

# County Hunter News

January 1, 2007

Volume 3, Issue 1

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation. This issue begins our third year of publication!

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

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

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

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7038.5, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 40 meters with activity centered on 7185 KHz after December 15, 2006.

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at [ch.w6rk.com](http://ch.w6rk.com)

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

## Notes from the Editor

1) **The CountyHunter Dot Com** forum was corrupted last October by some spyware. After extensive work with the on-line service provider, Dennis, KK7X, is now confident that all the problems have been resolved, and that new safeguards are in place to allow you to confidently surf the forum again at <http://countyhunter.com>. Dennis sent around email:

“In the past we have had problems with County Hunter Dot Com and the forum being compromised. With the assistance of our hosting service security has been upgraded and new protections put in place to keep the hackers out and you safe from harm. Please take the time today to visit <http://countyhunter.com/forum> and view the new messages and post one of your own. Our CW family is very active in the CW Forum but more activity is needed to keep it a viable solution for good communications between fellow CW operators as well as ALL county hunters. “

**2) December** started out as a ‘**slow month**’. Bad weather, cold, with many people madly dashing about after Thanksgiving and before the end of December holidays. Conditions on 40M fairly good, while 20M still suffers the ‘sunspot minimum doldrums’. Several mobiles ventured out on trips – KM9X/KB9MGI, W0GXQ, KB6UF, N2OCW, and KB6TAL among them. Jim, K0ARS, is running counties as well on his business trips. N8KIE headed off to HI. Where did propagation go? 40M and the new frequency of 7185 doing well. It also ended up as a ‘**slow month**’, with only one award issued in the first 25 days of December to press time.

**3) Net Shenanigans** - You would think, now with “K2JG” club license up for FCC ‘enforcement action’, that the ‘operator’ at K2JG would be on ‘best behavior’. As you recall, the ‘renewal of “Club License K2JG” was revoked, and sent to the FCC Enforcement bureau for action as noted in last months CHNews. Not so...details later.

**4) This month we make like ‘History Detectives’** and go back to the 50s and 60s to do some digging into County Hunting History. Do you know who came up with the first MRC and sold them to others? Have you heard of Cliff Come, K9EAB?

**5) Operating Events-** A few things this month to consider – a chance for some band counties. Plan for the Texas Mini in February now.

**6) Reminder** – send in your year end CW totals to Elwood, KA3MMM, for the annual listings!

**7) No Code HF** – FCC will shortly ‘do away’ with any demonstration of ‘Morse Proficiency’ for obtaining a license to operate with phone privileges on HF (1.8-30 MHz), maybe by mid-February. The new band allocations for SSB allocations went into effect on 12/5/2006.

## FCC ‘does away’ with Code Proficiency Test

On December 15, 2006, the FCC followed much of the rest of the world in ending a nearly century long requirement of demonstrating proficiency in sending and receiving Morse code. This was a result of the outcome of the WARC 2003.

“It took almost three and a half years for the FCC to complete final rulemaking on the Morse code testing issue. Elimination of “demonstrated Morse proficiency” as a prerequisite for HF operation was authorized on July 5, 2003 when the World Radio Telecommunications Conference 2003 in Geneva adopted changes to the ITU’s Amateur Radio regulations. Among other things, a new Article 25.5 §3 1 resolved to leave the Morse code issue up to the discretion of the individual countries. In other words, any country could eliminate code testing if they chose to ...which some did at once. Many US amateurs immediately submitted rulemaking petitions seeking to drop the code ...usually the first step in beginning an FCC proceeding. “(From W5YI Newsline)

The handwriting has been on the wall for a long time. Back in the 1990s, the FCC, when it created the ‘no code’ Technician license, also indicated it found no imperative or correlation with an applicant’s ability to copy Morse code when it came to being technically competent and be able to follow the FCC Rules and Regulations. In the commercial license area, the FCC eliminated the First and Second Class Radiotelephone Licenses, and issued a ‘dumbed down’ General Operator’ Certificate.

A standoff occurred at the ARRL, with membership evenly split. Their final petition was to argue strongly for retaining the code requirement for Extra Class licensees, but that too was ‘too much’ for the FCC. There is little reason to file petitions for a re-hearing. On what basis?

Those holding Technician licenses without having passed the code test will be able to operate on 28.3 to 28.5 MHz after the ‘effective date’ now estimated as early February, and on cw in the designated ‘cw subbands’. By taking and passing the Element 3 (General test), those holding Technician licenses will obtain all General HF privileges.

In reality, those with 'proficiency' at 5 wpm were not able to provide much in the way of communications. For most, it took 15 to 20 wpm proficiency to be a useful means of communication. Those who had an interest pursued higher code speeds. Those who did not, or even those who passed 13 and 20 wpm 'tests' but never became good cw ops, often become excellent SSB or data operators, experimenters, and in the eyes of the FCC, able to understand and follow FCC rules and regulations.

Yes, making everyone learn 'a little bit' about Morse code was often an entry barrier. One might say the same about AM modulators, schematics of mercury vapor tube HV power supplies, the difference between a Colpitts and Hartley oscillator might all fall in the same category. Many of the old timers likely struggled with, and memorized the answers to those and other questions, never to ever see a mercury vapor tube, or worry about whether the oscillator in their Heathkit was a Colpitts or Hartley or modified Clapp, and exactly where the neutralizing capacitor connection points were in their 6146B r.f. power amplifier. One can imagine folks in the 1930s worrying about MOPA circuits, various regen receiver questions, tuning your 'flat top' antenna, 'battery eliminators' , A B and C batteries, etc.

The era of the 'no code' Tech has not caused mass chaos, nor is the era of the 'no code' HF license going to be the end. What needs to be done now is to "Elmer" those newcomers into proper operating procedures, and a mutual respect for interaction with others. That is up to the current ham population to do. Many of the current SSB ops graduated up from CB.

Over the past 30 years, the ham population has not been 'healthy and aging steadily'. With dozens of competing activities, few teenagers enter into ham radio. The era of the internet, email, live chat, instant messaging, cell phones, text messaging, instant videos, IPODs, and everything else makes for ever more 'competition' to attracting new hams.

One cannot argue for continued use of valuable spectrum with an ever decreasing ham population, when world populations and business interests keep growing, and more people want access to 'spectrum' for more services. Only a healthy ham radio population can fight for and hopefully keep what we have today (and optimistically get even more spectrum).

Personally, it is a bit disappointing to see 'the end of Morse code' proficiency testing. Some enjoyed the 'sound of the spark' transmitters.

There are still ‘AM Diehards’ who think that SSB was the ‘ruin of all ham radio’. Maybe we get hung up too much on ‘the way it was’ and ‘what we had to do’ to get a license. No matter what, now we have the future ahead of us, and that is HF licenses without code.

## The Cliff Corne Story

I enjoy the “History Detective” series on PBS on TV – often good stories, and investigations into the past. So this month, the CHNews has done some research going back in the time machine to the 1960 era of county hunting, five years before there was ever a USACA number issued! - When radios ‘glowed in the dark’. When mobiles ran dynamotors and vibrator supplies to get the high voltage to run ‘tube equipment’. When cars burned unleaded gas, had ignition ‘points’ and generators, and inner tubes inside tires.

With input and contributions from many county hunters willing to help out to tell this story, let’s go back in time to the 1950s and 1960s – the beginning of county hunting. Thanks to the many who helped including W4OV, WB4UHI, AC4XL, W8QOI, K2RP, W0GXQ, W5VD, K4BAI, NF0N, W4YDY, W9MSE, K2UFT, WB9NUL, W0KZZ, N7AKT, W0OWY, K4KI, W0FF, W0VFE, K8IHK, K1BV, WC5D, K3WWK, W9UCW, and K2MGA, K8CTY.

**Cliff Corne, K9EAB, was the first person to work and confirm all counties back in 1965.** It’s quite a story and accomplishment, and he was quite a remarkable man, who despite some major handicaps, overcame the odds and did what many thought was ‘impossible’ at the time. Most chasing counties thought USA-CA-500 was hard, and 1500 was about all anyone would get since so many counties had no resident hams. He was always enthusiastic about working stations, and helping out! Of course, **most** county hunters have a tradition of ‘going the extra mile’ to see that folks get their last counties needed to finish up, and try and suggest ways to get other needed counties they can’t get themselves. And volunteering to relay in those ‘last counties’ when serving as net control. The goal of ‘all counties’ was a monumental challenge that he took on.

## Creation of the USA-CA Award Program

Certificate Hunter/County Awards go back to the 1950s, with the Certificate Hunters program –created by Clif Evans, K6BX. In 1960, Certificate Hunters Clubs had chapters in many states which encouraged county hunting in each particular state to earn state awards. Clif Evans purchased the rights to the Directory of Awards and Certificates in 1960, giving him a larger platform to disseminate information on his awards.

Dozens of states had “Worked All **this state**” – and some state groups still offer certificates today. (See CountyHunter Dot Com for a listing of currently available state awards.) Many award chasers were delighted just to finish off a single state with ‘worked all counties’ and get that award. Most of the certificate hunters were interesting in obtaining ‘paper’ and accumulating points in the CHC by winning state QSO parties, getting endorsements for bands/modes on existing awards, etc. The thought of working all counties was thought to be ‘near impossible’ at the time. Most contacts were with fixed stations for all the awards. The main goal was accumulating points for CHC status.

After WW2, hams could pursue the IARU “WAC” award, or the ARRL “WAS” or CQ Magazine WPX or WAZ certificates. That, and ARRL DXCC were about it for ‘major awards’, although hundreds and hundreds of other awards were available domestically and internationally.

Various groups sponsored the State QSO parties, and often operators went ‘portable’ to give out counties during the contests. Fixed stations were recruited to come up to ‘net ‘frequency’ and give out their counties. Award chasers asked traffic handlers to come to the CH frequency, or waited until after the traffic nets had finished to call one of the regulars to get a new county.

Now we have a ‘gray area’ ....which came first, the chicken or the egg? According to the County Hunting History written by Don, W7OK, and distributed at the 1972 MARAC Convention:

“Sensing the need for more awards of various types to be available to any worthy ham operator was the father of an extensive Awards Program, Clif Evans, K6BX. During the 1950s K6BX created and developed the

“Certificate Hunters Club”. One of the most popular awards created by K6BX was the USA-CHA or ‘County Hunters Award’. In 1960, county hunting activity was well underway.....K6BX had become associated with CQ Magazine which provided a widespread media for collecting and disseminating information and news of county hunting activity. The USA-CA Awards were created by classes USA-500, USA-1000.....”

This is where it gets confusing, as the CHC USA-CHA, if it ever got started in or before 1960, seems to have literally disappeared for 4 years, then resurfaced. More later. It likely is that the US-CHA did not really start until after 1964. Thus, the work with CQ Magazine was first.

Dick, K2MGA, Publisher of CQ Magazine, which sponsors of the USA-CA, sent me the following information:

“I was party to the origination of the Award, having joined CQ in September 1960. I lay no claim to the conception of USA-CA, but through that early time I was witness to the development of the program and sat in on numerous meetings where it was discussed.

The USA-CA was, indeed, the brainchild of Clif Evans, K6BX. Not having the platform from which to launch such an ambitious project, he approached CQ Editor Arne Trossman, W2DTJ, seeking a good home for the award. Arne immediately saw the potential of the program, and sold the idea to CQ ownership, the Cowan family. The award program became, right from the beginning, the property of Cowan Publishing Corp., owner of CQ.”

In the October 1965 Zero Bias Column, looking back from 4 years in the future, Dick wrote:

Looking back in 1961, when CQ first got the notion to sponsor a new award program, it was agreed among the staff and award experts that to be worthy of its following, the award would have to be a *real* challenge.” Several considerations went into its creation.

First, since there were so many counties, it was unlikely that any one amateur would have a great numerical advantage over all others – It didn’t give old-timers the upper-hand before the hunt began.

Second, one could work several hundred counties toward the award on any band from 160-6 meters, and also from DX locations. Again, no one had a particular advantage.

Third, it would take years for folks to get the awards, and there wouldn't be the problem with DXCC and WPX of what is a new country or prefix and what isn't.

He wrote in 1965: "Back in 1961, the likelihood of anyone ever working all three thousand odd counties was seemed so remote as to be almost unthinkable. " CQ offered an extra special plaque to anyone achieving all counties as incentive, and thought it would be 'forever' before they had to come up with it.

Continuing with his history in his email: " With considerable investment of time, money and resources, the award was launched, and was supported by what we jokingly called "the black plague," the USA-CA Record Book, which was originally an 8-1/2" X 11" book with a black and white cover, and contained not only the state-by-state county listings and spaces for QSO data, but also full page maps of each state, showing every county boundary with county names.

What made it "the black plague" was the enormous cost associated with the production of the book which was compounded by the fact that we had to purchase the rights to the maps from one of the large map makers in NY. It sounds like a simple thing, and today that sort of stuff is probably free on the internet, but back then it was a really big deal. In addition, designing the certificate art and printing the oversized certificates on parchment paper in four colors was a staggering investment for our small company at the time. Almost a decade passed before Cowan had recovered most of its investment.

From the beginning, it was agreed that Clif Evans would write a column about award hunting for CQ, and that he would manage the award. Clif was a bundle of energy and enthusiasm. He was a retired Navy Captain who had served eminently in WW II. He did a wonderful job of promoting the award not only through his column in CQ, but through his own publications and organization (CHC) devoted to certificate hunting. He was nearly blind, but typed almost a hundred pages a month in microscopic type for his publications using a high intensity light and special magnifying lenses.



In June 1964, Arne Trossman left CQ because the company's offices were moved out of New York City, while Arne had just recently moved out of the city in the opposite direction. The three-hour commute each way was impossible for a family man, so he left. At the age of 24 I was named the new editor of CQ.

One of the early things I did after assuming the title of Editor was to correct what I saw as a very bad editing policy of using all caps in Clif's column in CQ. Clif didn't see it that way, and he quit.

We were in need of someone to pick up the responsibilities of managing the USA-CA program and writing the awards column for CQ. Our Contest Manager at the time was Frank Anzalone, W1WY. Frank suggested that I contact Ed Hopper, W2GT, a transmitter engineer at WHN, where Frank worked. Ed was an active ham and also a certificate chaser. W2GT was thrilled to take on the job, and handled it beautifully until he retired from the position due to failing health many years later.

So that's the early story of the USA-CA program".

CQ continues to sponsor the very successful USACA 46 years after its start!

The early CQ articles in the 1960s tracked people's progress toward the various levels – 500, 1000, and 1500. Slowly, people reached 1500. Then on to 2500. Only a handful were even above 1500. People received awards for 500 counties on 6M (AM), 500 on 28 MHz, 500 on 21 MHz.

Incidentally, it was that colorful, large award the CQ created that got me, N4CD, interested in that first level – to have that certificate on the wall. Miss Ida – she just 'had to have that large, colorful certificate with all the state flags' as well. Likely, in retrospect, that was a wise decision that the founders of the award at CQ made back then!

## Cliff Corne Gets Interested in Ham Radio

It was Cliff's cousin, K9CDC who got him interested in ham radio. In 1955, Cliff passed his novice test, and three months later passed the Conditional exam. He got into DX chasing, traffic handling, QSO parties, contests of all

kinds, and of course, award chasing. Would you believe he earned over 1,100 different awards?

K9EAB got seriously started in county hunting in 1961 and received USA-CA-500 award #1-R in September 1961. The first award numbers were assigned by lottery. After the award was officially created, there were at least 26 who had 500 counties, and submitted for the award. A drawing was held for all those who submitted an application by the start date, and all got number 1 for the USA-CA 500 level, followed by a letter. Cliff got to 1000 in April 1962, and then after that led the pack to each higher level, receiving award #1 for each higher level, to finally get to “all” in August 1965.

The 40M on 7223 kc. was created in August 1963 by a group consisting of Otts, K8CIR, Cliff, K9EAB, Earl, K9UTI, K8IWI, and Lou, K8IQB. Each of them took turns running the net. At first, regulars numbered 10 or 12 a day. It started at 1300Z and ran till late at night. After a while, mobile check-ins grew from a few a day to 10 or 15 a day. Folks started planning expeditions to desperately needed counties!

According to a contribution made by Cliff to the CQ column, some of the regular mobiles included a minister in TX, a TV repairman in OK, an X-ray engineer in NK, a dog food salesman in OH, an electronics equipment representative in IN, a Federal Labor Mediator in the Carolinas, a City Manager in KS, a shoe salesman in NE, a truant officer in FL, a TV Station engineer in MO, an air conditioning jobber and wife in LA, a priest in MI, a distributor of western goods in NM and CO, an automotive supply rep in the entire south-east. Over 50 mobiles logged in the first year. The net tried moved up to 7233 to try and get away from foreign broadcast in 1965 which was moving into the band at the time. Back then ‘no help’ on QSOs was tolerated. No ‘22 22 22’ relays. No relays at all! **So his USA-CA was not only the first, it was the first with NO relays!**

The contribution to CQ, May 1965, also describes how the net folks came up with the idea of MRCs. A county hunter “QSL” was drawn up. These cards were produced in large numbers by K9EAB and sold to the others – 500 for \$3, postpaid.

This 40M net ran until 1966, when the foreign broadcasters moved into the band in large numbers. People worldwide worked toward the USA-500 award which was very popular.

## Who Helped Him Finish?

Carl, W0KZZ, was talking with Otts, K8CIR, back in the early 60s while out mobile, just rag chewing, and learned about the “County Hunter Net” on 7223 kc. (kilocycles). Carl was a tech rep for an X-ray equipment company, and traveled all over in Northwest MN and in North Dakota. He was one of the first mobiles out there giving out counties, and he himself earned USACA #27 in 1970. He recalls he probably had some Heathkit gear in the car. He built several Heathkits, as did many hams back in the 1950s and 60s. They were good value, easy to assemble, and worked well. Heath came up with AM mobile rigs then had SSB mono-banders on 20, or 40, or 80 meters. (HW-12, 22, 32 with HP-13 mobile PS). Not long after came the five-band SB-100 with DC power supply for mobile use. On the back of the car was a Hustler antenna. He remembers changing resonators to change bands!

Active until recently on the county hunter net, Carl (age 88) recently moved to a second floor unit in retirement home, and can no longer get on the air, other than two meters, and IRLP. Before that move, Carl had been heard on the 20M SSB net chasing mobiles and earning more awards. He recalls working K9EAB, who often ran/helped out on the net on 40M along with others. Back then, there were few mobiles, and the net often consisted of looking for new fixed stations to check in, which then everyone on the net worked in turn. Sort of like modern day Century Club nets I suspect. Confirmations with fixed stations were direct – but MRCs had come into style for those out mobile.

Carl, W0KZZ, recalls meeting Cliff’s dad, WA9DCQ, who occasionally went out and got some of the missing counties. Charles, WA9DCQ was out in North Dakota giving his son some of the last few needed for the state, when they had an eyeball.

Other mobiles from ‘way back when’ were K0CML, now W4OV, W4OHP, K0RTH – now W0FF, W5HDK, and quite a few others who are now “Silent Keys”. Jim, W0FF, former President of MARAC, and a convention host for

the National, remembers getting involved in County Hunting back in April of 1963. He was stationed in VA, and ran counties from that QTH, before moving back to the St. Louis area.

In a CQ column contribution, Cliff mentions 'there is a picture album of Net regulars in constant circulation among the members who add their own snapshots with notations and pass it along to the next on the list'. Maybe someday it will surface, so we can see what the beginnings were like! N4CD is on the hunt to locate it, and I've got a lead or two. Keep your fingers crossed. MARAC didn't get started until years later.

Another county hunter who gave Cliff counties is Bruce, W4OV. Back then he was K0CML, and used a station wagon with Swan 140 and Heli-whip antenna. (pics of his early installation at this time was in October CHNews). Bruce was a salesman for a shoe company and traveled around Kansas to various stores scattered across the state.

Orville, K0IHK, was first licensed in 1957. He quickly upgraded to General, and ran around Missouri hauling sawdust for a living. Initially he had a Multi-Eimac AF67 transmitter and PMR-6 receiver, a PE103 dynamotor for the HV, and a Webster Band-Spanner Antenna. Later, he ran a National NCX-3, an SSB rig. Occasionally he would use a key strapped to his leg to send cw to give out counties. He recalls giving many counties to Cliff, K9EAB. Orville worked up to 1800 counties, and then lost interest, never working them all.

The 40M net was abandoned in 1966 as foreign broadcast moved in. Most activity switched to 20 meters. Also, we were approaching another sunspot max period when 20M improved significantly.



Radio W4YDY Confirming our QSO of May 23, 1960,  
 at 1624 GMT., on 14315 Mcs. SSB RST 5-9  
 Xmtr: C. E. 100V Exciter x Viking Thunderbolt Linear 1000 wts.  
 Receivers: Collins 75A-4 RME 4350  
 Antennas: 5 EL. W3DZZ Triband Beam. Reyco Trap Dipole  
 Remarks: **TWO WAY S. S. B.**  
 Dear Dave: Tnx for the short visit - hope we  
 may get together again for a longer QSO. I will  
 appreciate your QSL for the Capital of N.C.  
 Pse QSL. S.a.s.e. enclosed. 73. *Cliff*  
 WIA WAZ WAC-PHONE WAC-CW WAS RCC DXCC DXCC-PHONE SSB  
 WFX-CW WPX-SS MMA WPR RAMEY ADXC 20 K NAA-II 599CW  
 BERTA WBE-PHONE WBE-CW WAVE WACAN WAG DUF-565  
 R&K KKK DRD WAA WSM WGS WAW OHA AHC  
 BP KARC WZIM ACISZ IDI CCC TPA CAA WFKAS  
 WACE WAPY WAVO WALA WHD DVO AHCH  
 CDM WAP WUN WACONN DID WBC WANE  
 WCA KZS 25 AAA WAB WHC  
 WAE WAC-YL ZMT DUTCH-DX WADM WWCNY W-100-U  
 C. Fritz, Joliet, Illinois

QSL Card Received by W4YDY for QSO with Cliff in 1960

From NF0N, Mike: "I have a QSL from K9EAB who I worked at 0417 Feb 23, 1966 on 3.990 SSB with RST of 59. The note on the card says: "Tnx QSO for Nebraska Centennial". In 1966-1967 the Hams participated in the Nebraska Centennial with special QSL cards and awards for making Ham

Radio contacts. I was fortunate to receive the #1 certificate for making and sending the most QSLs for the year using my original call of WA0KGD. One of those contacts was K9EAB along with many county hunters. **This activity is actually what got me started in county hunting and award chasing. Guess I can credit Cliff Corne for part of that.**”

From Jerry, W0GXQ: “Missing logs prior to 1978, so can't tell you when I first met Cliff, but I have one QSL in file from December 9th, 1962. Don't remember if he was ever mobile, but will look deeper into the QSL files for any other cards.

In 1962 the net met on 14070 - and not every day. Cliff held Top Honors with the CHC (Certificate Hunters Club) sponsored by Cliff Evans, K6BX. At the time I worked Cliff Corne, he had 318 different awards. His QSL mentions that the QSO was good for HTH (Hunt the Hunters) and he hoped that I would soon be on the CHC Roster.

Cliff had an impressive station for those days. HT-32B "Exciter" and a Heath Chippewa KL-1 Linear. His receiver was a Collins 75-A4. Antennas: 5 Element Telrex 20m Beam, W3DZZ Triband Beam, 2 Element Hy-Gain 40m Beam, and a 80m Dipole.

And of course, he ran from Peoria county IL.”

John, K4BAI, has several QSLs from Cliff. One is from Jan. 2, 1961. He has another card from June 2, 1961 – the Annual CHC contest, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> from May 15, 1966 for the GA QSO Party. John had gone portable for that test. John notes that K9EAB held CHC #18, having gotten in at the very beginning of the Certificate Hunters Club. John received USA-CA-500 number 1A, and USA-CA-1000 #2. He stopped shortly thereafter, and now sits at 2700 confirmed. He's decided it is time to finish up now after 40 years of inactivity in CH.

## Part II – About Cliff Corne

Now, on to some historical insight. Cliff contracted polio in 1949, and spent the next three years in the hospital. Cliff, K9EAB was confined to an iron lung for the rest of his short life.

For those born after 1955, they likely never have heard of an iron lung. Originally developed in 1927 by Drinker, and later improved by John Emerson, and iron lung, or ‘tank respirator’ was a last ditch medical effort to provide breathing for those whose breathing muscles had been paralyzed or impaired by polio. For some, it was just temporary for two weeks or so, until the viral infection had subsided, and they recovered somewhat and could breath on the their own. For others, it was a life long fact of life. Cliff Corne was confined to an ‘iron lung’, paralyzed below his neck, except for slight movement in one finger.



Picture Courtesy ARRL, Inc  
November 1962 QST, p 61

In 1930, an iron lung costs \$1500, the equivalent of a new house. In 1959, there were 1200 people in iron lungs, by 2000, there were 34. Modern technology had also created portable chest respirators to handle on these situations.

Before the invention of an effective polio vaccine by Jonas Salk in 1955, there were outbreaks of polio across the USA, affecting millions. Around the world, over 20 million. Many were left with some after effects. Worse, a recently discovered long term after effect has been seen. More later on this.



Franklin Roosevelt contracted polio in 1929, at age 39. He was elected President of the United States in 1933. Had the press been as invasive as today, he never would have been elected, as he lived his life in a wheelchair, and the only pictures of him standing had him propped up or supported by others – he could not walk on his own. The press was ‘diplomatic’ in those days – there was no TV coverage like today (no TV at all!). Often, polio left victims with weakened muscles that never fully recovered. FDR was elected multiple times to the Presidency – there were no ‘term limits’ then.

In FDR’s particular case, he had weakened leg muscles requiring extensive leg braces to barely be able to stand. In 1938, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis was founded – which later became the March of Dimes. Slowly, an effective vaccine against all 3 types of polio was created after tremendous effort. Dr. Sabin also developed an ‘oral vaccine’ that was widely put to use. Widespread campaigns to get every child inoculated were made.

Hieroglyphs on the walls on ancient Egyptian tombs show this disease was present thousands of years ago. It came in went in cycles.

In the USA, the first major epidemic recorded was in 1916 in New York City, when there were 9000 cases reported with over 2300 deaths. For the USA that year, it was 27,000 cases and 6,000 deaths. Polio, often called infantile paralysis, had often struck at infants (6 months to 5 years) but later moved up in age – between 1945 and 1954, 35% of people who contracted it were adults. (the virus strains had mutated slightly – much like the flu virus does every couple years). The last case of native polio in the USA was in 1979 among Amish who had refused vaccination. However, around the world, new cases keep being reported due to failures in many countries to keep up vaccinations. India, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan lead the world in new cases of polio each year, due to lack of vaccination.

By 1957, two years after vaccinations started, cases of polio dropped by 85-90% in the USA. (above info from the Smithsonian Website). Within another 3 years, it was essentially eradicated.

Ernie, W8DCH, sent me an email concerning Cliff:

“Yep, I was active during the K9EAB era but now at age 82 my memory of those days has suffered, as well as my CW. I did operate mobile both



CW and SSB on 40, 80 and 20, but primarily from OHIO. I do remember Cliff on the nets but only have recollection of working him in the ILL QSO Parties back in 1964 and 1965. **I do remember him as a super CW operator from his iron lung.** If I am not mistaken, he keyed his rig on CW with his nose. There was an article written about him with pictures but I can't say where it was. Maybe some much closer to him can elaborate more. ....Sri I can't be of more help.”

The picture above appeared in Nov. 62 QST with an article about Cliff receiving the (one and only) Arne Trossman (of CQ Magazine) High Honor Plaque. It was presented by the Peoria Area Radio Club on August 4, 1962, in a special ceremony. The Governor of the State of Illinois also issued a proclamation making the following week as Radio Amateur Week in Illinois. This event made the local TV stations and press around the state.

The picture also appeared in other publications, including Popular Electronics, July 1963, and CQ Magazine. MARAC offers an award, the “Polaris Award” in honor of Cliff Corne. You can see a copy of the old MARAC web page at:

[http://marac.org/awards/Cliff\\_Corne\\_AWARD.htm](http://marac.org/awards/Cliff_Corne_AWARD.htm) from back when the award was known as the Cliff Corne award before 2004, complete with picture.

If you have some MRCs from the 1970s era, you will see lines at the bottom to fill in your CHC number and **your Cliff Corne** number. Cliff Corne number? And here again, we get into a ‘grey area’ of uncertainty.

Yes. for the Cliff Corne Award. One source indicated that you qualified for it by working someone in each county with USA-CA ‘all counties’ number. That would seem to have been ‘too much of a challenge’ as there were only 50 people with USCA numbers in 1970, and half of them didn’t go mobile!

The more likely answer is that you had to work 10 for the first level. This award is in the 1972 Convention package of information. It was issued in five levels of 10, 25, 50, 75 and 100. When you completed all 100 contacts, you were issued a Cliff Corne number. For example, N7AKT was USA-CA #410 and Cliff Corne #359. This is the same as today – other than being five levels back then. Of course, in 1970, there were under 50 USCA numbers issued, so getting to 100 would be something where you waited for

new numbers, and worked essentially every number holder to qualify! Now, there are over 1100. Maybe the award is 'too easy' now?

[A request on the K3IMC forum for help in getting magazine articles about Cliff, K9EAB, produced excellent results. Thanks to everyone who helped out with emails, suggestions, articles, and further references! Thanks CQ and QST for checking the archives and the excellent info].

Cliff was active on SSB until 1967, when he began to lose his voice. He operated another year on cw, but eventually began to lose interest in ham radio, selling his equipment to pursue other interests before his death in November 1969 at a young age of 29. He had earned over 1,100 different awards, and there weren't too many new ham challenges for him left!

His enthusiasm in the quest for 'all counties' was infectious. Over a thousand followed in his footsteps to complete USA-CA, and to this day, county hunters used the MRCs which he promoted and sold first. **He'll always be "Number One" in the county hunting history.**



Picture from CQ, October 1965, courtesy CQ Magazine

Bonus Trivia Points – Cliff Corne worked 3079 Counties to get USA-CA-3079. Yet, Broomfield, Colorado wasn't a county back then. Ten years ago, there were only 3076 counties. Now there are 3077. Name the missing 3 counties he worked!

Now where did that 'Extra Special Plaque' ever wind up? Would you believe TX?



Trophy Given to Cliff Corne, K9EAB - 3079 Counties!  
United States of America Counties Award #1 (pic courtesy WB9NUL)

The plaque above reads:

**K9EAB  
Cliff Corne, Jr.**

**United States of America  
Counties Award 3079  
Number One**

## **Now to fast forward to 2006**

Over of the 300 million people in the USA, there are about 75 million over age 55. Folks younger than that were born after the introduction of the polio vaccine, which prevented further outbreaks across the USA. Within that population of 75 million are an estimated 1.8 to 2 million ‘polio survivors’, some of whom are unaware they had polio in childhood. Up to 20-30% of all cases were not reported to authorities or recognized at the time as polio. Rural doctors often diagnosed it as ‘summer gripe’. Thus, about 2 in 100 of those over age 55 may be affected with newly developing aftereffects.

Within the past 20 years, medical experts have looked into what is called Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS), where muscles and more importantly, the motor neurons that control them, slowly begin to degrade at higher than normal rates, bringing on the symptoms of PPS. While it appeared that muscles and nerves ‘regenerated themselves’ initially, after the initial infection subsided, they did so in an impaired fashion.

Dr. Bruno, (Chairperson, International Post-Polio Task Force Director, at Englewood (NJ) Hospital and Medical Center) in his extensive work at his clinic in NY for the past 20 years, and the author of The Polio Paradox, has concluded that there is no thing as an unaffected muscle or motor neuron in someone who had polio. Up to 98% of the motor neurons in the body were infected by the virus. Fifty percent died. In the most severe cases, the ‘brain stem’ was impacted severely, which preventing normal breathing – the muscles could not function without signals from the brain – and thus the worse cases of the most serious form of polio (of those that survived wound up requiring a respirator just to ‘stay alive’. Cliff

Corne was in that category.) Others wound up permanently with leg braces, crutches, or in wheel chairs due to impaired muscle/nerve function.

In the majority of cases of survivors, the remaining 50% of motor neurons to some extent were able to repair themselves after the initial two week infection, but never back to 100% normal. This allowed many people to resume life at least some level of function. In many cases, there were no obvious 'after effects' for decades, even with 50% of motor neurons permanently gone, and with the use of only 30-50% of some muscles. The body was able to 'fake it'. Others had only one affected limb weakened, so it seemed. These folks led normal lives, participated in sports, and were able to function at a high level for many decades. Now the 'boomerang effect' comes back to haunt them. And perhaps on what appeared to be the 'unaffected muscles' in their bodies.

From Dr Bruno on his web page at:

<http://www.inglewoodhospital.com/postpolio/>

"Post-Polio Sequelae (PPS, Post-Polio Syndrome, The Late Effects of Poliomyelitis) are the unexpected and often disabling symptoms -- overwhelming fatigue, muscle weakness, muscle and joint pain, sleep disorders, heightened sensitivity to anesthesia, cold and pain, as well as difficulty swallowing and breathing -- that occur about 35 years after the poliovirus attack in 75% of paralytic and 40% of "non-paralytic" polio survivors. The existence of PPS has been verified by articles in many medical journals, including The Journal of the American Medical Association, the American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and The New England Journal of Medicine."

Fortunately for the majority of Americans, they were born after the time of polio epidemics, or managed to escape it 'way back when', are not affected by this new finding on PPS. But the people who did have polio (whether they know it or not) have high probability of seeing the impact of the late life effects of polio. It was a vicious disease, and still, 40-50-60 years after, PPS is looming to again cause problems for those who had it many decades ago. The new generations do not face this threat, but Mother Nature can throw a curve ball at any time with SARS, Bird Flu crossover to humans, or new anti-biotic resistant diseases. They'll always be a need for sharp



medical researchers and people dedicated to eradicating the worst human diseases.

## Conclusion

So now you know the story of Cliff Corne, K9EAB, the creation of the USA-CA award at CQ, and a bit about polio which was a big part of his life. Despite his handicap, he sought and obtained over 1000 awards, including being 'the first' to qualify for USA-CA – Worked All Counties. He was active on SSB and CW. He met adversity with enthusiasm and everyone was a 'friend' on the net. He was an integral part of the County Hunting community for as long as he was able to stay on the radio and operate.

He had thousands of friends he met on the air, and it was a great community of county hunters that got things started. About five years after his award, folks were gathering to form the first county hunting 'organization' – MARAC. Next issues –more on the beginning of MARAC.

We still use the MRCs today that he was the first to develop and sell to others. If you go to a convention, you'll see we all take pride in the USA-CA number we have received, following after "Number One". Cliff led the way.

MARAC today honors him by the "Polaris" award.

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## Special Canadian Prefixes

Heard some new prefixes lately? Here's maybe why. (from W5YI Newsletter).

At the request of *Radio Amateurs of Canada*, Industry Canada has authorized all Canadian radio amateurs to use special event prefixes for the months of December 2006 and January 2007, to mark the 100th anniversary of the first AM voice broadcast by Reginald Fessenden on December 24, 1906.

Reginald Fessenden, who was born in East Bolton, Quebec, on October 6, 1866, and lived until July 22, 1932, was the holder of more than 500 patents on a wide variety of subjects, and the inventor of radio.

He is particularly known for: the first voice transmission by radio in 1900, the first transatlantic two-way radio communications in January 1906, and the first radio broadcasts of entertainment and music in December 1906.

On Christmas Eve, 1906, from a transmitting station in Brant Rock, Massachusetts, he sent a short program which included the song 'O Holy Night' played on the violin and a reading from the Bible. A second short program was broadcast on December 31, 1906.

Canadian radio amateurs are authorized to use the following special event prefixes during the period 1 December 2006 to 31 January 2007 inclusive: CF for VA stations, CG for VE stations, CH for VO stations, CI0 for VY0 stations, CI1 for VY1 stations, CI2 for VY2 stations.

## Doing Some 160M Contesting

The bands had been quiet for mobiles since N4CD had gotten home – plus I had a bunch of things to catch up on. However, the 160m contest was coming up, and there are those 'band counties' to chase! Occasionally in the past, I had thrown up a temporary 160M antenna. I live on a small suburban



lot, 70 feet by 110 feet, and the house occupies most of the area, with no 'backyard' to speak of.

However, hams aren't stopped by lack of space. Friday afternoon came, and I hadn't dug out all the pieces for the 160M "L" that I had put up before. I did find enough wire for the radials (66 feet – 1/8 wave), so I strung out two of them. It was getting dark, so I figured I would try to load a wire, not up too high (along the top of the 8 ft high fence. It made a good dummy load, and it took a lot of effort just to work 4 stations. Yep, believe the antenna books - you want a 'vertical' antenna for 160, or your long wire or dipole up 150 or more feet in the air.

Saturday I looked harder for the hardware for the inverted "L"...which consists of 3 ten foot pieces of galvanized steel 'fence top rail' – about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, hose clamps, and insulators. . It is something like old TV mast, but steel, and more rigid. The cheap Radio Shack type mast easily buckles. These mast sections, and two hose clamps to go around it, one to connect the coax at the bottom, one to connect the 'top loading wire' at the top, a beer bottle for the base insulator, a piece of coax, and something to hold the antenna up are what is needed. In the past, I had used large hose clamps to attach the 160M vertical to the fence post. They were missing. This year, I tried using bungee cords – a lot less effort, especially when your fingers are cold, and it takes a lot of turns with the screwdriver to tighten up the hose clamps.

This is a temporary installation – right near the property line (not exactly 'legal' as far as antenna regs in my city, and not very 'hard to see' for my homeowners association. So it goes up at the beginning of the contest, comes down before Monday morning. Out of sight, out of mind.

The antenna is 30 feet high, with a 100 foot long 'top loading wire' that goes across the alley to the neighbors fence (another no-no as far as the town is concerned – but only put the wire across the alley when dark, down by morning – hi hi). One person can easily 'walk it up' the vertical. The top wire is blue colored insulated #20 – hard to see even in the daytime.



160M Inverted L at back corner of lot. (30' vertical)

Naturally, antennas work best with a good insulator at the bottom – in my case, an empty 15 year old Coors bottle. The vertical upright had two insulators of PVC pipe connector sections so it did not touch the fence post.

In the past, before the lots behind my QTH were sold, I could string out a half dozen radials. (1990) Now, I just had two in place. I had lost the original top wire. In addition, the neighbor to my west had redone some of their fence, so the original sign for “Fence Protection by XX” was gone – it was my attachment point in the past. I think I skipped a few years of not operating in the contest. All the pieces I was looking for were scattered in different boxes/locations. The garage is not ‘organized’ in any sense.

So it was back to square one. I hooked up what seemed like 100 feet of wire to the top of the vertical. I connected it to the neighbor’s fence across the alley up about 8 feet, so it sloped down a bit. With the MFJ analyzer, it resonated at 2.2Mhz. Oops. I added about 15 feet of wire – and it went along the fence 8 foot up– success – 1:1 SWR from 1.805 to 1.85 MHz. (good for rig, not great for vertical which on good ground plane should be about 35 ohms, or 1.7:1 SWR). Probably lots of ‘ground loss’. But any antenna is better than no antenna. It would do to make some contacts for

band counties. It was about to get dark anyway. I only get in these contests to work new counties, and give out a few contacts to others I can work in one or two calls without humongous pileups.



Detail of bottom of 160M temp vertical – Coors bottle, hose clamp, radials attached to shield of coax. Old glove is keeping the mast away from fence.

It took 4 hours of running around to get the antenna up – looking for this, looking for that. I won't make a good 160DXer – I fall asleep too early – and hit the sack at 11pm.

Did it work? The barefoot FT-1000 at 200w worked 150 stations in maybe 6 hours – I pooped out early. Getting through the 'east coast QRM was tough'. I snagged WA, DE, CT, WMA, and PJ2, some Mid Atlantic, SC, FL, GA, dozens and dozens of IL, IN, MN, OH, MI, WI, CO, a few in MT, UT, AZ, NM. Probably many I had worked in previous 160 contests, but with lack of activity on the regular net frequencies, it was a fun thing to do.

I didn't have a 'big sig' but often got through in one or two calls since this was the second night, and many had worked each other already. . Calling

CQ didn't work very well – folks mainly answered the 'loud stations' – many running good antennas and KWs.

I worked county hunter Fred, W4DF, operating at another station for the contest, and K4CNW, K7RE, AF9T, as well as some other long time county hunters and participants in state QSO parties. Bill, WS4Y, one of the other members of the TI9M expedition to Cocos Island, was on – he's a big 160M operator and was one of the chief 160M ops for the DXpedition.



Vertical pipe held to fence post by 4 Bungee Cords

Was it 'pretty'? No. Did it work 'OK'. Yes....and all gone by Sunday noon time – put away for another year. Now someday I have to look up all those stations I worked and see if I need their county on 160M cw. Next time you need a temporary antenna, a FD antenna for 160, maybe this temporary type installation will work for you.

# The NN9K/K9WA Missouri Trip Report

November 18,19,20, 2006

**From Jim, K9WA;**

Pete, NN9K and I discussed the idea of making a trip to Missouri to run many of the more difficult counties in the state. Missouri is not easy to work from the Midwest this time of year considering band conditions and activity. We also thought a trip during the ARRL SS SSB weekend would help maximize CW county hunters for our trip. All bands 20/30 as well as 40 and 80 were included.

We left at around 1300z on Saturday driving toward southern Illinois to start the trip. Working a few early risers in a few of the SW Illinois counties, we entered Missouri to run our first Missouri County, Clark at about 1450z. We ran the northern tier of the state driving west and then headed south. Activity was good and the bands didn't appear too awful bad. We ran 13 counties the first day and spent the night at a Super 8 in Kearney, Mo.

We started out Sunday after a very good breakfast offered by the Super 8. Our first of the day would be Clay County. Bands were much busier today, yesterday we were sharing the CH frequencies with Bob, N4CD/M and Jay AA9KH/M. Today we were joined by Jerry, W0GXQ/M and Jim, N9JF/M. At times, this made for some busy QRGs and moves were in order. I felt things went as smoothly as they could and I trust we made most of the gang happy. The drive was really nice and the south and western portion of Missouri is attractive country. Roads are good and county markers are easy to spot. At the end of day two, we added another 18 counties and spent the night in Marshfield, Mo in the southern part of the state.

Day 3, Monday, we began the day with the Wright/Webster County line. Throughout the day, the bands continued to be good with most signals an honest S9! Why this is rarely the case from my home QTH remains a mystery! Maybe no one needs Henry County, Illinois anymore.....hi!

Southeast Missouri is the home of the Mark Twain National Forest. For driving, this means many winding roads with a lot of ups and downs. Pete, NN9K did an excellent job of driving, Jeff Gordon of NASCAR would have been proud! This part of the state is really beautiful with some awesome views and large ranches! The roads tend to slow you down and we

had a long way to go. We tried to work everyone who needed us and hope we didn't miss anyone.

In Butler County, we finally turned north to begin a zigzag course on our way home. There is a lot area in Twain National Forest, and I'm glad we made it out by dusk, driving would be a chore on those roads in the dark. We decided Audrain County would be our last as the bands were going long and the activity was decreasing except for the RTTY on the 40 meter CH frequency and that was about 20 over S9! After finally crossing the Mississippi into Illinois, we had run another 21 counties.... It was a long day!

Some final thoughts of the trip.... I think judging by the several "tnx L/C" comments, Pete and I had mapped a decent route which must have helped several county hunters. The Icom IC-7000 performed perfectly and the antennas did their job. Finally, the best aspect of the entire trip was the help we got when running. I can't list all the calls of the CHers who pitched in to either run us or help on QSPs. They certainly made the trip more enjoyable. Much appreciated! So, after 52 counties and 1236 Q's, we hope the gang enjoyed the trip as much as we did.....

### **From Pete, NN9K;**

Jim told our story nicely. He and I have run counties together before and we usually don't have any problems deciding on a route or whether to run a county on the fly or find a line to operate from.

Quite honestly in the early part of November I was ready for a road trip, didn't really care about operating but wanted to spend some time behind the wheel. The drive was relaxing in one sense and a bit nerve-racking in another, too many tales of deer versus county hunter! We did see a few Bambi relatives but they were well off the road and presented no problem.

It was really nice to listen to a good operator run the pile-ups we generated; Jim always does a nice job sorting out the callers. But there were also a lot of operators out there calling us and most everyone was well behaved unlike some of the DX pile-ups I like to listen to.

So all in all we had a good trip, the van behaved nicely, the gas prices were better than we normally see at home and the radio and antennas worked just as designed. 1589 miles from my house and return, now the question is—"Where do we go next?"





Phelps/Maries County Line, MO



Watch out for the “Green Powered Vehicles” – no fossil fuels needed  
All ‘emissions’ are 100% bio-degradable



## New 40M SSB Net Frequency

From Dan, KM9X, on the K3IMC forum:

“New 40m freq, week one- observations - Well, for most county hunters, the "dreaded" move to the new 40m freq of 7.185 has went well. It seems a couple refuse to operate there, whining and citing problems that someone else may not be able to operate there, but most tuned up, or did a minor change to a mobile whip or something. ....

I started the net on Monday morning on the new frequency and had some luck. Not many mobiles out now, and bands were coming back from all the flares over the weekend. Had maybe a couple dozen mobile runs. Tuesday was ok, with people checking 7.185, .238 and .243 because we still don't know who got the word and who hasn't. Not everyone has the internet, or reads this forum, or hangs out on the net to hear it. We did what we could to talk it up.

Wednesday was really bad, no one ran hardly all day...Only a few runs on 40m. Thursday, we had several mobiles. I started at 9am and ran till I lost the band at 2300(happens about every night anymore, lose everyone). Had 68 runs and lots of good counties. As many know, it takes a handfull of mobiles putting out counties in a constant motion to keep a nice net. We had some real big runs and lots of stations on the new freq.

Today (Friday) no one ran till almost noon on 40m. The mobiles running only ran 20m.. In these conditions, it just baffles me why you would run counties on 20m only, get the 4 contacts and move on. 40m is where everyone is in the crappy conditions we have now. We all lost out on a lot of great counties on the east coast because no one in the eastern half of the US can hear them on 20m. Ernie got them. I ran GA two weekend ago and had 51 contacts on the Johnson and Laurens line on 40m!!!

When Larry got going and K0RCJ found us again, we had about 30 runs this afternoon. Had several "drive bys" all week of hams listening and then jumping in to give their county. A Tipton, TN fixed station today must have worked 50 contacts! None had ever heard of the net, probably never made it up to 7.238.

We have had Ernie, KF7CT, N0ZA, TX, OK and such on the nets. Bands long in the am and later in the afternoon. Good crowd. I had a blast running the net and appreciate all the help with relays.

Broadcast is bad about 1200z, but is clear and just plain quiet by 1300z. Some QRM once in a while from a QSO here or there, but overall, no Rotten Apples QRMin the net, no 40 over splatter from the preachers on 7.240... and broadcast till 11am and starting again at 3pm. Overall, very much improved conditions.

Ernie even commented about how he loved it, never could work the mobiles on 40m before!

But 40m is 40m, goes so long we all lose each other at 6 to 6:30 Eastern, but 20m does the same thing.. I am pleased with the better conditions, but that will change after the 200,000 new HF operators come on in Feb.

Change is not good most of the time. I am sorry I am getting blamed for "ruining the 40m CHer net" as emails I received stated. In fact, one ham, who I have never heard on 7.238 in the years I have been on, stated there was no intentional interference from the RA. I was making it all up. I guess the other 25 of us also was making it up. He must have not spent enough time on the net. It is so nice to be able to take the high road and leave that fighting behind.

As any net, if you can't keep it busy, you can't hold the frequency doing nothing. Someone else wants it, I am not going to tell them we are using it, when not one mobile has ran all morning. That happened this morning. Called for stations to run a county for 2 and a half hrs this morning and not one showed. When I went to get coffee a QSO was going on. They held the frequency till about 1pm. I don't blame them, but with mobiles running only 20m, we lose the freq and the counties!" Dan KM9X (12/23/06)

N4CD comments: 7238 was not the 'original' CH frequency. It was 7223, which was down below where current General class license holders can operate now! Incentive licensing changed that. So to those who claim that 7238 is 'where we always have been', they are mistaken. From the spots, it looks like all the activity has moved to 7185, plus or minus. Maybe some have rusted adjustment screws, or can't find the Allen wrench to get the whip adjusted, but sooner or later they'll join us. Or maybe some have

forgotten how to put new frequencies in the memories of their transceivers? The new frequency is great – No Rotten Apples, no 40 over S9 QRM from 7240, no Baja net. Thanks to Dan and other others who scouted it out and moved us down there when the expanded bands open up.

## Net Shenanigans

Net Shenanigans - You would think, now with “K2JG” club license renewal up for FCC ‘enforcement action’, that the ‘operator’ at K2JG would be on ‘best behavior’. Not so. [As you recall, the ‘renewal of “Club License K2JG” was revoked, and sent to the FCC Enforcement bureau for action as noted in last months CHNews.]

Best behavior? Don’t bet on it. KN6ZB made a special trip to Trinity, CA, to give out the county, and to make a contact with KA3DRO, Ron, for LC WBOW for his Bingo. As you may recall, in the last issue of the CHNews, Ron made two trips with K3IMC to finish up many of the remaining counties he had, and was getting mighty close. So Jim, KN6ZB started his run in Trinity, and worked the people as he heard them. Then he heard Ron, KA3DRO calling, and worked him. The “Club”, not able to immediately react, did not have time to jump in and prevent that contact from happening, or it took a few seconds for the ‘club’ operator to realize this was the LC WBOW for KA3DRO. Then the ‘reaction’ started! True to form! Temper tantrum! Take out his vengeance on all the county hunters! How could this happen to him? He let a contact happen?

Needless to say, at that point, the mobile’s run was abruptly ‘terminated’ without relays, after only five minutes. What can you say? The same pattern and vendetta over and over and over again. Juvenile temper tantrums. Uncontrollable outbursts and actions. “Vendettas” initiated that continue for years and years. And of course, other county hunter’s interests totally put aside in his ‘reign of terror’. I wonder how many were waiting for a relay to get Trinity? Time and time again.

An end to ‘trashing and bashing’? Not on your life. Someone asked for the latest numbers recently, and just like always, when someone on his ‘vendetta hate list’ had earned an award, he’d mention the call, and follow it with a very sarcastic, malicious comment.

KA3DRO was run off the net five years ago for simply giving a LC WBOW KF0LZ on the KZ2P ‘Hate list’? Then years and years of malicious comments. N4CD run off the net for giving a LC WBOW on pre arranged schedule. Then years and years, continuing to this date, of attacks, interference with contacts, etc. What can you say?

In addition, he still continues to interfere with all the mobiles making contact with folks on his ‘personal vendetta list’. Why would the FCC renew the ‘club license’ of the club that doesn’t even know its own name? Or that continues the ‘trashing, bashing, and banning’ practices that the FCC took him to task for years ago? If the ‘club trustee’ can’t control this, then the club doesn’t deserve a license. Plain and simple.

On the FCC database, it, K2JG, the Club Callsign, is suddenly the “Atlantic Amateur Association”. See <http://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/UlsSearch/license.jsp?licKey=237742>

On the MARAC database page, until recently even when it received bogus awards (not eligible for them), “it” was the “Atlantic Radio Club”. Congrats were recently posted on the forum to “Atlantic Radio”. On the last update, with the ‘Club HQ’ moving to South Carolina, suddenly it is the ‘Atlantic Amateur Association’. This is now the second move for the ‘club’. It must be hard to attend meetings in person with the club moving every few years and changing names. When was the last time your club and ‘club station’ moved 500 miles away? Or suddenly changed names? Maybe he doesn’t want ‘club’ in the name of his organization that has a **CLUB** license from the FCC?

Is this anything but the personal ‘second call’ of James Grandinetti? After all, how many people put their CLUB CALL on the license plates of the car? (he started on this in NJ with NJ plates reading K2JG). Do you have a club call on your personal car? The ‘club nonsense’ continues.

One day in late December, Larry, N2OCW, was running in PA. The “NC” could not hear him. After his initial run, Larry asked for relays. A station

who was hearing him S9 volunteered, and Larry said “Go ahead please”. Well, since this helper had not ‘asked NC’ if it was “OK” to do relays for the mobile, NC jumped in, proclaiming “This frequency is in use, please QRT or QSY”. Then NC proceeded to ask if there was ‘another’ station who wanted to do relays. What’s with this jerk? A station copying the mobile 59 volunteered, but forgot to ask “NC” first if he could get ‘permission’ to do the relays, and instead of welcoming any help with the mobiles, tells that helper in no uncertain terms to ‘get lost’. And this is the operator at a club station that gets voted NC of the Year, year after year?

It’s a shame that the 600 members of MARAC have to put up with the juvenile antics of the 3 or 4 county hunters who perpetuate this ‘club lunacy’, and the malicious intent of the ‘club’ operator at whatever it’s name is this week at the expense of the mobiles and those trying to help and those wishing for relays, time and time again. No wonder 40M is where many hang out exclusively.

## The US-CHA Award

It seems there are a few others in County Hunter History who have some interesting ‘history’ and ‘oversized egos’ associated with them. As described above, Clif Evans, K6BX, started the USA-CA program at CQ Magazine. Prior to this, for about 5 years, Clif was very active in promoting this Certificate Hunter Club, which at its peak had over 4000 members seeking hundreds of different awards, and nearly 180 chapters worldwide. Clif Evans retired after 33 years of service in the Navy, as a Commander and Naval Aviator, on disability. (likely from detached retina suffered in plane crash).

There is uncertainty over the ‘start’ of USA-CHA – It could have started prior to his work with CQ Magazine, then vanished while the CQ version took over, or not. However, if it ever was created, and then was forgotten about for 4 years, it reappeared after K6BX left CQ, or as most speculate, only got started after he left CQ Magazine. If anyone has solid evidence one way or the other, let me know!

The goal of the CHC was to accumulate points – you did this by qualifying for awards, by working the same awards with different mobiles or band or mode endorsements, by winning state QSO parties in your category, and by

achieving different levels on awards. Often, awards had levels, so if you qualified for the first level, you got say 1 point. Another point for the next level. Or you could get to level one on 40M, then do it again on 20 meters for another point. There was a listing of who had how many points published regularly. One popular way was to get the “Worked All XX State” award (or qualify for levels of it – since often you only had to work ½ or so to get to the ‘first level’). You got more points for the next level, and so on.

It seems suspicious that in his 1966 copyright date Directory of Awards and Certificates that he talks about a “17x22 inch US-CHA certificate .....The parchment paper permits each holder to color in counties worked’. Most awards CHC offered were printed on standard paper, and the expensive large certificate at CQ caused massive headaches. It isn’t likely that anyone would start with this, but only had to come up with it to ‘compete’ with the CQ award large certificate on parchment. He takes full credit for ‘starting’ the USA-CA program at CQ Magazine, but is silent on when US-CHA started. There is nothing about ‘start dates’ on any listed award in his Directory, and it appears to be a never ending addition of materials with no idea of what was included when. No one has come forward with anything about US-CHA prior to 1965 or so.

Ted, K1BV, indicates that in his 1970 Directory of Awards and Certificates, there is one given to those who had ‘Worked All Counties in Five States”, with subsequent endorsements of additional five states completed. K6BX and the various CHC chapters also sponsored many of the “Worked All This State” awards. Many of these were available in levels as well, for working 2/3rds or 80% of the counties in the state. That award is not in the 1966 Directory owned by W9MSE.

As Dick, K2MGA described Clif: “He was a retired Navy Captain who had served eminently in WW II, and was as hard boiled and egotistical a character as you could imagine. His ego demanded that he refer to himself relentlessly throughout his CQ column and his publications as THE OLD MAN, all caps. You couldn’t look at a piece of Clif’s writing without your eye being drawn immediately and repeatedly to THE OLD MAN, which is exactly what Clif wanted! He was determined that no one could ever forget that he was the main man! “

Dick tells of how after assuming the title of Editor, he corrected what he saw as a very bad editing policy of using all caps in Clif's column in CQ.... he changed "THE OLD MAN" to "The Old Man". Clif exploded.

Dick writes: "He wrote me a steaming letter ripping me from stem to stern..... he quit when I refused to back down"... Thus began at least a decade of verbal attacks on CQ, Cowan Publishing, and me personally."..."What a shame he chose to waste so much of his remaining time and energy over such a trivial thing, but ego was paramount to Clif."

After leaving CQ, it appears Clif began to seriously promote a competing award, the US-CHA, in levels of 300 counties. A note on the K3IMC forum from Jeff, W9MSE reads:

"I have hanging above my radio my certificate for the USCHA award from the Certificate Hunters Club-K6BX. It is a really nice (black and white) map, about 18 X 24 inches of all the counties which I colored in each 300 counties a different color. I have each level endorsed from 300 up to 2400 with seals for each level. Level k, 300 counties #242 ALL CW 9-6-68 up to 2400 counties Level d, 2400 counties #112 ALL CW 2-3-75 with each 300 county level in between dated with seals. After that the combination of my decrease in radio activity and also the eventual ending of the USCHA program resulted in my not getting the total counties of 3077 counties for Level A."

Jeff continues: "the US-CHA was a competing award by K6BX, which the Certificate Hunters Club issued, in competition with the USA-CA that CQ Magazine had. There was a Record Booklet of about 14 pages which included 2 pages of Rule, and then about 12 pages of the listing of all the counties, and with just a space to mark call of the station in each county worked. On the last page was the application and certification form which required 2 hams to certify with name and call. The award did NOT require QSLs for the contacts. I have no idea if anyone ever got the award for level A (3077 counties). "

Others have the level "A" award, having finished the CQ Magazine award, then simply sending their CQ number to Clif, who then issued a US-CHA certificate for level "A", or all counties.

One of the unusual features of this award was you also got credit for the county by working someone from it. Also, no two finished awards would look alike, but would be very individual since folks would color in their counties worked in differing patterns, one color for each 300 worked.

K6BX went on a 15 year campaign of 'trashing, bashing, and maligning' CQ Magazine, the USA-CA program, the owners, and the editor at CQ Magazine. Temper tantrums, and issuing of directly competing awards, and lots of vitriol in his CHC publications. He put out a monthly subscription newsletter.

The county hunters started serious county hunting in the early 60s on 40M. A CHC/ISSB net ran on 14.333, and in March of 1963, the ISSB net moved to 14332 and the CHC/FHC Service Net to 14340, per W7OK's 1972 history.

By 1966, the 40M had foreign broadcast problems made 40M operation tough and the county hunters decided to leave the 'CHC/FHC Service Net' on 14.340 and form the Independent County Hunters net on 14.336 since NC had to run his net 'HIS WAY' or else, and he likely was upset at the high percentage of county hunters seeking the CQ award, and lower percentage of hams pursuing HIS awards. There were tons of new mobiles as well. It was also the time of the sunspot max as well with activity shifting to higher bands. There were normally 3 net control stations on at one time on 20M, to insure everyone in the country 'got heard'.

After K6BX death in the late 70s, his award program died shortly after. County Hunters formed MARAC around 1970, and other county hunting organizations started awards as well. Likely long before its final demise, the CHC county awards were fading fast, as few have even heard of them now. Few have ever heard of US-CHA. Those who were part way through toward getting all were 'out of luck'. All confirmed contacts, naturally, did count toward the CQ USA-CA. So all you had to do was apply.

People still chase the prestigious DXCC, WAZ, WAS, WPX, and USCA awards which require confirmations. Others still chase 'paper' certificates from all over the world. County Hunters pursue additional non-confirmed awards via MARAC.

That's the history of US-CHA which came and went in about 15 years.



## Awards Issued

Third Time #202, N2OCW, Larry, December 12, 2006

## Events for County Hunters

A few events in January, with a few things to catch band counties! Courtesy ARRL Contest Corral, January 2007 issue.

January 1, 2007 – **Straight Key Night** – rules Dec QST – dig out the old straight key, the J-38, or whatever else from the ‘old days’ and join in the fun.

From ARRL: “At the beginning of each year many operators around the US, and world-wide, declare a respite from the technological evolution. They turn back the pages of modern operation and look towards our roots in this hobby - **ARRL Straight Key Night**. Some consider CW antiquated while others view it an outdated technology. But for many - old-timer and newcomer alike - it is a reliable friend..

The object of this friendly event is to enjoy some good, old fashioned QSO fun, using straight keys. The emphasis is on rag-chewing rather than fast contest-type exchanges. **SKN 2007** begins at 7:00 p.m. EST December 31 and runs for 24 hours through 7:00 p.m. EST January 1 (**0000 -2400 UTC January 1, 2007**).”

**North American QSO Party** -- CW, sponsored by the National Contest Journal from 1800Z Jan 13-0600Z Jan 14. Frequencies: 160-10 meters. Categories: SOAB and M2, 100 W power limit, operate a maximum of 10 hours (off times must be at least 30 min and M2 entries may operate the entire contest). Exchange: Name and S/P/C. Score: QSOs × States + Province + NA DXCC countries (count each once per band). For information: [www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php](http://www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php).

**ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes** -- 1900Z Jan 20-0400Z Jan 22 (see Dec 2006 *QST*, p 98).

**North American QSO Party** -- Phone, 1800Z Jan 20-0600Z Jan 21 (see Jan 13-14).

**CQ WW 160 Meter Contest** -- CW, sponsored by *CQ Magazine* from 0000Z Jan 27-2359Z Jan 28 (Phone is Feb 24-25). Exchange: RST and S/P/C. Categories: SO-QRP (<5 W), LP (<150 W), HP, MO categories. Enter as MO if packet or spotting nets are used. QSO points: own entity -- 2 pts; same continent -- 5 pts; diff cont -- 10 pts; /MM stations count 5 points, but no multiplier. Score: QSO points × states + VE call areas + DXCC entities (KH6 and KL7 count as DXCC only). For more information: [www.cq-amateur-radio.com/index.html](http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/index.html).

Coming up in Feb – The VA QSO Party – You can earn an award for working all the counties in VA, and a higher level endorsement for working all the counties (with no wild card independent cities), plus ALL the Independent Cities in the state. A step higher than what most CH do.

During calendar year 2007, you can earn a special commemorative award – The Virginia Quadricentennial (400 years) by making 25 two-way contacts with Virginia stations in the year 2007. Fee is \$2. ( I suspect their idea is you work 25 different people, not one mobile running through 25 counties). It's a very colorful 8 ½ x 11 inch certificate.



That's it for another edition of the County Hunter News! See y'all next month. Next issue – maybe some MARAC history and early pics? Article on fixing the 'broadband noise from broadband internet FIOS'. Been on a county-putting out trip? Got some interesting county hunting lore to share? Send them my way!

De N4CD