

County Hunter News

August 1, 2012
Volume 8, Issue 8

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 provide you with interesting, thought provoking articles, articles of county hunting history, or about county hunters or events, ham radio or electronics history, general ham radio interest, and provide news of upcoming operating events.

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

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188/7185 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.W6RK.com

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

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

For general <http://www.wd3p.net/ch/netproc/netproc.htm> information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:
<http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm>

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

[The CW net procedure is written up at:](#)

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

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

<http://pages.suddenlink.net/w4ydy/hamlinks.html#County>

Download the file to a flash card that fits in your GPS unit, turn it on, and the county lines should appear!

De N4CD, Editor (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

July was a good month for mobiles being on the road. It was also a good month for solar flares, HF blackouts, and many days of rotten propagation with the A index up in the 20s and higher (up to 60) and the K index up to 5 or 6 some days (horrible). Still, lots of counties were run and worked.

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Mobile Activity in late June and July

It was a good month for activity with at least a dozen mobiles headed to the county hunter convention in Vancouver Washington.

Major trips were done by Mike, NF0N, Frank, AA9JJ/Kay, N9QPQ, Barry, N0KV/Pat, N0DXE, Matt, W0NAC/Sharon N0LXJ, Bill, WG9A, Mary, AB7NK/Neil, K7SEN, Larry, W7FEN, Tony, WA9DLB, Bob, N8KIE, Leo, WY7LL and Chris, WY7LL, Milt, KY0E,

AF3X, Jeffrey, Cliff, AC0B,

In addition, Don, K3IMC rented a car in NV and put out counties for the next week or two up in the Pacific North West (PNW), and Ron, N5MLP, rented a car and was busy putting out counties.

Jim, N8HAM, was spotted out and about in IL.

K0MAF was busy putting out counties many days

Kerry, W4SIG, spent some time in CA, then wandered back all over the country through northern states eventually getting back to TN.

NT7R was busy many days putting out MT contacts for the county hunters

K4ZGB returned home from a western trip running them all the way back home to the east coast.

Bob, KA9JAC/Ann KB9YVT, ran counties in WI.

Ron, KB6UF, ran counties in LA on many weekends on different trips. Did a good part of the states.

Don, W0EAR, was heard out mobile in dozens out counties.

Jeff, W9MSE, took several trips in WI, including one over to MN and back.

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Ed, K8ZZ, headed out and ran a large number of IA and NE counties. Stopped by to visit W0QE in Broomfield CO, He reported:

“Drove 4051 miles and one oil change - 9 States - put out 142 counties - hundreds of contacts - Gas: Filled up every time it was empty - Motels were good every night, did not spend any nights in the SUV - waistline shows food was good - Towing: once, to close to ditch to get off the road to run a C/L and shoulder gave away - Police: 2 misunderstandings - Visa bill: YIKES.. Many thanks to the SPOTTER's and Net Controllers “



Larry, W0QE and Ed, K8ZZ

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Mike, KA4RRU, ran many in VA during the month.

Jack, KC7YE, made a trip to CA, and then back in time for the convention.

Mike, W0MU, ran back from MT to CO.

Bob, K7TM, was observed running WA counties – and headed to the convention.

Paul, WB2ABD, was noted putting out WA counties while out convention way.

Bob, W0BH, noted out and about in CO, UT and WY. Ran a few while on vacation.

Jim, N4JT, ran a few in NC.

Gene, NT2A, put out some in NJ and PA.

Bill, K2HVN was active up in CT.

Greg, NM2L, took a trip up north from GA and back.

W8FNW/W4FNW spotted in OH and MI. Later, they'd team up with W8GEJ and put out some in OH – both SSB and CW.

Larry, W7IN spotted on SSB and CW in MT.

Bob, N4XML was noted in MD and VA.

Jack, N7IV, put out some ND counties.

Jim, VA3XOV was out and about in NJ and PA.

Lowell, KB0BA, and Sandra, N0XYL, spotted in SD counties.

K9JWV noted out in a few UT counties.

Then the flares and CMEs hit and the bands were horrible for four or five days with not much of anything in the middle of the month.

Jerry, W0GXQ, headed out to IA and NE over to CO. He plans to return later in the month.

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Bob, K0PVW headed around KS. He reported:

“Trip Statistics: 14 Hours of Drive Time. 17 Counties Run, 10 of those new to me to run, 1 New state run, 10 new counties worked for CA while mobile. QSO's were light at 249 total with 228 on 20M, 8 on 40M, 10 on 17M and....I had takers on 10M this weekend with 3 Q's! Also had 3 LC's with 1 for the WBOW. Thanks to all that I worked to make it a fun day on the road. Next trip will be in September sometime.....more to come on that. “

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Jim, VA3XOV, was spotted over in NJ and NY.

W7IN was about in the state of MT.

K5MZF was spotted in MO

Mike, KA4RRU was busy in VA putting them out on several days here and there.

Bill, K2HVN left MA and headed west through NY

Bob, K0PVW, made a nice trip through OK running many there.

Dick, K5VYT headed on a major trip to the NE from his QTH.

Barry, N0KV, and Pat, N0DXE, were spotted down in NM putting them out. Then over into TX and back around to NM. He's working on getting his MG counties by heading to them.

Charles, N1SPX/Bryan, KB0BQR spotted out in MO and other states.

Jeff, W9MSE, headed over to OH. This trip he's got his MG award and working on MP.

Ray, WA2CNJ spotted out in New York County, NY.

On the Road with N4CD – Heading Northwest

The annual county hunter convention was coming up in Vancouver, WA. It was time to head on out. The trip would have 3 main objectives:

- a) Get to the National in time
- b) Run as many of the counties still needed for Second Time Transmit as possible.
- 3) Get as many Mobile Diamond counties as possible and still make it home in about 3 weeks or so.

It was 2600 miles to 'short way' to Vancouver, but almost no county hunter ever seems to make it the short way, and N4CD isn't usually headed straight there and back. I'm retired so I can take a few detours and have some fun along the way. (When you are working and on a schedule, you've got to compromise. Someone has to pay the bills! Or keep the XYL happy). A few county hunters like AI5P, N5MLP, K3IMC, K1BV, WB2ABD, K1DFO took the big bird to arrive. Two rented cars for extended vacations out west.

I needed to get up 'north' quickly, so even though it was Field Day weekend, I headed out on Saturday morning early. I'd have half a day on Saturday before the big mess started and

messed up the normal freqs on 20 and 40m. We'd have 30M without problems. On cw, we can head up to 14.113-114 but that seems to be filling up more and more with data drivel. It would be worse on SSB as there are no alternatives other than 17M and it hasn't been doing too well on SSB. When it opens there are lots of loud signals and not much room for mobiles. This was going to be a mainly CW trip as loads of mobiles would be filling up the 20M SSB net.

Most of WA, ID, and OR had already been put out for Mobile Diamond by N7ID, WQ7A and N8KIE on other trips. I still needed a few – they ran on SSB and my home SSB setup isn't great – just a vertical (R5).

I put about 50 FD stations in the log later in the day. Hard to do a dupe sheet while mobiling and logging is more a problem with the times, lack of 'runs' etc. Everything was new and there wasn't much happening in between counties I was running.

It was the same boring route up I-35 to KS, then west on the Interstate 70. I was running 20/30/40 cw until the contest started. Then it was CW on 14.113 or so and 30M for the rest of the day, which turned out to be a long long day. Before you know it, I was in western KS (got a MD or two there on the interstate and with a short short detour. I didn't have a motel reserved – figured I'd drive to dark and find a motel. Well, dark would be about Denver as it turned out – – and there was no reason to stop in Denver (higher prices) so I started calling motels in Ft. Collins. It was up I -25 another 50 plus miles. Oops...not a good plan for a Saturday night.

Super 8...full.....Motel 6 – full – all the weekend tourists headed to the mountains and other things going on. Motel 6 told me there were rooms yet another hour north in Cheyenne, WY. OK.....got there at sunset – which, of course, was an hour 'later' in MST. Gained an hour – it was a 15 hour driving day at warp speeds. Whew! This was the 'longest daylight' hours week of the year. Motel 6 in Cheyenne was it. It was hot. The temps were hitting 104 to 108 in western KS. I'm glad I got through there when I did. A few days later, KS reported temps up to 118 Deg! Death Valley, KS they called it on the news!

Sunday it was a repeat- up the interstate starting at daybreak (before 6am) on I-25 to I-80 all the way west in MT to Deer Lodge, MT. OE5KE, Adolph, needed Deer Lodge desperately. We hooked up late in the day. It also happened to be one of the two counties in MT that somehow I had managed to drive around and not run for a second time. Motel 6 in Missoula. You are not supposed to stop on the Interstate so I quickly 'slowed down' and took the pic through the window, then headed on into the county.



Deer Lodge MT (on I-80) – out the windshield – quick!
For OE5KE

I stayed at the Motel 6 in Missoula, MT (\$63). I was 1783 miles from home in two days of driving. Time to slow down a bit. That's almost 900 miles a day! Next morning it was up to Mineral MT. That's the other county in MT I seem to have missed on previous trips. Ran it early in the morning, then headed on south into ID. There's a nice but unmarked county line of Beaverhead, MT/Lemhi, ID just to the east on a nice paved road at the border of ID and MT. Ran it, then headed down for hours and hours to get out of Lemhi and Custer. Gas was still up above \$3.50 gallon – way higher in the boonies.

What can you say about ID? Big? It is as high as OR and WA combined! Really big counties that you can't drive across and wind up on their roads for 3-4 hours to get out of – and then 3-4 hours in the next? Custer and Lemhi are huge. It took a while, but I got out of the giant ones (with their few roads and deep valleys in places) to where they are a lot easier to run. It was short detours and long detours to fill in the missing counties – I needed to run about 2/3rds of the state. You zig and zag. Well, those 'short' detours are often 40 or 50 miles round trip or out of the way. Ran the counties, took lots of 'Percy pics'. I can send out some for LCs when folks told me they were a LC.

I also needed to run Teton, WY – another one I had managed to miss on previous trips. Don't ask me why – no clue - just never made it there – you can do that after you run Teton ID. Zip on over the county line and find a spot to run not too far down the road to the east. C/L has nice parking lot that is, dang, all in ID, but good place to snap a pic of the entering WY big sign there. From there it's 10 miles up to the 'summit' and a long climb if you keep going east. I didn't.

No motels are cheap are in that neck of the woods. \$100-150/night type places. I called the Best Western –in Digss ouch...\$100 and tax and one room left. Super 8 – full up. It was tourist gulch with fancy little eating places and apparently a bunch of B&Bs around by the dozens.

Checked the other place in town down the road – they wanted \$121 for the last 'suite' – double ouch!. Decided to bite the bullet and go the best Western – oh no – room gone. I continued on down the road and ran Teton, WY then headed west again toward the next need to be run county.

Dang.....so it was another 60 miles over to ID Falls and a Motel 6 for \$50. It was another real late night! Arrived 8 pm at the motel, and that after getting on the road at 6am in the morning.

Another day, another motel. Another late arrival, late dinner and in bed by not much after 9pm totally zonked. Did I say it was time to slow down? It was.

Next day - Up to Blaine and Lincoln and Camas, down to Owyhee. Over to Boise, ID. Zig and Zag, run the county , head on to the next one. I took a whole bunch of 'percy pics'. ID is easy to get pics of the county lines other than the ones on the interstate.

That night I wound up at a Super 8 motel at the ID/OR border in Ontario, OR just over the border. Seems the motels like OR better than ID – they are all just across the border. It was nice in the mornings with temps in the 40 degree range, a lot different than TX where you were lucky to see 82 deg at 6am for an hour or two before the 90s set in...or higher. Highs in the 60s and low 40s. Delightful. Scottie, I, and the rest of the MD gang needed Baker OR....nope...it would have been a 100 mile round trip detour. Didn't go there. Another trip maybe. Same for Union, OR.....just too far.

Next day it was up through ID for more miles. Long detours to get Valley, ID then north again up Lewiston after hours and hours of driving. Then finally after a couple days in ID, it was into OR, which takes just as much time to get around. It's another huge state with giant size counties.

The long roads have just begun. Sooner or later, you got to get to Wallowa. Any way you go there is painful (unless you happen to have access to an airplane or helicopter). The route was down route 129 from the north. You climb up steeply for a mile or two then ride along the plateau for dozens of miles. Then, it's off the plateau with five miles of switchbacks and twisty road at 20 mph till you reach the Grande Ronde river bottom. That's not the county line. Two or three miles further on, you are climbing again, and the county line is right up against a cliff face. And down in a deep valley that is VERY hard to get a signal out of at the C/L. You might work a few people. You can park there, but you won't hear much in the way of any signals.



Wallowa County line view – rock face - east.

Behind you when you take this pic is 300 foot or more drop off to road below you. It's 40 miles down to the C/L from route 12. Wallowa County has a population density of two people per square mile. (about 7200 people total). You just keep moving. (not much traffic either!). The rock wall/hillside goes up a few hundred feet. Almost nothing gets out going east.



Asotin, WA/Wallowa, OR line – the other way (west)



Here's a pic of the C/L from Mapquest – scale about 700 feet to the inch. Someone asked what a 'switchback' is. The road on the left hand side is about 300-500 feet lower than the road on the right side. You go around sharp climbing turns coming from the top of the picture climbing out of the river valley. The C/L is about 500 feet higher in elevation – but the hill to the east are 2000 feet higher. The line looks into a giant rockface to the east. No RF escapes.

Now this is what real switchbacks look like – you have to go to the Alps or Rockies to find them like this. There are a bunch in CO...maybe even going up Pikes Peak in Places and Mt Evans.



SO what to do? Yep, drive another 5-7 miles with 20 mph switchbacks and twists and turns and climb out of the valley up to the area where it is nice and flat and high up. I went 7 miles to a turn for Paradise road and parked away from the main road with a power line. Nice and quiet. You need every dB you can get with the conditions we have. Ran all the bands on cw.

Then you get to drive the 47 miles back! (unless you are crazy and want to drive across the county for some reason). Down the hill with 5 miles of twisty road dropping down into the canyon. If you have the time, stop at Boggan's Cafe in Anatone, WA, at the river bottom and enjoy their ice cream or pick up a drink for the long drive back to the main road and your way to the next county! There's a camp ground down there too. Population there is probably 38 or so.

Plan on at least 3 hours for the trip to Wallowa. That killed the better part of the afternoon and before you know it, and a few counties later, I was looking for a motel in Whitman County. I had to hit Adams. There were no motels nearby. That means within 40 miles! Not good planning on my part. I wound up driving 50 miles to the west (as I was headed to Spokane) and found a motel in Ritzville in Adams county. (needed to run that anyway). Otherwise, it would have been up to near Spokane, then driving 30-40 miles back southwest to get Adams, then head back northeast again. You don't want to miss any otherwise it will be 3000 miles to get back up here to run the one you missed! (that's why I had to go to MT for Deer Lodge and Mineral) and hit Teton in WY!).

I had to run all of WA – so it was zipping here and there, catching them one by one. That night I stopped at what used to be a La Quinta Inn in Ritzville....now they seem to have turned into Cedar Inn. Not bad. There was a brand new restaurant next door...but they shut 'early' at 8 pm for employee training that night...and I got there at, you guessed it.....7:58pm. Dang. No decent dinner tonight. It had been another long long day. Plan B - Dinner at a fast food place next door. Chef salad. Not too bad for plan B.

The next day was more zipping around while headed generally to the west. Band conditions on 20M were good in the mornings at 6am local time. I was up and on the road at that time most days. Oops....solar flare around noon....bands dead.....it was time for lunch, and I had missed 'pizza night' so I stopped at a pizza buffet (Pappy's Pizza in Redmond). Band took good hour and a half to recover. Pappy's appears to be a chain. Good pizza and good salad bar.

Around the Grand Coulee Dam you can run five counties – I headed up 'north' to run a nice line of Ferry/Okanongan about 15 miles. Bring your GPS. No sign for Ferry. Just Okanongan. Nice place to run it though – quiet. You can get the others with short detours out of the valley in several directions to get away from the noise and low down location.

That night was at a Motel 6 and dinner at the chinese buffet. The car was going through \$75/day or more in gas. I saved on the motels. I wasn't awake long enough to really worry about upscale or not. By the time I had dinner, it was bedtime and didn't even watch TV most nights or turn it on.

I was planning on going out to San Juan county the next day. I left early hoping to catch the 9:30 ferry. You don't need reservations (they don't take them for Lopez Island – the nearest one you can go to.) I hit some traffic and got there at 9:35. The ferry doesn't wait. The next one was at 12:30 so you just spin your wheels and sit in the line. It's a big ferry that can haul a lot of folks out there. It was prime vacation season – the islands are full of rental places and summer places so there's lots of folks headed out there (or from there to the mainland) for the weekends. Sometimes you don't get on the ferry – it fills up. It seems to hold a few hundred cars, though. No one seemed to be left behind.

There was one car ahead of me – a Toyota Prius. Seems his 12v battery had died...and the 'jump start' battery cart the ferry folks had also had a dead battery. So he missed the ferry. I jump started him. Wasn't too easy but he got it running and headed off to get a new (expensive 12v sealed special battery) so he wouldn't get stranded again. The Toyota pulls 4 amps from the 12v battery to fire up all the computers – then it starts itself off the 220v HV battery. The 12v battery is there just for starting, and for power for alarm systems, remote entry, and internal lights or emergency flashers when the car is turned off.

You have to dismantle your antennas otherwise they charge you double on the ferry (same for Dukes MA) . It's \$40 roundtrip for a car under 23 feet, and it goes up very quickly for 'high clearance' (over 7 feet), for extra length, extra axles, etc. My antennas take about 15 minutes to disassemble and put inside the car. Maybe 8 if I have to rush.

Eventually the ferry came and it was off to the islands. Here's a pic of why you can't leave your antennas on the car. Note the clearance 100 feet to the rear!



On the ferry to Lopez Island(San Juan County)

There's a few feet clearance above the cars with big steel beams – depending upon where they park you. Maybe 7.5 to 8 foot total clearance from the ground up in spots you drive through. Big trucks and high clearance vehicles in the center of the ferry, and cars off to the sides in not too tall areas. I need 10 foot clearance for the rear antenna and the hamstick for 40M unscrews in 1 minute or less. However, I run a solid six foot mast, so all the resonators have to come off to fit it inside the car. (Long ago I ran masts with joints – and they fail at the joints. Somewhere in KS are some resonators and a top section along a roadway.). Quick disconnects are also major failure points and 'intermittents', too. It takes 10 minutes to carefully unscrew things and even more time to be sure not to strip out the six way adapter or get it cross threaded when you assemble it again.

This is a spot that WQ7A found- parking in front of the Lopez Island Fire Department. Nice and quiet.



Lopez Fire Dept – Genuine Percy Pic

When you get to the island...turn LEFT at the camp ground turn off and go about 1 mile down the road till you reach this point. Big wide area to park and assemble/disassemble your antennas and operate. (If you just have a quick disconnect you can do that anywhere, but there aren't a lot of trucks to keep the roads clear of trees- beware antenna eating trees.) I made one run on each band...and decided to catch the next ferry back that left 1 hour after I arrived. There would be 4 or 5 other county hunters headed to San Juan County. It was back to the ferry line after taking apart the antennas – getting on the end of the line of about 50 cars, and waiting only a few minutes before we loaded the big ferry to head back to Anacortes. It's about 45 min to an hour to get back and get off. They've got a full cafeteria on board and lots of space to just chill inside, do puzzles, eat, have a soft drink, watch the scenery, go out on the front or rear decks to watch the other boats along the way, etc.

It turns out that WY7LL/WY7LL, N0KV/N0DXE and K3IMC all headed out to the islands to run San Juan as well. Barry and Don also ran on cw, but Don stayed near the SSB frequencies with his CW run. You had to be watching the spots or listening on the SSB net.

If you leave your iPhone or data set on, it can roam onto a Canadian wireless system. Maybe that was true on Lopez Island when I spotted myself. A day later I get an email from Verizon saying I had incurred a 'roaming charge for data' – which was \$2/megabyte and I had used 0.00002 megabytes. Oh wow..... but don't be watching Youtube videos or high def TV while on the island or ferry without checking if you are roaming or not. I'll wait to see what happened with the phone – don't recall if I called anyone from there – wasn't there all that long.

It was getting to be mid afternoon – so I headed off to Island County – not too far away – ran that, they headed up to get Whatcom – way up north. Then it was back south again with a stop in Everett, WA at the Motel 6. OK but I wouldn't stay there again – the not so great of all the Motel 6s I stayed at. Next day it was around the bottom and back up the west side to get the ones way up north. I'd be the first of many to get up to Clallam and Jefferson (WY7LL/ML and N0KV were some others up there). Down to Mason and Thurston, then over to Pacific and Wahkiakum – and it rained and drizzled. While up in that neck of the woods, the windshield wipers were going half the time with light drizzle showers. It was in the 60s. I wasn't complaining too much as it was 95 plus degrees in TX and dry as a bone! 80% of TX in drought situation still.

Wow...I was way ahead of schedule, having finished off what I planned to run before the convention with time to spare. After the convention, I'd have to come up with plan B.

So what to do? Yep, run the ones that I planned to run after the convention in WA and OR.

I headed through Vancouver (Clark County) and out east on I-84 to get to Kittitas and Klickitat and the remaining 4 in Washington. That finished off WA, so it was down into OR.

OR is another big very empty state east of the coastal mountains. (Well, Pacific WA is pretty empty too with lots of swamps and bogs and 'wetlands').

You pass south of I-84 and its 127 miles to John Day, the next good size town in the next county. Out west, it's not unusual to see signs for miles to the next town. Maybe town A – 55 miles. Town B 150 miles. Town C 284 miles. You drive through lots of scenic country on good roads with just a few “bump in the road” towns of a few dozen people. 110 miles down the road is the small town of Mt Vernon with a nice motel – the Blue Mountain motel - \$43 – very nice. I stopped there and got a room. It was getting to be dinner time. However, first it was 30 miles over to the west for Wheeler County – zipped along at 70-75 – ran the county – then headed back to the one place in town for dinner – the Silver Spur before it closed for the night.

The GPS came in handy (ones with county lines added in!). You pass through the John Day fossil bed area just before you get to the county line. You go through some canyon like area – wondering if it is going to continue to the C/L but it stops and you got a good place to run the C/L if you want. I went past it and ran Wheeler alone off the road and away from power lines.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Day_Fossil_Beds_National_Monument

No time for sightseeing – the dinner place closed in a little over an hour and I didn't want to miss dinner. Not much else in Mt Vernon. Gas was \$3.99 at one station and they were out of gas. The other was \$3.85 a gallon. Filled up the tank.

In the morning, I hit the cafe early for breakfast – 6am – then it was over to the Big Town of John Daly with 20 motels. Then it's another 75 miles south to the next town and change of direction. Lots of open space and 'scenery' but a lot of it lacks rainfall. It all falls on the coastal range and much of eastern OR is dry as a bone. Not many roads are in this part of OR and the counties are HUGE. I had another six to run.

It was getting to be time to head on in to the convention – I headed over that way - but had time to run up to Clatsop, Tillamook, Columbia. You can run four counties within five miles of road. There's actually a sign for the '4 corners' but you can't get there on the road. You can run each county separately on route 26, but bring a GPS. You are only in one county for a few hundred feet (with a convenient parking lot for a trail) and there's another spot in the next county to pull over. They don't bother to put up county signs for 1000 feet of county. You've just got signs for Washington and Clatsop – not anywhere near each other.

After a few runs, I figured I'd see if there is a better spot to run Clatsop. After you head over the top of the hill, you can't stop for the next 8 miles or so – no place to turn around – divided two lane road, no exits. It's all the way down the hill to the next town. Well, bump in the road. Elsie, OR. There's a nice store/bakery down there in Elsie– so I stopped, had some chow, chilled, ran the county again, then headed back up the mountain. I had run everything I planned to run. Now I had to figure out what to run on the way home. I had done most of it already, finishing off transmits in WA and OR (and ID and MT).

It was still a day early, so I headed on in to the Vancouver area and stayed at a Motel 6 about 5 miles away for the night. It was half the convention hotel rate. I did stop by the convention hotel – just a few folks there already - no reason to hang around. Most would start to arrive on Wed, Thurs and Friday.

Mobiles were still out running, so Thursday I found I could check into the hotel early then head on out (9:30am). Nothing going on till evening. I had the radio in the car and headed up to do some sightseeing at Mt Saint Helens, about 50-100 miles north of the convention site. Ron, N5MLP had the same idea. We discovered we were both on the same road a few miles apart! It's a road that goes for 45 miles with no forks – and we were both headed toward the visitor center near the mountain. He didn't have any problem getting a 'transmit county' with me a mile or so behind. The main visitor center is in Skamania County.



Mount Saint Helens

It takes a good couple hours to see everything and half a day to get in the road, visit and then get back out the road. For the newbies born after 1970 or so...Mt St Helens was an 'inactive volcano' that suddenly came to life with a major eruption in 1980 and wiped out over 200 square miles of pristine WA country side, hundreds of homes and industries. It was the biggest volcano eruption in the history of the US.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_St._Helens

It was then back to the hotel. Dinner at the Mexican food place a short walk from the hotel.



Who Song and Larry's Mexican Cantina

On Thursday night, we had BBQ at the hotel, and Friday night a big group went over to Joe's Crab Shack 1000 feet away.

Here's the view off the back deck of the hotel and the restaurants



River View

Then it was back to the Red Lion hotel in Vancouver for 4 nights. The hospitality room opened early evening and the yakking and tall tall telling began.

Renewable Energy's Scale Problem

It's summer. It's hot. And once again, we are hearing from the usual suspects that we must change our entire way of living. Repent, they say. Carbon dioxide emissions are killing Mother Earth. Give up hydrocarbons and embrace renewable energy.

Doing so, we're assured, will result in a gentler climate and myriad other benefits, including scads of "green" jobs. Sounds easy, no?

Alas, no matter how much they may wish it to be so, the proponents of alternatives -- and better yet, "clean" energy -- cannot overcome the problem of scale. A simple bit of math shows that even with the rapid expansion that solar and wind-energy capacity have had in the past few years, those two sources cannot even meet incremental global demand for electricity, much less make a dent in the world's insatiable thirst for coal, oil, and natural gas. Indeed, had any of the myriad advocates for renewable energy bothered to use a simple calculator, they would see that their favored sources simply cannot provide the vast scale of energy needed by the world's 7 billion inhabitants, at a price that can be afforded.

Consider this: between 1985 and 2011, global electricity generation increased by about 450 terawatt-hours per year. That's the equivalent of adding about one Brazil (which used 485 terawatt-hours of electricity in 2010) to the electricity sector every year. And the International Energy Agency expects global electricity use to continue growing by about one Brazil per year through 2035.

How much solar would be needed to produce 450 terawatt-hours per year? Well, Germany has more installed solar-energy capacity than any other country, with some 25,000 megawatts of installed photovoltaic panels. In 2011, those panels produced 18 terawatt-hours of electricity. Thus, just to keep pace with the growth in global electricity demand, the world would have to install about 25 times as much photovoltaic capacity as Germany's total installed base, and it would have to do so every year.

Let me repeat that: just to meet the world's increasing demand for electricity -- while not displacing any existing electricity-production facilities -- the world would have to install about 25 times as much photovoltaic capacity as what now exists in Germany. And it would have to achieve that daunting task every year.

The scale problem is equally obvious when it comes to wind. In fact, wind-energy's scale problems are even more thorny because wind energy requires so much land.

At the end of 2011, the U.S. had 47,000 megawatts of installed wind-energy capacity. (Only China, with 62,000 megawatts, had more capacity.) In 2011, all of the wind turbines in the U.S. produced about 120 terawatt-hours of electricity. Thus, just to keep pace with the growth in global electricity demand by using wind energy, we would have to install about 3.75 times the current installed wind capacity in the U.S. every year. That means that global wind-energy capacity would have to increase by about 176,000 megawatts each and every year.

That would be an enormous challenge given that between 2010 and 2011, global wind-energy capacity increased by just 41,000 megawatts. That's a record increase, and one that advocates of renewable energy are quick to laud. But those same advocates refuse to acknowledge the energy sprawl inherent in wind energy nor will they admit the growing backlash against the wind industry.

Let's consider the extent of the energy sprawl if the wind-energy sector were to supply that 450 terawatt-hours per year of incremental electricity demand.

The power density of wind energy is roughly two watts per square meter or about five megawatts per square mile. That means that by the end of 2011, the U.S. had covered a land area of about 9,400 square miles with wind turbines, a land area just slightly smaller than the state of Maryland. Therefore, just to keep up with the growth in global electricity demand by using wind energy alone, the global wind industry will need to cover a land area of some 35,000 square miles -- about the size of Indiana --- with wind turbines. And it will have to do so every year.

That metric's still hard to grasp, so let me put it another way: in order to merely keep up with the pace of growth of global electricity use, the wind industry would have to cover 96 square miles every day, with wind turbines. That's an area about the size of four Manhattans.

Glib economists might suggest that such a feat could be achieved, but that ignores another key question: Where will we put all those turbines? That's a touchy question given that the backlash against the wind-energy sector is global and it's growing. Europe alone has more than 500 anti-wind groups. That backlash was typified by a move made last month by the Lincolnshire County Council, which imposed a rule prohibiting construction of large-scale wind projects within a 1.5-kilometer radius of any residences. The county council's leader, Martin Hill, told a local newspaper that "enough is enough...Not only are these things spoiling our beautiful countryside for future generations, they could also seriously damage our tourism industry, who wants to spend their holiday looking at a 400-foot turbine?" Hill went on, "People enjoy living in Lincolnshire because we have a great way of life, not because the landscape's blighted by wind farms."

The point of this essay is not to argue about climate change. When it comes to carbon dioxide emissions and global warming, I'm a resolute agnostic. You can insist that carbon dioxide is good. You can insist that it's bad. I don't care. I routinely read both sides in the climate debate, which has devolved into a vituperative morass of name-calling and vitriolic tribal warfare that pits the "deniers" against the "catastrophists."

The key question isn't your tribal affiliation. Instead the essential issues are these: If you believe that carbon dioxide is bad, how can we meet the world's soaring demand for transportation fuels, and more particularly, for electricity? And can we do so while phasing out coal, the energy source which remains the cheapest, most abundant, most reliable choice for electricity production?

The answers to those questions, are obvious and interconnected. I have long advocated N2N, that is, natural gas to nuclear. Choosing those sources offers the best "no regrets" strategy. Supporting N2N doesn't require membership in a CO2 tribe. Instead, it only requires understanding that for more than two centuries, the people of the world have been steadily

moving toward fuels that contain less carbon and toward power systems that have high power density.

During combustion, natural gas emits half as much carbon dioxide as coal. And thanks to the domestic abundance of natural gas, the US, according to the International Energy Agency, has, over the past five years, cut its carbon dioxide emissions faster than any other country on the planet. Better yet, as we are now finding out, natural gas is not only abundant in the Earth's crust, it is super-abundant. The shale revolution, which has unlocked galaxies of natural gas in the US, is only part of the story. Over the past few years, huge conventional fields of natural gas have been discovered in Israel, Australia, Africa, Mexico, and elsewhere. That abundance of gas is great news as it should allow more people access to more energy.

With regard to nuclear, my stance is simple: if you are anti- carbon dioxide and anti-nuclear, you are pro-blackout. And no energy source can compare to nuclear when it comes to power density. The core of a nuclear reactor has a power density that is measured in hundreds of megawatts per square meter. That allows nuclear facilities to have a very small footprint, the opposite of energy sprawl.

Fortunately, some of America's leading environmentalists are recognizing that nuclear must be a major part of the energy mix. Last month, I attended a conference in California that was sponsored by the Oakland-based Breakthrough Institute, a group founded by Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger. Nordhaus and Shellenberger are leading critics of the big environmental groups and they've also become staunch advocates for nuclear energy.

On the opening night of the conference, filmmaker Robert Stone showed a segment from his upcoming documentary, *Pandora's Promise*. The film explains why nuclear energy, which Stone calls "mankind's most feared and controversial technological discovery" is now being "passionately embraced by many of those who once led the charge against it." Among the people featured in the film is Stewart Brand, the longtime environmentalist and founder of the Whole Earth Catalog. Brand, who attended the Breakthrough conference, tells Stone that for years you had to be anti-nuclear if you were to call yourself an environmentalist. Now, with the threat of carbon dioxide emissions and climate change, Brand said the question has been turned around. "Can you be an environmentalist and not be pro-nuclear?"

While N2N remains an obvious pathway as we go forward, the key issue, when it comes to carbon dioxide is coal. Between 2001 and 2010, U.S. coal consumption fell by 5 percent. But over that same time period, global coal consumption soared by 47 percent, or the equivalent of 23 million barrels of oil per day. Put another way, over the past decade or so, global coal consumption increased by about the same amount as the growth in oil, natural gas, and nuclear combined.

For countries ranging from China and India to Vietnam and Germany, coal continues to present a compelling value for electricity production because deposits of the fuel are abundant, widely

dispersed, easily mined, and are not controlled by any OPEC-like cartels. Combine those facts with the world's soaring demand for electricity – recall that it's growing by about one Brazil per year – and it's readily apparent that coal won't go away any time soon. Indeed, between 2010 and 2011 alone, global coal consumption increased by about 3.9 million barrels of oil equivalent per day. Put another way, in one year, global coal demand increased by an amount that's nearly equal to the entire energy demand of the United Kingdom.

So where does that leave us, particularly if we are concerned about carbon dioxide emissions? Well, the obvious answer is that we need to find an energy source that is cheaper – a lot cheaper – than coal. And we must deploy it quickly. But keep in mind that even if such an energy source is found, energy transitions happen very slowly.

In a recent essay, Vaclav Smil, one of the world's foremost thinkers and writers on energy and power systems, points out that our existing energy infrastructure depends on coal, oil, and natural gas. In fact, those three sources now combine to provide about 215 million barrels of oil equivalent per day, or about 87 percent of global energy demand. That infrastructure “constitutes the costliest and most extensive set of installations, networks, and machines that the world has ever built, one that has taken generations and tens of trillions of dollars to put in place.” Smil goes on saying it is “impossible to displace this supersystem in a decade or two – or five, for that matter.”

So the next time you hear someone from the Sierra Club or Greenpeace, or any of the other groups on the Green/Left who are insisting that we need to quit using fossil fuels immediately, do them – and yourself -- a favor: buy them a calculator.

Source: Berry Investment Board

Rick, AI5P Alaska Trip

KL7/AI5P/Mobile Adventures 2012

On June 2, I flew to Juneau via Los Angeles and Seattle. Juneau is the capital of Alaska but can only be reached by air or boat. There are only about 50 miles of road network in and around the city of 31,000. Juneau is in the First Judicial District.

For the trip I took along my Icom 706MKIIG and ham stick mobile antennas. I also carried a dipole for portable use but never used it. My first rental car was a Toyota Matrix - nice little car!

I had beautiful weather while I was there. Little did I know what weather changes were in store. Juneau is a popular cruise ship stop and can actually have five ships harbored at the same time. It's quite a sight to see all the tourists descend on the small downtown area. I did see the Alaska State Capitol, the 1884 St. Nicholas Orthodox Church (Russian Orthodox), Governor's House, Alaska State Museum, Mount Roberts Tramway (where I saw my first Alaskan bald eagles), the Last Chance Gold Mining Museum, the Shrine of St. Therese and the magnificent Mendenhall Glacier. I also saw my first black bears while driving north of the city.

After three days, I stored the radio equipment and took the 6 hour ferry ride up the inland passage to the 1898 gold rush town of Skagway. This is quite the "tourist trap" but great fun. It's also a popular cruise ship stop because of the famous White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad. It was designated an International Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1994.

I spent three nights here and took two rides on the railroad - one to Carcross, Yukon Territory - a diesel-electric engine and one to Fraser Meadows, British Columbia - a steam trip. This was my long-wished for opportunity to see this amazingly built railroad.



The Skagway Train – A Cliff Hanger

Skagway is the home of the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. I had the chance to meet several of the local residents - only about 900 with about 200 braving the winter! If you want to see a movie screen, that's a 110 mile trip (one-way) to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory! The last day the weather began to turn and by the time I was on the ferry back to Juneau I had picked up a pretty bad cold.

The last two days in Juneau were pretty miserable. Besides the cold, the weather was nasty with rain and wind. I learned that in May it had rained every day but one. Juneau recorded their lowest "high" temperature in May on record and had their fourth highest recorded monthly rainfall. So I wasn't the only one sick of the rain.

My second rental car in Juneau was an "upgrade" to a Buick Regal - the first car I had ever dealt with having a "keyless" entry system. Not for me - locking and unlocking the car as you walked around just about drove me crazy!

I did manage to do some more radio work but conditions continued to be marginal. Most of the contacts were made from a beautiful viewing pull off between the airport area and downtown Juneau (Photo #2). So for the First Judicial District, the number of contacts were 44 on SSB and 133 on CW.



Rick AI5P First District

Flying to Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska (291,000), I arrived feeling pretty bad and holed up in the hotel more than I normally would have in a new place. My rental car was a bright yellow VW Beetle! I stayed downtown to be close to the Alaskan Railroad Depot. I did manage to visit a few shops and saw the beautiful Anchorage Museum. Anchorage is in the Third Judicial District and I only ran it a couple of times - from the hotel's outdoor parking lot

Not too effective, but I wasn't up to driving around finding a good spot. Total number of contacts were 2 on SSB and 6 on CW. I didn't worry about the number of contacts for the county hunters as both Kent, KL1V, and Bruce, KL7D, live in the third district. I enjoyed seeing Bruce again for coffee at a local dining spot.

I rode the Alaskan Railroad down to the town of Whittier to take the cruise of Prince William Sound. What an experience! Bald Eagles, a humpback whale, sea otters, sea lions, various birds and the magnificent glaciers. One of the highlights of the trip!



AI5P – Prince William Sound

The next day I traveled by bus up to Denali National Park and Preserve. I knew this would be one of the best adventures of the trip. Three days around the park allowed me to take a "backcountry" adventure as well as an one hour flying tour around Mt. McKinley (better known in Alaska as Denali).

You can't take private cars past the park entrance so all the "sightseeing" for wildlife is done on buses. And you can't get off the bus except at visitor's centers - so taking good pictures is a mostly a matter of luck. I did get to see (mostly at a distance) brown bears (grizzlies), caribou, moose, Dall sheep, birds and ducks.

Of course, the scenery is spectacular! I believe it was said that Mt. McKinley is covered about 70 percent of the time but I was lucky and got to see it completely clear a couple of times. The winds and weather are quite variable here - clear one minute, clouded in the next. At 20,320 feet, Mt. McKinley is the highest mountain in North America and many people attempt to climb it in season - April, May and June. It is quite dangerous - four Japanese climbers had died the day before I flew up to the mountain. I had beautiful weather while I was there and was quite fortunate to enjoy many of the natural sights of the park.



AI5P flies around Mt McKinley (Denali) AK

Back on the bus to Anchorage and then a flight to Fairbanks (pop. 31,000) - in the Fourth Judicial District. Fairbanks was a surprise to me with all the tourist things to do. Fortunately, I had gotten over my cold and was feeling much better. There is a world-class private automobile collection - the Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum (www.fountainheadmuseum.com), the Museum of the North at the University of Alaska, the sternwheeler Riverboat "Discovery" tour to include an Athabascan Indian village, Pioneer Park, and the Gold Dredge 8 tour - quite the "tourist trap" also but I found some actual gold while panning (I think everyone did - "salted" dirt to encourage buying other gold jewelry!).

And just a few miles away is a mandatory stop at the Santa Claus House in North Pole, Alaska! I loved it - visiting Santa and his actual reindeer! Of course, just a few more goodies for the trip home. Actually, I made good use of the Post Office's flat rate mailing boxes several times to send my purchases home! By the way, one neat feature of Alaskan Airlines is that within Alaska, you can have three bags checked - at no cost!

My rental car here was Chevy Sonic - another nice car! I found several operating spots including one on the Chena River. Conditions improved while I was in Fairbanks and I had a couple of good openings on both 20 and 17 meters. Total number of contacts were 26 on SSB and 154 on CW.

From Fairbanks, I flew to my final stop. Since I was young, I had looked at the U.S. map many times wondering about Barrow, Alaska. Barrow, population 4,200, the northernmost settlement in the United States and one of the largest Eskimo communities - what would it be like?

Flying via Prudhoe Bay, home of the largest oil field in North America and starting point of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (an interesting looking place from the air!), I arrived on June 21st. I have to admit there's not much to do or see here. I did enjoy visiting the Inupiaq (Eskimo) Heritage Center and seeing the Will Rogers/Wiley Post Memorial - commemorating the 1935 crash that killed the American humorist and the famous pilot. It's amazing to see the Arctic ice pack just right there....

I learned there is another type of type a hobbyist visiting here filling out his/her "life list" - the bird watcher! I met several from Sweden and Norway. They were easily recognizable with their extreme outdoor clothing, large binoculars, and very expensive looking cameras and tripods! I had hoped to see a polar bear out on the three hour tour but no luck.... although they had seen one the day before visiting the whale bone "remains" out on Point Barrow. You need a special vehicle and permission to go out there - and tires at 12 psi to get through the terrain.

I was lucky in that the local villages were having the festivities to divy up the whale meat taken from the kills in April. The native people have two whaling seasons with quotas for whales to be taken. This past season the quota was 23 and they had actually taken 17. To see how they do it as explained in the Inupiaq Museum was quite fascinating!

Barrow is in the 2d Judicial District and, along with Hawaii's Kalawao, is probably the hardest contact to make to earn the worked all counties award. There is one local car rental (not a national brand) and one gas station in Barrow. My rental car turned out to be a 2006 Ford 500. When I made the reservation (in January) I was told he only had Fords! I was worried about possible noise issues but there were none! I was fortunate to have a couple of good openings (remember you're only about 1300 miles from the North Pole) on 20 and 17 meters again . Total contacts were 53 on SSB and 266 on CW.

The total number of contacts for the trip were 125 on SSB and 559 on CW for a grand total of 684 - all mobile.

So my trip ended with a flight back on the night of June 24th arriving in Albuquerque on June 25th. It was everything and more I had heard about visiting Alaska. Highly recommended to anyone. But it is expensive. A normal motel/hotel room (nothing special) is \$120-180 a night, gas was around \$ 4.40 a gallon (except in Barrow where the final shock was filling up the Ford 500, about 3/4 empty, for \$ 85.35 at \$ 5.90 a gallon), the one hour flight for Mt. McKinley sightseeing (along with seven others) was \$ 350 each, and a cheeseburger and tea in Barrow was \$ 16 hi..... But, as they say, the trip of a lifetime!

The highlight of the trip, radio-wise, was fulfilling a 40 year effort to transmit from all the counties in the United States - 3077. My first mobile SSB contact was from Monmouth County, NJ, on August 8, 1972, and the first mobile CW contact was from Washington County, MD, on August 26, 1990. There were about 660 counties I had run before on SSB that I had to go back through to run on CW.

My final SSB and CW contacts were on June 21, 2012, from the 2d Judicial District of Alaska. You can see from the picture that I am celebrating this accomplishment with a special banner I brought along to Alaska (yes, that's Arctic Ocean ice in the background!)



AI5P, Rick in Barrow, AK – Second District

Special thanks go to Terry, WQ7A, and Guff, KS5A, for their assistance in forwarding propagation reports and spotting me. I wish conditions could have been better... but they certainly could have been worse!

I was awarded the MARAC "Run All Counties" Award # 14 with endorsement #1 for both 2XCW and 2XSSB contacts at the annual MARAC Convention in Vancouver, Washington, in July 2012. This accomplishment is definitely one of my amateur radio "highlights!"

If anyone has any questions and/or comments, please contact me at rickai5p@gmail.com

73, Rick KL7/AI5P/Mobile

Who Invented the Internet?

A telling moment in the presidential race came recently when Barack Obama said: "If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen." He justified elevating bureaucrats over entrepreneurs by referring to bridges and roads, adding: "The Internet didn't get invented on its own. Government research created the Internet so that all companies could make money off the Internet."

It's an urban legend that the government launched the Internet. The myth is that the Pentagon created the Internet to keep its communications lines up even in a nuclear strike. The truth is a more interesting story about how innovation happens—and about how hard it is to build successful technology companies even once the government gets out of the way.

For many technologists, the idea of the Internet traces to Vannevar Bush, the presidential science adviser during World War II who oversaw the development of radar and the Manhattan Project. In a 1946 article in *The Atlantic* titled "As We May Think," Bush defined an ambitious peacetime goal for technologists: Build what he called a "memex" through which "wholly new forms of encyclopedias will appear, ready made with a mesh of associative trails running through them, ready to be dropped into the memex and there amplified."

Back in the early 1960s, you could count all the computers in the world and it would total under a few hundred – big large machines with punch card input/output – used by businesses such as insurance companies to keep track of the insured. The government had a few dozen computers at most and they were all dedicated to a single purpose such as payroll or modeling of nuclear explosions and similar. However, there were 'dreamers' who looked to the future.

That fired imaginations, and by the 1960s technologists were trying to connect separate physical communications networks into one global network. The federal government was involved, modestly, via the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency Network. Its goal was not maintaining communications during a nuclear attack, and it didn't build the Internet. Robert Taylor, who ran the ARPA program in the 1960s, sent an email to fellow technologists in 2004 setting the record straight: "The creation of the Arpanet was not motivated by considerations of war. The Arpanet was not an Internet. An Internet is a connection between two or more computer networks."

In actuality, ARPA eventually connected all of THREE computers together to let files be shared via FTP protocols and for very basic email to be sent between other computers connected to these three computers. It was the development of the IMP (inter machine protocol) by universities with just a teeny bit of funding from ARPA that extended the existing Xerox Ethernet from 'local' to longer distance.

If the government didn't invent the Internet, who did? Vinton Cerf developed the TCP/IP

protocol, the Internet's backbone, and Tim Berners-Lee gets credit for hyperlinks.

AT&T developed the UNIX programming language, which when combined with TCP/IP, provided the needed interconnect 'language' and computer operating system that all computers to run to talk to each other. It was a private company that broke the government monopoly on 'encryption' that was also needed and used by the inter machine connections.

But full credit goes to the company where Mr. Taylor worked after leaving ARPA: Xerox. It was at the Xerox PARC labs in Silicon Valley in the 1970s that the Ethernet was developed to link different computer networks. Researchers there also developed the first personal computer (the Xerox Alto) and the graphical user interface that still drives computer usage today.

According to a book about Xerox PARC, "Dealers of Lightning" (by Michael Hiltzik), its top researchers realized they couldn't wait for the government to connect different networks, so would have to do it themselves. "We have a more immediate problem than they do," Robert Metcalfe told his colleague John Shoch in 1973. "We have more networks than they do." Mr. Shoch later recalled that ARPA staffers "were working under government funding and university contracts. They had contract administrators and all that slow, lugubrious behavior to contend with."

So having created the Internet, why didn't Xerox become the biggest company in the world? The answer explains the disconnect between a government-led view of business and how innovation actually happens.

Executives at Xerox headquarters in Rochester, N.Y., were focused on selling copiers. From their standpoint, the Ethernet was important only so that people in an office could link computers to share a copier. Then, in 1979, Steve Jobs negotiated an agreement whereby Xerox's venture-capital division invested \$1 million in Apple, with the requirement that Jobs get a full briefing on all the Xerox PARC innovations. "They just had no idea what they had," Jobs later said, after launching hugely profitable Apple computers using concepts developed by Xerox.

Xerox's copier business was lucrative for decades, but the company eventually had years of losses during the digital revolution. Xerox managers can console themselves that it's rare for a company to make the transition from one technology era to another.

There was one more step, however, in the process that made the internet useful to the average person, who did not want to deal with line entry worse than DOS command type interfaces, with no search capability, and no graphics. It was the 'browser' - MOSIAC – which was turned into NetScape. (Such as current internet explorer, Firefox, Safari) by university students . That gave the average user the ability to not need to know computer language, file directories, and exactly where the file was that he/she was interested in seeing. The government once again had nothing to do with it.

As for the government's role, the Internet was fully privatized in 1995, when a remaining piece of the very small network run by the National Science Foundation was closed—just as the commercial Web began to boom. Blogger Brian Carnell wrote in 1999: "The Internet, in fact, reaffirms the basic free market critique of large government. Here for 30 years the government had an immensely useful protocol for transferring information, TCP/IP, but it languished. In less than a decade, private concerns have taken that protocol and created one of the most important technological revolutions of the millennia."

It's important to understand the history of the Internet because it's too often wrongly cited to justify big government. It's also important to recognize that building great technology businesses requires both innovation and the skills to bring innovations to market. As the contrast between Xerox and Apple shows, few business leaders succeed in this challenge. Those who do—not the government—deserve the credit for making it happen

Source: Wall Street Journal

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Obama is totally absurd but what did you expect from a Marxist socialist but 'socialism'. It was your parents and grandparents who paid for the schools you attended. It was your parents and grandparents who paid for the roads you used to get to school and college, and to your first job. It was you who are paying for everything else in your life.

It was not 'government' that paid for your education, for the roads you drive on. It is taxpayers forking over money to government which then spends it the way the taxpayers approve.

It is not government that let you earn your salary/income in life. It was your hard work, getting an education, and not becoming a welfare weenie or queenie.

However, Obama, Pelosi and his slobbering followers like Krugman are all too rabid and foaming at the mouth to insist it was 'government' that built the schools, roads, colleges, and everything else that allowed you to be successful, and therefore you owe nearly everything to them for that 'privelege'.

Time to get some folks who actually appreciate hard work, innovation, and success in the White House!

On the Road with N4CD – At the Convention

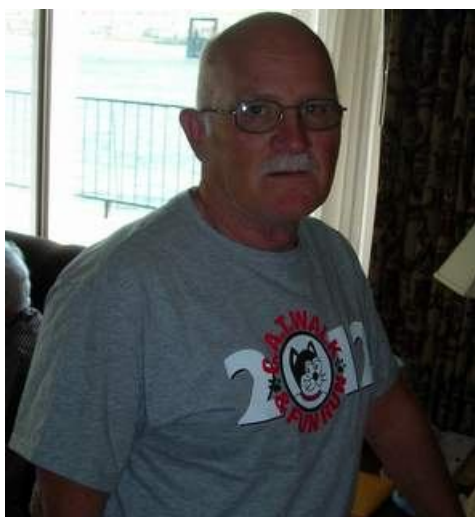
Here's a few of the county hunters attending the convention



Bruce, KL7D

Bruce came down from Anchorage - 3rd district. He's mostly on SSB, but comes over to CW for those elusive counties. It's tough from AK these days.

Kent, KL1V was there too. He's getting set to move to ID and all his antennas are down.



Dennis, KK7X

Dennis, KK7X, was in the area for a bike event and dropped by for a few hours to visit with the county hunters on Thursday evening, then headed home to ID. He shows up occasionally on CW net. He runs the County Hunter Dot Com Web site – drop by and visit a while. Lots of interesting and relevant information.

www.countyhunter.com



Kay, N9QPQ and Mary, AB7NK

Mary, AB7NK, just finished up her CQ USCA award before the convention. Came up with OM K7SEN, Neil.

Here is Mary, AB7NK, getting her USCA award presented by Ted, K1BV, USCA Awards Custodian, at the convention awards time.



Mary, AB7NK and Ted, K1BV



Neil, K7SEN



Jack, KC7YE

Not much was going on during the days. One tour had been unable to get the required number of folks signed up. I didn't go on the other, but went sightseeing myself.

The first day it was over to the historic Fort Vancouver, just a mile or two away from the hotel. It goes back to 1775 and the Hudson Bay company that set up a fur trading post. The 'fort' wasn't a military fort in the true sense. It was run by Hudson Bay company to protect the valuable fur trade.

They had carpenters and coopers, blacksmiths and bakers. It took 2 years to get things from Europe and 2 years to send things back, so they had to be as self sufficient as possible. They baked 'hard biscuits' that they sold to the trappers and travelers that would last for a year.

At this time, beaver hats were the rage. The most in demand pelts were beaver pelts. That went on till the mid 1860s when fashion moved to silk hats. (think tall top hats ala Charles Dickens movies). By then much of the beaver population had been depleted anyway.



It's been restored and it's worth a visit if you are into history. They have a nice 1-2 hour audio tour of the fort you can do at your own pace (free). It's a national park and if you have a "Senior Pass" (62 or older) you get into all the National Parks/Sites free! Even the audio tour was 'free'. The weather was great (70s).

Here's some info on the site

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Vancouver

gov't site

<http://www.nps.gov/fova/index.htm>



Restored Buildings

Wow...life wasn't easy back then. 10-12 hour days, up at dawn work till 6pm or later, and if it was inventory months – till 10-11 at night. Sundays off. There's about a dozen buildings you can visit and enter.

After, just across a big lawn there's another place to visit – the Pearson Aviation museum. It's got a great collection of WW2 aircraft (fighters) and other flight memorabilia. With the large amount of spruce – used to build the wood airplanes, there was a thriving industry in this neck of the woods for logging and for aviation. You can spend an hour or two at this museum right after the fort visit. It's got a good collection of WW2 planes.



Thursday night it was BBQ dinner night at the hotel.

Next day, Friday, it was down to the Evergreen Aviation and Space museum 60 miles away. It's a great museum if you are into aviation and space. Or for kids. At least five times bigger than the Pearson Museum. They have the one of a kind Howard Hughes Spruce Goose there – wow is it BIG – and inside the museum. They've got just about every WW2 airplane plus planes back to the Wright Brothers era, and rockets, missiles, jet planes including an SR-71 Blackbird, and space capsules. You can spend a few hours there easily. There's also an IMAX theater and I took in one of the movies.



The Spruce Goose

Howard Hughes built the gigantic Spruce Goose nearly all out of wood. This was during WW2 and metal was in short supply and used to build fighter and bomber planes. This was to be a heavy duty transport plane. Spruce was used for many/most of the original wood aircraft from the Wright brothers on – lightweight and strong. It flew just once, rising 100 feet above the water in a 'taxiing test' to show it would fly. (and Howard Hughes collect an additional milestone completion sum from the gov't). The war ended, and it never went into production. It used 8 massive engines from the B-29 bomber.

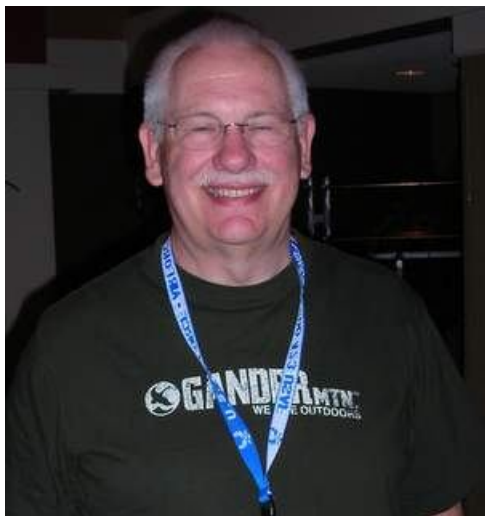
There are two huge buildings there to see (and they are expanding them even more). Plan on lots of hours there. Then it was back to the hotel for the evening get togethers.

There was an antenna talk by Larry, but I missed it. Reports were it was a giant 'infomercial' so if you missed it....you didn't miss much.

It was more meet and greet and share stories



Jerry, K7KWO



Paul, N7JPF



Wayne, AI9Q



N7HT - Dave



K7TM- Bob (pic by WY7LL)

On Saturday, there were several programs given.

Walt, K1DFO, updated the crowd on the latest in Digital Cinema. By the end of 2012, all the movie theaters in the US will be showing 'digital movies' – no more film. No more large shipment of reels of film and film projectors in movie theaters. It will all be gigantic files sent via BB internet to every one of the thousands of theaters, with the movie in secure servers. The era of movie film is over. By the end of 2013, that will be true world wide.

There was a CW session attended by about 15 CW county hunters. The usual subjects of relays and running bands in rotation were discussed, and the need for a NC at times with the bad conditions to keep two mobiles from trying to run at the same time. Also the need for spotters on all the bands. Self spotting helps but you don't always have coverage, and if you are moving, it is darn hard to do without an assistant, or stopping to spot yourself. Not many seem to listen to cw frequencies, but a dozen or more will show up once a spot is generated. It seems a lot of folks 'listen' to SSB and come over to CW for the contacts they disappear, and the ones who listen often aren't spotters or are mobiles who can't spot the run.

Barry, W9UCW, presented an antenna forum. He noted that QEX (the ARRL Experimenter Journal) will publish much of his work on antenna measurements in two installments in upcoming issues. You might want to buy these if you are not already a subscriber. (this is an extra cost journal with high tech articles in great detail). It was reported that if you use Teflon forms, Teflon coated wire, that the rain sensitivity of the 'flying saucer' antennas is reduced to where it is usable most of the time. Norm, W3DYA, and a few others are experimenting with the flat resonators that Barry, W9UCW, has talked about and experimented with.

There was the usual Logger presentation and update. The group picture was taken in the afternoon.



The CW OPS – pic posted by WY7LL

Annual Awards Announced

Net Control CW of the Year - Jerry, W0GXQ

CW Mobile of the Year - Jerry, W0GXQ

SSB Mobile of the Year Dan, AA0TT

Mobile Team of the Year Lowell, KB0BA N0XYL, Sandra

County Hunter SSB of the year Leo, WY7LL

SSB Net Control of the Year Mary, AB7NK, Joe, N5UZW, and Scottie, N4AAT tied for second place. First place – James, KZ2P.

Story of Western trip-2012 - KA3DRO

Sunday, May 6, about O'dark thirty and we were up and loading the puppy (actually, she is 14 yrs old....but still a "puppy" to me) in the truck. All else except the cooler had been loaded the previous day in final preparation for a trip that had been planned for almost a year. Janice, my fiancée, Sage, the puppy, and I headed north on the first leg of our Big Western Trip headed straight for Clarksville, TN. to drop off the dog at her daughters place for the duration.

We stopped for the night in Murfreesboro at the hotel where we will be for the Old Timers MMM convention in September to check it out and stay the night. A mistake as it was filled with "rugrats" and the State Soccer tournaments! We made an early escape north the next day and arrived in Clarksville to hand off the dog, visit with Janice's daughter, took a boat ride on the river, ate an early dinner, and hit the sack..... up at about 7 AM next day headed for our first counties..... the toe of western Kentucky.

Some 6 months of careful planning was to assure me that we would be covering the easiest route from one county to the next and we quickly was able to put out Callaway, Marshall, Graves, Fulton, Carlisle/Hickman, Ballard and McCracken..... most on 40 Meters with a few takers on 20 despite interference from the usual NC. Propagation was poor, but available, and there was only 1 county where we had a problem getting a single CW contact in Ballard. By the time I worked W4UB on 20 m in McCracken, just after 1850Z, propagation was about to dive.

Crossing into Illinois, I missed contacts in several counties, and then abandoned the original trip sked and hightailed to St. Clair. We checked into the hotel, then completed a dinner meeting with N9QS, N9STL, and their spouses at Lotawatta Creek.... a great meal and I guarantee you will not go home hungry!

Next morning, we joined the fight to get into St. Louis and visited the World Famous ARCH. Janice is a daredevil and anxious to get to the top.... I, on the other hand believe in TERRA FIRMA.... the more firma..... the less Terra! So while I stayed at the river front putting out the county, she headed for the heavens..... we were both successful! and then headed out of the city anxious to get into some more rural countryside. The propagation gods were not entirely kind and we only were able to put out a few Illinois counties mostly on 40 M. We headed into Missouri crossing the river well below Hannibal. 40 M was acting OK and 20 was downright inhospitable, as usual, so we just put out counties on 40. (sorry guys...if you missed me there on 20, send a Thank You note to KZ2P)

That afternoon, we stopped off to see a friend in Anabel, Mo. He maintains a professionals Woodworking Website that I am a member of, and we had a grand few hours there visiting and seeing his operation. We stayed in Macon and headed out early the next day anxious to see if the propagation gods were smiling yet. Fortunately, they were and we had a successful morning running counties on 40 M in some beautiful northern Missouri countryside. We even were able to make a few "specials" to make some CH'ers happy.

By afternoon, the bands failed again and we snipped off a few planned counties and headed for Maryville for the night, but were able to work a few more still mostly on 40 M. We arrived in Maryville at 6 PM local and had just turned 27,000 miles on the odometer. (We started trip at 25,978)

At 8 AM next day we were off and running west. I finished N. Missouri running Atchison and Holt after Nodaway and then we crossed the Mississippi and started our biggest challenge, Nebraska. My plan was to try to run County Lines as much as possible to conserve time and the State was kind enough most of the time to permit this operation. We also used the cellphone as much as possible now posting our spots when possible and calling others to spot us when we had but 1 bar service Thank God for the several who assisted us so much!

A special Thanks to W0GXQ for being there so many times! This opened up the 20 M portion and we made many more contacts despite constant interference from KA1JPR and his attempts

at CW QRM. I tried 30 M, 17 M, many times all to no avail. 20 CW was also empty of signals..... so I stayed on SSSB to make the contacts with people who needed CW asking for it and being able to deliver the contact as requested.

We quickly worked SE Nebraska and headed north towards York in the afternoon.....and were able to get our contacts in Polk, Merrick, Nance, (both of which were highly needed and a struggle to make contacts from.... but Thanks for the help W4UB and W8FNW) and Platte before settling in for the night at a local RODEWAY INN.... where despite the late checkin, still needed to get a load of laundry done. The parking area had a number of suspicious people around so I slept with my .38 close at hand..... glad that I had the weapon along and comfortable with the legality of the CWP in my pocket.

Next AM we headed east a bit to gather up a few more needed counties and detoured about 30 miles south for Cass, unscheduled but a LC for N0KV..... lots of traffic and construction, but we made it, and headed north in heavy traffic. 40 M was still the best band and we were able to make our contacts there. (Again, if you missed me on 20 M.... send a Thank You note to KZ2P)

After a few hours, we got into a more rural area and were able to work a few more on 20 M as well as a few County Lines like Cedar/Wayne, Knox/Cedar, and Holt/Antelope. We made it as far as Boyd, and all we heard was 2 contacts at 2335Z . The rain was falling by then as was the sunshine, With some effort, we drove back to Norfolk for the night... a long drive, but happy the next day as it gave us a jump on another long mileage day.

The counties now were spacing out a bit and the roads were not as plentiful either. We spent many miles between county lines... Thank God for SERIUS RADIO! We did a few more lines.... Platte/Boone, Greeley/Wheeler, Valley/Sherman. We drifted into the little town of Ord, NE. looking for a place to eat, and often finding great little cafes in the small towns. Here we discovered Rosie;s in the town square and enjoyed the best prime rib sandwich and potato salad I ever had.... and the tab for both of us was an amazing \$10.68 and included drinks! We also bumped into a local who was a Bucs fan so we were able to talk sports for a few minutes as well..... Then off and running again headed northward towards Keya Paha..... and finding out why it is run so rarely! Then headed south with stops along the way in Blaine and Logan along the way. We stayed in North Platte and had a fine steak dinner at a local grill.

Next morning was a long trip for a few county lines.... McPhearson/Hooker seems remote.... until you head for Arthur and Grant! Safe to say we saw our fill of Antelope all day out here... some as close at 50 yards away.... till we stopped to get photos.... then leap away like bullets!. But beautiful open plains country!



KA3DRO – Grant, NE

We then headed south thru Ogalallah passing the largest man made lake in Nebraska by crossing the Kingsley Dam.

Crossing I-80 we entered another world of flat and arid land and wide county lines. The day ended in McCook at the Horse Creek Inn. They recommended a nice family place for dinner and since it was Mothers Day, we went there and enjoyed a delicious homemade turkey dinner with all the trimmings, including salad, and dessert as well as drinks... for the amazing price of \$6.75 ! I was amazed! Next day, I ran north to put out Red Willow while Janice packed, and then we headed east to wrap up the balance of the lower tier counties to be run.....

Gosper/Furnas, Harlan/Phelps, Kearney/Franklin.... and then we headed for the Interstate for a speed run west staying in Sidney after running the CL of Deuel/Garden late that afternoon. Our efforts to locate a buffalo steak were for naught and we settled on a mediocre pork chop dinner in town.

Mileage was now 28965... we had driven 2,987 miles so far! Cheyenne/Morrill was the next line run with lots of action on 40 and more on 20 M. Janice had mastered the art of spotting using the Android phone and it was working FB. Then came Box Butte/Morrill followed by a jaunt thru some dry scrub country to the heights of the Buttes around Gering and we did the CL of Scotts Bluff/Banner. I was able to get another LC from W0GXQ on 30 M here. That completed all 71 counties I needed to complete Nebraska! We turned the front west and headed for Wyoming! At 29,138 miles, we crossed the border. Our destination for the night was Casper, a quaint western city. We put out Goshen/Platte along the way and then Natrona/Converse arriving in Casper at the hotel in late afternoon local time.

Next day was a shopping excursion where I bought a new western dress shirt and jeans, Janice

bought a few things, and we toured some of downtown Casper before heading out to Mt. Rushmore running Johnson/Natrona and Westin/Campbell along the way. We arrived in the SD tourist area with plenty of time to revisit Cheif Crazy Horse and saw from the road that almost nothing had been accomplished in the last 10 years.... so skipped it and headed for Mt. Rushmore monument... always a heart stopping scene!

While there we were able to talk to the last of the actual profile sculptors who was visiting... he was 91 years young and a big group was enjoying his tales. Then we hit the Winery to restock one of my favorites, Red Ass Rhubarb! Next morning it was a visit to Deadwood and then on to Sturgis to see the Full Throttle Saloon..... too early for a cold 807 so we bought a few tee shirts and headed into town for a more civil lunch.... cold beer and hot meal!

Then on to Devils Tower.... took obligatory photos.... and on to Buffalo for the night. Along the way we ran what I refer to as the county named after KZ2P..... Crook county, WY. Then Campbell/Johnson . We stayed at the Comfort Inn, had dinner at Winchesters, a great dinner too! and next AM, I headed north on I-25 to get Sheridan Cty, got off on a small rural road to do it, then picked her up as we headed west. Thanks to N5UZW again, I was spotted and was able to put out quite a few contacts on 40 and 20M. It was stormy, rainy and cool so when I filled the tank, knowing there were mountains ahead, I used 91 octane gas.

I ran Washakie, then the CL of Washakie/Big Horn..... nothing on any band except 20 M it was 39 degrees and windy with some snow flurries as well. I have photos of the passes filled with snow!

If you ever have opportunity to travel rt 16 thru the mountains to Ten Sleep, WY. ..it is a MUST SEE trip! The phone surprised me as I did not see that I had service... W9WOC needed Washakie as a LC.... we were able after some effort to connect with a 22 both ways and confirmed later by cell phone. He had caught me just a few miles before I hit Hot Springs.

Another great portion of the trip arose as we traveled the Wind River Canyon but this time in a blinding rainstorm....it was beautiful in its own way with a huge lake at the southern end. We did Fremont and then headed to Teton stopping along the way to endure 33 degrees on the pass with a total snow white-out! Stopping several times along the way for scenic photos, we finally pulled into Jackson Hole, found a motel Eight in town, and had a great BBQ dinner at Bubbas. Wish we had more time to see Jackson Hole but had to get on our way.....

We headed south next morning towards Kemmerer, WY putting out Sublette and Lincoln along the way. We located Rt 89 west and headed for the barren County/State line and put out Rich, Utah/Lincoln, WY. I had missed Rich a few years ago when I ran Idaho with W7LQT so this detour was necessary if I was to meet my goal of completing the State of Utah. We then returned to Kemmerer where we visited the town center to see the original JC Penny store.... very underwhelming.... then had a great Mexican lunch at a local cafe before heading south towards the rest of Utah.

We hit the Interstate and headed east a few miles to find rt 414 and traveled one of the prettiest parts of the whole trip.... Flaming Gorge thru Daggett, Utah! At Daggett, the action on 20 M was FB but about absent on 40M . While there, we made AB7NK very happy with a contact. A few hours later we parked for the night in Vernal, Utah. Next morning we continued our trek south doing Carbon, then Wasatch/Utah, and SanPete/Utah, all on 20 M.

By this time we were used to QRM from Percy and were having some “fun” with him..... I would announce on 14.336 a frequency between Jim's running others, and Percy would show up immediately with his pseudo-CW interference. Fortunately, at a 33, he did not hurt my reception much. I advised him of his “report” and told him to get his head out of Jim's Butt and he could go up to a “55” report.... he responded by doubling his speed of QRM and a few times I would tell him on 14.336.... “ quick Percy.... DRO is on .341” and sure enough, in a few seconds, Percy was sending his “click-click” on .341..... only to find out he was interfering with someone else's qso in progress. He was so predictable!

With the able assistance of N9QS, N5KGY, N5UZW, and special assistance of K7REL, we never missed a county after that and made a lot of CH'ers happy with lots of contacts. We headed for an out of the way County line.... Wayne/Piute, way off the beaten track and up in the mountains as well. It was a trip but beautiful countryside all the way. Next stop after a long leg was Washington, Utah where we pulled in to a motel for the night.

Early the next morning we pulled out of the town of St. George and headed to Las Vegas..... a deviation from our original plan to go to Page. We had been talking about this alternative for awhile and I thought that this was the right time to make an earthshaking decision..... at about 8:30 we parked the truck 1 block from the local Courthouse and stepped up to the Clerks desk and applied for our marriage license! Shortly after, we stepped across the street to a little Wedding Chapel and said our ‘I DOs’..... and just like that we were married!

We departed Las Vegas a half hour later and headed across the Colorado River for Phoenix..... the temperatures were up to 111 degrees as we entered the Glendale area. This was a bittersweet reunion as we had planned to visit a dear Old Lady, Dorothy Warman who I thought of as my “surrogate Mother-In-Law” from when we lived in Phoenix in the early 60's attending ASU as a grad student. Grandma was 96 when she had passed away 2 weeks earlier and there was a funeral to attend in 2 days. Her daughter, a preteen “brat” years ago was now a retired school teacher and needed some comforting from her “older brother”..... the week passed quickly and we actually had a great time in Phoenix revisiting our old haunts, seeing all the newness in Tempe, meeting K7REL and his lovely wife at their Scottsdale home, meeting friends of Janice that had retired there as well..... and visiting friends in Queen Creek on our last day there as we headed south to visit W7WBZ down near the Mexican border.

We had a great visit overnight with Avon who is relocating to the Denver area soon..... and took time to see the border, and visit and participate in Wyatt Earpp Days at Bisbee, Az. Then it was

back on the road to complete the last of the goals set for the trip.... complete all of New Mexico counties. We headed east for the first time this trip and put out Sierra and then Otero on our way to visit another old friend, KF0LZ, Dave, who lived in High Rolls, NM above Alamogordo. We found his nest high up above the 8,000 ft line in the mountains and enjoyed a delightful BBQ with his Susan, his wife, and Dave and his dogs as we played “catch-up” for the many years since we had seen one another.

The next morning early we headed east and wound our way to Carlsbad Caverns as Janice had that on her “bucket-list” and I had always wanted to revisit the area. It was as enjoyable then as the first time! We then had a quick lunch back in the town of Carlsbad and concentrated on our goal of putting out counties again. Lincoln county was eagerly anticipated by W0GXQ as a LC, and we were able to make a CW contact on 20 M to make him a happy man! We settled in for the night amongst the aliens in Roswell, NM. Next day we headed north and did DeBaca/Roosevelt, Guadalupe/DeBaca, and spent some time at the Billy The Kid tourist trap at Ft. Sumner, had a great Mexican Burger at a local cafe, and headed north..... doing San Miguel and then Santa Fe counties on our way to Albuquerque.

After getting lost because I turned the wrong way off the freeway, we located our hotel, and had one of our best ever Mexican dinners at a local restaurant. Early up and at 'em the next day where I ran Valencia and what I thought was Bernalillo..... but when I made the turn back to the highway, saw it was Cibola.....not Bernalillo..... and called K7REL to post to those out there on the K3IMC website the error..... (sorry guys!.... hope you got the correction) . We then headed north towards the 4 Corner area.... a long but interesting drive with lots of construction along the way. We stopped along the way to run the line of San Juan, NM/Apache, AZ and then continued to the monument. It was smaller than I expected, but just full of tourists all eager to stand on the medallion spanning 4 States.... we waited our turn and made the obligatory photos for our memory albums too!.... then I drove the truck around the back to where I was straddling the line and put out San Juan, Utah and Montezuma, Colorado. With that contact first with K2RP, my quest to complete Utah was done..... !

We later headed back thru Shiprock and Farmington, the Bloomfield to rt 550-South and ended up in the little town of Cuba where we stayed the night in an old 50's style motel and had a great Mexican dinner right down the street.

An adventure unplanned was about to unfold..... I had run Rio Arriba on the way to Cuba so my plan to use rt 96 was not needed..... and I decided to look at a map and chose to use rt 126 to Los Alamos. Well folks, this was a neat ride..... over 40 miles of dirt and soft sand, rising to over 8,500 ft at one point and about 9,000 another, all on single lane switchbacks thru remote forest where we didn't see another vehicle for an hour at a time!

But the views were amazing and wildlife abundant....but the road is not to be used in an ordinary car at anytime (Thank God for the F-150 we were in!) and not for the “faint of heart”

driver! We pulled into Los Alamos glad to be able to see civilization again and grateful for the beautiful countryside we had just experienced. From Santa Fe we went on to Taos, had lunch there, and while we wanted to see downtown, were stopped by a 3 mile traffic blockage.... so turned back and headed east..... running Colfax and ending up in another little 50's motel in Cimarron, NM. Dinner was a sandwich at a local Cafe, and early next AM we wandered east along with thousands of friendly Antelope. Breakfast was at The Browns Hotel in Springer where we had the pleasure to buy breakfast for several servicemen to show them appreciation for their service.... it felt good as this was a surprise to them! We then did Union/Colfax, Haarding/Colfax and then on to Mora.... where we dropped down a giant canyon, crossed the Canadian River.... and had to climb up the other side to be heard. Last on our list was Quay and it was a long ride from where we were, but as we neared Logan, we were there, and with a call to K7REL, and a 3x3 report to him on 20 M, we had completed our quest of completing 4 western States!

We hit I-40 and headed east towards home. That night we stayed in Amarillo where we had a steak dinner at the Big Texan in celebration of our goal being reached. The next day was a beeline east putting out "greenstamp" counties on the fly on 20 M in Texas and Oklahoma. We stopped to have lunch at the Cattlemans Club at the Stockyards, a favorite of mine, did a little shopping at the western stores, and then stopped in town to show my new bride a place every American needs to experience.... The Murrer Building Memorial in Oklahoma City..... those little chairs on the grass still bring tears to my eyes.... but it is a reminder of how precious Freedom is and the price paid for it, and why we need to fight to maintain it.

Back in the truck, more Interstate 40 east, and more counties..... till we got to exit 265 where I needed to make good on my last promise for our trip and we headed to the Cherokee Nation. My new wife is part Cherokee (and a lot of Irish!) and is a member of that tribe and her ancestors are buried in the area..... I had promised her we would check their registration when we were in the area and we did..... locating their graves and monuments and some additional family history. After satisfying that request, we again headed home with a stop-off to visit with a dear old friend, KG5J and his wife, Evelyn. It was so nice to see such sparkle in their eyes at their ages! (Almost 90 now!) And we enjoyed a great dinner with lots of rag-chewing catch-up and departed with promises to see one another again in September at the MMM in Murfreesboro.

Next day we hit Memphis with a detour to stop off to visit another Old Timer and good friend, W4RKY where we had a cold drink a an hour or so of social life.... then on to Clarksville. We gathered the dog, had dinner with my "new" daughter and her family, and headed home next day taking the long way via Huntsville due to the Music festival drawing 60-80,000 faithful at MMM area.... it took 17 hours but we pulled into the driveway at midnight.

Still working on totals but mileage appears to be about 10,692 from door-to-door. I put out almost 275 counties of which almost 200 were new for me. I have yet to total the contacts, but met all my initial goals of completing the States of Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, and New

Mexico. I am grateful to those many of you out there who provided help along the way..... and sorry many were unable to get their contacts due to the propagation gods or the insanity of one net control, and his sycophant, who places his personal vendetta above the good of the County Hunting community.

On the Trail of Regens

There wasn't too much time to be surfing Ebay this month, one one interesting goodie showed up. It was a kit from the last 20-30 years – a one tube (1H4) kit radio put out by Steampunk. Broadcast band kit similar to the days of the Boy Scout radios of the 50s and 60s. Ran off a 1.5v battery and a B+ battery of 45 to 90v. This is the only one I've seen. It's apparently a recent kit in the 1990s or early 2000s.



Steampunk Kit KT-201

Here's a nicely homebrewed set using a 6J7 and 6C5 tube – looks like a design straight out of a 1940s vintage ARRL handbook (up to the early 50s) but built in the 1960s or later since it had 'orange drop' capacitors under the chassis. . A pentode detector and audio tube with interstage audio 3:1 transformer. Sold for 94 bucks – and needs external power supply as well for filament voltage and B+.



Here's another goodie 'as seen on Ebay'. Looks like it was a kit of some form. Nice front panel, and chassis assembly. Kits were popular and in 1932, shortwave broadcasting was extremely new and popular. It was an experimenters delight to build and listen with your own set. You had limited choices – a 'shortwave converter' that you put in front of your table top radio (which stole filament and HV from the radio detector tube), a very expensive console radio that included shortwave, or a kit or homebrewed radio. There were dozens of kit suppliers. Some even supplied kits where YOU had to make your own holes for the tube sockets, bolts, terminals, etc.



1932 Vintage Regen Receiver

This used a 2A3 tube and type 57 detector(in the shield) . The tuning mechanism is somewhat unique. It used a main tuning capacitor, and the band spread was a rocker mechanism that physically moved the main tuning capacitor, which was not bolted down on one side. It had a spring to return it. You got a small amount of capacity that way. By varying the position of the main tuning capacitor, you then got a mechanical band spread. Saved an expensive depression era tuning capacitor. The main tuning dial didn't move either. Dog bone resistors underneath. This set required a 2.5v AC filament supply and likely 150-250v DC.

An Old Telegraph Tale

A Tale of A Snake's Tail
By Paul Flowers

[This delightful tongue-in-cheek story appeared in the Illinois Central Magazine for February, 1944. It was reprinted in Dots & Dashes (publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.) Vol. 15, No. 1 Jan-Feb-March 1987, by permission of Ms. Virginia Anzelmo, of the Illinois Central Gulf News.]

Here is the tale of a rattlesnake that mastered the Morse code, back when telegraphy and pounding brass was a fine and noble profession. It was soon after I first went to work for the road with which I am still employed, the Illinois Central, than which there is none finer.

I was sent to Way, Miss. as night operator. The name was about all there was to the station, except a water tank and day and night telegraph operators. Way is back in the Big Black River bottoms, where the nights get the blackest, the bullfrogs croak the coarsest and the hoot owls hoot the loneliest of any spot in creation. It is only about 4 miles from Vaughan, where Casey Jones of song and fable pulled his last throttle some 40 years ago.

My duties at Way consisted of reporting trains promptly and staying awake or vice-versa, and sometimes I dozed and as a consequence could not truthfully report that a string had gone by. When I failed to get enough rest during the day and was unusually sleepy when I came to work, I would find out when the next train was due to pass and then go out and pour a handful of cinders on the rails. If the passing train did not awaken me, when I did come to I could go out and see if the cinders were swept off, and if so, I knew the train had gone. This system had its disadvantages in bad weather.

I tried another old one, that of tying one end of a string to the coal scuttle in the office, stretching it across the track and tying the other to a stick. When the train came along, it hit the string and rattled the coal hod. This was not entirely satisfactory either, because a wandering mule or cow was liable to come along before the train. But fortune brought a happy solution to my problem. One night as I sat reading a detective magazine and had just reached the point where the villain was about to push the heroine over the cliff, I happened to glance toward the door and was amazed to see a good-sized rattlesnake crawling in the door. As it lay there on the floor, I noticed a marked resemblance to our porter, Oleander, who was long and svelte too.

Well, I sat there, paralyzed with fright while the snake coiled, moved his head from side to side like the pendulum on a grandfather clock, his beady, unblinking eyes taking in everything in the office. I had used all my snake medicine the night before, so I was just where Moses was.

All at once a complete calm came over me. I rose, strode boldly to where the snake was and poured some milk out of my lunch box kit into a fruit jar lid, and set it where the rattler could see it. He took the hint and lapped it up greedily. After he had finished the milk, we eyed each other for a moment, and seemed to reach a complete understanding.

I had a practice telegraph set in the back of my office, and I went over and began tapping out

slowly the alphabet in Morse code. Leander, as I called my visitor, crawled onto the table and was all attention—finest and most apt student I ever had. Soon as I would make a letter I'd pause, and he'd raise his tail and try to imitate the dots and dashes and spaces with his rattles. In an unusually short time he knew the entire alphabet. He had a little trouble with the letter "P" which consists of five dots. He seemed to lose control of his tail muscles on that one, and I thought he'd never quit making dots. But finally he mastered the "P" and his Morse was a joy to listen to. We spent many otherwise lonely hours, I with brass key and sounder, tobacco can and all, and Leander with his natural sounder. He told me he was one of twenty children, but that his brothers and sisters had been drowned in a flood. Leander was a handy creature around the office; he could grab up a broom with his tail, hump his back, put his nose to the floor and do as good a sweeping job as you ever saw.

But the biggest lift he gave was in helping me report trains. As you know, a snake's tongue when extended from his mouth is sort of like a radio antenna. Leander would crawl on the telegraph table in the depot's bay window (still there), stick his head out, poke his tongue out some more and get the vibration of a train 35 miles away. Then he would come over to the table where I was sleeping, touch my face tenderly with that sensitive tongue of his and I knew it was time to rouse up and exchange signals with the train crew and report their passing.

All good things come to an end. I got word that I was to be transferred, so one evening, as Leander and I were having our little chat in Morse, broke the news to him gently as I knew how. I told him how much I had enjoyed knowing him and how much he had done to keep me from being lonely, in his cordial, ophidian way and I invited him to go with me to my next station.

But Leander, after thinking it over for a while, tapped out "No" and explained that Big Black River bottoms were his home, where all his folks had lived since the Ice Age, and he was considerable of a homebody, and didn't think he'd get adjusted to unfamiliar scenes. He thanked me for teaching him Morse, and we had a parting of the Way.

As he slithered out he paused, looked back, transfixed me with those soulful and unblinking eyes and tapped out "73," which is the telegrapher's traditional symbol for good-by. I felt no shame as I stood there alone, with the shades of night falling fast, as tears trickled down my cheeks and Leander disappeared. He was a pal.

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Note: Telegraphers used the American Morse Code – the 'original' Morse code. Hams use the 'International Morse Code' which many different characters in it. In American Morse, a “P” is five dits.

On the Road with N4CD

After the Convention

Day 16 – Sunday – Plan C

After 4 full days of convention, it was time to head toward home. Having already run all of what I needed to run in WA, ID, and Oregon (and about 80% of the state this trip missing just a handful that I had been in before), it was time to head to CA to run those I had not run a second time for transmit. California is a big place, and the top two up north I needed were Modoc and Del Norte. You can't drive between the two of them without major deviations a hundred miles out of the way! So first it was a long trip of over 300 miles down from Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA to get to Modoc, then back tracking through OR to get way west again over into Del Norte.

Someone turned up the thermostat. For most of the trip it was temps in the 60s and 70s all day long! Wonderful. The 'hot' weather finally made it to Oregon. It was near 100 degrees in northern CA, and all across NV and UT and NM back to home. The cool temps up in WA and OR were behind me. Actually the heat reached up that way, too, as we all left the area, for a few days of 'hot' up there before the normal cooler temps returned.

California is very county hunter friendly as far as marking counties. Better yet, like a few other states, every road has a county marker every 0.1 mile along it. Here's what you might see at the county line along with a big sign



Siskiyou/Modoc markers

The signs have the first three letters of the county on them along with the road number and mileage. Route 139 – at the C/L which has both signs.

I looked at the map and decided to check out a little road from Cave Junction, OR to Happy Valley, CA in Siskiyou. You hit the corner of Del Norte. Probably should have just gone across all the way on highway 191 to Humboldt, then went north to Del Norte (10-15 miles) then backtrack. It would have been faster, but it would have taken a longer journey to get to Trinity later on. You can't win in CA....with the mountains, it's going in and coming back out the same road for counties - sometimes 30-40 or more miles each way. There's a reason that those counties aren't run too much. It also takes 3 hours to drive across them if you decide to to that – like Trinity and that just gets you to the border of the next county which could take another 2 hours to drive across! The drive south out of Happy Camp was 'scenic' as well winding down a river valley.

You start off on the highway in OR and it is paved – the first few miles are good and not much twisting. This shouldn't be too bad. Then it starts winding up and up. There's a sign “Scenic Byway”. Well, that has to be good. It's very scenic but you soon start doing lots of climbing with lots of switchbacks and turns. Up and up and up and up – thousands of feet. Then up even more – turning and twisting, maybe averaging 20-30 mph. Finally you reach the summit after at least 15 miles of driving – there's a sign – end of Josephine County maintenance.....leaving Josephine county. You are at Grey Back pass up 5000 feet. No sign that you are entering Del Norte – the GPS shows the line, but it seems to move around depending which way you point the car. This is a 'seasonal road'. They don't plow it once the snow starts and this is snow country.



Grayback Summit – 5000 feet

I go to where I am in the county – nice place to park on the side of the road – run Del Norte. A few miles down the road you run into Siskiyou and you are there for the next 50 miles. It's also 20-30 mph down the road...and down and down.....left and right...right and left – arms get worn out turning the wheel - to Happy Camp, CA. Happy Camp is about 1000 people – was an old mining town for gold, copper, jade and they did logging as well. Now it's an isolated town along a road mainly used by those wanting to get away from it all.

For 30 miles you see nothing but forest and twisting turning road. You don't make time on this road but it is SCENIC. After a few hundreds of left and right, left and right – you get worn out driving this road. Not for those who don't like 2 lane mountain roads – but all paved and open in the summer time.. You are on the State of Jefferson Scenic Byway. The section over the mountain and then the road going east (highway 96) are on the State of Jefferson Scenic Byway. What? State of Jefferson? This road runs from Yreka (at I-5) west to Happy Camp and then over the mountain pass to OR.

It's a long way between towns. After Happy Camp – you head south and run into Humboldt.

Going south is the Smith mountain scenic byway to Willow Creek. Translation: Scenic Byway – slow going – twists and curves, and more of them and even more.

It turns out that in 1941, the locals blockaded route 96 and planned to succeed from California as the 49th state. The original movement was an attempt to get better roads in Northern California and southern OR. Most of the states tax money were being used to build camp grounds in southern CA and elsewhere, not build better roads up north. Curry County and northern CA would form another state with Yreka as the capital. Along came WW2, when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec, 7, 1941, and the country became totally involved with the war effort. There are still factions up there calling for a separate state. It's sure a lot different than urban areas down south.

I read in the local paper that evening about how Humboldt county had the second highest gas prices in the country than anywhere in the county – other than HI - running 20-30 cents higher than in the rest of CA – and up around \$3.85 to \$3.90/gal where I was. Ouch. Seems they import their gas by ship, and the distribution costs are 'socialized' so everyone pays about the same price, whether 2 miles from the terminal, or back up in the hills 80 miles away by twisty

road. That will teach 'em all. Needless to say, the folks along the coast are not happy campers when it comes to fill up their SUVs and pick up trucks.

I needed to run Trinity and you can easily do that after you get to Willow Creek. It was getting late, and the Big Foot Motel had rooms available. \$55. Even better there was a pizza place across the street and it was Sunday night – you readers of the CHNews know that is pizza night!

Gas out west was \$3.50 to \$3.90 a gallon. Before heading to dinner, I ran over the 10 miles or so to Trinity. Nice spot to run it right across the bridge. (It's hard to get pictures of C/Ls in most places in CA...they are either at mountain passes where you can't stop, or on bridges – same thing – you can't stop to get a pic!). Then back to town and a nice pizza. There's apparently a lot of 'sightings' of Big Foot out in Humboldt and Siskiyou counties. There are loads of tourists traps, souvenir shops and other sucker bait to lure in your money.

Early to bed.

Day 17 Monday

That day it was over to Highway 101 along the coast. – and down 101 for the next couple hundred miles to get to the San Francisco area. One detour over to Lake County – then zigging through Napa and Sonoma. 101 is good for most of the way, but every now and then there is a two lane 25 mph section for a few miles through a town or a redwood forest, then back to 4 lane divided highway.

Soon I had to worry about the counties around San Francisco. I started in Marin – went right past the exit for KC6AWX off the 101 – down to 580 going east to Contra Costa across a bridge – no toll. Got lost there as I tried to get off the interstate – and got lost and it took 20 minutes to get back on course. I finally realized I had to get back on 580 'east' and head south – down into Alameda, then over the bridge into SF on I-80. That was \$6 I think for the bridge.

The county sign is about 1/3rd the way across the bridge. I kept running as I drove on the 8 lanes of highway into SF on I-80 and south out of SF on 80/280 headed down to Santa Cruz County via San Mateo. Yes, there was some method to my route – trying to hit all of what I needed to run a second time. I had made a previous trip or two out there – once for a convention and once to finish off N9STL for MP, but there were lots of missing counties and gaps.

When I saw the line for Santa Cruz...the GPS showed at exit at the top of the pass for Summit Drive. Sure enough...the GPS showed you could be in Santa Cruz county on parts of that road....so I parked and ran the county high up. Better there than having to drive a few miles down the far side of the mountain. Or more if there were no exits or it was a long downslope that did not favor getting a signal over the hills. Out west, if you can't run at the pass (and most times you cannot it seems in CA), you have to go another five or ten miles to find a place far enough back from the mountain to get a signal back east. In some cases, that was an extra 10 miles – or if on an interstate – to the next exit which could be a long long way!

That night I headed over to Merced County and found a Motel 6. Dinner at the truck stop nearby.

Tuesday Day 18

Next morning - it was north again! The plan was to get up to Yuba, Sutter and Butte Counties. That wasn't bad – up the interstate then route 99. Got lost once...GPS tried to take me across a levy and bridge that didn't exist. Hmm.....finished those 3 and headed east toward home...with one detour.

I was headed to Virginia City. California was 'complete' as far as second time transmit (along with MT, ID, WA and OR) so the trip objectives had been met plus more. There were still lots of Mobile Diamond counties needed in CA. N8KIE was running some – but I couldn't hear him on 20M and often he was 'too close'. Same for AA9JJ, and I was running counties and probably missed them on the 3 minutes they were on 40M every hour. Got a few, though.

It was then over to NV.

Rick, AI5P, had pointed out a great wireless museum in Virginia City that he had visited a few years ago. . You have to really want to go to Virginia City. It's now a tourist trap with a teeny, narrow, congested main street filled with gambling joints, old (not fake) store fronts from 100 years ago, crammed in a small canyon. It's a nice day trip from Reno, if you find yourself out there. 150 years ago, they discovered the Comstock Lode of silver, and gazillions (hundreds of millions) was made by a few. Virginia City was a very rich place. Then the mines played out before 1880 and before WW2, the town was almost abandoned. Now I it is a redone tourist trap with lots of history.

Comstock Lode history

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comstock_Lode

Here's a link on the Western Historic Wireless Museum - check it out!

<http://www.radioblvd.com/>

Henry, WA7YBS, has a lot of radios stuffed into the basement of his home with a dozen display cases. (maybe 200?radios) He's got many rare early commercial wireless sets up through the WW2 era, and will talk your ear off with all the history behind the companies, people involved, etc. Definitely worth a side trip if you are interested. Check ahead to see if he will be open. Open most afternoons in the summer time but definitely check ahead!

The road up to Virginia City climbs and climbs and climbs up to over 6000 feet. The city is over 6000 feet in elevation. Everything is either 'up or down' there. Other than the main narrow, congested, main drag, the streets are steep.

I don't know how they manage to remove all the traffic but here's some images of Virginia City less all the tourists! (There's plenty of off street parking everywhere so don't sweat it). However, the main street is very full, very narrow, and full of stores, bars, hotels, gambling places, and restaurants.

<http://tinyurl.com/85l32m4>

It's a 25 mile detour to get up there and back but if you've never seen a 'old western' town, this is as good as it gets. Better than the 'gold mining towns' in CO that have been really butchered up into tourist traps with gambling.

After a 2 hour visit, it was time to head on. It was down the mountain and back to the interstate 80. Then zipping east once again. Until I got to highway 50 – the loneliest highway in America. (after all the rural roads in OR, MT, and elsewhere it really wasn't much different!)

Back in the 1986 era, Life Magazine published an article about this road,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Route_50_in_Nevada#Loneliest_Road_in_America

There's not much to say. It's hundreds and hundreds of miles of good road but absolutely nothing as far as civilization. Three small towns along the way (a few hundred people). If you break down, it's a 100 mile tow to anywhere from much of the highway. You pass through Austin (pop 300) then it's another hundred plus to Ely. There's a Motel 6 in Ely. I called four hours ahead and arrived at 8pm. Another late night, but it was time to make tracks for home. You can zip along at 75 on route 50. You pass a car every ten or twenty miles. You're up at 5000-7000 feet for most of the road with 7400 foot passes. When the hills are a few thousand feet above terrain, they get some rain fall – they are tall enough to get the clouds to drop moisture. You might have trees and deer up on the top of the ridge. Otherwise, it is bone dry along the route. Desert. Those CA mountain ranges caused all the moisture to fall in CA

leaving next to none to fall on NV.

Ely has a nearby humongous copper mine in Ruth – and its a decent size town with 20 motels. No sweat.

Wednesday, Day 19

I was up early, grabbed a biscuit and coffee and it was off headed east at sunrise...well, before sunrise. Over into Millard, UT....to Sevier and Grand, UT - to get to I-70 over to Crescent City. Then it was down 191.

Down through the Canyon lands of NV. Past Arches National Park. At least there was some good scenery – although it was hot and bone dry the entire way.

Here's a good wiki link on Arches

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arches_National_Park

“Arches National Park is a U.S. National Park in eastern Utah. It is known for preserving over 2000 natural sandstone arches, including the world-famous Delicate Arch, in addition to a variety of unique geological resources and formations.

The park is located just outside of Moab, Utah, and is 76,679 acres (31,031 ha) in area. Its highest elevation is 5,653 feet (1,723 m) at Elephant Butte, and its lowest elevation is 4,085 feet (1,245 m) at the visitor center. Forty-three arches have collapsed due to erosion since 1970. The park receives 10 inches (250 mm) of rain a year on average.”

Warning – PDF big file....not for dial up users

<http://www.nps.gov/arch/planyourvisit/upload/2012ArchesVisitorGuide.pdf>

I kept on moving – it was time to get on to home. The route from Moab was over into the corner of CO (Dolores and Montezuma counties) and down into San Juan, NM. The tall 13000 foot high Rocky Mountains are off to your left – very nice.

I needed just three for MD in NM, and they were right below each other – so it was down on 491 to I -40. Wow...gas is down to \$3.25 near civilization and the flat lands. When I hit I-40 you run into Cibola – and then it had been a long long day so I looked for a Motel. Saw signs for Motel 6 and Super 8 in Grants, NM.. Picked the Motel 6. Less expensive usually by 10

bucks or more, so you can buy breakfast at McD or Denny's and come out ahead. The Motel 6 was fine for \$45. Asian Buffet across the street. Good.

Thursday, Day 20

It was time to get home. Starting in Cibola, NM (Motel 6 in Grants, NM off I-40), the N4CD mobile was on the road at 4:15 am. I couldn't find the road to get to the Denny's one could see.....after a few minutes of dead ends, and finding a sign finally - (use Walmart entrance), I couldn't find the Walmart entrance. They don't have the sign on at 4am in the morning and it was dark. So I hit the road and did 100 miles before the sun came up. Then I found another Denny's and had a nice breakfast to keep me going. It was going to be at least 12-14 hours on the road at 75 and 80 mph all day to get home by dark. Just stops for gas and a quick pit stop and grab a drink or snack. Gas was 'cheap' compared to out west – in the \$3.25 range. My credit card sagged a bit with \$3.85/gal fill ups out west.

Things started out OK....with half a dozen or more contacts per county as I zipped east. There were lots of trucks on the interstate – every other vehicle seemed to be a Big Rig truck. Most were zipping along at 70-75 mph. Joyce, N9STL was down to 3 to finish up again and one was Borden TX. (That's almost a long 5-6 hour trip with no stops from home to get there at warp speed...each way.) I could add in another 150 miles on this trip and get it on the way home. It was off I-40 through Guadalupe, Roosevelt, and Curry into TX on Highway 84 headed southeast. Just after Justiceburg, you can take a smaller road down to Fluvanna, TX. Then it's a mile jog over to Borden. Fluvanna consists of 3 boarded up buildings in 'downtown' including a Cafe that likely hasn't been open in 40 or 50 years. It's a town that time passed on by. Don't blink or you'll miss the entire town. There is a 4 way stop sign intersection there.

K8ZZ was out mobile on CW and some others would pop up at times. NF0N was headed across the top of NE. NT7R ran a few in MT. Matt, W0NAC, would be on a times.

Then the flare hit – R3 HF blackout – total for an hour (11:30 or so TX time). Ran through 6 Texas counties without a contact – fortunately, didn't need to transmit from any of them otherwise I'd be dead in the water for an hour. Then one contact in a county – then the band recovered slowly in the next hour. By then I had made it down to the Borden/Scurry, TX line and Joyce got her contact on cw just before 2 pm. Now she is down to 2 to go.



Borden/Scurry TX for N9STL
A genuine Percy Pic

Whew – it would have been a shame to have got there with no propagation at all. The last time a flare happened.....and everything went dead....I knew it would likely be an hour before you heard anything...and from out west, likely 2 hours before you could work much. That day I stopped for a pizza buffet (missed it the Sunday night before) and killed an hour. If you are in a new county – well, you just wait at the far county line.....until the band recovers and you get your needed contact. If you are just making time headed somewhere and can't wait....that's a few counties that won't have a contact in the log.

There's not much to see in west TX. Boring. After mountains and valleys and lots of interesting scenery...it was 500 miles of not much of anything. Flat, hot, and dry. Mile after mile. At least you make good time. 84 is a good divided highway most of the way, and good 2 lane with wide shoulders in other spots. Other than a town or two every 25 miles, it's just open country and high speed driving.

Many mobiles were reaching their destinations – but K8ZZ, W4SIG, NF0N, and NN9K were still zipping along putting out counties and W0NAC was still trekking toward home. Conditions weren't getting much better and another CME was headed to the earth in 2 days to make things even worse for a day or two. It would be over 3300 miles to get home and that done in five days – so you know I was moving along!

It was 2pm so it was time to put the pedal to the metal, get to the interstate, and zip along the interstate at 80 mph (speed limit 75 there – 80 further west) and head another five hours at warp speed toward home. That got me to the Dallas “Metroplex” at rush hour. Yep, there was a 10 minute 3 mile backup at 15-20 mph stop and go and stop and go (repeat endlessly) – either a minor fender bender blocking one lane...with of course, everyone rubbernecking as they went by...but it went amazingly well at 6pm through the usual mess. The car hit the driveway at 7 pm and I unloaded most of the stuff, took the antennas off and drove over the the Boston Market for dinner. Not much edible in the house after 3 weeks away. I was asleep at 9pm. It had been a long day and all that driving at 70-80 mph, plus the hour in the rush hour traffic, had

definitely worn me out. Plus changed two time zones in two days losing an hour each time.

It was a fun but long trip. Hope I ran something you needed and you could HEAR me and work me. That was the challenge. Most of the time, I stopped in places with zero QRN, so it was just listening for all the weak ones, and there were lots of those and lots of 339 reports.

17M worked well at times to the east coast – even when no sigs on 20M from the east. It was only open a few hours a day though. Otherwise, conditions were pretty rotten for most of the trip, but the cw gang hung in there. Everytime I headed to 20M SSB to listen, it was five or eight minutes of 22 relays for every mobile out west. CW helps a bit under weak conditions, but the east coast folks had real propagation challenges. High A indexes most of the month didn't help.

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9065 miles of driving....and now down to 202 to go for Mobile Diamond. Likely others are closer but I missed a lot that were run on SSB this trip. Some might be down to 100 to go for this new award. It will be another year or two unless someone really, really wants to put on the miles to finish it up.

My priority for this trip was finishing second time transmitting from as many states as possible. Now down to 15 counties to go to go – (AK, HI, 5 in MA, 1 in NH and that will finish second time transmit USA – only about \$5000 worth of travel is needed to get the remaining ones – hi hi – you can't drive to Nantucket or Dukes or Hawaii and AK is expensive no matter how you do it). Even then, W1TEE long ago transmitted twice from every county – the only one to have ever done it. So if, when, I finish up, I can start on 3rd time transmit – no one has done that. It looks like at least 10 years of mobiling to do that again. Yeah, right....now, what comes after Mobile Diamond? They haven't cooked that up yet but someone will be ready for it within 2 years – maybe less.

Remote Base Stations

In the last issue of CQ Magazine, Ted, K1BV, announced that CQ Magazine would now accept all contacts for their awards that were made by applicants using 'remote base stations' that were located in the 'same country'. Thus, a ham in Phoenix could set up a remote base station 200 or even 2000 miles from his house, work all the required contacts for a CQ Award such as

WPX or USCA, and apply for the award.

When my new QST Magazine arrived, it had multiple articles on setting up your own remote base station – noting how simple it was today with the internet and hardware available, with the computer controlled rigs, etc. Check it out – loads of good information and even more in the digital version of QST.

We now have run into a dilemma. CQ Magazine will accept all contacts from a remote base station located within the same country. The current MARAC rules require that, if you use a remote base station, it be located within 50 miles of your normal location. What would happen, say, when a new comer makes 3077 contacts for USCA, receives a number, and then goes on to work other MARAC awards using his remote base station a couple hundred miles away? The rules for MARAC are different, but I suspect that Logger has no provision for 'really remote' base stations or even remote base station contacts logged separately and not applied if that remote base station is 'too far' away.

Maybe it is time to revisit the Marac rule? For many who are active mobilers, maybe 1/3rd of their contacts toward their next awards may be made from the mobile. I filled in some nice 'band counties' on 40M cw and SSB while out in the Pacific northwest that I would really have trouble making from TX. They all count by the MARAC rules for any award. Heck, folks work each other on 2M FM when out as teams – or other bands. Or modes. You can't do that likely on 2M from TX to, say, Wallowa, OR.

County hunting is unique in this way – or was until this latest announcement. For ARRL WAS, all contacts have to be made within a certain radius of a QTH – allowing you to move cross town, but not cross country. That rule is still in effect. For ARRL DXCC, you just have to be in the same country. Remote base stations are fine for that. For county hunting, for ALL the awards, you just have to work someone IN the county and it makes no difference where YOU are – 100 feet away or 1000 miles away or at your home station.

If you want your award endorsed “all contacts from home location” , great -it can be done.

Enjoy the articles – some nifty stuff on remote base station setups in QST, and as another article noted, over 65% of the US hams now live in some form of 'deed restricted' subdivisions, making having your own 'home station' more and more difficult and the possibilities of remote base stations ever more interesting.

The Digital version of QST has an expanded section on remote base stations.

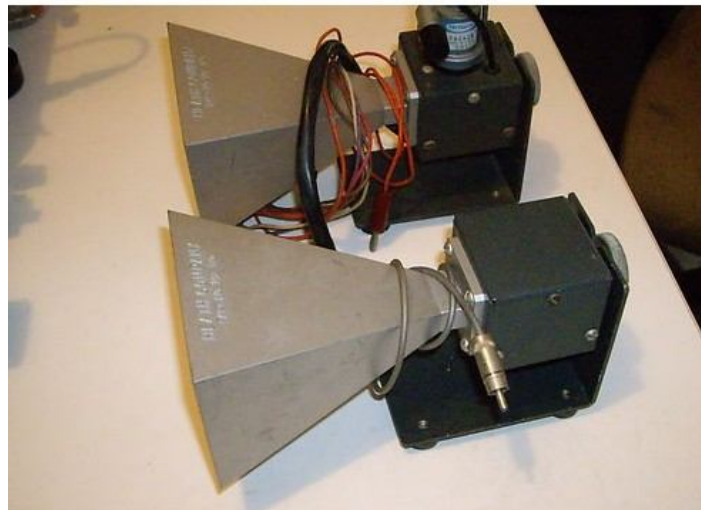
I'm not sure why MARAC even had to have a rule on remote base stations. No different than driving up to a local mountain top 55 miles away and making contacts or being 'portable' there

with an even bigger antenna, or going up to the summer home and operating there and counting those contacts.

Is it time to change the MARAC rule on remote base stations?

Some Stuff From Ebay

Here's an unusual item. It's a Heathkit EPW-25 transmitter and receiver – from the way back days - 1960s - when you used a klystron RK 2K25 tube to generate X-band power (10 GHz).



Way back then, you could build a pair of transceivers and talk line of sight using wideband FM modulation. Now activity on 10 GHz is crystal locked and narrow band cw or SSB. Mainly in UHF/VHF contests and perhaps out in CA, New England, Dallas, TX and other microwave hotbed areas. Complete with WR-90 high gain horns. It was one of their educational / demo type units.

More Taxpayer Greenie Boondoogles Gone Bad

The Amonix solar manufacturing plant in North Las Vegas, **heavily financed under an Obama administration energy initiative**, has closed its 214,000-square-foot facility 14 months after it opened.

A designer and manufacturer of concentrated photovoltaic solar power systems, Amonix received \$6 million in federal tax credits and a \$15.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to build the plant in North Las Vegas.

At its peak, the plant had ramped up to about 700 employees working three shifts a day to produce solar panels for a utility customer in Amarosa, Colo., he said.

The Amonix plant was highly touted by politicians and economic development officials when it opened in May 2011.

Nevada Sen. Harry Reid, U.S. Rep. Shelley Berkley, D-Nev., and Gov. Brian Sandoval were among the political leaders who lauded the company when it announced it would start making solar cells in the Golden Triangle Industrial Park.

The company's website describes Amonix as "the leading designer and manufacturer of concentrated photovoltaic (CPV) commercial solar power systems," founded in 1989. It lists offices in Seal Beach, and "additional facilities" in Torrance, Calif., and North Las Vegas. A hand-written sign posted at the shuttered plant Wednesday morning gave telephone numbers in California and Las Vegas for deliveries and inquiries. Amonix had a five-year lease on the site.

The North Las Vegas plant was a joint venture with Singapore's Flextronics Industrial. Amonix founder and chairman Vahan Garboushian had estimated capital investment of \$15 million in the plant, including equipment, construction and tenant improvements.

Source: <http://www.lvrj.com/business/amonix-closes-north-las-vegas-solar-plant-after-14-months-heavy-federal-subsidies-162901626.html>

Running the Counties

One of the fun things about county hunting is that you can go out and transmit from counties to give your fellow county hunters new ones. Way back when, when county hunting started, most contacts were with fixed stations. There were many state and regional nets for award hunting, and new stations would check in, and everyone would get their chance to get a contact with the new person and the new county. That was back in the 1960s, and there weren't a whole lot of folks running mobile then.

The ham gear improved and Heathkit and others brought out more affordable ham gear so more mobiles started to appear. Back then, there were lots of traveling salesmen and field engineers working all over states and regions, and some of them put radios in their cars and put out the counties as they passed through them. Activity was mostly SSB.

Back then, you also had lots of state QSO parties that were big activities – fixed stations and portable stations predominated. Every state would have a major club sponsor an award, and the 'award hunters' would all be entering to get more 'points' for their award ladder status.

As mobile rigs improved, folks thought more and more about just going mobile for the fun of it. You have to keep in mind that roads weren't as good back then, it took longer to get places, and the average car was 'kaput' at 80,000 miles – and required 3,000 mile oil changes, tune ups twice a year, changing the 'points' in the distributor every year, a new muffler every 2 years, and a lot more maintenance. Putting hundreds or thousands of miles on the family car wasn't so easy back then but lots of families went on 'vacation' and took nice trips.

I don't know when the idea of 'running all the counties in a state started'. Likely some eager beaver county hunter decided it would be great to run all the counties in his home state, then start working on the next state and the one next to it. Not too bad if you live in CT or NJ or DE but a lot harder if you live in CA or TX or GA. At any rate, somewhere after 1970 when MARAC and the B&B Shop in AZ were founded, awards were created for transmitting from all counties in a state. Now, when you finished running all the counties in a given state, you could apply for an award and have bragging rights.

It's an interesting problem if you look at transmitting from all counties in every state. Your home state is likely the one you think about starting on, but then again that depends where you live! You can run all of DE in less than an hour, and all of VT or NH in under 2 days. It takes 10 days of driving to do TX.

So how do you go about planning how to run all the counties in a state. That's a good problem and there are lots of solutions. Likely in your home state, you wind up with lots of counties that you have put out getting 'somewhere' whether it be a hamfest, business trip, trip to visit

grandma, parents, and the kids or the grandkids. You find that most close in get filled in quickly, then it is further out excursions, maybe weekend trips to get them.

One of the fun things about county hunting – is that if you go with a friend, you can work each other in those often hard to get 'close in' counties several hundred miles from your house. For county hunting awards, it matters not where YOU are. It matters where the person you worked is – his/her county. So if you need a few counties 200 miles out, take a friend and work each other with an extra self contained rig. Some use 2M FM or SSB. Many new radios such as the IC-7000 and older 756 had 2M SSB, CW and FM capability. Some will use a spare rig run off a battery on low power, or a QRP type rig. That helps you (and maybe your county hunter buddy/spouse) fill in those often hard to get ones. The key is the second rig must be 'self contained' and not use vehicle power, an antenna on a vehicle, etc.

Some purists might insist the second station should be 'outside' the vehicle when you work it. OK, if you want that, stop at a county line and make your contacts. Others figure a pair of 2m FM handhelds are two separate stations and have nothing to do with a vehicle, so contacts at 3 feet are fine. The key is make the contacts using RF in the hambands!

One of the classic problems in computer science is called the traveling salesman problem. Maybe you've heard of it. In a nutshell, the challenge is to find the way to allow a salesman to start in one capital city of a state, and visit the other 47 in the continental US (that's how old the problem is) by flying the least amount of miles. You must start in one city and fly to the next, and the next.

The classic problem is to figure out how to travel to all 48 state capitals with the least amount of miles and return back to the point of origin. It might sound simple. For the sake of the problem, you use the airline distance between the capital cities (don't worry about airports outside of town) as the distance.

For computer science students the problem is to find the 'algorithm' that solves the problem in the least amount of computer time.

If you think it is easy, just try to figure out the first ten cities. You start in city A. There are 47 ways to travel to the next city. After you get to the next city, there are 46 ways to get to the next city. And 45 to the next, and 44 to the next, and so on.

It's $47 \times 46 \times 45 \times 44 \times 43 \times 42 \times \dots$ etc till you get to the last one. The final solution is to find the least amount of miles needed – in the shortest amount of time.

Running all the counties in a large state with 100 counties provides a similar challenge when you go to run a neighboring state. What's the best way to start and where? You don't have to wind up where you started but you need to visit every county. Even more confusing is you don't have to go to the center of a county, but can just hit a county line. We're not necessarily

worried about the 'least amount of miles' here – you've got other constraints such as being near a town with motels when you need one, and staying on roads that may or may not go where you want to go next.

After a while , you likely develop your own technique for planning. Get some good state road maps. If you are an AAA member, they've got decent maps. Take a copy of a page out of a coloring book or get on line maps with counties shown. Maybe even use an Atlas to get the 'big view'. Then figure out likely 'entry points' where you'll hit the state border. Some take weeks, even months to plan how they will do it.

Don't forget that if you are near state borders, it's often easier to snag a county in an adjoining state across the river over a bridge. Otherwise, it might take more miles later to get to that county. Sometimes using a regional map, or having several maps out at a time helps. The NH/VT border is one prime example where you run up the interstate and take several short detours into NH for the counties along the river. Same in the western side of WV and OH. Same for the OR/WA border off the interstate. Of course, sometimes you'll just be able to look across and wave at the counties with no way of getting there! That can be frustrating as it might take a 150 mile detour to get there.

Perhaps the all time record for detailed itineraries and planning goes to Ed, WA0SBR, who would spend winters doing his research, then run entire states one by one during the spring, summer and fall. He'd list the times he would run each county – arriving at C/L X/Y at 11:45am. Then next county might be at 1:15pm. Then 3:15pm. Most of the time, he kept pretty close to schedule day after day, but a bridge or road closed can mess you up and back then, there was no internet to alert you to current highway conditions. Ed completed running all the US counties.

For various awards, like Master's Gold, where you earn a point per 'transmitted county' which can be repeated many times, and for Master Platinum and Mobile Diamond where you need to run 500 separate counties – it doesn't make any difference if they are scattered or not. If you head to Dayton OH for the annual hamfest there, or to the county hunter convention, likely you'll have 'strings' of counties along the highway you went. Maybe you went one way and returned a different way. That can fill it a lot of counties in other states if you try to hit some new ones each time you make the trip. (I've been heading to Dayton for over 30 years – so that leaves lots of options to pass through some new ones each time for one reason or another). Or maybe you want to hit some of the 'rare' ones highly needed according to the K3IMC web page along the way. Or maybe quickly zip on up to TN, run a bunch there, then head up to OH for the hamfest. Or head up to the hamfest area, run around in OH, and make it back for the hamfest. If you can spare some time, you can get counties here and there.

Eventually, if you are keeping track (and who doesn't), you fill in more and more. Some county hunters enjoy taking a week and going off and running the whole state of NE, or KS, or VA. Others do it weekend by weekend working on a different part of the state each weekend

until done. You've still got the same problem of 'what's the best way' to get to all of them.

Eventually, for some, it's down to filling in all the holes and trying to get to all the counties in the US. If you forget, or for some reason on various other trips for other purposes, miss a county or two 1500 miles from home (like N4CD having missed Deer Lodge and Mineral MT), it's now thousands of miles back to get those two. On 3 or four other trips, some to get the last counties for folks for other awards, somehow I'd run everything else but them. It wasn't a priority on those trips – or perhaps the band was totally dead when I hit the county and I couldn't wait around. So on the way to Vancouver this past year, I had to pass through MT just to get those 2. I call them 'stranded counties'. Mineral MT wasn't too far out of the way from the 2/3rds of the state in ID, but it still took a 50 mile round trip detour.

With GPS and computers, I'm not sure there is an easy way to do it still. With county lines to consider, it's not the simple traveling salesmen problem. You've got to stay on roads - stick to paved ones unless you have a good high clearance 4 wheel type vehicle and are in good enough physical shape to get yourself out of trouble if you have to walk 10 miles back to civilization if you are stuck on a forest road with no cell coverage when the bands are dead. Even some paved roads out west are mighty 'lonely'. Many times you can wave at a county...but can't get across the river for another 30 or 50 or 80 miles. It would be nice to have a flying car for that....but you just have to figure out how to 'get there from here'. In some places like LA, you might wind up taking ferries across the river to get where you want. Or not – ferries can slow you down...and sometimes break down.

I usually spend a few hours doing route planning for a trip. I take a coloring book map (or two or three) and a good state map. I put in the counties I need to run on the coloring book map. Maybe I've done part of the state passing through it going somewhere. I don't need to run those again unless I need it for another award that I'm working on. Then I figure out where I'll enter a state – from where I left the last state. Then it is a matter of seeing where the roads go. The ideal situation is to have nice diagonal roads that hit the corners of lots of counties that you can use....or a road on/near a county line going north/south or east/west....and being able to hit counties 'two by two'. That gets the most counties with the least miles. That works well out in the midwest with nice 'square' type counties.

If you get to GA, with lots of counties with wet lines, you're in for some real headaches trying to find the shortest way (or best way) to each of them. It's very easy to get confused in GA. One of our famous county hunters, Ed, N4UJK, always seemed to accidentally wind up in an extra county while trying to get to another – as the master navigator, we gave him the nickname of 'Magellan' when he did that, and it is VERY easy to wind up where you didn't expect in GA. Some of the wet lines are no longer wet, there are small segments of other counties in between where you didn't expect. With Mapquest, Street Atlas, those are easier to find. Do it using road maps, and you will likely do the 'Magellan' thing a few times.

For some who run counties 'on the run', the ideal situation is to find a route that is in each

county for 10-15 miles and then passes into the next needed county and so on. No 'dead end' counties where you sit. That's usually not possible because some counties only have one or two ways in or out that make sense – and you might not want to drive across them due to mountain ridges. If you like to stop and run, we'll, that won't bother you one way or the other.

In places like VT, you'll find that using the interstates and major highways going north south work well... the big mountain ridges run north south....but trying to cross the state from east to west all the time takes you up over winding, slow, full of little towns with congestion and slow progress. Now a days for the computer whiz types, you can even call up Google Earth View and look at the county line. One or two in VT are deep in valleys – you won't get a signal out. Most are OK, but like most states, you can't stop on an interstate so you need to plan a place to run them if you only run while stopped. It's a bit frustrating to arrive at a county line, so see 1000 foot high ridges on both sides – and barely enough room to even think about pulling off to run. (hint: If your state map shows the road follows a river in a state like CO or VT right next to high mountains, you might assume it's not going to be a great place at the C/L to get a signal out of!). In some states like OK, they delight in running intersecting very noisy power lines right on the county lines. Be forewarned.

Some of the newer computer savvy hunters use Google Earth to take a look at how the county line looks. Not all of them are covered – mostly confined to more suburban areas, but it's another tool to use.

Of course, it helps to be a bit inventive....you can run up the interstate in VT, and at several points, just take a 2 mile detour over the large river into NH and put out 3 or 4 of those counties too. It's the fastest way to get them.

Eventually, if you keep up your quest – it will be more and more trips. Some fly to long distance places and rent cars. KLIV did the whole US in rental cars state by state. Then it's trips out to Dukes and Nantucket MA, and of course, flying out to HI, and then doing the four districts in AK. And don't forget the real pain in the butt NYC counties to run – traffic and more traffic and roads to confuse you. Get some good NYC maps and learn the NYC names for the highway. The big signs are for Major Degan Expressway, not route XX, or West Shore Parkway. The GPS will really help here. Better yet, get a driver who knows his/her way around, have them drive and you run the counties. You really need to plan ahead to find a spot to stop and run if you want to stop. Finding a quiet place is also a challenge as the 'five boros' are all VERY URBAN. (Better yet, ask fellow county hunters for good suggestions – Randall Island is maybe the only place to run NY, NY without lots of noise).

So no matter whether you just want to put out your home state.....or the states nearby.....and get the MARAC award for each state (Ran All Kansas, Ran all OH, etc), or keep plugging and transmit from more and more, the choice is yours. You'll probably tear out some hair trying to figure out the best way to get to all the counties and not miss any (Take a check list or check off coloring book map when you go- forgetting to take that turn off for a five mile detour can mean

hundreds of miles of driving later to fill in the one you drove past!). In some cases, you'll have dead end counties that take 50 mile detours to get to – and maybe back out of – like Wallowa, OR.

For some awards, like Master's Gold with the 1500 points required – you can stay close to home and do lots of repeats. Once you try for Master Platinum, it is 500 separate counties that need to be run. And that after you get your MG. Then, if you are still in the county hunting game and ready for the next level, after you get your Master Platinum, you need to run at least 500 more counties for Mobile Diamond. You won't be staying at home just working mobiles if you want to earn Master Platinum or Mobile Diamond.

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This month, Rick, AI5P, becomes the 14th person to transmit from all counties. KB7QO, Ken, was the first back in 1988 – all SSB. He was joined by other county hunters like Gene, W1TEE, all cw in 1991, Ed WA0SBR in 1999. One, N8RLJ, completed it with all contacts on 2M FM while she and N8KIE went 'everywhere'.

The current list includes KK0L, N8KIE, AA9JJ, N9QPQ, KL1V, N4CD, N4AAT, N7ID and now AI5P. Some are just a handful away like KB4XK.

Gene, W1TEE, is the only one to have done it twice!

Global Warming – NOT!

“The supposed ‘consensus’ on man-made global warming is facing an inconvenient challenge after the release of new temperature data showing the planet has not warmed for the past 15 years.

The figures suggest that we could even be heading for a mini ice age to rival the 70-year temperature drop that saw frost fairs held on the Thames in the 17th Century.

Based on readings from more than 30,000 measuring stations, the data was issued last week without fanfare by the Met Office and the University of East Anglia Climatic Research Unit. It confirms that the rising trend in world temperatures ended in 1997.

Meanwhile, leading climate scientists yesterday told The Mail on Sunday that, after emitting unusually high levels of energy throughout the 20th Century, the sun is now heading towards a ‘grand minimum’ in its output, threatening cold summers, bitter winters and a shortening of the

season available for growing food.

Solar output goes through 11-year cycles, with high numbers of sunspots seen at their peak. We are now at what should be the peak of what scientists call 'Cycle 24' – which is why last week's solar storm resulted in sightings of the aurora borealis further south than usual. But sunspot numbers are running at less than half those seen during cycle peaks in the 20th Century.

Analysis by experts at NASA and the University of Arizona – derived from magnetic-field measurements 120,000 miles beneath the sun's surface – suggest that Cycle 25, whose peak is due in 2022, will be a great deal weaker still.

According to a paper issued last week by the Met Office, there is a 92 per cent chance that both Cycle 25 and those taking place in the following decades will be as weak as, or weaker than, the 'Dalton minimum' of 1790 to 1830. In this period, named after the meteorologist John Dalton, average temperatures in parts of Europe fell by 2C.

However, it is also possible that the new solar energy slump could be as deep as the 'Maunder minimum' (after astronomer Edward Maunder), between 1645 and 1715 in the coldest part of the 'Little Ice Age' when, as well as the Thames frost fairs, the canals of Holland froze solid.

She argued it is becoming evident that factors other than CO2 play an important role in rising or falling warmth, such as the 60-year water temperature cycles in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

'They have insufficiently been appreciated in terms of global climate,' said Prof Curry. When both oceans were cold in the past, such as from 1940 to 1970, the climate cooled. The Pacific cycle 'flipped' back from warm to cold mode in 2008 and the Atlantic is also thought likely to flip in the next few years .

Pal Brekke, senior adviser at the Norwegian Space Centre, said some scientists found the importance of water cycles difficult to accept, because doing so means admitting that the oceans – not CO2 – caused much of the global warming between 1970 and 1997. The same goes for the impact of the sun – which was highly active for much of the 20th Century.

'Nature is about to carry out a very interesting experiment,' he said. 'Ten or 15 years from now, we will be able to determine much better whether the warming of the late 20th Century really was caused by man-made CO2, or by natural variability.'

Meanwhile, since the end of last year, world temperatures have fallen by more than half a degree, as the cold 'La Nina' effect has re-emerged in the South Pacific.

‘We’re now well into the second decade of the pause,’ said Benny Peiser, director of the Global Warming Policy Foundation. ‘If we don’t see convincing evidence of global warming by 2015, it will start to become clear whether the models are bunk. And, if they are, the implications for some scientists could be very serious.’

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2093264/Forget-global-warming--Cycle-25-need-worry-NASA-scientists-right-Thames-freezing-again.html>

Yet More Taxpayer Greenie Losses

Electrified truck stop files for bankruptcy after \$400,000 stimulus injection

What was touted as the state’s first electrified truck stop, TR Auto Truck Plaza off Interstate 40 in Tennessee, now sits idle and is boarded up just months after the owner obtained more than \$400,000 in federal stimulus funds to install the electrification project.

The Tennessee Dept. of Transportation (TDOT) awarded truck stop owner Rick Lewis a \$424,000 Environmental Protection Agency stimulus grant for electrical hookups. Both the state and EPA were apparently unaware that he had a history of legal and financial problems and had filed for bankruptcy, according to a Fox News report.

“It is Solyndra in miniature,” said Rep. Phil Gingrey, R-Ga., referring to a Silicon Valley solar panel manufacturer that filed for bankruptcy shortly after receiving a \$535-million loan guarantee from the U.S. Dept. of Energy. “What I am questioning is the vetting and oversight and the fiduciary responsibility that the federal government — the people who run these programs — have to we, the taxpayer.”

Lewis had a history of financial troubles. Fox cited court records that show he filed for bankruptcy in 2003, a year after a conviction on 31 counts of theft and currently faces indictments for allegedly writing bad checks.

“The truck stop electrification technology installed at this location was operating as intended up until a short time ago and can be again if the property resumes operations as a truck stop,” state

Transportation Commissioner John Schroer said in a written statement.

<http://fleetowner.com/management/news/electrified-truck-stop-bankruptcy-1103>

Note de N4CD: Whaddaya want bet that somehow he managed to raise and bundle a couple hundred thousand for Obama's election campaign and local dem races? That's all it seems to take to be showered with tons of 'greenie money'.

Your Green Jobs – the Video

A couple minute video that will make steam come out of your ears

http://joemiller.us/2012/07/undercover-video-ny-union-bosses-112-million-in-green-jobs-is-bulls__t-but-well-take-the-money/

Weekend Ski Trip

A February 2012 ski trip enjoyed by first lady Michelle Obama and her two daughters cost taxpayers at least \$83,000, according to records obtained by Judicial Watch.

The total cost of the President's Day weekend getaway was at least \$83,182.99. The largest expense was \$48,950.38 for Secret Service protection, which included accommodations at the Fasching Haus deluxe condominium and the Inn at Aspen.

The cost of transportation was also hefty. Using official Department of Defense hourly rates, Judicial Watch estimated that the flights cost \$22,583.70. This didn't include in-flight purchases costing \$235.44. The cost of rental cars was \$6,442.23.

Judicial Watch received the records after filing a May 31 lawsuit against the U.S. Air Force and Secret Service.

“No wonder we had to file a lawsuit in federal court and wait six months to get basic information on Michelle Obama’s luxury Aspen vacation,” said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. “The costs of the Obama family ski weekend are staggering. These high-priced luxury vacations, and the lack of transparency about them, are beginning to seem like an abuse of office.”

<http://joemiller.us/2012/07/lawsuit-forces-obama-to-reveal-michelles-83000-luxury-skiing-weekend/>

Note de N4CD

What the heck – it's only taxpayer money. Million dollar trips to luxury resorts in Spain.. Million dollar trips to HI. Quarter million dollar trips to Martha's Vinyard. It's only taxpayer money and the 'elites' in the White House need to live the life of royalty.

Jobs? No meeting of the Jobs Council in six months, but time for sports games, a record number of fund raisers (5 times anyone else's record) jaunting all over the country day after day, but no time for creating more actual non-shovel ready make work jobs. More games of golf in the last year than any other President in history, but, sorry, no time for job creation other than adding 16,000 more IRS agents to enforce the penalties, fines and taxes called for in ObamaCare. Always more and more intrusive government regulations. Remember, for them, its 'we're from the Government and here to help'. At that point, start running. Not on your life.

Awards Issued

USCA #1229	Mary, AB7NK	June 23, 2012
USCA #1230	Paul, K1TKL	July 14, 2012
USACW #130	Paul, K1TKL	July 14, 2012
2 nd Time #422	Barry, KB8OMG	June 22, 2012
3 rd Time #232	Don, K3IMC	July 2, 2012
6 th Time #43	Don, W0EAR	July 21, 2012
Bingo II #87	Doug, WA4UNS	June 27, 2012
Bingo II #88	Al, KG5J	July 14, 2012
Master Gold #53	Don, W0EAR	July 2, 2012
Master Platinum #19	Roy, N9QS	July 11, 2012
Mobile to Mobile #20	Doug, WA4UNS	June 27, 2012

Upcoming Activities for County Hunters

2012 (46TH) MARAC U. S. COUNTIES QSO PARTY

1400Z TO 2400Z, Saturday, JULY 28, AND SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2012

July 28, 29

NJ QSO Party

<http://njqp.hamshack.info/>

10-10 Summer Phone QSO Party

Call, name, 10-10 number, S/P/C

www.ten-ten.org

Aug 4, 0001Z - Aug 5, 2359Z

North American QSO Party

Name and state

nejweb.com

Aug 4, 1800Z - Aug 5, 0600Z

Maryland-DC QSO Party

Maryland county/city or S/P/C

mdcqsoparty.w3vpr.org

Aug 11, 1600Z - See website Multiple operating periods, see website.

Hawaii QSO Party

RS(T) and HI county/island or S/P/C

www.hawaiiqsoparty.org

Aug 25, 0400Z - Aug 27, 0400Z

Kansas QSO Party

RS(T) and KS county or S/P/"DX"

www.ksqsoparty.org

Aug 25, 1400Z - See website

Multiple operating periods; CW--40 kHz above band edge; Phone--3.840, 7.240, 14.240, 21.340, 28.440.

Ohio QSO Party

Serial and S/P or "DX"

www.ohqp.org

Aug 25, 1600Z - Aug 26, 0400Z

Don't forget the September 3M reconstituted County Hunter Gathering in Murphreesboro, TN. A side trip to Mary Bo Bos is planned as well, and time is getting short to reserve. Get in touch with Ron, KA3DRO or Mitch W4RKV. Should be a great event!

There's info on the 2013 MARAC Convention in Deadwood, SD here on County Hunter Dot Com.

<http://www.countyhunter.com/MARAC2013.html>

Reserve the dates on your future planning calendar.