

County Hunter News

September 1, 2007

Volume 3, Issue 9

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

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

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

We hope you will enjoy the new County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all 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 during the winter months. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 7185. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.915.5, and 28.0565 when sunspots better).

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

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1. August has been a good month for county hunting, despite horrible sunspot activity, high "A" index on many days, and hot, steamy weather over much of the USA. Many folks were out traveling on vacation and making special trips to help get others finished up, and running counties toward their own Masters Gold or Master Platinum awards. As you recall, to qualify for Masters Gold, you need to accumulate 1500 points – either by being Net Control, serving on the board for MARAC or a position such as

newsletter editor, convention convener, or running counties. For many, running the counties is the only choice available. For MG, you need to run '1500 transmitted counties' – which can be repeats of the same county on different days (up to the limit), or 1500 different counties. In addition, for MG, you can work someone 'from' the county to receive credit for the county, so filling in those 'close in' hard to get counties is a way to get yourself there quicker!

What can we say? N8KIE, WY7LL/ML, KL1V, N2OCW, WB2ABD, N9JF, K0RCJ, N5UZW, K2HVN, AE3Z, AC2J, K5GE, KM1C, N9STL, KM9X, N2MH, W9MSE, W8MP, and others were all busy running all over the place, along with others. Half a dozen people finished up in August thanks to mobiles getting their needed counties.

W8MP ran both Dukes and Nantucket – tough ones to get on cw from a county hunter. They are both run during the New England QSO party usually.

August saw some activity on 17M CW – propagation still marginal most days, but it should improve quickly as we turn the corner on sunspots (soon, we hope).

There's lots of news and pictures in this issue. Enjoy!

2. Getting folks finished up –the county hunter tradition - Joyce, N9STL, noted that Bill, WA0KAQ, needed only a handful to finish up first time after 40 years of county hunting. She took a special trip to get him Muhlenberg, KY, and Dunklin, MO, two of his last 4 for WBOW during the first days of August. Many were on hand to help out insure these contact got made. It's sad when the NC in South Carolina is more focused on 'running off mobiles' than getting folks finished up. Naturally, the contacts were made on 40M and 20M (14.339) – while NC on 20M was begging for 'any mobile station ready to run a county?' Conditions were not good from here during the trip, but I caught Joyce in half a dozen to fill in some missing MP counties, and to fill in some 40M cw band-counties.

It's amazing that someone in South Carolina manages to have 'coughing fits' on 14.339 when N9STL is running. You would think that if listening on 14.339 triggers 'coughing fits', they would either not tune to 14.339 to listen to N9STL, or turn off the vox, wouldn't you? Well, y'all know what

is happening. Everyone listening or trying to work N9STL knows what is happening. What is amazing is the **COMTEMPT** for all the county hunters needing that county, and being interfered with by ‘the cougher’ at some ‘station’.

Yet, despite this, Joyce managed to put out hundreds of contacts, give a LC WBOW, and give 2 of the last 4 for another WBOW. Wow! Her story on the trip soon.

Larry, N2OCW, took 3 trips – report later in the issue – he got several people finished up! And many a lot closer to being done.

More later on folks finishing and about to finish who need help.

3. **Remote Control** – this month, Richard, K5SF, tells how to run your station remotely over the internet in an interesting article.

4. **Morse Code Training Programs** – One of the free Windows programs for learning the Morse code is from G4FON at <http://www.g4fon.net/> . It has some nifty features including allowing you to include ‘noise’ with the code.

5. **From “Down Under”**. VK3CB writes – he is hearing a few mobiles, but having problems getting heard by NC for a relay. Signals still poor at the bottom of the cycle. He did catch AA9JJ during the last months. His propagation best between 0300 and 0600Z, which is late for most mobiles. However, if you are out and about at 9 or 10PM, put out a holler on 14.336. Cliff and the other VKs might come back to you!

6. **Charlie, W0RRY**, reported on some harrowing events in July from Tulsa. He was working up in Montgomery CO, KS (Coffeyville). He had gone home to Tulsa (Collinsville) for the weekend. Just as he reached home, he got an emergency phone call saying he had to rush up QUICKLY back to Coffeyville to get his mobile home out of the mobile home park alongside the river. The levee was about to burst from the intense storms they’d been having.

He hauled up there quickly, and moved the motor home to higher ground. An hour later the entire mobile home park area was under 10 feet of water as the levee broke. It was a close escape for him. You might recall seeing him

at nationals and the mini in TX in the motor home. Without a place to stay in Montgomery County, Charlie became 'retired again'.

The small refinery in Coffeyville was wiped out, along with a good portion of the town – oily slime all over, and sewerage and other non-healthy things carried with the flood waters. It will be a while before this town, along with several others in KS, recover from the wacky weather this year.

Then, a week or so later, Mary, his XYL totaled her truck and wound up in the hospital with serious injuries. Now back at home, she is recovering OK and Charlie is busy taking care of her. He occasionally gets on the radio. He doesn't have too many to finish up for Master's Gold. He's planning on south TX for the mini.

7) **More Net Paranoia** – Do you remember the 'good ole days'? When if you heard a mobile in a desperately needed county make a contact on net, at the end of the run, you could ask to 'move a mobile' and hopefully get a contact with that mobile? Not any more, it seems. Those were the good times.

Now, if you hear a mobile – let us say NX4ABC in Wibaux, MT, maybe your last county, and he gave the mobile running a contact, you are at the 'mercy' of the sicko in SC. In the past, at the end of the run, you could ask NC if you could call and move NX4ABX. No problem was the usual reply. You called to see if he was there, then asked if he would move up 3 for a quick contact, and most said OK...and you got your county. If he wanted to run, you'd run him there. If the net was not busy (no mobiles waiting and no list to be called), you could do this on net. If the mobile didn't want to run, OK, that was his choice, but at least he had the opportunity. You got to ask him. And you got a contact.

Now, you have to ask 'permission' to 'call' a station. Then the interrogation begins. The first thing the NC in SC asks you is "**WHY?**". Huh? "**WHY?**" Obviously, because you want to either get a contact or maybe yak with an old friend. But NC inquires and must know **WHY** before you can even call the mobile. Even if nothing is going on but '...any mobile station ready to run a county??..' for the umpteenth time that day. It takes longer to 'explain' to the NC that it would for you to call the mobile and make a contact. And find out if he wants to run that county – in which case you move him if net busy, or let NC know he is ready to run.

So if you tell NC you'd like to get a LC from that mobile if he is still there, then and only then he might then call (not let you call) the station and see if that mobile would like to 'put out the county'. If not, well, **TOUGH LUCK**. You aren't going to get to move him and you aren't going to get a contact. He tell you 'sorry' but if he doesn't run the county, you are out of luck. **PERIOD**. It is noting but **PARANOIA** at work.

It's nice to encourage mobiles to run, but sometimes the mobile is not in a position to run for everyone. Or sometimes just went there for one person as they are not county hunters and familiar with the net procedures.

If James can't get him (or hear him) and the rest can't get him, then **NO ONE** is going to get a contact on **HIS** net. Or arrange a contact off freq. Or even 'move a mobile' on his net. Now it could even be the mobile went there special for one station, and had no interest in 'putting out the county'. Maybe didn't even have logging. So? It's the mobiles call. Maybe the mobile was new to county hunting and did not want to start running on net? (and get yelled at like a 7 year old for screw-ups). Who knows.

But, the way things work now, you better have cellphones and a way to catch up with folks other than hoping NC doesn't inject his "NOT ON MY NET" paranoia into your LC contact. Or do it on cw, or 40M SSB. How far down has county hunting come when you need 'permission' and have to tell why you need to go to the bathroom, err, contact.

Oh, and today, August 12th, James was quoted as telling a fixed station 'I run a semi-tight net' on 14.336. Duh! More like the 2nd grade classroom with everyone needing 'permission' and having to tell why they need 'permission' before they can get it! Semi-tight net? No way.

8) I heard from **Ed, NT9V**. Ed is a monthly reader of the CHNews. He chided me for failing to mention him when I ran through a list of the NC stations from the past that ran nice respectful nets, including WA3TUC, WA9QNI, WA4KER, K5CRW/AB5SL, WA7IRD, K1ER, and dozens of others. Ed noted he had over 3000 hours of NC time on his Karl Adkins Net Control Award certificate. We'll discuss that award in a future issue. There aren't too many accumulating too many hours of NC time these days other than on 20/30/40cw, and on 40M SSB. Net Control time is one way to qualify for the 1500 points needed for the Master Gold award. In the past,

folks used to take pride on how many hours they had run the nets, and get ever higher levels. Ken, W7LQT had several thousand hours as well as NC. Folks took shifts so when they got tired, they didn't get irritable and cranky and take it out on folks on the net. That also allowed for others to learn how to run things as well – a learning opportunity to work with a NC as co-equal, not as one who has to relay every tidbit to NC for a decision. Ah, the good ole days. Gentlemen and Ladies who ran the nets with respect and dignity.

9) **Ron, KA3DRO**, wrote to say he is back home after an unplanned long stay in the hospital following surgery, and recovering from a staph infection. He hopes to be active again county hunting in the near future.

10) **Dennis KK7X** reports (From the K3IMC forum) on his charity bike ride:

“I was able to ride every mile of the advertised 174. I ended up logging 180 miles confirmed by both my bicycle computer and my GPS. It was a great ride with such great support, well staffed and stocked Rider Service Centers and wonderful lunches and dinners. It was well worth the effort knowing what I was riding for. Many of you have met me and know that I am short and stocky and it takes a lot of work to haul my body over those mountain passes. The 3rd day was the hardest and the last 4 miles to the top of Stevens Pass on Highway 2 the hardest. There was a RSC 4 miles from the top and the Sag Wagon was loading up about 10 bicycles. I thought long and hard and decided that I have come this far and was not giving up! It took 50 minutes to ride that 4 miles but the joy of making the summit was well worth the effort.

You can view photos from the ride at <http://kk7x.us/courageclassic> - This is a sharing site so look for my photos at the bottom of the page. Just look for Dennis Hall.

Again, thank you to everyone for their support and well wishes. (ride for the Rotary Endowment for the prevention of child abuse and neglect and the Mary Bridge Children's Hospital). Those 3 days were without a doubt the most physically challenging of my life. But I am sure looking forward to next year! Hopefully I can drop about 20 pounds by then. Then I can fly (at the speed of a butterfly) up the hills.”

11) **Ameritron AMP** – Phil, AD5X, has written an excellent review of the home station Ameritron 600W solid state amp. He also has a QSK mod for it if you are a cw operator. See www.ad5x.com for the review and the mods.

12) **Reader Feedback – 40M SSB Net** – “I've been working counties on the 40 meter net. You are correct. It's a good thing. It embodies the spirit of county hunting. No rigid rules. Lots of people jumping in to help with relays, etc. No strict time limits to maximize contacts. Lots of patience and fun.

The other day in my car, I heard the net controller talk to a guy between mobiles. He had stumbled across 7.185 and told the controller that he was working on "Worked All States." The control station explained county hunting to this fellow and even made a call for him to relay any stations in Oklahoma, one of the states the new guy needed, if stations were around. Too cool!

Would this happen on the 20 meter net? Not!!! Did it happen when I was first a county hunter with WA3TUC and others running the 20 meter net? Yes!!!

I'm not a big gun and will probably never work them all. On 20 meters, I'm a nobody. On 40 meters, I am as respected as the next guy.

That's the difference. And it's the essence of county hunting...and maybe of life. Let's hope the 40 meter net continues to thrive. When the bands come back, let's hope the 40 meter net's spirit revives county hunting.

It has been so refreshing to use the 40 meter net. “ (From a “8” land station)

de N4CD – Glad you are enjoying the nice crowd on 7185. The same friendly spirit is present on cw, too. Maybe 17M and 15M will help out the SSB situation on the higher bands.

13) I heard from **DL3DXX, Dietmar**:

“Hi Bob

I have a USCA record book for long time and with working some DX in contests, I am filling it when new cards arrive for many years. Not with much success, because most of the active Contesters live in cities giving the same county.

I'm QRV since 1981, was Y33VL in old times. I'm a DXer for many years but few ill people seem to destroy this wonderful hobby. I was very disappointed about the bad behavior of strange people during the last DX-peditions like N8S and BS7H.

I thought it was time to look for another challenge. Ham radio is more then hunting the last reef in the water, accompanied by clowns and stupid jammers, isn't it ?

I stepped into Georgia QSO party by mistake and was surprised.

I have confirmed about 950 US counties and I think it's time to complete the 1000 to finish the award. Since we have a 4 ele monoband yagi for 20 meters at the radio club, I'm able to hear and work the US mobiles even under difficult propagation like we have here most of this summer.

Thank you for your information. Bob. I'm happy to find a new toy after being on the air over 25 years :-) Meet you on the bands

73 Dietmar
DL3DXX”

WA3TUC Paul Bugen - SK

George, KR5C posted on the K3IMC forum:

“With a sad heart, I have to announce that County Hunters have lost a "True Friend." Stephanie Bugen called and said Paul, WA3TUC, is now a silent key. He passed away in the early morning of July 27, 2007. For many years Paul opened and often closed the net daily. He was a true helper for all and did his utmost to be cheerful and pleasant at all times. Paul was an early days "spotter." He would keep people's needs lists and if a county came on they needed, the one ringer was made. It would be impossible to know how many counties were contacted because he truly cared about county hunters and their needs. To Janet and me, Paul and Rena were much more than county hunters. They were best friends and a joy to be with. Their home was open to county hunters and all were welcomed. Rest peacefully Paul, “

N4ANV: “Folks there were not many like him. When you heard him on the air, your thoughts were, with that big bass voice, that man had to be 6ft 6, and weight 250 to produce that kind of sound. Then when you would meet him you would ask well where is Paul. The reason, is that the man with the big heart and the deep base voice a short 5 ft 4 to 5 ft 6 in tall, and weight maybe 130 soaking wet. Just have many have said you could not measure the size of the man's heart by the height of his hat. Paul was, and is one of the greatest county Hunters to ever key a mike, and one of the most liked to operate on the HF bands. He never met a stranger, and considered all his friends.”

N9ID: “I remember Paul for his big deep friendly voice, and his willingness to help anyone with county hunting. He set a great example for the rest of us.”

AI5P: “You couldn't find a nicer guy anywhere - a true example of how a county hunter should act - both on and off the air!”

AD8W: “I remember working with Paul NC'ing on the 75 meter net back in the 70's. I will miss you my friend, you were a fine gentleman.”

K6OHM: “I always enjoyed being assistant. N/C with Paul. He was the best. We have lost a fine gentleman who meant a lot to all of us.”

Doing It the Hard Way

Some folks have worked all counties by working only mobiles. Some by working only ‘mobile to mobile’. Some have worked all counties using only USCA holders (WA3TUC among them). Hans, SM6CVX, may be the only one **trying to work them all with only fixed stations!** (not mobile or portable).

To date, he is up to 3040 counties confirmed with permanent residents in the county. That is amazing itself, but now he is trying to finish working all 3077 with permanent fixed stations in each county. Now he needs counties like Dolores and San Juan, CO, Loving, Starr, Borden, and Kenedy, TX and Kalawao, HI. The last one might be the toughest nut to crack. Has there ever been a ‘permanent resident’ ham in Kalawao? There have been portable operations and of course, many mobile operations.

He is digging out potential contacts from HamCall and the other databases, but that is getting harder and harder to do. The population of Loving County TX is now down to 52 permanent residents. What’s the chance that one of them is a ham?

Here’s the remaining list – for Fixed Stations

Arkansas: Calhoun

GEORGIA: Atkinson Clay Echols Glasscock Lanier Miller Taliaferro

KANSAS Clark

MISSISSIPPI: Noxubee

MONTANA: Blaine Carter Garfield Meagher Petroleum

NEBRASKA:: Blaine Hayes Hooker

NORTH DAKOTA Sheridan Slope

SOUTH DAKOTA:: Campbell Todd

TEXAS:: Borden Brooks Glasscock Kenedy Loving McMullen

Martin Oldham Sherman Zavala

UTAH:: Rich

G4KHG - June/July, 2007 trip to USA

Well, we left the UK on Monday, June 11. Thought we'd have a change of route to Salt Lake City(SLC) and try via JFK this year instead of Atlanta—not a good idea! Our flight from the UK was two hours late leaving. We then had to wait three and a half hours at JFK for our connecting flight to SLC, and were sent to four different gates. Finally made it to our seats on the plane.

OK, here we go !!!!! Let's get out of here !—but NO !— we sat on the tarmac at the gate for four hours without moving an inch ! Finally made it to our hotel in SLC, not at the expected time around 9pm, but 6am next morning !! Had showers, breakfast, rested up a couple of hours then headed right back to the airport for our flight to Honolulu, then on to Kauai. This day everything went very well, as usual.

Had a really lovely vacation both out on Kauai and driving around western USA. Beautiful, beautiful scenery out there. Persuaded Barbara to take a flight over Kauai in a six-seater plane—breathtaking views over Waimea Canyon and along Na Pali coastline. Had to laugh when Barbara whispered “It's only got a propeller !” Enjoyed the many CH contacts from Lihue harbour at sunrise and sunset on 20m, 30m and 40m. Glad you could hear my 50 watts from my hamsticks. Thanks guys !

Back on the mainland into SLC June 28, after overnight plane from Honolulu—again excellent flight ! Now off we go for more magnificent scenery combined with putting out the counties. Generally headed up from Utah, through Idaho, past the splendid Grand Tetons—never had a clearer day there—inspiring to gaze at their immense stature above Jackson Hole ! On we went through Yellowstone where Barbara was thrilled to see well over 100 bison, a grizzly mom with two cubs, a black bear and a wolf, the latter prowling up and down a river bank waiting to pounce on one of the many unsuspecting Canada geese !

Continued to head North over the marvelous Beartooth Pass which lives up to its reputation to be 'America's most spectacular drive'. Continued North right up to northern Montana, then turned West and over the Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park—a wonderful drive! Next day, July 3rd, —never thought this would ever happen— I was delighted to give out a last

one for WBOW, Boundary ID to N9ID -ex-KT5H—congratulations Mike and thanks for the pleasure ! Sadly there was no county sign to photograph as we crossed into Idaho but I found a spot to park up soon after and Barbara took a picture.



Last County WBOW for N9ID – Boundary ID

Was amazed later in the vacation to give out a second last county for the WBOW—unbelievable !!!-more of this later !

There is so much to see out there, so I'll just briefly mention being in Port Orchard, WA on July 4th. What tremendous fireworks starting at 10.30pm over the bay with great view from our hotel balcony, and this after spending a lovely evening with Joe, ND3T and Eleanor. Had first of many radio contacts with Joe, November 20th, 1991. Great to see you after all these years, Joe !

Next day had a great drive around the Olympic peninsula and into the Rain Forest. Propagation was proving very disappointing out there on the West coast, so was really pleased to meet up with WQ7A, Terry and Boni over dinner. Continued to head South now. Made pleasant visit to HRO, Portland. Next, Mt Hood with his ever-snowy mantle beckoned. No takers for Hood River—guess you guys just could not hear me ! Unusual, but not much snow around Crater Lake OR this visit. Mt Shasta, Mt Lassen were better provided.

This day, Sunday, July 8th, was memorable for another last county for the WBOW from Sierra co, CA for Sharon, KJ8F. Lots of guys needed Sierra, including Ray, WG6X—so very glad to be there. In the picture some of you may recognise this small turnout from the 395 South. On to Reno for a two-day rest. Didn't get the big one though !



Sierra CA – Last WBOW for KJ8F

Esmeralda NV proved to be a popular lady. On through Death Valley to Laughlin NV Really strange that the only rain we had in the daytime the

whole trip was about 40m North of Death Valley and that lasted all of five minutes !!!

And so back to our beloved southern Utah. We never tire of hiking in Snow Canyon, Zion, or Arches N.P. However disaster had struck by the time we arrived in Utah, as my Icom 706MKIIG passed away on HF. Still don't know why, but very relieved now that the final, which had died, has been successfully replaced. Although very enjoyable driving back through via Capitol Reef, Moab and Duchesne, Utah to SLC, it seemed rather lonely without the company of you county hunters.

Much better experience flying back home the usual route via Atlanta to the UK. The memories of the nightmare we had at JFK have faded away. Already made some reservations for our next visit to Kauai and out West USA. Hope the radio will perform as well as in past years SLC back to SLC. Thank you for all the contacts and help we received running the counties. Making a first ever trip to Oz in November/December but can't think of a more enjoyable vacation than being out West USA, with Barbara in the car (now logging for me !!) and putting out the counties. So, until next time.....Any /m qrv ? 73, Eddie, G4KHG

17 Meter County Hunting

The Net Frequency has moved itself to 18.0915, higher up in the band to get away from casual CQ on the first frequency of 18.080. So far, it seems uncongested there. Many new calls are showing up on 17M, including N8II, K4YFH, KB6TAL, N0KV, N0ZA, N8KIE, KA9JAC, W0QE, KY0E, KS5A, W7GQK, N2MH, W9JL, NW6S, W3CR, W6TMD, WB2ABD, AA9KH, KF2O, KB4XK, W2ZI, N5PR, N4VA, WA7JHQ, KC0JG, N9ID, K4AMC, K8CW, AA0IP, K5SF, K2RP, W3DYA, K8MW, K4EXT, K4XI, W9GBH, W9MSE, W0GXQ, KM1C and others. Conditions aren't fantastic, with the sunspots bouncing along the bottom, with solar flux under 70 most days, and with geomagnetic disturbances and A index values up to 15. However, counties are being run, and many are now snagging new 'band counties' on 17m. Just about everything I've worked in the past month on 17M has been 'new'. It's like starting over again! All new band-counties. I wonder if anyone will work all counties on 17M? It's been done

on 40cw, 30cw, 20cw, maybe 75m too. I don't know if anyone has done it on 80cw. One fellow got it on 10M, but no idea if SSB, AM, CW or mixed.

During the last days of July, a special event station was active and very loud from Marion County on 17M SSB. I suspect we'll see other special event stations now on 17M to add to band-county totals. K0RCJ starting running on 17M SSB. He noted a 17M hamstick will also tune to 20M with a tuner. There are Hustler resonators for 17M, and naturally a wide selection of 'Hamsticks' that will work. For home use, perhaps your 40M or 30M dipole will load up with a tuner. Try it. Some of the mobiles were louder on 17M than on 20M.

On 15M, the county hunter frequency is 21.056.5, and on 10M 28.0565. Now folks are thinking about selecting a 12M frequency, where a few counties have been run. Not much in the way of propagation, but somewhere around 24.915.5 might be a good place to start.

Obviously, no one will get to run many counties in a day if they run all the bands on cw. At the present time, runs are short enough (on any band) to allow you to spend 5-10 minutes on 20M, 5 on 30M, a few minutes on 40M, and still have time to get to 17M. Currently, most folks run on 20M, then QSY to 17. If you use another sequence, it's not likely to work. If I can copy you on 20, there is a chance for 17. I may not hear you on 30 or 40, and I'm not going to listen for 20 minutes or more on 17 hoping someone will eventually get there. Nor am I going to listen on SSB, waiting for you to get to run, or knowing when you will be up on 17M eventually. So, please QSY to 17M after 20cw, then down to 30 and 40. Not many (any) are listening full time on 17M as well as other bands. Let's see.....I need Kalawao on 17M....and 2nd AK...darn..... hi hi...something to look forward too. KL7HBK in 2nd AK was spotted once on 17M – there is hope for that one. When things improve, maybe N8KIE will put out Kalawao on 17M cw.

Come join the fun on 17M CW. The N4CD trip to MO, KS, OK later in the newsletter. Had 17M contacts from most counties. The first county spotted on 17m was run by K8CW mobile nearly two years ago. Then W4GNS ran a few. Various DX (AK and HI) were spotted. W0GXQ got on about 9 months ago mobile. In the past month, WA7JHQ, N9JF, KO1U, N2MH, KB6TAL, AB7RW, N4CD, W9MSE, KM1C, K8ZZ, AA9ZZ, KB4XK,

W3DYA, KM1C, K0RCJ*(SSB), K4EXT, N2MH, N0KV, AA8R, AA9KH, and KN4Y have been spotted mobile.

My goal in the next few months is to work 500 counties on 17M. How about you?

Toyota Hybrid Wins Race

Toyota's Supra HV-R hybrid race car won the Tokachi 24-Hour Race last weekend, marking the first time that a hybrid race car has won such a competition. The car, which is based on the Supra GT used in Super GT races in Japan, uses a four-wheel energy regeneration and drive system which includes 10 kW in-wheel motors in the front wheels in addition to one 150 kW rear-axle mounted electric motor.

A quick-charging supercapacitor system provides energy storage for the vehicle. The car completed 616 laps in the 24 hours—19 more than the second place finisher.

In 2006, Toyota was the first car manufacturer to enter a hybrid vehicle into the Tokachi 24-Hour race—a Lexus GS450h which finished 17th overall. By entering hybrid systems into racing events, Toyota engineers hope to discover ways to make hybrid systems more efficient and lighter.

From <http://www.greencarcongress.com/2007/07/toyota-hybrid-r.html#more>

Readers of the CHNews will be familiar with super capacitors – for high density energy storage. Who knows? Maybe in your car in five or ten years?

GM is talking about 'leasing' the battery in the new Chevy Volt electric/gas hybrid. Otherwise, the initial purchase price might be too high for many buyers. The example they use seemed to indicate about \$100/month to lease the battery, which they expect to last 10 years. Hmmmm??? What is going on here. The Volt battery will provide local driving totally on electric power.

More Pictures from Convention

I took a few more pics while out at the Convention in Denver.



Lowell, KB0BA, USCA #1154

Lowell just received his USCA number - #1154. Now he is busy chasing second time, and other awards.

Bill, K0ERE, is busy working toward his USCA



Bill, K0ERE



K5VYT – Dick - good for Five Stars



Dan, NG0T, USCA #341, USACW #6

Dan was one of the first to work all counties on CW! (1984).

“2007 MARAC Mobile Bakeoff Results”

Held July 12, 2007 at the MARAC National Convention
Village Greens Park, Greenwood Village, CO, near the Cherry Creek Dam
Event designed and built by Larry Benko, W0QE, w0qe@bnk.com

This was not an antenna shootout!

The event was a measurement of radiated signal strength which included the transmitter, SWR seen by the transmitter (transmitter may reduce power due to SWR), vehicle, antenna, antenna mounting location, antenna grounding, coax, DC voltage supplied to the transmitter, etc.

Conclusions:

I was quite surprised by the variation in signal strengths and several setups have room for significant improvement with minor changes. The following statements are guidelines for a stronger signal.

1. A larger vehicle will always help.

2. You can NOT ground the antenna too well. Multiple low impedance grounds as short as possible are desired. Less than 6" should be the goal. Trunk mounted antennas can benefit from additional grounding of the trunk itself to the vehicle body.
3. Highly oxidized braid is not a low impedance connection. Copper flashing is much better in the long run if the braid can not be kept shiny and the copper can be painted. All connections need to be weatherproof and the use of an anti-oxidant such as Penetrox or OX-Gard is good insurance.
4. Magnet mount setups including 3 and 4 magnet brackets will not be as good as a direct connection to ground especially on the lower frequencies.
5. Size does matter for the antenna especially the distance below the loading coil.
6. Roof mounting produced a much more symmetrical pattern than bumper or trailer hitch mounting.
7. Having the lower part of the antenna parallel and close to the vehicle reduces the effective height of the antenna even though the antenna looks large.
8. Mounting the resonators horizontally with a longer mast is preferable to a shorter mast and resonators mounted upward at an angle. This is assuming that you are placing an overall height restriction on the antenna which is necessary.
9. As the antenna is made more efficient the SWR will rise as the losses are reduced. This may necessitate matching in order for the transmitter to output full power and restore a reasonable SWR bandwidth. A tuner may be used with a small increase in the loss in the coax unless the tuner is mounted at the antenna. A better solution is a shunt coil to ground at the base of the antenna in the range of 1.0uH to 2.0uH which will work on all bands and will provide static protection for the radio.

Winning the Oil End Game

Amory Lovins who has been an alternative energy guru for the past 25 years, has written a new book titled “Winning The Oil End Game”. Working at the Rocky Mountain Institute, a non-profit research organization, he suggests that the USA can easily wean itself off oil, but has chosen for the last 25 years to take the opposite path. From their press release

“Winning the Oil Endgame proves that at an average cost of \$12 per barrel (in 2000 dollars), the United States can save half its oil usage through efficiency, then substitute competitive biofuels and saved natural gas for the rest—all this without taxation or new federal regulation.

“Unlike previous proposals to force oil savings through government policy, our proposed transition beyond oil is led by business for profit,” said RMI CEO Amory Lovins. “Our recommendations are market-based, innovation-driven without mandates, and designed to support, not distort, business logic. They’re self-financing and would cause the federal deficit to go down, not up.”

Winning the Oil Endgame shows that by 2015, the United States can save more oil than it gets from the Persian Gulf; by 2025, use less oil than in 1970; by 2040, import no oil; and by 2050, use no oil at all.

“Because saving and substituting oil costs less than buying it, our study finds a net savings of \$70 billion a year,” Lovins said. “That acts like a giant tax cut for the nation. It simply makes sense and makes money for all.”

The RMI study focuses on cars and light trucks (SUVs, pickups, and vans). These vehicles account for nearly half of projected 2025 oil use. The report demonstrates that ultralight, ultrastrong materials like carbon-fiber can halve vehicles’ weight, increase safety, and boost efficiency to about 85 mpg for a midsize car or 66 mpg for a midsize SUV.

“BMW has confirmed that carbon-fiber autobodies weigh only half as much as steel and have exceptional crash performance,” said Lovins. “The resulting fuel savings can be like buying gasoline for 56 cents a gallon.”

Winning the Oil Endgame also predicts that to fight better and save money, the Pentagon—the world’s largest oil buyer—will accelerate the market

emergence of superefficient land, sea, and air platforms. A more efficient and effective military can protect American citizens instead of foreign oil, while moving to eliminate oil as a source of conflict.

A fuel-efficient military could save tens of billions of dollars a year,” said Lovins, who served on a Pentagon task force studying this issue. “As our nation stops needing oil, think of the possibilities of being able to treat oil-rich countries the same as nations that don’t own a drop.

Imagine too our moral clarity if other countries no longer assume everything the United States does is about oil.” The RMI report says that by 2015, more efficient vehicles, buildings, and factories will turn oil companies into broad-based energy companies that embrace biofuels as a new product line.

Winning the Oil Endgame demonstrates how cellulosic biofuels (wood-based rather than from starchy or sugary plants like corn) can replace one-fifth of current oil use, more than triple farm income, and create 750,000 agriculture jobs.

“Europe produces 17 times more biodiesel than we do,” Lovins said. “The EU has shifted farmers from subsidies to durable revenues, and now oil companies compete to sell their petroleum-free fuel.”

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You read that Congress is all set to pass an energy bill. Lovins take on that:

“Congress is a creature of constituencies, and the money and power of the constituencies are almost all on the supply side. There is not a powerful and organized constituency for efficient use, and there's a very strong political (but not economic) constituency against distributed power, particularly renewables. So I would not pay too much attention to what Congress is doing. I'm not saying it doesn't matter, but ultimately economic fundamentals govern what will happen -- things that don't make sense, that don't make money, cannot attract investment capital.”

He sees less and less activity in building new nuclear and coal fired power plants.

“We see this now in the electricity business. A fifth of the world's electricity and a quarter of the world's new electricity comes from micropower -- that

is, combined heat and power (also called cogeneration) and distributed renewables. Micropower provides anywhere from a sixth to over half of all electricity in most of the industrial countries. This is not a minor activity anymore; it's well over \$100 billion a year in assets. And it's essentially all private risk capital.

So in 2005, micropower added 11 times as much capacity and four times as much output as nuclear worldwide, and not a single new nuclear project on the planet is funded by private risk capital. What does this tell you? I think it tells you that nuclear, and indeed other central power stations, have associated costs and financial risks that make them unattractive to private investors”

He notes that both the USA and China cancelled major projects to convert coal to liquids – horribly environmentally unsound – pollutes worse than anything else you can imagine.

He talks about autos (essential for county hunting!)

“The automotive revolution alone has a number of steps you could do in whatever order you'd like. In round numbers, if you take a really good hybrid and drive it properly, -- not the way Consumer Reports says to -- you roughly double its efficiency. If you make it ultra-light and ultra-low-drag, you roughly redouble its efficiency. Now you're using a quarter the oil per mile you were before. If you then run it on, say, properly grown cellulosic E85, you quadruple its oil efficiency per mile again -- you're using a 16th the oil per mile that you started with. If you make it a good plug-in hybrid and have a good economic model to pay for the batteries -- some of those are starting to emerge -- then you at least double efficiency again. Now you're down to about 3 percent the oil per mile you started with.”

Will it happen? Likely over Detroit's big bulging SUVs and monster pickups, and Average Joe Sixpack's desire to have the biggest and baddest vehicle in his peer group! Perhaps ever increasing costs will eventually start a change to super efficient vehicles. Otherwise, it is going to get ugly!

Ham Radio Adventure Books for Youngsters

When you were a ‘youngster’ do you remember reading books about electronics, teenagers getting involved in ham radio or electronics, or mystery books that featured ham radio?

The first books I know about were the Radio Boys books by Chapman and later other authors. These are adventures of teenagers (well financed) who get into spark gap type radio. “Portable” is several hundred pounds of equipment back then.

Per <http://www.keeline.com/Chapman/>

“In 1911, the first Stratemeyer Syndicate book featured a radio theme. This book, ***TOM SWIFT AND HIS WIRELESS MESSAGE***, (Grosset & Dunlap, 1911) was written by Howard Roger Garis (1873-1962) and published under the "Victor Appleton" name. The spark-gap radio was not described in great detail but it did help Tom and his friends escape from Earthquake Island on which they were marooned”.

In 1912, Weldon J. Cobb suggested to Stratemeyer that they start a "wireless boys" series of some sort. Edward passed on this idea by saying that he had already supervised one story and had another in the works. He had Cobb write ***THE BOYS OF THE WIRELESS***, (Cupples & Leon, 1912) which was published in 1912 under the "Frank V. Webster" pseudonym.

Some of the non-Syndicate radio series to be established in 1922 include:

- The Radio Boys series (A.L. Burt, 1922-31) by Gerald Breckenridge
- The Radio Boys series (M.A. Donohue, 1922-23) by various writers
- The Radio Detectives series (Appleton, 1922) by A. Hyatt Verill
- The Radio-Phone Boys series (Reilly & Lee, 1922-28) by Roy J. Snell
- The Bill Brown series (Hurst, 1922) by Wayne Whipple & S.F. Aaron”

<http://www.keeline.com/Chapman/>

There were some mystery books like Tom Swift and others. The Hardy Boys had one called *The Shortwave Mystery*. From http://www.dxing.info/shop/review_mystery.dx

“The story begins in the Hardy home attic with brothers Frank and Joe attempting to reach their chunky pal, Chet Morton, by way of a short-wave radio. After a brief conversation with Chet, the boys twiddle the dial for a few minutes and stumble across a strange voice, "little more than a whisper," exclaiming "Help...Hudson." A new mystery was afoot!

The story involves the theft of radio parts and how they are craftily hidden in stuffed animals (not teddy bears but real animals having undergone taxidermy). This leads to 217 pages of casing stores, following suspects, clonks on the head, deductions and an exciting airplane chase to Canada's Hudson Bay country to catch a gang leader and also, hopefully, to find a few missing scientists.”

If you grew up in the 50s and 60s, you'll likely remember Carl and Jerry monthly adventures in *Popular Electronics*. They are now available in reprint! Many of the current “Old Timers” probably got inspired by the 10 years of adventures of these teenagers, who came up with many ways to use electronics and get into trouble on more than one occasion!

“Carl and Jerry had been in *Popular Electronics* since the magazine's debut issue in October, 1954. John T. Frye wrote an episode almost every month for ten years—119 stories!—until November 1964. The stories, while often fiendishly clever, were sometimes a shade breathless but also a little wry in a way that appealed to slightly precocious twelve-year-old boys.

As with the Tom Swift books, each story revolved around a science or technology concept. Occasionally the entire story was a dialog between the boys, one asking questions and the other lecturing. ("TV Antennas" from August 1955, and "The Bell Bull Session" in December 1961 are good examples.) But more often than not, the boys build an interesting gadget, explaining along the way how it worked, and then put it to use in a clever fashion. Perhaps the crispest example is "Lie Detector Tells All" in November 1955. The boys build a lie detector (explaining the principles behind it) and test it on Jerry's parents. Mr. and Mrs. Bishop are both caught up in "little white lies" in front of one another, and then each quietly approaches the boys later on and offers them ten dollars to dismantle the machine!

The stories span the whole universe of what hobby electronics was about at the time: Ham radio, sonar, metal detectors, Hi-fi audio, tape recorders, remote sensors, radio controlled models, and so on. Nor did Frye cling to the past: When the world's first transistor radio appeared in 1955, Carl and Jerry had one almost immediately, and used it to track a tornado. ("Tornado Hunting by Radio", May 1955.)"

<http://www.copperwood.com/carlandjerry.htm>

In the 1960s, you also had the Tommy Rockford series of books by Walker Thompson. "SOS at Midnight" and "CQ Ghost Ship". "SOS" was reprinted in 1980.

In the 80s, there were adventure books written by Cynthia Wall, KA7ITT there were about five in the series and ARRL and others sell them

<http://www.arrl.org/catalog/?category=History%2FAdventure&words=>

Hostage in the Woods, Easy Target, Disappearing Act, A Spark to the Past are some of the book titles. Cynthia used to appear at the Dayton Hamfest flea market and sign copies of the books for Hamvention goers.

These are excellent for youngsters - written for them and the story involves youngsters.

Rain and Sunspots

From Science Daily

"The scientists showed that unusually heavy rainfalls in East Africa over the past century preceded peak sunspot activity by about one year."

"The research relied on rainfall data going back a century. Historical records of water levels at lakes Victoria, Tanganyika, and Naivasha also demonstrated the link. Stager demonstrated that while the link between sunspots and rainfall seemed to grow weaker from 1927 to 1968, the cyclic pattern held true throughout the 20th Century.

The researchers, who represent five institutions from the United States and Great Britain, offered several reasons why sunspot peaks may affect rainfall. The increased solar energy associated with sunspots, they suggest, heats both land and sea, forcing moist air to rise and triggering precipitation. ..But most of the rainiest times, he said, are consistently coupled with the predictable rhythms of sunspot peaks.”

Remote Station Operation

By

K5SF – Richard Detweiler

It is amazingly simple to remotely control a radio with the use of a computer and just about any radio that can allow for a computer interface. I found that the problem is the way of thinking about operating a radio needed to change a little in order to make the task very simple. Many radios with computer interface can be completely controlled by the computer interface. Thus with the right radio control program, the operator does not need to even touch the radio. This is the first and most important step in building a remote station operation. Once that is accomplished, there are many ways to take the next step and remotely control the station from the internet.

To set up a remotely controlled station, take a relatively late model radio with a computer interface, an inexpensive PC running Windows XP next to the radio with a sound card interface to bring the sound into the PC and an all band antenna tuned to your favorite frequencies.

Any number of radios will work. An older Yaesu 767GX, an ICOM 746 or a newer Yaesu FT1000, Ten Tec Orion, or ICOM 756 Pro III. Of note, while the new Ten Tec OMNI VII is internet ready, it is a bit of overkill for the function and with the problems of internet delay, there are a many features that seem to work much better with the method I’m suggesting using a PC next to the radio.

Next, set up a PC next to the radio that is running Windows XP. It needs to be something with a processor over 1Ghz, 40 to 60 GB disk, and 512MB of memory. The more memory and more processor speed the better to minimize the delay from command on the keyboard to the reaction on the radio. Insure the PC has a sound card and the ports needed for the interface to the radio and to the internet.

The antenna can be anything tuned to the bands you want to operate on. I prefer to use an all band vertical as it is Omni directional and doesn't need to be touched if I want to change bands. The fewer things that have to be configured in the station, the easier the task of interfacing all of those functions to the PC is going to be.

Then with the PC next to the radio, plug the interface into the appropriate port and start a radio control program. The most important thing to be able to control is the frequency. Most radios today need no other interaction to change the band and adjust the internal antenna tuner. For these radios, it's all automatic based on the frequency. For most of us, this program can be a logging program like DXBASE, Logger, N1MM or ACLog. However it can be a more robust program like the N4PY radio control programs for ICOM, Kenwood or Ten Tec radios. This kind of program control almost every aspect of the radio like RF Gain, TX power out and hundreds of other things we normally would do at the front of the radio.

The last step is an interface from the PC sound card to the audio output of the radio. There are many little boxes for this as well as schematics of small circuits on the internet. Test all these interfaces and insure the sound levels are good. Too high and the audio distorts, too low and the audio breaks up as it falls below the thresholds for the sound card.

Now, if you wish to also be able to transmit on the radio, you will need to add a few other little things. For SSB, you'll also need to interface the PC sound card to the audio input or MIC of the radio. Then you'll need a serial port to close the PTT switch. For CW you'll need another serial port to key close the CW Key. Don't have any serial ports? No problem there are many USB to Serial port adaptors out there that work perfectly and are very inexpensive.

Interface the serial port to the radio using a small circuit, my favorite is based on an opto isolator. There are many circuits on the internet to take

and convert a serial port to PTT and CW. Many logging programs will handle the software interface to a serial port to handle the PTT and CW inputs. For CW, the Winkey is one of the best solutions for doing this and can be easily interfaced to the radio and the PC.

The setup here at my station is a Butternut HF9V vertical driven by an ICOM 756 Pro II. The Pro II is interfaced to the PC through a MK2R+ that handles every input for sound, CW, PTT, has a WinKey built in, and computer control and I didn't have to make up any of the cables either. The PC is a 2.66 Ghz E-machines with USB interface for the MK2R+ and a network adapter to connect to my DSL router. The remote control program is the N4PY program for the ICOM 756 Pro II. The MicroHAM company has many other interfaces and the new microKEYER II will have a USB interface built in, costing less than the MK2R+ and providing much of the functionality needed.

Here is the critical thing. With this setup, I can set at my PC next to the radio and control every part of the radio from the keyboard and mouse. All things like RF Gain, AF Gain, Filters, TX power out, Antenna A/B are just a mouse click away. I can send CW, FSK, PSK and SSB all from the PC. Audio comes into the USB sound card and I can hear the output of the radio on the speakers.

For transmit, I can use the C-TYPE for the WinKey device in the MK2R+ for CW. I can use the PC Mic jack for my voice to the radio and I can also use a PC based Digital voice keyer for highly repeated phrases like "K5SF" or "Got the 5 Niner your also 5 Niner".

When you can control all of this from the PC without touching the radio. you're ready for the next step going remote and controlling the station by the internet.

To accomplish Remote control we need to think of two things. 1). Controlling the PC next to the radio (not the radio because the PC controls the radio) and 2). Getting the audio in and out over the internet.

To control the PC we need to use a remote desktop program. There are many programs out there. Lap Link and Webex are a couple that come to mind. If you are using windows XP Pro at the radio then there is a facility already set up for desktop takeover. What ever you use, load that program

up on the PC that is remote and the PC next to the radio and get that working. Once you are able to remotely control the PC, then you will be able to remotely control the radio.

The next thing is the audio. Use a common and free program, like Skype or IPsound, or any other IP telephone program that allows you to call PC to PC like a telephone over the internet. Set up the remote PC to receive the incoming IP phone call and then get that all working.

When you use the desktop takeover program, to control the pc next to the radio, then cause it to dial the remote PC and answer the call. Now you have a remote PC connected to the internet, controlling all aspects you need of the radio and the audio streaming in both directions from the PC near the radio to your remote PC. Remote control accomplished...

All you need to do is operate the PC next to the PC and you are remotely controlling the station.

Now for a quick note: The FCC allows this type of operation if the operator is licensed for the frequency and power used, and there is a fail safe mechanism. The fail safe mechanism will shut the transmitter off if the transmission exceeds 3 minutes. This is an FCC rule and is in place in case you hit the transmit key on FSK or something and all of a sudden you lose connection to the remote station. After 3 minutes sending out RF, the fail safe will engage and shut down the transmitter. Some of the remote ops grumble a little as they have to release the key if they are rag chewing like the repeater time out functions. It's a small price to pay believe me.

For the remote control piece, I use WEBEX (www.mywebexpc.com) because it will connect to my PC next to the radio from any where , even behind my company's restrictive firewall, and I do not need a "dedicated IP address" at the station making the internet service much cheaper. For the PC Telephone, I use Skype as it allows me to use PC to PC phones calls for free and for \$10.00 per year, I can call any phone in the US. I've heard IPsound is better but so far Skype has given me no reason to switch and it was very, very easy to get setup.

If you have a need to remotely operate a receiver or radio station, I believe this is the cheapest and easiest way to get it done.

Letter from LY2ZZ, Jonas

From the MARAC RoadRunner, August 2007 issue

Jonas recently completed USCA from Lithuania

“I’m happy to achieve the goal I was trying to get for more than 25 years. In fact, I’m very proud and have already started a second round. I’m 55 years old, living with my XYL, Zita, who always has supported my hobby. My son and two daughters have their own lives, but they know how important to their dad are those boxes in the shack.

Back in 1966 I made my first QSO: a CW contact from the school club station, UP2KAG, in my native rural area of Vilkaviskis, Lithuania. I graduated from the Technical University as a radio engineer and moved to Sialuliai in the north of the country. There I got a job with a big company producing TV technical goods for Eastern Europe. We built up a competitive club station and produced good results in many contests using the calls UK2BAS, UP1BZZ, RG6G, UP4A, UP7A, UP8A, UP9A, LY2ZZ, LY5A, etc.

Dramatic changes occurred in the years after Lithuania regained its independence. The company I worked for went bankrupt. I bought equipment, Towers, and a ham shack in the outskirts of the town and secured LY2ZZ as my personal callsign and LY5A as a contest call.

My priorities in ham radio varied during those decades: DXing, contesting, constructing my antennas, designing power amplifiers, and county hunting. I managed to win many contests as a single op as well (CQ WW DX, CQ WPX, ARRL, etc.). Now my ICOM-756 runs nine mono-band antennas and nine separate amplifiers.

My first attempt to collect counties occurred around 1980, but in about four years my enthusiasm slowed when it seemed like an impossible task to collect all the counties from here in northeastern Europe. I resumed again ten years later, but again, it was for just a few years.

In February 2003 I proudly showed old buddy, Victor, LY1A, my DXCC Honor Roll #1. He said it was a trifle compared to earning USA-CA All Counties. Once again I got hooked and counted the QSLs I had already collected for USACA. Many of the counties were missing, some of the QSLs had disappeared, and I had a task to get them again.

So, on the third attempt, I started by building a new 6-element Yagi on top of a 42-meter tower. Thanks to the better antenna, I started to hear those scratchy mobile stations which had never been able to hear before! I began to spend days on 14.336 and 14.056.5. Three years later, I got to the total of 3074 and was missing only three counties. Then what happened is what I can only call the spirit of a true ham.

Dan, KM9X, drove five hours from Indiana down to the intersection of Monroe and Cumberland counties in Kentucky just to give me an opportunity to try a QSO with two of the missing counties. We managed a contact with reports of 44 both ways without the assistance of a net control station!

Then came the last one...Schleicher County in Texas. The family of Janet, KC5QCB, and Rand, AJ5ZX, drove three hours just for me! Conditions at my sunset here were poor. I sent a signal report to Janet, she received it, and now it was turn to receive a report. You know, one can only try to receive it only twice. Those few seconds I was listening to Janet's signal could fill all of my prior life on this Earth. Then came the voice of Jim: "Jonas, what did you receive?" I told him the report I heard, and then came an explosion of greetings on the frequency! I have heard other stations receive congratulations on that frequency, but this time they were addressed to me. This happened on May 27, 2006. The long journey was finished.

The statistics: One third of my contacts were from fixed stations and the rest from mobile operators. My special thanks go to all the hams who assisted me in my efforts; to the net control operators; and to Bob, N4CD, Rich, AI5P, Ray, WG6X, Terry, WQ7A, Frank, AA9JJ, Jim, ND9M, Jerry, W0GXQ, and Matt, W0NAC.



LY2ZZ, Jonas, in the Hamshack

What is next? Just a dream—to visit the town of Eldorado in Texas, which was my last county, to attend a MARAC convention and to shake the hands of the mobile operators in person. Now I'm trying to make it for the second time. I'm addicted and no medicine can help me. I'm just not sure if I'll manage to make it during the rest of my lifetime.

—73, Jonas, LY2ZZ

Getting Folks Finished Up

A long standing tradition of county hunting has been the willingness, indeed, eagerness, of help from mobiles to get the last counties someone needs toward USCA and other awards. It's about '**running counties**', not about

‘running mobiles off’ that is the tradition. Of course, it’s also a good excuse to go out and run a few counties when you can help by a short trip (or long trip – hi hi).

Many folks have been finishing up with the relatively good conditions on 40M SSB and CW! For many, hearing much on 20m SSB is a challenge in the middle of the country. Many of the WBOW last few counties have been done on 40M and CW bands recently.

AA9ZZ posted on the K3IMC forum: “I want to thank Joyce [WB9NUL] and her husband[W9UCW, Barry] for making a trip to Starr TX for my last TX **on cw**. My concern was the band would not cooperate and we would not have an opening. She told me she would take some games and some knitting and would sit and wait for the band to open. That is going well beyond what was needed and what most people would do. Fortunately I was able to make the contact on the first call and then I worked W9UCW on **30 meters**. Thanks to both of you for going the extra hundred miles.” AA9ZZ still needs more to finish up.

During July and August, we saw some prime examples of mobiles making extra effort to help folks finish up. Bill, WA0KAQ has been working toward USCA for 40 years. He finally decided he really wanted to finish up, and requested help. He posted: “Thanks to those who have gone the extra mile the last couple of weeks, especially N4AAT, W8OP, N2OCW and N9STL in their mobiles, and N4CD for some help from the home QTH. I'm down to 2 needed now, and N7ID is going to try to give me Power Co., ID, in the morning. This proves that there are still a bunch of "good guys" out there in "County Hunting Country."

Bill got Power, ID from Jack, N7ID, and 2 hours later worked Scottie, N4AAT, who made a ‘speed trip’ to Lunenburg, VA for the last WBOW! Trivia - N2OCW pointed out this might be the first time that someone has gotten the last two from two people who have run all counties. (only 8 have run all counties so far).

Larry, N2OCW reported the following after reading the August “Closing in on USCA’ column: “I got the next to last for WB4KZW, with Wolfe, KY. I got last 3 in PA for N8KIE, and then went to in Person, NC, for the last WBOW for him. (Wow! That’s the way to do it.)

For Bill, WA0KAQ, I went to Henry, VA and Magoffin and Johnson, KY. He missed me in Gilmer and Hardy, WV but got them from others. (W8OP).

For Pete, N4AKP, I went to Martin, KY on **20M CW**, then 2 days later gave him Pocahontas, WV on **40M CW** for WBOW for Bingo CW". Larry drove 8000 miles this summer running all over the place giving out counties.

Joyce, N9STL, gave KC0JG the last three WBOW for USACW – two in Kentucky, then over to Greene, AR for the last WBOW. How about that? A last WBOW given on cw by N9STL! And in the same trip, gave two of the last 4 for WBOW to Bill, WA0KAQ.

Mark, N2MH, gave Ron, W8ILC, the last WBOW 2nd time with New York, NY on 40M CW. Paul, WB2ABD, went to Orleans, NY, for W8QOI to give him Bingo WBOW with a contact on 40M CW. Raleigh reports all but the last county were done on SSB, and the last WBOW done on CW.

Randy, AJ5ZX, was closing in on first time. Janet, KC5QCB, started popping up all over the east coast, giving him counties. She detoured to Union, GA, leaving him with 3. Steve, N0SM, got him Scotland, MO. N4CD took a 550 mile roundtrip to Latimer, OK, and Janet, KC5QCB gave him the last on 40M SSB with Iberia, LA – the last 3 for WBOW done on the friendly **40M SSB net**.

Phil, AB7RW is down to 10 to finish up for Bingo. Let's help him out with CA Mendocino - GA Forsyth, Habersham, Warren - -KY Taylor, Webster NJ Passaic - -TX Bastrop - -VA Greene, Page. Of course, for MARAC awards, you can work fixed stations (and not have to worry about a QSL card – sometimes hard from some fixed stations to obtain.). For Bingo, you can often find a station with an X in the suffix, or with the correct letter for Bingo, such as a "P" for Passaic, NJ.

At the convention, Ron, K2RP showed you how to get many of the counties you need on skeds. It's not as easy as sitting on 14.336 or cw nets waiting for the county to be run, but with the current conditions, that might be a long wait for your county if you need it on SSB.

Ron, K2RP is down to one – Letcher, KY, and he has a sked for it! So by the time you read this, he may be done!

KE4TTS is down to 13 to go.

K4YT closing in – Needs only KY- Woodford, UT- Washington, VA- Surry, Madison WA- Adams.

The weather is still good over much of the country. Maybe you can see where you can help out and get the last one or two in a state for someone, or get them down to zero to go!

The Missing Link – Water Vapor

It seems Al Gore and crowd are barking up the wrong tree on Global Warming. From neglecting the obvious, to exaggerating or misinterpreting scientific data, the Global Warming fanatics have got most of it wrong!

From Energy.com

“Readers are requested to think about the implications of what is missing from the following table which appeared.... in Sydney’s Sun Herald Newspaper, on Sunday July 15th 2007.

Measurement of Gases in 1770 and 1990		
	1770	1990
Halocarbons	0ppm	0.28ppm
Methane	800 ppm	1700 ppm
Carbon Dioxide	280 ppm	350 ppm
Nitrous Oxide	285 ppm	310 ppm

The lift-out also contained the following quote: “The principal cause [of Global Warming] is an increase in emissions of carbon dioxide of industrialized countries in the past 200 years”

This table represents a *shameful* example of the intellectual dishonesty that pervades the raging debate on Global Warming. The one item that is

glaringly missing from this table is the most important of all: Water Vapor. Water Vapor is also a Greenhouse Gas.”

Not only that, but methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas, and it has more than doubled in the time period. When have you heard Al Gore mention methane?

“The major natural greenhouse gases are water vapor, which causes about 36-70% of the greenhouse effect on Earth (not including clouds); carbon dioxide, which causes 9-26%; methane, which causes 4-9%, and ozone, which causes 3-7%”. i.e. **Water vapor is roughly three to four times as important as CO2.**

..how can they possibly know for a certainty that CO2 is the “swing factor” if they do not include in their calculations a before and after measurement for Water Vapor? **My guess is that no one thought about whether or how to measure this across the planet in respect of the year 1770.** Oh well. This key piece of information is not available to us. Let’s just ignore it shall we? Let’s just assume no change. Let’s just be irresponsible in the manner in which we go about constructing our computer models.

Hands up all those who have heard the words “water vapor” coming out of Al Gore’s mouth?

The lift-out contained ***not one single reference*** to water vapor – which pure logic tells us must have been increasing in our atmosphere in recent years, because increased sunspot activity has given rise to less cloud formation, and hence, less rain. That the humidity in our atmosphere has indeed been rising in recent years is evidenced by the fact that “pan evaporation” (the rate at which water in an outdoor pan evaporates) has been slowing.

Without an accompanying rise in humidity, slowing pan evaporation is totally at odds with rising ambient temperatures. Rising temperatures without rising humidity would give rise to ***rising*** pan evaporation. Ergo, there ***must*** have been rising humidity – which is three to four times as important as CO2. Yes, there has been a Greenhouse problem. No it has not been “caused” by rising CO2 levels.

I have... used the term “intellectual dishonesty”. The reality is that I do not believe the scientists are being dishonest. They are quite naturally worried about Global Warming and are looking for answers. I believe they are falling

into a trap known as “selective perception”. That is often what happens when one is plagued by worry. One starts to grasp at straws in the hope of finding instant answers to deep seated problems. One starts to become subjective regarding what is important and what is not important. Remember the Y2K problem that never materialized? Remember the hysteria then?”

Yes, the planet is warming, but grasping at straws for an ‘explanation’ is totally off base, and coming up a ‘plan of action’ that doesn’t address the root cause of the problems is also not a plan worth executing or paying for! Why spend hundreds of billions on things that are not going to fix the problem? Until you have a way to track increasing levels of water vapor over history, you don’t have a valid ‘computer model’.

N2OCW- 3 Summer 2007 Trips Synopsis

Larry sent in a trip report..and a trip report...and a trip report – he’s been busy this summer running counties!

“(I) **The first trip** started out June 29th with a little pre-planning between N8KIE and myself. Bob needed some of the same ones in VA to finish 3rd time that I needed for Master Gold. I got up to leave and we had heavy fog.

I ran into the first major detour within an hour by finding portable highway signs in VA saying the route I had planned was closed. Time for an immediate change of plans that took me quite a ways from getting those counties for Bob on this day. They would have to wait one more day.

The route followed Route 522 down through VA, getting off the beaten path a few times for a few close by counties. Then I zigzagged around Richmond, VA, working my way towards the middle peninsula. Made it to James City before backtracking to spend the night in New Kent, VA where they had thunderstorms all night and lost power at the motel.

That evening I got a phone call that my signal appeared to be down. In the morning, I swapped my winter antenna arrangement around before leaving the motel. During the winter when 40M was working real well I had a 40M Iron Horse stick on the roof and ran 20m with the rear mounted High Sierra

HS-1500 screwdriver. I reversed this to putting the 20m Iron Horse on the roof and tuning the High Sierra for 40M. This is the arrangement I still use. I carry a fishing pole tube full of Iron Horses pre-tuned with quick disconnects in the car.

From here the trip went flawless, finishing eastern VA for N8KIE and myself, then crossing into MD, running all of Eastern MD, then up through DE with a side trip To get a **CW LC** for KC0JG in Kent, MD, I. worked my way back over to DE, then up into Salem, NJ for a Master Gold for myself.

KC0JG had informed me when we did Kent, MD that he also needed Cumberland, NJ for a **CW LC**. I was on the way when KC0JG called me back saying he had to leave. I felt bad for him but it was good for me. The traffic was extremely heavy so I got turned around at the next chance. Headed over to S.E. PA to get two more Master Gold for myself and finish putting out the four S.E. PA counties I had not done. Once these were done, I headed for Cecil, MD as it was getting late for my last MD Master Gold there.

Thank goodness N7ID was listening when I got there. I then checked into the 40M Century Club Net to manage a few more transmitted counties on the drive home.

II) Trip number two started July 13th with plans to get my Master Gold needs in OH/IN/MI, and to finish running all of OH. The trip went according to plan so far spending the night 7/14 having dinner with W8FNW, his XYL and friend Al. 7/15 got back on the road running everything as planned in OH/MI/IN, then back to Defiance, OH to spend the night. On the morning of 7/16 no sooner than I got on the road, a big monkey wrench was thrown into the trip plan for finishing OH. I got word about the passing of K2NJ whom I had spent much time around during my years in NJ. As calmly as manageable, I asked NC to keep me advised of details since I don't have Internet access when I'm on the road. Pulling over clearing the tears, I looked over the maps to revise my trip plan.

A short time later I was back underway with a new plan in mind, aborting the 18 S.W. OH counties I still need to run. From there I proceeded East zigzagging my way around the northern tier of OH, stopping a few hours to meet K8QWY for a wonderful prime rib meal and shoot the breeze before getting back underway. I continued to run quite late until finally

finding a motel in southern Ashtabula, OH. Next day I finished putting out the Eastern side of OH I had not done before then crossing into PA working my way east going east then north then east again, finally stopping in Coudersport, PA, Potter County.

This was the night to catch up on everything. I had already exceeded my expected trip plan time. It was raining, the only night of rain on this trip. I found a laundromat, first time I've been in one of them since maybe 1979. I had to wash my clothes and get the details for the services for K2NJ so I could plan where to go next. Made good time the following day across PA then working north towards NY. Scott-KA3QLF called as I was passing through his county wanting to meet. We met and shot the breeze along the highway then I proceeded on a mission to get Schoharie, NY another one of my Master Gold needs.

This was much further than expected as I found out NY does not use mile markers for their highway exits. Then backtracked down into PA to stay the night with my mom in Monroe, PA. Next morning left early headed for NJ.

Finding the traffic wasn't too heavy yet, I proceeded to Staten Island, NY (Richmond) then over to Kings, NY (Brooklyn). Then backtracked over Staten Island up through Middlesex, NJ to get to Union/Essex, NJ. After finally finding the county line, I did the run then looked at my watch. I wanted to get Hudson, NJ, but was running out of time to make it to K2NJ's wake.

Finally getting to the funeral home, I knew AA9JJ/N9QPQ were headed to my last ND Master Gold I put out a request for a call when they got to Renville, ND. I set my phone on vibrate and put it in my pocket expecting it to buzz in my pocket. Well, W6TMD and N5UZW both called but apparently I had no signal in the funeral home. I came out to find two voicemails and AA9JJ already out of the county. Then headed back to Monroe, PA for another night with mom. Next morning headed southwest the county hunter way to get N8KIE's last two for 3rd time in PA and my own last PA Master Gold then home.

III) **Trip number 3** got bumped up a few days again with some pre-planning between N8KIE and myself. Bob got me Sibley, MN next day then 7/24 he got next to last for 3rd time Marshall, AL from K3IMC leaving only Person, NC for WBOW. Bob called to tell me he got Marshall, AL done as he drove

home. I told Bob since he got me Sibley, MN I would go get Person, NC for him.

I got the car packed to leave in the morning but woke up to thick fog so another late start. Due to this a few more counties had to be aborted. I didn't run any until I got to Montgomery, VA, my last VA Master Gold. I wanted to get over to Lunenburg, VA for WA0KAQ but had to abort going there as time was slipping away. I did get Henry, VA, for him though working my way into NC where I had to backtrack one county to get Stokes, NC for myself. Then headed east on two lane roads to get to Person, NC to finish N8KIE WBOW.

Shortly after that KN4XP returned my call wanting to meet for dinner. I got into heavy traffic on the Interstate and found an escape route but finally got to Fayetteville, NC (Cumberland) to meet Mike and his XYL for dinner then stayed the night in Cumberland. Next day went as planned getting my last NC Master Gold in Scotland, NC, proceeding northwest towards Carter/Unicoi, TN. That was an interesting county line to find. Ran a few in TN then into the southwest corner of VA for a few new transmits before going into Harlan, KY before having to go nearly 50 miles away from my projected destination to find a motel in Cumberland, KY near the Letcher, KY line.

The night before N8KIE had plotted me the distance to get to Clay, TN next day. I was already off course then next morning started off losing time after the 40M runs in every county. I really wanted to get there but it just wasn't in the cards after losing so much time run after run. Those of you who have run KY know what it's like to find places to pull over or to log by hand on the fly. This is where the Internet spots are a pain. A handful kept showing up run after run after I had gotten back on the road, impossible to log on the fly, trying to find a place to pull over again then they wanted CW also. Having to use the mike buttons on the 706 and having pinched nerves from a 1998 auto accident I cannot operate fast nor work too many before The numbness sets in my fingers. Doing this and hand logging takes a lot of time. Throw in on top that being left handed for everything. I did have a few CW skeds set up ahead of time.

Once I decided to bag going to Clay, TN the trip plan was revised a bit but proceeded fine as I went to get my last KY Master Gold in Jackson. I decided to go over to an area of WV that I knew to get a motel that night. I

was tiring from the heat - a car w/o A/C sweating day after day was wearing me down. While working my way towards WV, K8QWY called telling me I could get another WBOW on this trip. He mentioned N4AKP needing Martin, KY and Pocahontas, WV for all **CW Bingo**. I didn't have Pete's phone number and was already exhausted.

I got a motel in Chapmanville, WV (Logan), called KQ0B to get Pete's phone number and we made arrangements to get both for him. I really wanted to go home but an added day to get Pete finished up for Bingo was worth it. Next morning headed out, stopping to run Mingo/Logan, WV, then turned off on Rte 65 to Rte 52 to Kermit, WV where I could cross the River to Warfield, KY (Martin County). Proceeded on Rte 40 a little way until I found a quiet place to pull off and call Pete. Just as I called I heard KM1C in Johnson County next door. I called Pete to let him know I was there and he had the 40M frequency we had agreed on loaded up. I informed him I had just worked WA4WQG who lives fairly close to his QTH from Mingo/Logan 59 on 20M that 40M would not work. I told him to load up the 20M frequency we had agreed on. Shortly after Pete called me, Martin, KY was quickly in the log on CW.

Since I was already in KY I decided to go to Johnson, KY for WA0KAQ whom I knew needed Johnson. I prayed he would be there since I had already ran Magoffin, KY the day before and he didn't show up. I ran the Martin/Johnson, KY line and Bill worked me.

I then announced that Morgan/Magoffin, KY would be next since I had ran through Morgan the day before with just a contact with W0NAC/N0LXJ in Honolulu, HI. WA0KAQ worked me again to get KY down to one. From there I just did a few more Eastern, KY. These were new transmits for me and some pre-arranged CW skeds.

I had told N4AKP I would get him Pocahontas, WV on Sunday so I drove late into the night up to Lewis, WV to spend the night. I had thought of going to my YL's father in Upshur, WV but it was too late to call him. AB2LS and a few others kept me company county after county as I drove into the night. Pete had mentioned not being able to do Pocahontas until approximately 1630Z after he got home from church. I had time to kill in the morning so walked up to Stonewall Jackson Dam a while then lazily drove over to Buckhannon, WV (Upshur County) where I killed more time shopping and visiting.

Around 1500Z I decided it was time to head for Pocahontas stopping to run Barbour/Upshur. Just before 1630Z, I arrived at the Randolph/Pocahontas, WV County line on Rte 219. Ran the line on 20M then a short run on 40M and Pete called to let me know he was home. At 1649Z 40M CW N4AKP's **all CW Bingo WBOW** was in the log. Then headed north and east into storms to work my way home.

No car breakdowns this time. The '95 Explorer just purred along now with 235K miles. Still running strong. **Three trips, 8000 miles later she's back home. Ran through 321 counties, finished 12 Master Gold states.** Finished transmits in DE, MD, and PA. Made 6944 Q's and a bunch of CW on the last trip. For those who keep hounding me about more mobile CW I am attaching A picture of the car I broke my neck in April 1998."



The N2OCW Car Wreck 1998 – Ouch!

73's es C U down the log,
Larry N2OCW

On the Road with N4CD – MO/OK Trips

The weather was steamy, humid and hot in Dallas, not much was going on in TX, and I got my monthly club meetings out of the way, so I had some time for a trip. After I wrote the article about the Titanic Museum in Branson, I decided it was worth a trip up there – and it was a good excuse to go mobile. I just bought a new 17M hamstick, and mounted it on another mag mount (4 magnets) and put it, the 40M hamstick, and the regular 20/30/40 antenna on the car for a trip. I set 18.091.5 for cw in memory, and on the trip put in 18.132.5 for SSB – that way I could move up or down a bit depending upon QRM. So it was off to Branson, MO to see how well 17M would work.

My car started to resemble an electronic porcupine with all the antennas. Mapquest indicated it was 414 miles and 7.5 hours of driving to Branson from Plano, TX. That assumes you aren't a county hunter, don't stop to run county lines or weak relays, and don't take detours! (www.mapquest.com good site for route checking).

AB7RW is closing in on Bingo and needed 2 in MO out of last 12 for WBOW. I checked the map and could get those, run a bunch of new MP counties that were not done along the west border of MO and then the east side of KS. I had only 2 to run for MP in OK...I could get them on the way home. Then N2OCW hollers and says he needs Woodson, KS for MG(Masters Gold) , and Logan OK. The route could go through those as well, most likely. N4RS wanted Washington OK. I connected the dots, checked the needs, and headed out to see what could be done. I figured about 3 days in the 100 deg temps would be about right. When I stop on county lines, I usually shut the engine off – so it gets real hot real fast inside the car with the sun beating down, even with windows open. If I leave the engine running, it can gobble 1-1.5 gallons an hour while idling, and with gas at near \$3, that gets expensive if you sit too much.

Thursday it was up through OK across the I40 to AR. I was working folks on 17M cw. There was a “friendly net” on 14.336 Thursday so I ran everything on 20M SSB. Even a few were worked on 17M SSB at times. Everyone wanted Adair OK. Hmmm....I got to ARK, and then could take a narrow, twisty road, highway 59, right along the OK/AR border and get to Adair that way. It's not the ideal way to do it, but it works. I was ahead of

schedule. So I took the road, ran the county line, and continued on the route. Now I was behind schedule, but I was flexible. Adair OK can be a pain in the neck to get to, and get away from, depending where you start.



CL Adair OK/Washington AR

The first day, I had just put the 40M antenna on the roof, and it wasn't connected with a separate switch. The end was just sitting in the car. I discovered the SWR on 40M cw on the main 3 resonator antenna was not great. The next day, when I hooked up the 40M antenna to a second antenna switch, all the problems went away. SWR on the main antenna on 40M now good. Hmmmm...the antenna on a mag mount, not grounded with the shield (just loose in car) caused problems. OK....I won't do that again.

Thursday the DX from EU was in. Friday it started to get tougher, and Saturday there was little from EU. Bands just didn't cooperate to EU. LY2ZZ was waiting along with others, but NIL copy as I headed south. Yet, 17M was good all day Friday and Saturday.

I got to Branson in the late afternoon on Thursday. Gosh, the traffic 15 years ago, when I was there last, was terrible, and it isn't any better now. The main road, Highway 76, creeps at about 10 mph for 5 miles of main drag. Motels, music places, restaurants, fast food, and all sorts of tourist traps like Water Parks, Amusement Parks, and shopping centers. I found my motel (the BaldKnobber) and checked in – Taney County. It was late afternoon, but I decided to see how big the line was for the Titanic Museum

which was ‘just down the street’ which crept along at 10mph. (lots of crowds and people everywhere – major vacation time for kids hauling along parents). The line wasn’t too long, but still took 30-40 minutes to get in with 30 person line. (about \$20) – ask for AAA discount if a member. (There are all sorts of discount coupons for everything in Branson and package deals.) Interesting – I spent about 2 hours there inside the museum.

You’ll recall the article in the May 2007 CHNews about the museum and the accurately displayed duplication of the original radio room. The pieces of equipment back then were very expensive. Now, they are astronomical – maybe \$20,000 or \$30,000 for a single piece of the equipment if you are even lucky to find one. Back in 1968, I met Ms. Eleanor Johnson Shuman, my roommate’s mother – she was a 1 year old on the Titanic when it sank, and was rescued in Lifeboat 15. She passed away in 1998, at that point being only 1 of 6 remaining survivors. Now there are 3. Of course, the “unsinkable” Titanic sank in 1912, so that was almost a century ago. (95 years ago)

It was then back to the motel, dinner, and to the BaldKnobber music show....oldest show in Branson – corny but good. You might as well see some music when in Branson. At any given time, about 20 different shows going on, so you have lots of choices. If you’ve been to the Grand Ole Opry, it’s a cross between that and TV show Hee-Haw....some theatres have ‘name’ performers, others just put on variety/comedy shows – usually with excellent musicians and singers. There’s everything from corny comedy to 50s Rock and Roll, Alan Jackson, to music families like Pam and Mel Tillis available. Bring money. Besides admission (and any snacks you want at theatre type prices), there are CDs for sale, pictures for sale, shirts, ties, hats and you name it. I resisted – needed the money for county hunting gas and don’t need more ‘stuff’ around.

Friday morning I was off headed west – highway 76 - on the narrow twisty roads of MO, heading east to get Barry and McDonald. I had been there before but missed MP contact. Now that there are more MP holders, it is easier. (For MP, you can work someone in the county with a MG, or you can work someone from the county who has MG once you have MG yourself). Then it was up the west side, headed toward the last two for AB7RW.

AB7RW and I might have done a 'first' – a LC given on 17M cw by a mobile!



CL Hickory/St Clair MO

Note two hamsticks on roof (40 SSB and 17M)

LC for AB7RW – done on 17M CW

The small roads had eaten up lots of time, so I headed back west, over to KS, then south again, then west to Woodson, last for N2OCW. Hello Larry? Larry? Dang – Larry had gone off to car races for the evening in PA in a car without a radio! Oh well. That's the problem of doing things 'on the fly' with no set schedule. I stayed in Allen, KS and headed south in the morning hitting Neosho, KS. Who shows up? N2OCW - back at home. Neosho turned out to be a LC for W3DYA.

Well, after all Larry's trips for the folks, I couldn't disappoint him – so I headed back west, to Wilson, then backtracked north to CL Wilson and Woodson. Ran it. Then headed back south headed toward OK. W6TMD was working me on 40M cw most of the day from CA. Rest of the bands were so-so, but still pulling them through on cw, but no or just one DX. "A" index too high. Ran 40/30/20/17 and would get to 40M SSB in most of them.

N4RS wanted Washington OK for LC, so that is where I entered OK. Then ran east 7 miles to Nowata, which everyone seems to need at one time or another, and folks kept asking for it, then went back west to Osage and Pawnee, doing a zigzag going south west. One county west, one county south- one county to the west, one south. That got me to Lincoln, my last

MP in OK, then straight west to Logan for N2OCW. It was hot. (100 plus deg and sun beating down). I hit I-35 and headed straight south to TX. At about 5:30 I stopped at the Cracker Barrel in Lewisville (Denton CO), had a nice country ham dinner and then headed home in bumper to bumper city traffic for the last 20 miles. That's about the only restaurant chain in TX you can get the old style 'country ham', and despite half a million people in Collin County, there is not a single Cracker Barrel restaurant. I have to go to an adjoining county! (at least 40 minute drive each way, darn). If I'm headed back home at dinner time, I can stop on by one on several routes back home.

Three days, 1350 miles, and got one LC from N0KV in MT, and gave out a few LC for the folks, and had 17M CW contacts from most counties after 9:30 AM. The band seems to open about the same time as 20M, but only to the east coast like 20M. Then it pops open. It stays open to 5-6pm or so, but skip lengthens out. At times, it was fairly short, maybe 500 miles, and later in afternoons was 1000 miles. Sometimes folks were louder on 17M than 20M. It should be good band in a year or so when sunspots return.

One time I had to move down 2 because another mobile was running! Congestion already on 17M! Hi Hi On SSB, I had to move around a bit up or down a few times. Many loud sigs on 17M SSB, with folks running big antennas and amps, so I'm not sure how it will be when conditions a lot better. In the meantime we can have fun and get some band counties!

If you are not QRV on 17M, try loading up a 40M, 30M antenna or 80M antenna to see if you can work folks. If you haven't worked all states on 17M, that's another good excuse to try it. It's something new and different. Dang, I still need a bunch of states for WAS, but you have to work them all from home, not mobile on the road close too home for ARRL WAS. Hope I hit some that you need. I'll be listening for those 17 counties! And probably running more counties. So many counties, so little time.

Second Trip - Now there were some counties in Southeast OKLA I didn't get to run on the first trip, so it was time for a second trip on Sat, 8/18. It was going to be a cloudy day and not too hot (only low 90s). Randy, AJ5ZX was down to 3 to go to finish up. Steve, N0SM was going to go to Scotland, MO to give him that. So it was off to Latimer, OK, which a lot of people seemed to need. I figured I could get most of the counties in the lower quarter of OKLA on a one day trip. It was up through Bryan to Marshall,

Johnston, Coal, and up to Pontotoc – Rufus needed Marshall – he is closing in on MG. WA6OCV and others needed Johnston, and K5AAR needed Pontotoc. Then it was over to Atoka headed east to Latimer, through Pittsburg and Pushmataha. Randy, AJ5ZX was there when I hit Latimer. He was down to one now. AB2LS also needed it for LC, as did N8BGF.



Latimer OK – 2nd to last WBOW AJ5ZX

I missed Jack, N7ID – there was no mobile running on 20M that I could work and move myself off....and there was no cellphone coverage to get or make calls in that part of OKLA – the boonies!

Then I had to hit Leflore, and it was a ways to McCurtain and even longer getting back to Choctaw. That part of OKLA is sparsely populated with narrow roads, very few tiny towns, hills, twisty bridges, one lane bridges, and many miles of driving. I finally got to Choctaw, then into Lamar, TX, which W0GXQ needed for MG (He is closing in), then Delta, Hunt, and that was it.

I had a quick country ham dinner at the Cracker Barrel in Greenville, then home at 8pm. 540 miles of driving – whew....nearly all on 2 lane roads - long day. The bands weren't in great shape, and only made a handful of QSOs on 17M. When I could work a mobile, I moved myself off net to run on 20M SSB as many needed the SSB contact. 40M SSB was fairly good all day.

There are lots of places in OK where cellphones don't work! No coverage - at least the Verizon one I have...and in many areas, the service is analog only, which eats up the cellphone battery so it goes dead in 5-6 hours of receiving. Where is that Verizon 'network' 300 person army you see on TV when you are trying to receive calls in southeast OKLA? Hello Verizon? You're missing a lot of network there! That makes it hard to set up skeds to move off freq on 20M – hi hi. Jack, N7ID, is trying to close in on MG from ID, and with the current situation on .336, it makes it even more of a challenge. He unfortunately missed one. The cellphone beeped about 3 hours later when I got back into a digital coverage area with voice mails. Dang.

However, it was a good trip, safely home, burned up a bunch of gas, and got quite a few counties that were desperately needed for the folks. 30M and 40M SSB and CW worked well. 17M was a washout the second trip with few contacts. The DX was in with LY2ZZ, OH3JF, DL3DXX, OK1VD working many. Randy, AJ5ZX finished up WBOW the same day, getting his last from KC5QCB on 40M SSB. It's great to see the folks finish up. Even better when it happens on 40M.

Sputnik – 50th Anniversary

Sputnik (the first satellite in orbit) was launched on October 4, 1957 – 50 years ago. That event triggered the space race. Shortly thereafter, President Kennedy promised to put a man on the moon within a decade. The transmitter operated on 20.007 MHz. WWV shut down the WWV transmitter on 20 MHz in the USA in the evenings to enable people to listen in to it.

A recording of the first satellite is here:

RealAudio (11K)).

<http://www.amsat.org/amsat/features/sounds/Sputnk1b-144.ra>

Back then, not many had tape recorders – the only thing available were reel-to-reel tape recorders and they were fairly expensive. (and full of tubes!).

Various museums are sponsoring events and displays to celebrate this landmark event anniversary. This was the start of the space race and race to the moon.

Awards

Fifth Time #84, K4UNF, Frank, 7/25/2007
Third Time #208, N8KIE, Bob, 7/25/2007
USCA #1153, K4AMC, Jim, July 27, 2007
Five Star #29, N9QPQ, Kay, July 30, 2007
USCA # 1154, KB0BA, Lowell, August 1, 2007
USCA #1155, WB4KZW, Gene, August 6, 2007
Mobile to Mobile #2, N7PIB, San, 7/30/07

USCA #1156, Bill, NS4C, August 22, 2007
Fourth Time #131, N4MYZ, Alice, August 17, 2007
Fifth Time #85, KC6AWX, August 12, 2007
Bingo #231, N4AKP, Pete, July 20, 2007

Activities for County Hunters

Courtesy of ARRL Contest Calendar, www.arrl.org

Arkansas QSO Party -- CW/SSB/PSK31, sponsored by K1ARK from 1400Z Sep 8 to 0600Z Sep 9 and 1500Z-2400Z Sep 9. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 3.550, 7.050, 14.050, 21.050, 28.050; Phone -- 3.980, 7.260, 14.260, 21.360, 28.360, 145-147; PSK -- 3580, 7070; 14.070; 21.080; 28.120. Categories: SO, MS, Mobile (HP, LP, QRP), PSK. Exchange: RST, state or province, DX stations send DX. (AR stations send county) QSO points: PSK -- 3 pts, CW -- 2 pts, SSB -- 1 pt. Score: QSO points × AR counties (AR station count S/P, AR counties and DX). Mobile stations may be worked again in each county. See Web site for bonus points. For more information: www.arkan.us

Tennessee QSO Party -- CW/Phone/Digital, sponsored by the Tennessee Contest Group from **1800Z Sep 9-0300Z Sep 10**. Frequencies (MHz): CW - 1.815, 3.540, 7.040, 14.040, 21.040, 28.040; SSB -- 1.855, 3.900, 7.240, 14.280, 21.390, 28.390; Digital -- 3.585, 7.085, 14.085, 21.085, 28.085; VHF/UHF -- 50.195, 144.195, 146.55, 223.5, 446.0. No repeater or digipeater QSOs. Exchange: RS(T) and TN county or S/P/C. QSO points: Phone -- 2 pts, CW -- 3 pts, Digital -- 3 pts. Score: QSO points \times TN counties per band (TN stations add S/P/C per band). One bonus multiplier for every five additional QSOs with the same county. Bonus points: add 100 pts. for each QSO with K4TCG. TN mobiles may claim as a multiplier any TN county from which they complete at least 10 QSOs. For more information visit: **www.tnqp.org**

Washington State Salmon Run -- CW/SSB/Digital, sponsored by the Western Washington DX Club from 1600Z **Sep 15-0700Z Sep 16** and 1600Z-2400Z Sep 16. Frequencies: 160- 6 meters. Categories: SO (CW, SSB, Digital or Mixed Mode; QRP, LP, HP >200 W), MO-ST (WA Club, WA Non-club, Non-WA), Mobile (SO, MO), WA County Expedition. Exchange: RS(T) and S/P/C or county (for WA stations). QSO points: SSB -- 2 pts, CW/Digital -- 4 pts. Work Expeditions and Mobiles from each county, log county line QSOs as 2 separate QSOs. Score: QSO points \times WA counties (WA stations use S/P/C + WA counties) counted once only. QSOs with W7DX add 500 bonus points for each mode -- up to 1500 points. For more information: **www.wwdxc.org**

South Carolina QSO Party -- Phone/CW/Digital, sponsored by the Columbia Amateur Radio Club (CARC) from 1300Z **Sep 15-2100Z Sep 16**. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 1.805 and 50 kHz from band edge; Phone -- 1.845, 3.860, 7.260, 14.270, 21.370, 28.370, 50.125, 144.200, 146.58, 223.50, 446.00. No repeater or cross-band QSOs, work mobiles again from each county. Categories: SOAB, SC Mobile. Exchange: serial number and SC county or S/P/C. QSO points: Phone -- 1 pt, CW -- 2 pts, Digital -- 3 pts. Score: Total QSO points \times power multiplier (<5 W \times 5, <150 W \times 2, >150 W \times 1) \times SC counties (counted only once) \times SC counties activated (SC Mobile only). 300 bonus points for QSO with N2ZZ or KF4GHC. For more information: **carc.ham-radio-op.net**

Texas QSO Party -- CW/Phone/Digital, sponsored by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society (NARS) from 1400Z **Sep 29-0200Z Sep 30** and 1400Z-2000Z Sep 30. Frequencies (MHz): CW -- 40 to 60 kHz above

bottom of band, Phone -- 25 kHz above edge of General segments and 28.300-28.500, VHF -- 50.2, 144.2. Categories: Fixed Stns-- SO-Mixed (HP and QRP <5 W CW, <10 W Phone), SO-CW, Multi-Single, Multi-Multi; Mobile (Texas Only) -- SO-Mixed, SO-CW, Multi-Single, Multi-Multi. Exchange: RST + TX county or S/P/C or MM region. QSO points: Phone -- 2 pts, CW/Digital -- 3 pts. Score: QSO points \times TX counties (TX stations add S/P/C). Multipliers counted only once. Add 500 points for every 5 counties from which a specific TX Mobile is worked. Texas mobiles add one thousand (1000) points to final score for every county activated with five or more QSOs. For more information: **www.txqp.org**

That's all folks! See you next issue.