.5**, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188/7185 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.915.5, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18135 or 18.132.5 for occasional 17M SSB runs.

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.w6rk.com

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

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

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

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can find information on these awards and the rules at:
http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:
<http://www.wd3p.net/ch/netproc/netproc.htm>

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

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1) Monthly Activity

The end of May saw several mobiles out running. WY7LL/WY7ML were off in MT and WY giving out counties. NM2L made a trip from GA to TX running counties both ways.

a) **KL1V, Kent**, reported on his several week trip in May:

QSOs: 11,623

40M : 4978

40 SSB: 2962

40 CW: 2960

20 CW: 1948

20 SSB: 4697

Counties run: 496

It looks like he did well on 40M with nearly 5000 Qs. His antennas were tuned for SSB on both bands, but he did OK with the reduced power/high

SWR on 20M and 40M CW. (Wonder if he took out all the duplicate contacts with 'club calls' on 20M (W1BQL and K2JG) what the 20M total would drop to? 496 x 2 or about 1000 less real contacts on 20M SSB.)

Fred, W4DF, and KT, KT4U, ran across from the Lynchburg, VA area over to Powhatan, VA and back, running them on cw. For some unknown reason, they seem to be 'unwelcome' on 20M SSB. For those who have been around decades, Fred, formerly AA4FF and other previous calls, started county hunting back in the 1960s.

b) Mike, W0MU and his invisible friend NA7XX made a trip to MT. Don't forget, the "N" prefix of the club call cannot count for prefixes by MARAC rules. (even though Logger likely erroneously does enter it).

The rules are:

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

Obviously, the **operator** W0MU has only the letter "W" as the first letter of his call sign. The rules say 'operator'.

Specifically, for the "N" prefix award

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

Since NA7XX can never be an 'operator' (by FCC rules), it can never count for the prefix award! Nor is NA7XX assigned to him personally. It is not 'his call'.

One must realize that Logger is 'buggy'. If you were to type in club call K9DCJ, being used by WB9NUL, you will find it generates the following errors:

b.1) Gives you credit for a "K" prefix when the rules say it cannot. Logger needs to be fixed. Joyce does not have a "K" prefix as HER call, as required.

b.2) Gives you credit for 2 more stars. The rules state that an operator may give out no more stars than THEY hold. Joyce, WB9NUL, cannot give you two more stars than she has by also using K9DCJ ! Logger is in error. It needs to be fixed.

When “K2JG” was used mobile, it gave people false credit for MG and MP, and for the five stars it has – when W0MU was the operator. Since he has no Bingo, no stars, no MG – he, as the operator, cannot give you stars, MP, or MG. Logger was seriously in error. It needs to be fixed. Quickly!

The easy solution is put it in the database, just like you define a ‘big rig’ station, or a “YL” station when you enter the data. There needs to be a ‘club’ category, and all the award then calculated based upon ‘club’ status. The only thing a “club call” can give you is Bingo IF it has the right letters, or an X in the call. Nothing else. No prefix, stars, MG, or MP. No wildcard Bingo if it has a star.

When will MARAC fix its own logging program so it follows its own rules?

c) **Ron, KB6UF** took the ‘county hunter route’ back from Maine, wandering all over PA, then down to NC, and then headed home. Mostly ran on SSB.

d) **AA8R, Randy**, ran across the Upper Peninsula of MI, putting them out on cw for the folks. Rich, K0RCJ, was busy running the counties on 40M SSB, and KW4V, Leslie, made a short trip in FL.

e) **Ray, WG6X**, reports on his trip to AL, MS, KY, TN

“I ran thru 100 counties which some were also ran again as county lines. I made 65 runs on 40 cw on net freq & some more on 7185 & 7.0585, 11 runs on 30, and 30 cw runs on 20.

Trip cost something over 1200 bucks which mostly was gas at about 800 bucks at least. Still was a lot of fun and like the saying goes Priceless.

Had some problems with the auto controller for the screwdriver which required running it down and re-tuning it and some of that was my fault

forgetting to change the coax switch over. Hee! Highest gas paid for was \$4.01 and lowest \$3.69

3,124 miles.”

f) **Ed, KN4Y**, reports on the Alabama QSO Party:

“Thanks all for the QSO's in the Alabama QSO Party. I stopped in each county and ran 20 and 40 meters, after dark I went to 40 and 80 meters. I had a laboratory timer that went 'DING' and set 15 minutes for each band. BUT when the 'DING' came there were still stations calling, I ran overtime. A good thing. I had planned to run 10 counties, but did 8 due to time constraints. I hope you got a new county in Alabama.

I started each county on 15 meters and made a few QSO's, the band was open but no-one knew it, but the few I worked. I made a total of 367 QSO's. This year the ALQP used 4 letter abbreviations, so I had to change my Writelog .ini file.

Doing it alone is not the most efficient way, so next year I hope to have a driver. I screwed up and signed /cty and was suppose to sign /M, so my log will be disqualified, but I still had fun and found where old cars go to die. I covered 509 miles. I pay cash for gas and cannot remember the amount, so this is not a factor. I had 38 multipliers, three from Canada. Food on VISA, the trip priceless.”

g) **Chuck, AD8W**, left MI and headed east to run some of his needs for MP. Gone for about a week, and many got him on 40M and some got him on 20M SSB.

h) **Jack, N7ID**, headed east from ID to KY, running counties along the way – 20M SSB only. A bit tough to work – he seems to have quite a bit of noise in the mobile and many were calling but couldn't get through. Conditions not all that great much of the time.

i) **W4HSA** has run quite a few in NC and VA – cw – new county hunter very busily chasing counties on 20/30/40M. Did well in the MARAC CW Contest, too!

2) USA- CW Award

One of the most sought after awards these days is the USA-CW award for working all counties on CW. Many are closing in after just starting a few years ago. There has been a tremendous burst of activity, and if you look at the active mobiles and county hunters now, about 40-50% of them are chasing counties on CW. Back 20-30 years ago, the CW group was maybe 20% of the thousand active county hunters. (MARAC had well over 1000 members back then). Now, it seems that at least half or more the folks finishing up on awards recently are chasing counties on CW.

KQ0B finishes up ALL CW for USACA after long quest! He is now #93. K4YFH also snags number 94.

Leo, WY7LL and Chris, WY7LL, send greetings from Sheridan, MT



WY7LL and WY7ML – LC WBOW USA-CW for KQ0B, Mike

3) Master Platinum Award

How soon will the first Platinum Award be issued? Many are now down under 250 to go, with W6TMD needing less than 135, and many of his needed counties to be run this summer. Bob N8KIE will run many out west, and so will Ray, AB4YZ, and his imaginary friend, W4CA, which counts for nothing in the way of awards, on the way to/from the national convention. (W4CA does not count for “W” prefix award despite Logger giving you false credit.).

Many of the mobiles (WG6X, N8KIE, N4AAT, W3CR, N9QS, N4CD, KB6UF, W6TMD, AB4YZ, K5GE, N9STL) have probably met or will shortly meet the 500 transmitted county requirement since getting their MG award, so that part is done for the top contenders to finish up the award. Others, including WQ7A, are likely well along and with a few more trips will have it done. What then?

4) Natural Bingo

A proposal for Natural Bingo was forwarded to the awards committee about a year ago. Wonder if anything will ever happen on it? Maybe they’ll be some news at the convention? Seems MARAC gets around to creating one or two new awards a year at best. And, maybe, too, the rules for awards based upon the Toplist will be ‘finalized’. It is now over a year where ‘a few loose ends’ were being cleaned up. **(that was announced at the convention last year it was ‘close’ to being done)**. Hmmm.....when was the last MARAC board meeting? Do they actually keep a list of ‘action items’ and check if they ever get done? Does the awards committee ever meet? And take action, other than ‘Gee, I don’t remember that proposal, fill me in’ every time they have a rarely scheduled meeting (No advance preparation)’?

5) Home made mobile antenna

QST has had several good articles lately on how to make your own antennas and resonators (by AD5X, Phil).

Another appeared a while back in QST – on how to make your own 20-6m antenna for \$20. Probably could be extended down to 40M.

See <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/pdf/0004033.pdf>

6) Phonetics

For those who run the net on Tues and Thursdays, as propagation gets better and foreign stations try to 'check in' or work the mobiles, here's a handy guide to ham radio phrases and phonetics in other languages. Useful for DXers, but its worth scanning so you get an idea of what phonetics other countries/languages use. There's no reason to have 'phonetics phobia'.

<http://www.k8zt.com/racg/racg.html>

7) Gene, N4ANV had a serious spill. He reports:

(From the K3IMC forum)

"Well guys I was getting ready to cut some limbs from over the roof the house to make room for a 40 Meter ant, and then I would be almost ready to get the ant. system back up an on the air. Then all of a sudden the saw (not running) snagged my trouser leg, and just flipped be off the house. One broken rib and broken Hip. Boy, has it been a ruff road to walk. No use of my left leg at all for about 6 to 8 weeks. I want to express my thanks to all of my old friends who dropped me a card while I was in the Hospital. When I get the station back on the air, It will be good enough to assume net control, and I will begin trying to do just that when I can, and any one who wants to run on 14.336 will be allowed to do so as long as the are courteous. Watch for me and join me. God Bless, and keep praying for my hip to heal."

Morse Code Returns

(from ARRL News, ARRL, Newington, CT)

"After more than a dozen years, Morse code will soon be returning to Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) nets. In the mid-1990s, the Department of Defense (DoD) did away with CW operation across the board

-- including MARS nets -- as automatic systems such as the Internet, SATCOM, cell phones and e-mail became available and the payroll cost of manual operators escalated.

MARS members who had embraced CW operation knew that Morse code, the most "digital" mode of all, was an important tool for Emergency Communications. After Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the need for more robust -- not to mention quickly deployable EmComm resources -- some MARS members led a campaign to resume CW operations on their nets. This resulted in the Chiefs of Army MARS and Navy-Marine Corps MARS calling for a census of interested MARS members as the first step to reactivating regular training nets.

Army MARS Chief Stu Carter told his members last October, "We are pushing for the Department of Defense to use CW again." He designated CW veteran Grant Hays, WB6OTS -- Operations Chief for Army MARS at its Fort Huachuca, Arizona headquarters -- to coordinate the effort. Like many hams who are skilled at Morse code, Hays, an ARRL Life Member and active ARES/RACES participant in Arizona, has taken a leading role in introducing new technology such as WinLink.

Army MARS launched a limited test of CW nets in four Midwestern states in late 2007. During a DoD interoperability test this past March, a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) station used it to communicate with Ft Huachuca.

In announcing the return of CW to MARS nets, Navy-Marine Corps MARS Chief Bo Lindfors cited an emergency where CW was sorely missed: "I remember the [1998] Northeast Ice Storm shortly after I became [Navy-Marine Corps MARS] Chief and the unnecessarily lengthy effort by all of southern New England to receive one voice EEI [Essential Elements of Information Report] from a northern New England member whose antenna was covered in ice and lying on the ground. It took more than an hour when CW could have handled it in a few minutes. As more and more of our members enter MARS with no Morse code experience, I am afraid that we will soon lose that skill set if we don't do something."

Army MARS Chief Carter said the imminent return of CW will not replace modes such as WinLink, Pactor 3 and MT63. "Our CW nets will focus on maintenance of skills and will necessarily be limited by the shortage of

available frequencies and trained members," he said. "But if members want to add CW to their skills, the nets will be available for training."

MARS's primary mission is providing auxiliary communications to the US Military and emergency communications to such national agencies as FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. MARS is also available to assist state and local emergency response agencies, and public and select private agencies such as the Red Cross. On a day-to-day basis, MARS members are available to handle messages to and from servicemen and women on active duty, in the reserve or guard, or retired, as well as certain employees of the federal government who are stationed outside the US. The three MARS programs -- Army MARS, Air Force MARS and Navy-Marine Corps MARS -- consist of a volunteer force of more than 5000 skilled Amateur Radio operators."

Youngsters in Ham Radio

Back in the 60s and 70s, ham radio was the entry for many into technical fields. While we may not have quite as many new hams, this is one of the youngsters that the RWK Club brought along through setting up ham radio classes at one of the Richardson, TX schools.

From ARRL news release:

"In May 2008, the ARRL Foundation Board of Directors voted unanimously to award the prestigious William R. Goldfarb Memorial Scholarship to Austin Evans Wilmot, KD5QKS, of Dallas, Texas. Wilmot will graduate from Richardson High School this year with a cumulative GPA of 97.64, placing him 19th in a class of 431.

First licensed in 2001, Wilmot holds a Technician class license and was active in his elementary school's Amateur Radio club (W5SPS); he is currently active in the Richardson Wireless Klub, K5RWK. His commitment to volunteer service in his community included support for the Lone Star MS150 Bike tour and the City of Richardson's annual Christmas parade. He can be found on local repeaters and is currently studying for his General class license.

Wilmot credits Amateur Radio with helping to develop leadership, organization and communication skills. Wilmot's studies at Washington University in St Louis will concentrate on medicine and will include his interest in mathematics and finance. "I envision a future as a scientist and economist where I can apply my analytic skills with the compassion and curiosity that are my hallmark," Wilmot said.



Austin, KD5QKS

The Goldfarb Scholarship is the result of a generous endowment from the late William Goldfarb, N2ITP. Before his death in 1997, Goldfarb set up a scholarship endowment of close to \$1 million in memory of his parents, Albert and Dorothy Goldfarb. Awarded to one high school senior each year, the Goldfarb Scholarship assists the recipient to receive a four-year undergraduate degree in engineering or science or in the medical or business-related fields. The terms of reference of the generous Goldfarb scholarship award require that recipients demonstrate financial need and significant involvement with Amateur Radio, in addition to high academic performance. The sixth Goldfarb Scholarship winner, Wilmot continues the tradition of prior recipients, demonstrating superior academic performance,

outstanding leadership and extraordinary Amateur Radio and community service.”

Austin and the entire RWK club, along with the ARRL Section Manager Tom, N5GAR, participated in an internet video conference using Skype with Mary, K1MMH, ARRL Foundation Secretary, at the RWK meeting on June 9, 2008.

It's nice to see some youngsters get off on the right foot and use ham radio as a springboard to bigger and better things. Good luck in your studies Austin!

Peak Oil News

Readers of the CHNews for the past three years are not likely too surprised by the ever increasing prices for oil. Now, predictions for oil prices just a few years out vary all over the map, from \$80 to \$500/bbl. We'll see where we are going.

1) Airlines - Airlines are struggling to work with higher jet fuel prices. American Airlines has added all sorts of charges for checked bags, including the first one. Other airlines will surely follow. Service to smaller airports is being cut back significantly, and American is flying 12% less flights in the fall. Layoffs are about to happen in big numbers, and old inefficient planes are being retired. Orders for new planes around the world are being scaled back. Within a few years, there will be half the number of airlines, and mergers with cash rich international carriers might be in the cards. Hello Lufthansa.

United is parking 100 of its older inefficient jets, cutting 1000 flights, and laying off over 1000 people as it 'downsizes'. Service will be 17% less next year. Latest news is 900 pilots will be let go in next 12 months.

2) Geo Metro/New - Remember the 55 HP 3 cylinder Geo Metro from the 1990s that got 50mpg? GM is now working with Daewoo Motors and will be selling a new version in 2008. It will be sold under the Chevy name.

http://businessweek.com/lifestyle/content/may2008/bw20080530_752282.htm?chan=top+news_top+news+index_news+%2B+analysis

“This trend should be encouraging for Chevrolet, which announced in late 2007 it will build a minicar based on the Beat concept car, co-developed with its South Korean partner, GM Daewoo.

The idea is to build a successor to the old Geo concept, but the modern minicar will be sold as a Chevrolet from the beginning, and the underlying platform will be more thoroughly integrated into GM's worldwide lineup. The new car is expected to get 50 mpg, with production starting in 2009. The Beat-based car was not expected to come to the U.S. market right away, but if people are lining up to buy 10-year-old Geo Metros, maybe GM ought to rethink that. “

3) More Oil news from King and Schwartz

The world's top oil producers are proving unable to put more barrels on thirsty world markets despite sky-high prices, a shift that defies traditional market logic and looks set to continue.

Fresh data from the U.S. Department of Energy show the amount of petroleum products shipped by the world's top oil exporters fell 2.5% last year, despite a 57% increase in prices, a trend that appears to be holding true this year as well. There are several reasons behind the net-export decline. Soaring profits from high-price crude have fueled a boom in oil demand in Saudi Arabia and across the Middle East, leaving less oil for export. At the same time, aging fields and sluggish investments have caused exports to drop significantly in Mexico, Norway and, most recently, Russia. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries also cut production early last year and didn't move to boost supplies again until last fall.

In all, according to the Energy Department figures, net exports by the world's top 15 suppliers, which account for 45% of all production, fell by nearly a million barrels to 38.7 million barrels a day last year. The drop would have been steeper if not for heightened output in less-developed countries such as Angola and Libya, whose economies have yet to become big energy consumers.

For all the attention paid to China's increasing energy thirst, rising energy demand in the Middle East may pose the greater challenge. Last year, the region's six largest petroleum exporters - Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Kuwait, Iraq and Qatar - curbed their output by 544,000 barrels a day. At the same time, their domestic demand increased by 318,000 barrels a day, leading to a loss in net exports of 862,000 barrels a day, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Demand in the Middle East is a major factor right now, said Adam Robinson, an oil analyst at Lehman Brothers in New York. Mr. Robinson predicts the region will constitute more than 40% of increased demand next year.

Saudi Arabia in particular has become a major energy consumer as the country pushes to put its oil riches to greater use. The kingdom is in the middle of a major investment campaign to become a world player in petrochemicals, aluminum and fertilizers, all of which will require huge amounts of oil and natural gas. Since 2004, Saudi oil consumption has increased nearly 23%, to 2.3 million barrels a day last year. Jeffrey Brown, a Dallas-based petroleum geologist who studies net export numbers, said that at its current growth rate, Saudi Arabia could be consuming 4.6 million barrels a day by 2020.

That would cut significantly into Saudi exports even as the world looks to its largest oil supplier to help manage rising demand.

One reason Middle Eastern nations are using more oil is a shortage of natural gas, said Bill Farren-Price, director of energy at Medley Global Advisors. This is particularly troublesome during the summer, when governments scramble to keep the lights on and air conditioners cranking.

Some producers, such as the U.A.E., are easing back at times on the crucial industry practice of injecting natural gas into crude oil fields, which is done to boost reservoir pressure and increase crude recovery rates. Halting the injections ends up undercutting oil production, further reducing exports.

As top exporters hit trouble, historically marginal players such as Brazil and Kazakhstan are likely to play a greater role. Three of the four non-OPEC players among the top 15 oil exporters - Russia, Norway and Mexico - are reporting declines in production this year. Kazakhstan is showing slight net export gains.

No big exporter is struggling more than Mexico, where net exports dropped 15% in 2007. Mexican officials announced Monday that output from the country's once-mighty offshore Cantarell field had plunged by a third in less than a year.

"The sense in the market is that peak oil is here and that things will only get worse," says Mr. Robinson. "But the verdict is still out on that."

De N4CD – readers of the CHNews should not find the above anything new. We've been writing about the Export Land Model for over a year (where producers use more and more of their own oil leaving less for export), the falling production rates in many major producers, and very little good news elsewhere. The media seems to be finally catching on.

Saudi announces over and over again it is increasing production. Month after month. The world needs another 1 million barrels a year to help fuel all those new cars, generators, buses, and power plants in China alone, yet the Saudis promise 200,000 more, yet never seem to produce it. Do the math.

The only good news is Iraq might get some production back as the militias are finally put down. That might help if they can produce another million barrels a day. Somewhat.

4) Hydraulic Hybrids

Good government article on Hydraulic Hybrids

5) The Export Land Model Update (ELM)

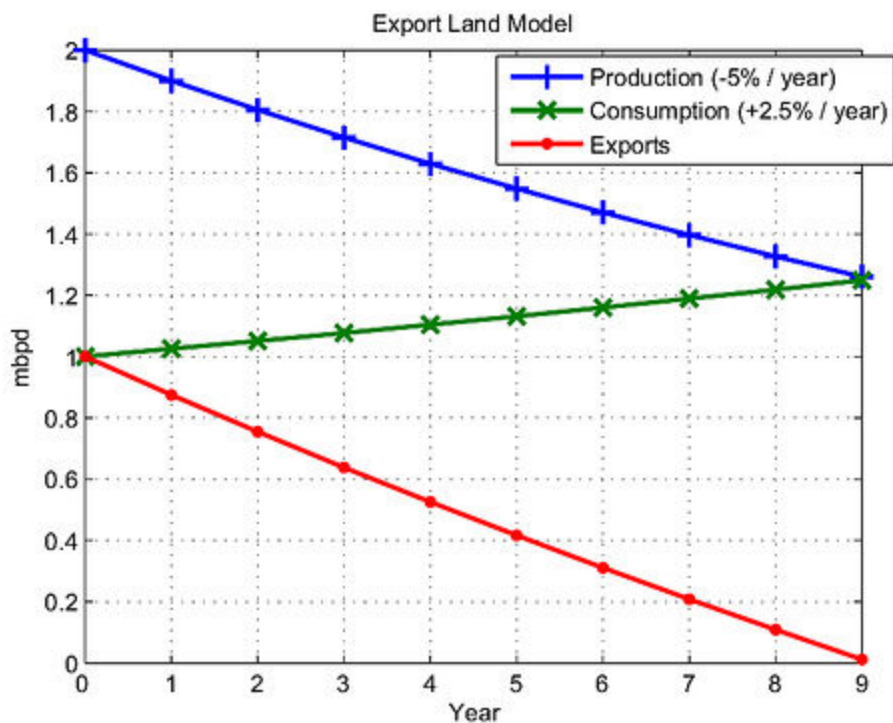
From Jeffrey Brown, published on the Oil Drum site:

The simple mathematical model for our export situation is called the Export Land Model (ELM). Recently, data and media reports have shown that the concerns expressed about our export situation are growing more valid each day.

Venezuela and Mexico are critically important to the US because of their proximity to the refineries on the Gulf Coast. It takes an average of about five days for a tanker to get to the US from Venezuela and Mexico versus about 30 days from the Persian Gulf. Based on recent news reports, it certainly appears that the overall net export decline from Venezuela and Mexico is continuing into 2008.

So, what has happened to net oil exports from Venezuela & Mexico to the US and what effect has had this had on Gulf Coast crude oil inventories, and why am I concerned?

First, let's talk a bit about the ELM model. As an aid to understanding how rate of production declines and rates of changes in consumption affect net oil exports, we proposed a simple mathematical model, the Export Land Model (ELM), which assumes a country producing two mbpd at peak, with a subsequent production decline of 5%/year, and consuming one mbpd, with a consumption increase of +2.5%/year. This results in net oil exports going to zero in nine years, with only about 10% of post-peak production being exported. Here is a graphical image:



Once an exporting region hits peak production and starts declining, the net export decline rate is a function of consumption as a percentage of production at peak, the rate of change in production and the rate of change in consumption. However, net export declines tend to consistently show an accelerating decline rate with time. As Khebab and I warned in a recent paper on the top five net oil exporters, recent EIA data showed an accelerating top five net export decline rate in 2007, continuing a trend that began in 2006. **Our middle case has the top five—Saudi Arabia, Russia, Norway, Iran and the UAE—collectively approaching zero net oil exports around 2031.**

Recently, there has been increasing attention paid to the declining net oil exports worldwide, and last week the Wall Street Journal published a very important article, “Net Oil Exporters Unable to Keep up with Demand.” Neil King, the lead writer for this article, recently obtained updated 2007 net oil export numbers from the EIA. I was particularly struck by the net oil export decline rates for Venezuela (-7.6%/year) and for Mexico (-16%/year).

This EIA website has net oil imports into the US by country of origin, through March, 2008.

http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impqus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbb_lpd...

The data show that combined net oil exports from Venezuela & Mexico to the US have dropped by 414,000 bpd from 10/07 to 3/08, an astounding annual decline rate of -32%/year. This decline was at least partially offset by increases in imports from the Persian Gulf.

However, as the decline in net oil exports from Venezuela & Mexico (and elsewhere) has increased, it's quite likely that the Persian Gulf has not been able to sufficiently offset the decline.

The EIA has recently reported a large drop in US oil imports and fairly large crude oil inventory declines, with almost all of the decline concentrated in the Gulf Coast area. Gulf Coast crude oil inventories have dropped by 15.6 million barrels (9%) in two weeks.

So, in looking at those numbers it seems quite possible that we are seeing some real, tangible near term effects from the ongoing net export declines from Venezuela and Mexico, and it's possible that we could see some problems with refined product deliveries in the Gulf Coast area in the very near future, perhaps in a matter of weeks if the trend were to continue, and there seems no reason to expect it not to.

What would result from this? Well, first we would then almost certainly see calls to release oil from the SPR. The problem of course is using emergency reserves to offset a long term decline in oil exports from two key nearby oil exporters. Venezuela is showing a long term net export decline, and Mexico is on track to approach zero net oil exports by 2014. In October, 2007 these two countries accounted for more than 20% of total US petroleum (crude + product) imports.

At the very least, this situation may force an earlier recognition of our long term problem with net oil exports. One risk is that oil from the SPR will be used to perpetuate the myth, for a little while longer, that we can have an infinite rate of increase in our consumption of a finite energy supply.

6) Saudi Oil Cutbacks !!!!

“Saudi Arabia's Shura council (parliament) will hold a series of meetings over the next two weeks to discuss a controversial proposal by a key member to curb oil production to save reserves for better prices, Saudi media reported. The council will listen to a report by deputy chairman of the Shura water and public utilities committee, Salim bin Rashid Al Marri, who will argue for cutting crude supplies to maintain the Kingdom's underground reserves.

"Marri will seek to persuade council members that the oil production must be linked to the country's actual development needs not the needs of foreign consumers," Alriyadh newspaper said in a report from the capital Riyadh. "He will tell the Council that keeping sufficient oil quantities underground is a good investment for the future as oil prices will then be higher...he will argue that this will be better than producing more oil and generating financial surpluses on the grounds these surpluses are causing inflation."

Saudi Arabia is the world's top oil exporter and its crude policy is normally determined by the King as the oil minister's job is mainly to implement that policy.

According to analysts, any major increase or decrease in the Gulf Kingdom's crude production must be approved by the Monarch, who was reported last week to have heeded a call by US president George Bush and **agreed to lift output by nearly 300,000 barrels per day to cool down boiling crude prices.** Saudi Arabia, which controls nearly a quarter of the world's total extractable oil deposits, has pumped an average of nine million bpd over the past year but its sustainable output capacity is almost two million bpd higher.

To face an expected increase in global demand, Riyadh is investing heavily in projects to boost its oil production capacity to 12.5 million bpd at the end of 2009 and maintain its traditional spare capacity of more than two million bpd.”

What? First they promise a 300,000 bbl/day increase....then, golly, they realize that not only can they not produce more, but can't even produce the same amount anymore. And they invent 'excuses' to save face. Oh, they are 'saving it' for future generations. If you recall, less than 2 years ago they were bragging they could produce at least 15, maybe 20 million a day with no problems and do it for the next 40 years. Well.....they were lying.

First, the King announces they won't go beyond current production....then, last week, they announce they are going to CUT PRODUCTION. In reality, their main field Ghawar is getting old and tired. Its output is dropping and all the other new/older reworked fields aren't producing at the levels they need to stem the decline.

The handwriting is on the wall. Matt Simmons was right. Saudi is at/near peak, and it is downhill for the world from here on in.

7) Record Development Costs in Brazil – from Bloomberg

Brazil's oil discoveries, including the Western Hemisphere's largest in three decades, may cost \$100 billion more to develop than the industry's most costly field.

The Tupi deposit and nearby offshore prospects probably will cost \$240 billion to exploit, said Peter Wells, director of U.K. research firm Neflex Petroleum Consultants Ltd. and a former Royal Dutch Shell Plc exploration manager. The total exceeds the \$136 billion estimate for Kazakhstan's Kashagan field, led by Eni SpA, and would be enough to fund the U.S. space program for 14 years.

“This oil is going to be difficult to get out of the ground and it will cost a lot,” said Wells.

Tupi and Nearby Fields

The \$240 billion estimate assumes there are four to seven similar prospects nearby and includes costs to drill wells, lay pipelines and build production platforms over a period of about 20 years, Wells said.

Tupi alone could cost \$100 billion, said Wells, part of a Neflex team doing a six-year study to map all of the world's petroleum basins.

Cambridge Energy Research Associates, the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based consulting firm headed by Daniel Yergin, said the Tupi-area fields will cost \$200 billion to \$240 billion. Costs are rising as producers compete for labor and equipment with oil prices above \$120 a barrel. Deepwater drilling rigs are renting for more than \$600,000 a day in some cases. At \$240

billion, the price tag would be more than the annual economic output of Thailand, Ireland and Malaysia.

The Brazilian discoveries contain about twice as much natural gas in each barrel of crude as reservoirs in the Gulf of Mexico and West Africa, increasing the complexity and expense of the projects, Wells said.

Tupi is about 80 percent crude and 20 percent gas, said Wells, a University of Exeter-trained geologist. "Gas is an important cost consideration because they have to decide whether to reinject it back into the reservoir or construct a rather large pipeline to take it to another destination where it can be used," said Candida Scott, a senior director at Cambridge Energy Research Associates.

"The high wax content of Tupi's crude and the presence of carbon dioxide, which can damage pipes, also may raise costs, Wells said. "

Bottom Line: Don't expect gas prices to drop anytime soon! Someone has to pay that \$240 billion and it will be oil customers!

8) Lukoil Production Drops

LUKOIL has admitted for the first time that its production is falling. It fell 3.3 percent in the first quarter of the year. Rosneft is now the only Russian oil company that is not having trouble with production.

According to its quarterly account, published yesterday, LUKOIL produced 23.6 million tons of oil in that period, compared to 24.4 million tons in the same period of last year, that is, by 3.3 percent. Its production was down both in Russia (by 0.8 percent to 22.27 million tons) and abroad (by 10 percent to 1.35 million tons). The account cites depletion of reserves in Western Siberia and a lack of necessary electrical capacity for production due to the high quantity of oil production in the region as causes of the decline. LUKOIL had been showing growth in production until that point.

Gazprom Neft production was down 0.3 percent last year. TNK-BP was down 4.12 percent, and Surgutneftegaz was down 1.6 percent. Western Siberia is the main area of oil production in Russia. Many wells there have been producing since Soviet times.

9) Sobering Reality – from Jeff Brown,

For those of you with simple math skills:

““If you look at the situation in terms of presidential terms, looking at fossil fuels plus nuclear the world burned through the equivalent of 10% of all oil ever consumed in Bush’s first four-year term. And, in our model, we’re going to burn 10% of all remaining conventional crude in the second four years of Bush’s term.

“That is the equivalent of around 25 billion barrels a year. So that’s 100 billion barrels every four years, and we’ve burned 1,000 billion barrels in the entire history of oil use in the past 100 years. It gets interesting when you consider that current estimates are that we’ve only got 1,000 billion barrels of conventional crude remaining. With natural gas liquids, we’ve got a little bit more. But of the conventional crude oil, we’ve got 1,000 billion remaining.”

So, the math question. If we are burning through 100 billion barrels of oil every 4 years, and there about 1000 billion barrels of conventional oil out there, what happens then? OF course, you won’t get there ...in 40 years because soon, you won’t get 25 billion barrels of production a year on the downhill side of the ‘peak production’. It will fall and fall and fall. So it is true ‘you will never run out of oil’. But in 40 years, when they are producing 5% of the current amount, it will be basically ‘nothing’.

Mexico, which used to be the number 2 supplier to the US, has slipped to number 3. It is using more and more of its declining and declining output, and will be a net importer within 6 years! Same trend for other oil producers. Where will our imports come from? You got it – there won’t be much to import!

Forecasts now range up to \$7 gas within 2 years. Unfortunately, once countries peak, the production starts to fall a bit the first year – maybe 2%. Then a year or two later, hit 3% decline per year. Then 4-5% per year decline. Mexico’s main source Cantarell is now dropping an eye-popping 15-25% per year in output! This year it might drop 40% in just one year!

You had better hope that the car makers really can produce electric cars, that the Congress can actually pass a meaningful and useful energy bill that encourages more production, builds railroads, stop funding bridges and highways to nowhere that won't have any traffic, and can unsort the impeding airline implosion. The track record so far of Congress is miserable, and its election year, which means likely nothing but punishing taxes, loss of incentives, and a boost to declining output of domestic producers and exploration. Not good!

Let's examine the record:

Drilling in ANWR – Democrats voted 90% to oppose. Republicans voted 90% to allow. Result: continued ban on exploration and drilling in ANWR. On 0.2% of the 19 million acres. Only 2000 acres wanted out of 19 million! And it is 'no no no'.

Drilling offshore – for a potential 80 billion barrels of oil and 430 trillion cu feet of NG. Democrats – 90% opposed. Republicans – 90% for. Result: continuation of the ban on 85% of the coastal areas of the USA.

Oil Shale: Democrats – 90% opposed. Republicans 90% voted for. Result. Ban on oil exploration where the oil shale is, or requirements that they are 'allowed' to be there 3-6 months a year, and not 9 months a year. Ever try to run a billion dollar mining operation part of the year? Lay off folks for months every year to make sure a wandering animal isn't affected?

Refineries: You keep reading that 'no new refineries have been built in the USA in 30 years'. After 3 years, an expansion in IL of a refinery received all but one permit. It had been denied, then approved, and now 'withdrawn'. Oh, by the way, it is in Barack Obama's district, and he is 'opposed' to having it. But he'll tell you over and over about 'no new refineries built'. Duh! Hope his constituents run out of gas first. If you want new refineries, you can't have the BANANA mentality. "Build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone". Yet, that is what the eco-nuts want, and the Sierra Club owns the democrats and nothing energy wise will be done, other than many will start to freeze in their homes they can't afford to heat any longer. Then Congress will want to approve tens of billions of YOUR tax dollars to give them a 'fuel allotment' while you pay full price.

The tax breaks for solar and windfarms are set to expire. Is Congress concerned? Heck, no. They need MORE TAXES to have to give away. Look at the Obama plan. \$500 tax credits for 'low income people' on top of earned income credits. Higher exemptions for 'low income workers'. He's set to give away \$800 billion in taxes that mysteriously he plans to collect from the middle class, who pay nearly all the income taxes. Now it is a \$1000 reduction in taxes for 95% of the people. You got to be kidding. Out of one side of the mouth, he is raising spending 800 billion. On the other hand, he is handing back \$1000 to 'every wage earner' in the lower 95%. And who is going to pay for all of this? Of course, YOU ARE.

Get set to pay more and more and more for energy, courtesy of Congress and the Sierra Club. No nukes. No refineries. No oil shale. No clean coal. No more areas open to exploration and development. Nothing, anywhere, anytime, anyplace. The lives of six fish and 2 polar bears exceeds all the needs of 300 million people. Having 'unspoiled 2000 of acres out of the other 19,000,000 acres wilderness' that no one can get to is more important than energy. Let's see..there are 19 million acres in ANWR, and the oil company wants to use 2000. That is 0.1% or something of the area. About the size of a postage stamp on a football field. That would leave 18,998,000 acres undisturbed. Oh, but that isn't enough for the eco-whacks, Al Gore and Obama types. (They can't control your lives unless there is an 'oil shortage'.)

Could it be that 'energy prices' will be the single biggest issue in the election campaign?

9) Hybrid Sales – More than 'hot'

"Toyota Motor Corp.'s (TM) popular Prius hybrid may not be known as a sports car, but it certainly has been speeding off dealership lots in the era of \$4-a- gallon gasoline.

Demand for gas-electric hybrids has been surging overall as consumers increasingly opt for fuel-sipping cars to combat high gasoline prices. The Prius, the first mass-market hybrid and the most iconic hybrid name, is at the vanguard of the trend, with U.S. dealerships recently measuring their Prius inventories in hours, not days.

At the end of May, a new Prius averaged just under 17 hours on a dealership lot before being sold, compared with an average 3.5 days at the end of April. For comparison, Toyota's average passenger car spends about 25 days at the dealership, according to the company.”

In many areas, there is now a six month waiting list for a new Prius.

The limiting factor, according to Toyota, is inability to get more batteries to be able to build more hybrids. Within 3 years another battery factory will come on line, but that is 2011! Everyone wants batteries and there isn't enough capacity to make more of them.

KI7WO and K0AYO Mobile!

Alan, KI7WO (also on the banned list) reports:

I had a great opportunity yesterday to run some counties with one of the original County Hunters. I met Bob, K0AYO, when he was having some trouble with an old run of coax. Joyce, WB9NUL, asked if I would go over and see what needed to be "fixed". After getting that problem resolved, I asked Bob if he would like to go run Counties some time.

I needed a couple in KS for BINGO so we went out yesterday and had a GREAT Time. He said he has not been on the radio in quite a while, and though he has great difficulty talking due to a neurological condition we had FUN. It was especially nice to hear some of the guys who knew Bob and had not heard him on in a while tell him how nice it was to hear him on the radio. We are looking forward to the next opportunity to go out again.

Alan KI7WO

P.S. his radio room looks like a parking lot with all the "cars" he has received for Last for the WBOW.”

Joe, WB0CQO commented:

“Alan, many thanks for getting Bob out and on the air again. I know him from a long time back. He wasn't an original county hunter, but was on of the founding members of MARAC. There was a group of maybe 10 or 12 county hunters in the Kansas City area and they formed the club way back in the late 60s. I am the first regular member of MARAC. The first 100 numbers were for folks who were able to give more than the membership fees to help get it started. Some of the other folks involved were: WA0WOB Skip, W0SJE Jack, W0YLN, K0AYO Bob and others that it has been too long for me to recall there calls and names. Again thanks for getting Bob out and hope that he will get on the air from home and work a few of us.”

Alan and Bob ran about 8 counties on the 7188 Friendly County Hunter Net.

World's Fastest Computer

At least this month, the fastest claimed computer! From cnn news

“Scientists unveiled the world's fastest supercomputer Monday, a \$100 million machine that for the first time has performed 1,000 trillion calculations per second in a sustained exercise.”

The technology breakthrough was accomplished by engineers from the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the IBM Corp. on a computer to be used primarily on nuclear weapons work, including simulating nuclear explosions. The computer, named Roadrunner, is twice as fast as IBM's Blue Gene system at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, which itself is three times faster than any of the world's other supercomputers, according to IBM.

Some elements of the Roadrunner can be traced to popular video games, said David Turek, vice president of IBM's supercomputing programs. In some ways, he said, it's "a very souped-up Sony PlayStation 3."

"We took the basic chip design [of a PlayStation] and advanced its capability," said Turek.

But the Roadrunner supercomputer is nothing like a video game.

The interconnecting system occupies 6,000 square feet with 57 miles of fiber optics and weighs 500,000 pounds. Although made from commercial parts, the computer consists of 6,948 dual-core computer chips and 12,960 cell engines, and it has 80 terabytes of memory.

The cost: \$100 million.

Turek said that in a two-hour test May 25, the computer achieved a "petaflop" speed of sustained performance, something no other computer had ever done. It did so again in several real applications involving classified nuclear weapons work this past weekend.

One petaflop is 1,000 trillion operations per second. Only two years ago, there were no actual applications in which a computer achieved 100 teraflops -- a tenth of Roadrunner's speed -- said Turek, noting that the tenfold advancement came over a relatively short time.

The Roadrunner computer, now housed at the IBM research laboratory in Poughkeepsie, New York, will be moved next month to the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Anastasio said the computer, in its unclassified applications, is expected to be used not only by Los Alamos scientists but by others. He said there can be broad applications such as helping develop a vaccine for HIV, examine the chemistry in the production of cellulosic ethanol or understand the origins of the universe.

And Turek said the computer represents still another breakthrough, particularly important in these days of expensive energy: It is an energy miser compared with other supercomputers, performing 376 million calculations for every watt of electricity used."

Master Titanium

With folks closing in on the Master Platinum, is it time to create a new challenge? What will keep mobiles out there running counties? MARAC is an organization founded to give out MOBILE awards. What will keep up mobiles interest? What will keep mobiles out running counties?

A proposal for the “Master Titanium” has been forwarded through MARAC channels. It likely will take the computer programmer folks for Logger a year advance notice, so maybe it is time to have the consideration and award process underway before folks finish Platinum and then want to seek higher level awards! Only active mobiles will likely earn Platinum, so why not continue the tradition of the higher level awards for mobiles with an even higher challenge after Platinum! (MARAC has at least a dozen other awards to seek for those who chose not to go mobile – including five star, prefixes, YLs, Master’s Gold, Teams, Big Rigs, etc).

He is what was proposed and why.

“Proposal for New Award to be tentatively called Master Titanium

Discussion – to keep interest in county hunting going, and to provide a path for ever increasing challenges and to keep mobile activity up, the following award is proposed.

In order to make it interesting, a few new twists are proposed.

1) The start date will be after the sixth Master Platinum Award is issued. Whatever date that occurs.

That is for several reasons, the main one being that it will give incentive for ALL the people interested in getting Master Platinum, currently the highest level award, incentive for helping others finish up! That gives more incentive to see the first half dozen MP awards issued to those seeking to be among the first to finish. Second, it keeps mobiles out and running, trying to get things done. And third, it gives no one person the head start for putting out counties for the new award while others are struggling to finish. It gives everyone incentive to get the first six or more folks finished (and others will be close behind).

2) To keep mobile activity up, during challenging sunspots and higher gas prices, there is a requirement to transmit from 500 counties. This has not proven a significant challenge to those seeking the MP award, who had to make contacts from 500 separate counties. Only if mobile activity is maintained, will county hunting be alive years from now. There must be *incentive* to keep up activity. In addition, there must be incentive to work as

many people as possible, not just one contact with NC or with a traveling buddy. The counties need to be put out for all to work. Preferably on multiple bands and modes.

Proposed Award:

Master Titanium Award

OBJECTIVE:

- 1) To make **Valid Contacts** with Master Platinum Award holders, and
- 2) Transmitting from at least 500 counties after the applicant has earned the Master Platinum Award.

SPECIAL RULES: An applicant must make contacts with holders of the Master Platinum Award in **All USA Counties** (Master Titanium contacts).

All **Valid Contacts** for this award must have been made on or after (date to be determined by issuance of Sixth Master Platinum award).

Valid Contacts with Master Platinum Award holders made before the applicant receives the Master Platinum Award are good for the county where the Master Platinum Award holder is located

After the applicant receives the Master Platinum Award, the applicant may receive credit for the county by working another Master Platinum holder from a county.

After the date of the applicant's Master Platinum Award, the applicant must make **Valid Contacts** with THREE operators from each of 500 counties with operators holding at least one star (holder of USACA award) Club calls cannot be used for the purpose of meeting this requirement.

AWARD LEVELS: The Master Titanium is awarded for making Master Titanium contacts in **All USA Counties** and transmitting from at least 500

different counties as a Master Platinum holder, working at least three different USACA star holders from each claimed transmitted county.

APPLICATION AND FEES: Standard application and logs. Standard fees apply to members and non members.

There are a few new twists – everything should be a bit different otherwise it is the ‘same ole thing’ over and over again, like umpteenth time around. Are we ready for a new challenge? Do folks want to keep those mobiles out there running?

Note you can get credit for the 500 counties to be transmitted after you get your MP award by working 3 star holding operators from a county. You do not have to work a MP holder to get credit for that part of the award. If you work an MP holder from the county after you get your MP, then you get credit for the MT county as well.

What do you think? If you think this is a good idea, tell your director that you are interested in seeing an award like Titanium get created! Now is the time to be working on it, before the first MP awards are issued in the next year or two.

Transmitted Counties

When you first start out county hunting, you might not realize the importance of running counties initially. One of the most sought after awards is the Master Gold Award. To get the 1500 points needed to qualify for the second part, you can earn all/most of your points by running counties. You get 1 point for each county you run. You can run the same county on different days, up to 50 times. Better yet to run more counties only a few times each. Either way, they all count!

If you are on your way somewhere, even if going through the same counties as the previous weekend, make at least one contact from every county you go through and log it. If you can, ‘put out’ the county so others can work

you. If not, at least work the mobile running on net, and LOG IT (where the mobile was and where you were).

At some point, if you decide to go on beyond the basic USA-CA, having those early transmitted counties will help. Likely, you will get your Bingo award at some point – and then be interested in the Master's Gold award. Part of that award is accumulating 'points' which you can earn in several ways. Most county hunters will earn them from running counties. You can count transmitted counties from 'day one' – the first day you ever went mobile.

So if you are headed off to a local hamfest 100 miles away, put out the counties. Take a different way home and put out some more. You can only run a county once a day, not coming and going for credit. If you are going on vacation, go one way and return at least part way on a different route. Not only log who you work, but where YOU were at the time, and try to make at least one contact from each county you go through, preferably running it if possible, even if you QSY off frequency to run it after working the mobile running, or if several are waiting to run. Or if you work someone on 40cw, go to 30cw and run it or 20cw. It's a lot of fun to run the counties.

Some new county hunter mobiles might not think that it is worth 'putting out the counties' or making contacts as they go through them, but later you might be very happy that you have those logs with those dozens or hundreds of point already when you need them for the Master Gold Award!

Global Warming Consensus? No Way

Bob Unruh of WorldNetDaily reported that 31,000 U.S. scientists - 9,000 with doctorate degrees in atmospheric science, climatology, Earth science, environment and other specialties - have signed a petition rejecting global warming.

The list of scientists includes 9,021 Ph.D.s, 6,961 at the master's level, 2,240 medical doctors and 12,850 carrying a bachelor of science or equivalent academic degree. Global warming assumes that human production of greenhouse gases is destroying the Earth's climate.

According to the petition, "There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing, or will in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate.

"Moreover, there is substantial scientific evidence that increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide produce many beneficial effects upon the natural plant and animal environments of the Earth."

The Petition Project www.petitionproject.org has been underway for 10 years. It's a gradual movement but it was spurred on by the release of Gore's "documentary" *An Inconvenient Truth*.

Gore's movie claims there is a "consensus" and "settled science" about human-caused global warming. It was particularly unsettling because teachers all across the country showed the movie to students to indoctrinate them in global warming.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Gore's movie contains many very serious incorrect claims which no informed, honest scientist could endorse," said project spokesman and founder Art Robinson.

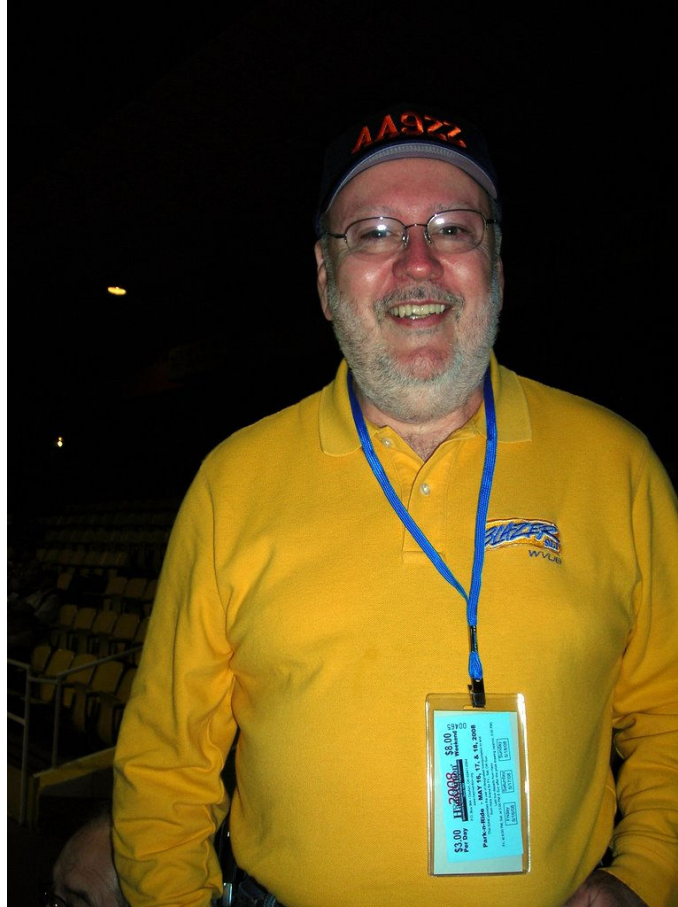
Robinson said Gore's folly has gone so far that it is damaging people's lives. The Petition Project website www.petitionproject.org reports there are 31,072 scientists who have signed up and that list is growing.

More pics from Dayton

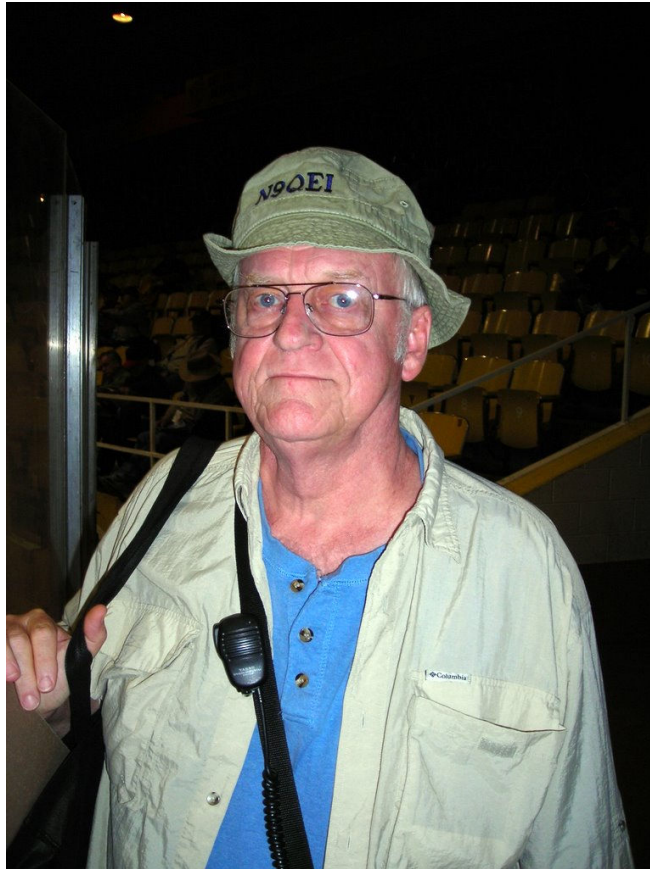
These are three county hunters closing in on first time



W8MP Mark



Phil, AA9ZZ



Ray, N9QEI

Here's a long time county hunters:



Jim, N8HAM, Jim USACA #682



Got Antennas? 53 of them on this car

At Dayton Hamfest – but ALL magmounts

Your magnetic compass probably will point right at this car!

Master Diamond Award

Two years ago, Jack, N7ID sent in a proposal for a new award to MARAC to be known as the Master Diamond Award. It seems to be lost in the massive backlog of MARAC paperwork. (There hasn't been a BOD meeting in months as far as members can tell.) Ideas for awards go in, and not much seems to come out. Seems they take years to iron out 'a few details'. Maybe they need some 'change'?

The requirements of the Master Diamond Award are simple:

- 1) To make valid contacts with all 3077 (or current number) of counties in the USA with holders of the 'Ran All USA Counties Award', after the date that the operators received their award. Thus, you could work N7ID after

4/19/2006 or N4AAT after 2/24/2006 in any county they run/have run since then.

2) To transmit from at least TBD (10-20-25?) counties.

3) Applicants who have run all counties would get credit for the county they transmit from if they work someone who has also transmitted from all counties while in the county. Both parties would have to be in different counties at the time of the contact.

Currently, MARAC has only a few awards which can be earned only by mobiles. The Ran All USA counties is one. You will note that this award now appears in the MARAC database, so you can see the listing of people who have qualified for the Ran All US award.

MARAC needs more activity, and more incentives for mobiles to put out the counties. This will provide incentive for:

a) Mobiles to try to achieve Ran All USA status. Currently, KB4XK is five counties away from finishing. (He needs to run HI). KL1V is working toward this goal with an unknown number left to go, and N8KIE said it might be a few years before he winds up doing it. He is seriously working on that goal. Several others have put out thousands of counties.

b) Mobiles to continue running counties after they achieve the Ran All USA award. Currently, three of the award holders are very active. Jack, N7ID has put out 1500 counties or more. N4AAT has likely put out 1000+, and N4CD has put out 2480 different counties. Nell, K0GO, occasionally puts out a county, and John, KK0L takes a trip or two a year to run counties.

The MARAC Awards committee consists of the following people:

AB2LS, AB7RW, K8ZZ, KA9JAC, W0QE, KE3VV, KL1V, KN4Y

One from each MARAC District.

Information and suggestions for new awards seem to go into the committee, then just sit for years until they are completely forgotten.

Is it too much to ask of the MARAC board and officers to give some deadlines? What goes in must be acted on within six months or 90 days? Information is sent electronically at the speed of light. Does it really take 2 or 3 years for 8 people to get, analyze, maybe revise or decide on whether a new award should be created? Even Gator with a handy six pack nearby could make short work of analyzing and finalizing an award. Inquiring minds want to know? What else is the business of MARAC, the mobile **AWARDS** club, than having interesting and challenging awards for people to work on, and to stimulate mobile activity? (and have conventions for those seeking awards or giving out counties to attend?).

More Net Shenanigans

1) From the K3IMC Forum **from Fred, W4DF and KT4U**:

“Fred, W4DF, and myself will be leaving Amherst, VA going to Powhatan, VA via route 60. Will leave my QTH around 1400 UTC and using the CH CW frequencies. **I hear Fred and myself have been banned from 14336.0 by Jim. Don't know what that is all about.**”

W4DF, Fred, is long time county hunter from back in the 60s and 70s – used to be AA4FF among other calls. That’s a shame because some of those counties are desperately needed by some to finish up on SSB. Even more reason for joining the crowd on CW. It doesn’t take much to get banned. Some of the ‘chat room crowd’ even use false ‘nicks’ to log in as the person ‘in trouble’ and make nasty posts, making sure that person who is about to get ‘run off’ actually does. Strange. They pick a target, then tar and feather them. Makes you wonder who is next. N2OCW one month. AA4FF and KT4U another month. Soon there won’t be enough mobiles to even call it a ‘mobile net’ anymore.

Probably was a trip they took a while back where they didn’t run everything on SSB. Maybe it was the cw contest weekend?

Plain and simple extortion of mobiles. You either run on 20M SSB every time out, or you will be 'banned'. Mafia type extortion.

2) On G4KHG's trip out west this year, he posted:

"Please note 20m SSB this trip on 14.342/.345 and up. 30m, 40m cw as usual."

One might speculate he doesn't have the time to 'wait his turn' on the busy .336 net these days so he'll immediately start on .342 or above for those that need his counties out west. (hi hi) Likely he'll run 20cw, then QSY to SSB where John, K6OHM, or other west coast stations will help out when out in HI, and others when stateside.

3) From Raleigh, W8QOI:

"On our last trip I didn't include anything but 40 meter antennas and was having trouble then. Apparently 'HE' requested me to come to 20 and I responded that I didn't have 20 with us.

Today I asked for a relay to N7ID and was promptly told that because I refused to come to 20 he would not relay me in. I told him I didn't have 20 with me and was promptly called a liar. As I have been a Constable for the past 27 years I am not prone to lying. Too bad, so sad."

K7REL added: "Yes, Indeed. I Heard the Whole Thing!!"

De N4CD: Yep, plain and simple **EXTORTION of county hunters**. Golly, we didn't get upset that N2OCW runs mobile on SSB, and has rarely, rarely run a county on cw while out mobile. We don't ban him from CW nets, and everyone gets a relay on cw when they request one. No extortion, strong arm tactics, second grade or Mafia type operation on CW or 40M SSB. We don't tell folks on 40M SSB or CW that if you don't run counties on the frequency, don't dare ask for a relay! Unlike 20M SSB.

Larry, N2OCW, is being set up again and again for a 'fall'. Seems he got banned from the chat room for comments made by others. Now, they want him to grovel and plead, and if he returns to the chat room, has to issue a 'public apology' to KZ2P, KA1JPR, and W5UGD within 20 minutes. For something he didn't do. And likely 'praise' someone as 'the best NC'.

What type of idiots are they? Extortion, silly demands....when Larry did nothing wrong. Oh, right...just another set up, and in two weeks they'll find something else to 'ban him again'. That's the game they play. If you dare to say anything they don't like, you get the 'treatment'. Or if you forget your 20M antenna leaving it on the porch.....watch out. So sad. Pathetic is probably a better term for it. Maybe 'sadistic' applies just as well. Just a slow torture game you cannot win.

You really think N2OCW is ever going to show up on 20M SSB again? Or W8QOI? Or WA4WQG/m? Or K0IYA/m? or K4YT? It's going to be rough going on 20M SSB.

Last month in was K0IYA and K4YT. Now, this month W8QOI, WA4WQG, and W4DF and KT4U. Running off mobiles and county hunters left and right. A few months ago N2OCW. Well, they keep jerking him around – more 'fun' for them that way. Who is next? Who wants to play their 'lose/lose' sadistic game? You lose no matter what – either get banned or give up your dignity and grovel.

Now they play the 'you are banned from the chat room game' since no one is out running mobile these days.....and why should they? Sooner or later they'll get the 'treatment' – for not running counties, for not putting out EVERY county on 20M SSB, for not this or not that, or otherwise? They need to pick on someone new every month to continue their game. When will it be your turn?

With not so great conditions, not so great gas prices, if you keep running off two or three more potential mobiles each month, you really wonder what will become of 20M SSB county hunting. So far, 40M SSB has been very good for most.

What's more amazing is that there are still folks out there who think that this extortionist is 'the best net control' around. Their turn is likely coming up soon. Just a matter of time. Larry, N2OCW, found that out the hard way. If you are not on the list, your time has yet to come – just a matter of time before he goes off half cocked and dumps on you. More likely yet if you 'help out' on net – more chances of slipping up, or giving him an opportunity to 'find something wrong'. Many have found that out. Then, too, you are toast. Just look at KA0SHC and K0IYA – tried to help with

relays and got 'the treatment'. Larry, KA0SHC, time and time again. They jerked him around and around. More 'sadistic fun' for them that way.

4) Art, WA4WQG now, too?

Tom K7REL posted: "I was told this morning that WA4WQG was told that he was "on his own now": that he would get no more relays unless he started running on the Bimbo's net again. Can't believe that he would "ban" even the Reverend Art; but that was what I was told. K2JG is "sick": really sick."

d) From K4YT, Karl

"I have to add to some of the crap that comes off of 336 thrown at me by the fuehrer in SC. I started this year trying to go mobile and learn how to function at 70mph running counties in both modes and logging properly. A month or two ago out of the blue I get an email telling me to start running on his NET. I didn't answer him as I didn't want to stir things up like several other county hunters.

My first mobile trip was a hard drive in one shot from VA to the Florida Keys with my son and then another non-stop on the return. I only have a 40m ham stick and occasionally ran on 7188. Then the email arrived from the NC.

Occasionally when we drive up to our vacation home in Garrett cty, MD I run 7188. Well last week from home after I worked someone on 336, he stops the net and start shouting at me for not running on his net during the last trip to the lake. I told him I only have a 40m ham stick. Then I get told very sarcastically to go out and buy one NOW and get on his Net. This kind of crap turns me off and now I can understand why so many county hunters are banned from 336. I probably will make his banned list very shortly. Some people don't have a life so I guess this ego trip is what turns him on. I have a family who comes first and ham radio somewhere down the list. If I get on 20m it will be on CW.

I have been a ham for 47 years and have run into this type of ego trip from DXers. I have spent 35 years traveling overseas with my profession and have operated where ever I could get a license. There have been a few times where the locals including Americans living in the country didn't appreciate

someone coming into their rare DX country and running the pile-ups contest style. Mostly because of their egos and IRCs/green stamps.

Jim should take some lessons from N5UZW. Joe is such a nice person and everyone is relaxed on 40m where on 336 you wonder just when he will jump all over you for something stupid. The guy sounds sick. Too bad Joe doesn't run 336.

I am still a member of MARAC but if this continues I won't renew my membership. Too many cronies supporting him. Glad I was able to finish USACA before I get banned.”

De N4CD: To the ‘apologists’ who support KZ2P no matter what – if nothing ever happened on 14.336, no one run off, no one denied relays, no one extorted, no one excoriated for accidentally using phonetics.....there wouldn’t be anything to report on. Instead, they claim he is a ‘victim’. Of what? Of folks telling it like it is? Telling folks what he and his 5 or 6 buddies hatch out each month? We just report the news. He creates it.

Reader Feedback

1) Ray, WG6X adds more detail to his antenna mount article of last month.

“I assume you could use the tie down holes to mount the bracket, but I used the holes that were there for a trailer hitch. The vertical bracket was made using 3/16 steel and the angle iron was 2 inch 3/16 steel. Basely parts need are a vertical plate something like 5 to 6 1/2 square, a 2 inch angle iron most likely 4 1/2 inch to 7 inches length, and pipe or even tow hitch square piping, a antenna mounting plate to be welded on the top of the pipe and drilled for the antenna mounting hardware, and a couple bolts to mount the bracket to the frame. For the Toyota the bolts for the 09/10 are M10-40 x .125 which is a fine threaded M10. I notice that Toyota keeps changing their frames and spacing between the holes lately and in fact on the 09/10 model the front hole is not open (punch out) and may not have a welded nut inside the frame, but there appears to be a large grommet between the holes, so after removing it I believe you can then get inside the frame to put the nut

and locking washer on the bolt. Most cars have the ability to add trailer hitches in their design, so should be a problem. The key or hard part is align the spacing of the holes for drilling out the angle iron. OF course you can have a straight bar welded to the vertical plate and not use angle iron.

This shouldn't be very costly to have made or if you have the ability to weld no biggy I guess. The angle bar used was 3/16 by me, but mostly 1/8 could be used for both the plate and the angle iron, but think the 3/16 would be best choice. The angle iron is sold by many hardware stores like Lowe's and Home Depot. The real hard part is getting the holes align on the angle bar from drilling. I used clear plastic picture frames butted against a guide flushed against the frame to mark my holes. For drilling M10 bolt holes you can use a 13/32 drill bit. “

2) All YL Award

Nell, K0GO (ex NB6A) wrote me:

“As far as I know W7KOI was the first to finish YL. I flew to Kauai to give him his last--I can find the date, but it would take an effort. W7KOI, Earl, has an endorsement from CQ, which in my mind, makes him first Then Arnie, K9DCJ, claimed the first for Marac. “

de N4CD: Mary, KC5UO, also has finished up all YL. And Nell, K0GO, is the only YL to have transmitted from all counties!

MARAC does not track who has and who does not have the ‘all YL mobile award’. It is just in a series of numbers of awards – a relic of the system used by the B&B Shop which assigned serial numbers to every award whether it be Big Rig 250 counties or YL 500 counties, etc.

3) Jim, K4DI forwarded the following:

“The U.S. military (Department of Defense) discontinued the use of CW (Morse Code) in 1995, including the use of code on Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) frequencies and nets.

Poor propagation on the high frequency bands has resulted in the inability to communicate between stations and pass traffic many times in recent years,

despite the use of high tech digital communications techniques.

In a reversal of military policy and doctrine, the Director of MARS, on May 29, 2008, has issued an order to begin training of Morse Code on military MARS channels.

Unfortunately, in the thirteen years since Morse Code was used on military channels, training manuals and documentation has disappeared as to how to conduct Morse Code training and nets.”

DXers could have saved them a lot of trouble if they had ask us first. We knew all along, CW works, when all else fails!

de K4GK”

4) From K1BV (on K3IMC Forum)

The first USACA award in six months was issued to VA6JR on June 2, 2008. Ted notes ‘We need sunspots!’

Getting folks finished up!

This month, we look at some of the people closing in on Master’s Gold. See if you can help them out! If you have Bingo and at least one star, you can give a contact good for Master Gold.

Arden, AA0IP, needs about 31 to finish, with single needs in many states.

Jerry, W0GXQ, needs about 41 to finish. A handful in GA, WA, MD, and the rest scattered around.

Bob, W0DFK, needs only TWO: Terrell, GA and Page, IA!

Joe, WB0CQO, needs about 60 to finish. See if you can help him out.

Mike, KQ0B, needs only TWO: Roosevelt, MT and Jefferson, WA!

Dan, KM9X, needs about 38 including many in ID, MT, and OR which likely we be run this summer.

Don, W9GUY, needs about 11 including quite a few of them out west – likely to be run this summer.

Tony, WA9DLB, needs about 30 to go for MG.

Jim, VE9DH, needs 12 or so to go with most of them out west. Let's hope the propagation works for all needing the Northwest.

Chuck, AD8W, down to about 40.

Tom, K7REL, just needs Hardy, WV, to finish working all the counties for MG.

San, N7PIB, needs 9 – and all of them 'back east'.

Jack, N7ID, needs 31 to finish up.

Don, AE3Z, needs about 25 to go for his MG.

Dave, KE3VV, needs a handful. See if you can help with PA: Greene, or MA: Plymouth, or Wallowa, OR, or McIntosh, ND.

Don, K3IMC needs 102 to go.

Larry, N2OCW, needs 5! All of them out west in states likely to get run.

With 13 of the last 16 operators receiving the Master's Gold award using both CW and SSB, that seems to help people finish off the last counties more quickly. Some of the folks above are only on SSB, making it a bit more challenging. See if you can help them out in any case.

KM9X Dan's Most Wanted List

Dan, KM9X compiled a 'getting very close list' and put it on the K3IMC.
Here it is minus the MG needs above.

WØGXQ - 3RD using CW - ID: Madison KY: Carlisle, Elliott TX: Ft Bend
VA: Accomack

KYØE - 3RD using both SSB and CW - 2008 OH: Lawrence SD: Bennett
VA: Highland

WØDFK - BINGO3 using both SSB and CW - NC: Yancy

WØDFK - FIVESTAR using both SSB and CW - WA: Whitman-2

WØDFK - 5TH using both SSB and CW - CA: Mendocino WI: La Crosse
Email to

KQØB - 3RD CA: Alpine CO: San Juan IA: Howard MN: Houston MO:
Adair TX: Swisher, Wilson

WB9NUL - BINGO - Updated: 06/06/2008 CA: Plumas KY: Bracken,
Johnson, Nicholas MO: Bates OH: Carroll SD: Spink

W9MSE - BINGO2 using CW - AK: Second MA: Dukes WA: Douglas,
Jefferson, Skagit

W9JL - 2ND using SSB - CA: Yuba OR: Clatsop SD: McPherson UT:
Wayne WA: Pend Oreille

WA9DLB - BINGO2 ID: Lewis MO: Miller WA: Chelan

VE9DH – FIVESTAR ID: Clearwater(4*) KY: Lee(1*)

K8QWY - USACA using CW - 2008 ID: Valley

W8FNW - USACA using SSB - OR: Morrow, Wasco

AB7RW - BINGO using CW - GA: Forsyth, Habersham, Warren KY:
Webster

W6XLR - 2ND using both SSB and CW - 2008 KY: Harrison VA: Charlotte

N5MLP - USACA using SSB -. AK: Second District ME: Piscataquis ND:
Nelson NY: Essex

N5PR - 2ND using both SSB and CW - CO: San Juan IL: Randolph TN:
McMinn, Stewart

AB4YZ - BINGO2 using both SSB and CW - MT: Teton

K4XI - USACA using CW - Updated: 05/29/2008 ID: Franklin Power OR:
Columbia Email to k4xi@arrl.net

W4QNW - USACA using SSB 20m mobile - AL: Lawrence MD: Somerset

WB4KZW - BINGO using both SSB and CW KY: Green, Trimble VA:
Lunenburg, Westmoreland

KE3VV - BINGO2 using both SSB and CW - MA: Plymouth

N2OCW - BINGO2 using both SSB and CW - MD: Dorchester OR:
Wheeler PA: Fayette

AB2LS - BINGO3 using both SSB and CW - KS: Pratt MT: Daniels,
Powder River PA: Carbon VA: Accomack

AB2LS - FIVESTAR using both SSB and CW - ID: Clearwater WA:
Kittitas

AB2LS - 4TH using both SSB and CW - DE: Kent MD: Somerset NY:
Fulton, Monroe, Steuben WA: Jefferson

On the Road with N4CD – June

After the big 7000 mile trip to New England, you might think that would be enough for a while. Well, after two weeks at home, and getting lots of chores and errands out of the way, paying bills, answering a pile of mail, getting the annual physical.....it was time to think about another trip. So many counties, so little time....and time to do it before gas hits \$8/gal.

Bob, N8KIE and Ron, KB6UF had run through the last two counties needed in PA and WV for MP (Master Platinum) for me, so those needs were off the list. There's about 175 on my needs list for MP, so it was time again to knock off a few more of what I needed. Like the Master's Gold award, for MP you can go to the county and work someone from the county who has the requisite award. For MG, after you get your Bingo award, you must work someone with the Bingo award and a star. For MP, you must work someone with the Master's Gold award, and there are only about 15 or so active county hunters with MG. Many are close to finishing.

Michigan was my worst state, where I needed 42 MP counties. That seems strange since two county hunters with MG live there, but I managed to miss them – conditions not that great, and they don't run the counties on cw. So why not head to Michigan? It was 100 degrees in TX with temps above 80 at night. Summer sizzle had arrived. The cooler temps of Michigan looked attractive.

I needed two more in MO, and had one more county to run to finish running all of them Second Time there. So it was up through OK and KS the fastest way to MO, across to get Ray and Howard, zipping through IL and the north part of IN to MI. KL1V was running counties in AR and OK headed toward Denver. When I got to MI, AD8W headed out from MI to run some back east to help finish off his MG. It was uneventful getting to MI.

As I watched the news, I'm glad I went to IA back in May on the way to Dayton, running about 30 counties there. The news is just full of the epic floods in IA, with 83 of the 99 counties declared a disaster area, roads closed all over, the interstate closed with a 150 mile detour, and horrendous problems. Some problems in western MI in Manistee County, which I avoided. (not the county, but the problems – just got the corner). I hope our IA county hunters are OK.

This was another “go to dark and find a motel” trip. That can be risky when in rural areas, sometimes making folks drive for hours to find an available motel room. Much of MI and WI is resort areas, and during season, you can find everything full and very high prices. On Saturday nights, you can find a whole town full with some event (wedding or reunion or rodeo or similar). There are disadvantages of ‘to to dark’ and find a motel, vs. trying to plan how many miles and counties you can run a day. If you plan things out and find roads closed, or lots of construction slowing you down, you can be very

late, maybe not even getting contacts in some counties if it gets too late – especially if you only run 20SSB.

On the other hand, if nothing goes wrong, the weather is perfect, you get to run immediately everywhere, you can wind up at the motel at 3 pm with great weather, and wish you were out county hunting for another 2-3 hours to get further along the route. It's a toss up, but if you travel with a YL, they seem to prefer nice motels and the go to dark routine can put you in some funky motels where the YL isn't overjoyed with the accommodations! I know Miss Ida(SK) liked a good motel and wanted to get there to watch her favorite programs Jeopardy! and Wheel of Fortune by 6pm or earlier. So I had to plan accordingly, and we usually stayed at a Best Western, Comfort Inn, or Super 8 or similar. Now, I'll settle for less motel and less price.

I've stayed at some funky little motels and lots of Super 8s. The first night out this trip was a Super 8. Since the first day was actually VHF Contest day, I put the 6M antenna on the 40M SSB mount and played around a bit in the contest – worked about 20 folks on 6m, but too much hassle to do much else. Gave out a few grid squares. Band was wide open to TX, LA, MS. After a few hours of not making too many contacts, I put the 40M SSB antenna back on to get back to county hunting. I was running cw through all the counties. The second day I forgot about VHF and just ran on 40M SSB and the cw bands.

The second night was a Super 8 in Calhoun, MI. Since it was 'pizza night', dinner at the Pizza Hut. The 3rd night was a Super 8 in Muskegon, MI. I actually stopped around 5pm since I expected that going up along highway 31 would put me in resort area and few motels. I should have kept going since most of the motels were half empty or more (too cold and rainy) all over MI and I could have made another 60 miles or more before 'dinner time'. At any rate, I had a break and found a Chinese Buffet place for dinner.

The fourth night I'm in the Onaway Motel (\$40 including tax) in Presque Isle County – likely built 60-70 years ago. No internet here. Maybe 8 rooms? It was after 7pm, and the choice is the previous town looked worse. Hi hi. It's also another 50 miles to a bigger city with better motels, so that is the downside of travel to dark. Most folks want to stop before 7pm. Well, I

got to run a few more counties before stopping. With the June days, it stays light till nearly 10pm up north. The sun is up at 5 am, but there is no one on 40M or 30 or 20 to talk to! Skip too long unless you want to work DX. Maybe 80M would be OK.

It's amazing how many motels up this way have 'for sale' signs on them. Not a 'good sign of the times'. Many are owned by older folks wanting to retire to FL or a larger year round town with close by medical care and stores and activities likely. No takers. With ever increasing energy costs it must be tough making ends meet.

The good news also was K7INA needed Presque Isle and wouldn't be around in the morning, so he was happy I kept driving! It rained all day on Tuesday. Drizzle, rain, yuk! The tourists aren't here. All over MI, the motels are empty. Not a single 'no vacancy' sign anywhere up the west coast of MI, in the middle of the state, or anywhere I could see. Of course, it is sort of like New England, where season is July and August, and any good weather before and after is a 'bonus'.

It's no surprise there are no tourists. Lots of rain and chilly. Today it never got over 55 deg, and most thermometers said 51 or so. Drizzled. Windy. Not weather for the lake or outdoors. I thought I had all the 50 degree weather in New England. Wrong! Hi hi. It's now 100 deg in TX and at night, you are lucky to see it go down to 80. So I wasn't complaining about the temps. Less rain would have been very helpful. There would be three months of HOT weather in Dallas to contend with, so 50-s 80s was beautiful.

Joe, N5UZW, and Scottie, N4AAT, were doing most of the net control on 40M for the past few days. Scottie now getting active on CW and chasing CW counties along with many others including AD4IA and the rest of the gang – K4UNF, W6TPC, KA0SHC, KM9X and lots of others who want the MP contacts and counties often run or heard only on CW. Scottie is active on 40/30/20 cw, too. He used to be quite active on cw 'way back when'. About half the active county hunters now are on CW, up from years ago!

On rare occasions, I would go to 20 SSB. Hard to work N7ID there, and AB4YZ wasn't in the best place skip wise either. But worked them a few times to give them my county. It seemed easier to work Ray on 40M, and Lloyd, NX4W heard me everywhere on 40M SSB – he has good setup. So I

got some counties from the other mobiles, and of course I chased AB4YZ on cw, too. Filling in those band counties.

Right now, Scottie only has a key in the car – so when he is at home, he has to run out to the car to catch folks on CW. He's getting lots of exercise, but he's headed to FL to pick up a paddle for home use! I wondered why his 20M cw sig was always 3 S units below the one on SSB! He'll have that fixed soon with a booming sig on 20M/30/40 CW!

Conditions weren't great today. Good in the morning, then blah midday, then better later in the day. The good news was that between WG6X, who was around much of the time, AB4YZ, N9STL, N4AAT, K5GE, W6TMD, N9QS, N8KIE, ND3T, N0ZA, N4UJK, and W3CR, things have worked out well so far, with an MP contact everywhere.

The next day it was up through the Upper Peninsula. It was still cool and not 'season' yet here. It's a long trek up to Keweenaw – and back. That was the third time there.



Keweenaw MI

I made it down to Rhinelander, WI, to another Super 8 motel. Kent, KL1V was finishing off his trip in OK/MO and headed to Denver. He had dodged

a bunch of nasty weather in the panhandle of TX and OK. It can be nasty in OK during tornado season.

Greg, NM2L, headed out on a business trip up north, and on Saturday would be running some counties around PA/NY area. Mark, KO1U, ran in NY state putting out Lewis, Franklin, St. Lawrence plus many others. Those are tough counties to get these days. More NY counties to come from him.

After the night in Rhinelander, WI, I headed down to get the ones around Milwaukee I needed – hit it right at rush hour – dang – and got delayed getting down to Racine. I ran that, then headed 100 miles west to stay in Madison (Dane County) at a Super 8 Motel there. Another late arrival and late dinner! The next day was a mad dash up to the NW part of WI, then up to MN to go up the long way to Cook, MN.

There were two “PITA ‘counties on this trip – pain in the a** - Keweenaw, MI – where you go for miles and miles up to the county, run it, then backtrack at least 50 miles to get to the next one. Parts of the trip are through towns and you creep along – 2 hours each way it seems. That’s the 3rd time I’ve been to Keweenaw, MI and it doesn’t get any better. Nice motel (Northwind?) about 3 miles south of the county line where I stayed once. If you want, dinner at the “Hut” restaurant.

The other PITA County is Lake/Cook, MN. You head on up from Duluth (St. Louis County) and drive and drive for 2 hours or so to get there. Then you run the county and head back 2 hours, running just Lake which is in the middle of the trip. Long, long way, and there is no easy way to Cook, MN. KB0BA puts it out occasionally on 40M SSB.



Lake/Cook County Line, MN

That day finished with a dash down through MN headed south toward Minneapolis. I started looking for motels at dinner time. Dang, stopped at a few here and there, and everything full. This event in this town, that event in that town. Everything sold out for miles around. That went on for 100+ miles. I was beginning to get a bit concerned. No Super 8s convenient....and somewhere there was an Interstate Bridge that fell down....where was that? I didn't want to accidentally find out where. (I 35W I later remembered).

I stopped at 5 locations where there were motels, called another six or 8 places along the way. Same story. Everything in town full. Lots of county fairs. Town fairs. This celebration day. Plus weddings and other things. I figured that down in Minneapolis, being a business town and a weekend, there should be lots of rooms. Sooner or later, there would have to be something free. This is when the 'run to dark' trip can really be a run to dark trip – like 10pm up north in June! Motels easy to find in the city?

Wrong! In Minneapolis, there was an 'antique car show' going on. There were 12,000 registered cars, and over 25,000 people already registered to attend! Motels were packed! Several other events were going on, too! I tried calling half a dozen motels. No luck. Finally I found a Days Inn with a room, and headed there at 8 pm. (\$99 –ouch!). That was a very long day. The parking lot was full of folks polishing there '53 Pontiacs and 38 Fords

and other cars my dad might have owned at some time. All of them in pristine condition! Show cars! I scanned half of them quickly. Now imagine 12,000 plus of them on display! Probably every year and model ever made!

I grabbed dinner at a Denny's and got back to the motel room at 9pm. Too long a day! Well, the good news was I had gone an extra 100 miles along the route! No reason to head home just yet. There were still needs! I'd get the first two tomorrow morning, then think about Kittson, as far northwest in MN as you can go!

One month ago, Randy, AD4IA, was saying all he wanted to do was work one station on cw in each state. That would be enough. Then he started working me and other mobiles. Before you know it, he must have had 250 counties on cw. On this trip, he must have worked me in 50 or 75 on cw – 40M or 20M. Soon he'll have a 1000 and be well along toward USACW!

I was ahead of schedule, so it was time to add in some counties. I could whack off a bunch of SD and ND needs on a trip around the eastern half of the states and it would take another 2 days or so. Why not? So far, things had gone well. Other than overcast, drizzle, rain showers, a small T-storm here and there, no bad weather. Propagation was OK with good runs on 20/40cw and 40M SSB. Of course, the further west/north you get the worse the 40M sigs get – just getting too far from the heart of the 40M 'middle of the country' sweet spot. Dang – ND and SD are BIG states. In the middle of the day, 40M propagation isn't good to all the country.

Not much activity or takers on 30M these days. Not sure why. We need a new frequency. The digital noise from the mailbox station in CA with a wide signal on 10.1228 makes an S3 residual noise. If I tune down ½ KHz or 1 KHz, there is NO noise – S0. But on 10.1225, you have to be strong enough to overcome S3 garbage. We need to find a new home on 30m. I suggest down 1 and maybe I will only run on 10.1221.5 next trip. I won't listen on 30M at home unless I see a spot. I get tired of the 'growl' in there all the time! I'm sure others have to hear it – either that or have so much noise at home or in their car they don't realize it!

It takes a lot of time and miles to hit the counties. It was up the east side – overnight in Grand Forks, then north – to get Kittson. After the hard time of finding a motel in the MN east side, the next day around 4pm I called ahead

to reserve a room in Grand Forks, ND. Super 8 motel. Still a long way and I got there at 7pm. Headed out early as usual.

That day it was north – to within 30 miles of Canada yet again. Once I got to Kittson, I saw it was just a few more miles to a county line, so I ran over and got Kittson/Marshall line. Another transmitted county! Up over 2500 now the second time around. So many counties, so little time. I doubt whether I'll complete them all again but I keep track. It's not as exciting as the first time around to have been in everyone of them! Then I headed west – maybe 150 miles – long way...then slowly south.

So I kept moving and moving and moving. On the road at least 12 hours a day nearly every day – moving at 6:30 am headed toward the next county, and stopped at 7pm or later most nights, not always by design. After the debacle in Minneapolis area, I figured I'd call ahead around 3-4pm in the afternoon and get a motel reserved – maybe 2-3 hours more down the road. Not many choices for motels in ND! I went 150 miles without even seeing a gas station – and no motels....so I wound up at Bismarck ND with a 20 mile detour (Super 8).

Ray, AB4YZ, had headed out on his trip. I was working him to give him MP contacts and counties to be sure he got a MP contact from each county so he reaches the 500 level and also gets to count the county for himself. I also needed a bunch of what he was running and would run on 20M CW and SSB. Hard to work much of ARK on 20M from TX, and I had lots of missing band-counties there. While I was 1000 miles away, it was a lot easier to work it! He has his imaginary friend, W4CA, who literally counts for nothing, riding along. Not good for the W prefix by the rules (even though Logger logs it erroneously). Ray is good for everything else with his own call. (nth time, Bingo, Five Stars, MG, and MP, and the A prefix)

Logger has many bugs. Just type in K2JG with W0MU as the operator. (well, it doesn't let you enter the operator). When K2JG/m was in MT for one run, Logger gave everyone 5 stars in the county, even though W0MU has none and can't give out any. It gave folks credit for Bingo, even though W0MU is not good for Bingo and the call is not good for it because it has a star or more by the wildcard rules. It is not W0MU's star. It gave folks credit for MG even though it cannot count for it. Logger just can't handle club calls correctly. It gives lots of 'errors' big time. **When they get**

around to fixing logger, a lot of ‘contacts’ that never were legal for an award will simply disappear from logs and ‘books’.

Of course, it seems some folks ‘log it’ and insist that since ‘Logger accepts it’ it must count. It doesn’t – they can read the rules – and you wonder how they look themselves in the mirror and say they are ‘following the rules’ for their awards! Duh! Even stranger than the 2 people who have ‘ride along club calls’ continue to willingly scam the folks creating hundreds or thousands of bogus contacts. Why anyone works W4CA is beyond me, unless they just want to show they aren’t following the rules time and time again, and that any prefix award they get for the W prefix is likely full of bogus contacts. Why would anyone work it otherwise? It has no stars?

And it is not good for a legal, by the rules contact for the W prefix. Are the dozen or so out there who continually work the imaginary friend so willing to cheat and show it time and time again when they work W4CA? I find that amazing! Most give the use ‘Logger takes it, so why not’? Answer: Because Logger is wrong. Read the rules yourself.

Ray, WG6X, Joyce, N9STL, Chuck, W3CR, Silver, N9QS, and other MG holders were around. I worked Scottie, N4AAT a bunch of times on cw so far this trip. He now has cw in the mobile to snag me as I zip through counties.

There’s only a few holdouts among the MG holders now that just operate SSB only. Nearly all the MG holders are active now on cw – including K5GE, KB6UF, WG6X, N4AAT, AB2LS, N8KIE, N9QS, KC6AWX, WQ7A, W6TMD, and AB4YZ. A lot of the previous SSB only types are coming over to CW – AA1VA, AD4IA, KG5RJ, W6TPC, and dozens of others. You can get some horrendously big pile ups when you hit a rare county that lots of folks need. Great – folks are getting counties and band counties for the County Challenge Award!

I had to ‘take a list’ a few times on this trip on 20M CW – just too many calling, probably not hearing each other, but total clobbering each other. You take a list on cw by sending “LIST QRZ”...then folks call, ONCE, with their call – hopefully not at the same time with others. I write down calls for 15-30 seconds, then work them one by one in the order they called. That thins out the pile. If there is really a big pile, I’ll do it twice or sometimes three times....then the pile is small enough to work them one by one. If you

are moving, that isn't easy, but if the road is wide, there isn't any traffic, I can do it. My cw logging is a lot of shorthand anyway. 'QS, OCW, AAT, 6X, STL,' etc. That's N9QS, N2OCW, N4AAT, WG6X, N9STL. New calls I write down. KB8OMG is 8OMG, and if he is loud, that's all I send when I go back to him to save time. Same for Elwood...he is 3MMM in the log. Other folks might have problems reading my log, but it is clear to me! If I am stopped I write down the whole call.

Of course, the big interest in USA-CW is getting folks on CW. Anyone can work umpteen time – just do the same thing over and over again. Don't even have to think about having a logging program and the hassles of keeping I updated and working right all the time. Or if you long on paper, no worries about what counts for Bingo or MG. Just buy a county record book and fill it it for umpteenth time. Simple.

Wow – some calls from 'wayback' showed up during the runs. George, KD8HA, worked me in one. That's the first time in a few years I've heard him. George and XYL, KD8HB, Joyce, often ran 'mobile team' all over OH, KY, and to and from conventions and on trips. Both would run on SSB, then KD8HB on cw. Alan, KI7WO, went out with Bob, K0AYO, to run a half dozen counties. Great to hear the 'old timer' county hunter out mobile!

The Garmin Nuvi GPS worked well, and between it and the Super 8 motel book, most nights it was easy to find a motel. I stopped in Sioux City, IA at a Super 8 the last night. Mike, NF0N, came over and we had a very nice dinner together. Always good to have eyeballs with CH along the way!

I figured it was 1 ½ days to home from there (it is 5 miles from SD) but just for the heck of it, I asked the GPS for the fastest route home....and it said I could be home by 6:38pm! Wow....should I believe it? 12 hours of driving and back home? Well, so far, other than not having maps for some of the roads I was on, it had done a good job – so I decided to follow what it said.

That's sort of strange since I didn't have a clue as to what route it was going to take me on, but headed down I29....to KC...then across the interstate and down 169 through KS to OK to 69/75 home. That is the route I figured I'd take anyway!

I had to stop twice for gas, and two other 5 minute 'pit stops' and to get a sandwich. I was ten miles from home at 6:35pm when I stopped for dinner, having made up a few minutes to compensate for the stops by running a few miles over the speed limit. Wow! It was pretty accurate.

I don't know how many counties I ran....but it was 6571 miles on the trip. Probably 200 counties and I ran everyone I ran through but one – just had a few contacts from one (Rice, MN). 90% of the time, or more, ran both 40M SSB and the cw bands, except the last few coming home – just one or 2 bands/modes - tired! The DX was 559 on 20M and it was a good time for them late in the afternoon. So many counties, so little time, and folks need lots of band counties and counties for different awards. I was still having fun...and would be home for the first time in 10 days.

67 pages of logs with about 60+ contacts per page. Whew! I just had the oil changed 2 weeks ago, but it time for another one! You never know when N4CD mobile will head out again! I haven't reached 200K miles and the tires are still good for another 20K miles or more.

New CW County Hunter – G4RRA

I received a few emails from G4RRA,

"I'm new to county Hunting but after calling in on the MARAC net and being treated abysmally I will NEVER go on that net again.....it was the worse experience of rudeness I have encountered in 30 years of operating.

However I'm really enjoying the various QSO parties and have carried on chasing counties without the help of MARAC.....the idiots in charge of the net are portraying the sort of image to the rest of the world that makes you want to weep for the state of the hobby.

Any info you have of nets that don't involve these idiots would be appreciated....its going to be a long haul to get all 3077!

Best Wishes

Paul G4RRA”

Well, you can guess that I steered him to the friendly bunch on 14.0565 and he was working me through the counties on the trip. Listen out for him!

He added:

“I’m up to 631 worked so there’s still a long way to go, but I really enjoy chasing the various counties.

It sounds as if my first impression of MARAC was a bit unlucky.

The CHN Newsletter seems to be a really good source of information so thanks for the link.

I’m mainly active on cw so that suits me fine.....the more activity down there the better.

I’m always about for the QSO parties.....W4AN/M has given me quite a few new ones as has KN4Y/M

Your reply has been really helpful and has pointed me to the right direction so thanks for that.”

And

“I discovered KZ2Ps hatred of phonetics when I called in, it seems all of his rather small minded followers feel the same. It’s a bit unfortunate for me because my call is very often confused with G4WRA, G4RA, etc etc.

To be honest I like to make the contact myself, but on the net I noticed that callsigns are passed by a third party, which seems to me to invalidate the QSO, but maybe it’s done differently in the States.

Anyway it’s good to know that the people running the net are in the minority and that there are guys like you out there who are prepared to help and I’m very grateful for that.”

Multi-Way Adapter for Resonators

Ray, WG6X, passes on the following information:

“It appears that Transel has what they call a Tri-Star model TRS 100 for \$9.95 in their Catalog on page 9. I did drop in on a few truck stops on my last trip and did not see them like I use to and prior they ran between \$14.95 to \$19.95 depending on which truck stop you looked at. Of course you would get rid of the 3 little ground plane like rods. This should be good for 3 coils horizontal and one vertical. Of course not stainless steel and as fancy as another one that was mention off and on here .

The web site is www.transeltech.com and again they were on page 9.

World Radio Article

World Radio Magazine carries a bi-monthly column for the County Hunters written by KK7X.

A very relevant article appeared in the last issue. Dennis, KK7X, was nice enough to provide a link to the entire article at:

<http://kk7x.us/July2008WR.pdf>

MARAC CW Contest Results

From Randy, AA8R:

“I thought I would forward to you the winners of this year’s MARAC CW

Contest and if you would include in your CW News. Here's a link to my web site that has all the results, soapbox, State records, etc. for the CW contest going back to 1978 - WWW.AA8R.NET.

Mobile: 1st W9MSE
2nd W0GXQ

Fixed: 1st N8II
2nd W4HSA

Mixed: 1st K4EXT

DX: DL5DWI

Thanks and 73,

Randy - AA8R"

Awards

Second Time #378, Ed, K8QWY, May 29, 2008
Second Time #279, Jimmy, K4YFH, May 31, 2008
USA-CW #94, Jimmy, K4YFH, May 31, 2008
USACA #1166, Jim, VA6JR, June 2, 2008
Fifth Time #89, Frank, AA9JJ, 6/4/2008
Fourth Time #134, Kay, N9QPQ, 6/4/2008
Third Time #213, Leslie, KW4V, 6/5/2008

Operating Events for County Hunters

Slim pickings this month. Time to work the few mobiles actually going to the convention this year that will run counties on the way there and back. N8KIE scheduled for big trip and AB4YZ headed across the country. Maybe KY0E. Some of the others taking airplanes to get there, skipping the long drive west. (AF3X, AB2LS, W0GXQ, WB9NUL, and others).

Eddie, G4KHG will be out mobile in late June/July. Look for him on cw, and up around 14.342-347 on SSB. Trip posted.

That's it for another issue. See you next month!