

County Hunter News

February 1, 2015
Volume 11, Issue 2

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in ham radio 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 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 information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

<http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm>

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can

find information on these awards and the rules at:

http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

<http://www.wd3p.net/ch/netproc/netproc.htm>

There is a lot more information at www.countyhunter.com . 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

1) N4CD Rumblings

It's mid winter. The snow has been flying in 38 states or so this winter with periods of very 'wintry' weather. Radio conditions are decent and a few mobiles out on trips has kept things interesting. A few more people finished up awards this month.

There have been days with no mobiles or only a county or two run – mid winter lull. Next month the QSO Party season starts so those weekends will provide some action for the county hunters.

2) Self Spotting Made Easy

W4SIG: “I have a solution for those mobiles who at present cannot spot themselves but would like to be able to spot themselves if they had the technology. I own a Galaxy tablet with an unlimited data plan through Sprint. I rarely use it (I have two iPhones as well, one with Sprint and one with ATT). For those who aren't familiar with a Galaxy tablet its about the size of a cell phone and works similar to an iPad (it is not a phone). You simply go to the internet, type W6RK at the top of the page, and you are on the spotting page just like on your own personal computer at home. Spot yourself just like you would at home spotting others. It's that simple! The Galaxy tablet gets its internet connection through Sprint automatically. (Like any cell company there are some remote locations where you may not get coverage) I AM WILLING TO LOAN IT TO ANY MOBILE WHO IS PLANNING A TRIP. Just let me know a few days in advance and i'll ship it to you along with a car charging cord. When you are done let me know. You can either mail it back to me or to the next mobile who needs it. The data plan only costs me \$10 per month, well worth the price of helping my fellow mobiles out! Let's see how this works out...if smoothly maybe we just found a good use for some of the \$40,000 in the MARAC bank account-a fleet of tablets. The tablets are very cheap (mine was free) and the data plans are too....On a legal and safety note I must stress that spotting yourself while driving is not recommended! :)

3) Gas Prices

In Texas, gas is down to under \$2/gal with the local stations at about \$1.65- \$1.80 per gallon. Out in the boonies, it runs \$2.00 to \$2.20 a gallon. Isn't that nice? How long it lasts is anyone's guess but probably at least six months. Time to go mobile!

4) Jerry's New Year Resolution

Jerry, W0GXQ, has set a goal of reaching 1000 Last Counties given out. He needs to give out and receive awards for 114 more. At the 1000 level, you get a nice tall MARAC trophy.



MARAC Trophy*

*Awarded for 1000 last counties given out or Running All Counties

Only a few county hunters have reached the 1000 level. Rick, AI5P, has 1003. Kent, KV7N, has 1010 as of Jan 5, 2015. Scottie, N4AAT has 1050. Ed, WA0SBR, has 1230 listed in the database. N9QPQ, Kay, has 1238 now with Frank, AA9JJ at 966 – close to the 1000 level. Ron, KB6UF, has 1246 listed.

KB7QO, the first person to run all US Counties, has 1363 LC listed in the database.

N8KIE is within striking distance at 947

I don't know of an 'easy way' to check the awards ever issued – there's not a record listed anywhere - other than digging it out call by call in the database under last county awards. There may be others who have reached 1000.

Who is going to be next to reach 1000? N4JT with 852?
KC1NA with 815?

Jerry will be running more needs on the way to CO on his next trip – down through SD and NE. He's at 886 received LC's as of 1/24/2015. He'll be doing another SD trip soon, too!

Did I miss anyone? Some of the old- timers before I started in the mid 90s might have been way up there. Of course, these days with more awards (Master Platinum, Prefixes, Call Combos, Teams, Digital, Mobile Diamond) there are more ways to earn LC's than 30, 20 and 15 years ago.

There are maybe a dozen more with 500-800 last counties given out. Some are within striking distance of the '1000' number while others are now inactive.

5) Ed, KN4Y trip report to Alabama

Thanks all for the fun on my jaunt into Alabama, what was a short trip turned into an all day. I found out my son does not follow route signs very well, we got lost or off the schedule route too many times to mention. It was 26F when we left the house - glad I am in sunny Florida. For some reason yet to be determined I had some transmitting problems, but once the sun came up I had no further problem until after I took the antenna off for a 10 foot overpass it started again. Not sure about the connection. I was getting ready to change rigs. 15, 17, and 20 meters were great, almost everyone was 599, I went to 30 and 40 in each county but no reply to QRZ in most of them. It was great going mobile again, if you need a last few counties within 200 miles of Tallahassee FL let me know. Covered 628 miles including when lost. Got home it warmed up to 33.

6) MARAC membership

According to Terry, WQ7A, there are 474 paid up members as of mid January.

7) KL7DG – Second AK

As noted on the K3IMC planned trip page, KL7DG is active and was spotted a few times in the Second District, AK from the west coast. He will be there for more months so if you need it, that's a possibility.

8) County Hunting Trips

de W0GXQ on the K3IMC forum:

“I plan to run the entire state (SD) before the end of this year, so hang in there. This will most likely be my last year of full blown county hunting trips because I am uncomfortable driving in darkness, and because, believe it or not, there is a lot of stress involved with operating CW on the fly and running on six or seven bands. And, I find that I'm unable to separate the pileups as easily as I once did “

de N4CD: You'll see N4CD usually stopping before dark these days, too. I've usually had my fill of county hunting fun for the day by then. You can find me on the road at sunrise most days – so they are still 'long days'. Now W4SIG, AF3X – will run and run and run till the wee hours of the mornings at times. We need more 'younger folks'. Hi hi! By the time you hit 60, the 'average' person needs 10 times as much light as they did to see at age 20. That means your night vision is a lot crappier as you get older.

Mobile Activity

At the end of December:

Rick, W5QP was running around in MO putting them out five mode data

Jerry, N9AC, headed from IL down to FL

Jim, N4JT put out some on cw and data modes

Bill, K2HVN headed south from VA down to GA

Fred, K0FG was putting out counties in MO.

Joe, WB0CQO was putting out counties in IA

Frank and Kay, AA9JJ/N9QPQ returned from CA back home.

Bob, WA3QNT ran a few in PA

Jack, K0MAF was on in FL

N0HKK was on in OK and MO -ssb

Doug, WA4UNS, was spotted in NJ

Matt and Sharon, W0NAC/N0LXJ, were spotted in NM.

Jack, WD4OIN, made a nice trip in NC putting them out.

WW5DD ran a few in south TX

Dave, KW1DX was up in VT and NH

Larry, N2OCW, was spotted in NJ

Starting in January

There were many slow days with no mobiles or only 1 on quite a few days in January.

Seth, N3MRA was on up in MO and IL

Cliff/Nelda K6JN/W6XJN, were on the road in TX headed back to FL.

Gene, NT2A, headed to Monmouth NJ, LC WBOW for K7SEN

Bill, K2HVN continued running counties in GA headed south to FL.

Alex, K5XY was spotted in NM, AZ and CA.

Larry, N2OCW, was out in PA putting them out. Headed to Jefferson WV, too.

KB6UF headed from CA to home, only SSB.

N4JT, Jim, was busy on Data Modes in NC.

Ed, KN4Y, went up to AL and ran counties for the day on cw.

Jim, N9JF was over in IA.

WB5TMW was spotted many days in TX on SSB.

Mike, KA4RRU, put out a few in VA.

Charlie, N2JNE, headed out to put out some in NY and VT.

AF3X, Jeffrey, headed to some rare TN counties then down into NC.

Barry, N0KV and Pat, N0DXE, were out in CO putting out some counties.

Karl, K4YT, headed up to NJ running them only on SSB. Then over in MD.

Dave, KW1DX, was up in Maine

Jerry, W0GXQ, ran a bunch in SD.

K6PJ was out and about in ID, UT, and MT

K0FG, Fred, was headed south to TX then west from there.

K4YT, Karl, was on the air from the Big Island (Hawaii County) in HI. SSB only as the keyer/paddles got busted by the TSA.

Mike, NF0N, made a nice trip around in eastern NE to get many needed ones.

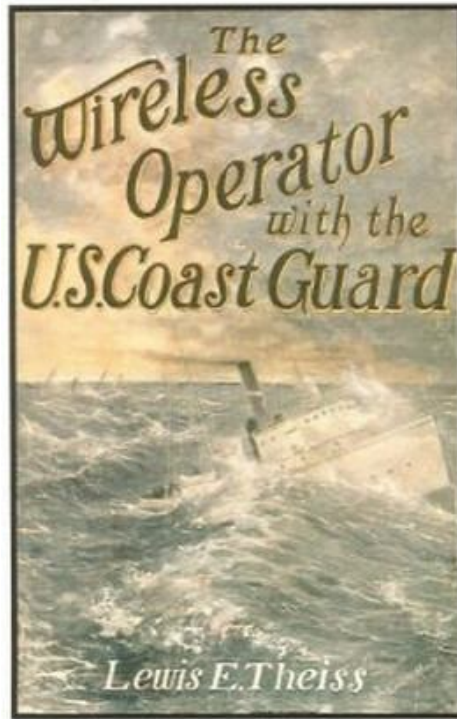
Ed, K8ZZ hopped a plane – and put out counties in WA and OR on a vacation trip.

Bill, WG9A, was on in IL SSB

Paul, NU4C was spotted in FL. SSB

Team W4FNW/W8FNW ran counties in FL.

Book Review of the Month



The Young Wireless Operator with the Coast Guard – by Lewis Theiss - 1924

Wow!...It's a pretty good read – especially after some of the dogs reviewed in the past six months. Theiss tells an excellent story – from beginning to end. He spent a few weeks on a Coast Guard vessel to get a good sense of the background for the story.

It all starts out in NYC. Young Henry (age 16) has headed to NYC to meet up with one of his wireless club buddies in downtown NYC– hopefully with the goal of finding a job somewhere in the city. Unfortunately for Henry, his friend has just left as wireless

operator on a ship that will be gone for 2 or 3 weeks. Henry tries his back up plan to visit a couple he knows in Staten Island – but they have moved and no one knows to where. So he heads back to the ferry terminal. As he is crossing the street, a man with a large box is about to be run over by a speeding truck. Henry quickly pushes the man to safety narrowly avoiding the man being run over. “'Tis nothing” says Henry as the man offers him money for the good deed. Both go on their way.

Henry winds up on the old abandoned piers, looking for a place to rest and maybe catch a few winds of sleep. He is admiring the ships anchored nearby – Coast Guard cutters. He accidentally catches his foot on a spike and winds up tumbling into the bay. There is no way to get back up to the pier – no ladders or no way to get to shore. He decides to try to swim out to a nearby ship and call for help. Some sailors on the ship rescue him, and bring him aboard. After warming him up, the crew take him to the captain to explain what is going on. Well, much to everyone's surprise, the Captain of the Iroquois is none other than the man that Henry just saved. Henry is invited to be a guest on the ship for a week as the Captain is about to take the ship out to sink a abandoned derelict floating in the shipping lanes. So begins the adventure.

Naturally, Henry gravitates to the Wireless Room. This is a 1900s type ship. Coal powered. Spark Gap transmitter. No tube receiver. Big antennas. Henry is one of the Camp Brady bunch that built their own wireless sets, so he is familiar with the code, with making contacts. Only the main wireless operator, Sparks, is allowed to send messages on the very expensive \$10,000 wireless set of the day. On this ship, there are three wireless operators, Sparks, Mr Black, a ne'er to well sully youth,, and Mr Blanford. They all take shifts listening in for messages. Sparks takes Henry under his wing and teaches him about the workings of the wireless. As a guest of the Captain, Henry is allowed to roam the ship at will. Sparks examines him for 'Third Class Wireless Operator' and Henry passes with flying colors. Unfortunately, there are no openings on the ship for any additional wireless operators.

The trip goes successful, but before there are about to reach home, an SOS comes in and the ship is off to rescue a ship on the shoals off Nantucket. That rescue doesn't go so well, and several men are lost in the attempt in stormy seas. Sparks, who went in one of the lifeboats, is capsized along with 15 other men and wind up on a sandbar, later rescued by other land based Coast Guard personnel. That leaves the ship shorthanded and Henry gets to stand one of the watches at the radio, just listening in.

Henry finds Mr Black asleep during his watch. That's a serious offense. Henry has to report him to the Captain. Mr Black threatens retaliation if he tells the Captain. Henry does anyway out a sense of duty. Mr Black is confined to quarters, a relatively light

sentence. Normally, a court martial would be the appropriate punishment.

A day later, Sparks returns but comes down with pneumonia and confined to sick bay.. Henry is allowed to then send messages in his place, as he has done so under the immediate supervision of Sparks before. All goes well till Mr Black sabotages the wireless transmitter while Henry steps out for a few minutes to deliver a message to the captain. Henry returns and the transmitter fails the next time it is used. . With Henry operating, suspicion is cast on him for 'using too much current and burning out the transmitter'. After Sparks returns quickly to duty, the fault is found to be a hidden small nail driven into one of the coils of the transmitter. Now the mystery! Who did it? And why?

Well, the adventures continue. Eventually enough evidence surfaces, and Mr Black is court martialed for intentionally sabotaging the ship, endangering the crew and mission, dereliction of duty, and then sent off to prison for a long term. Henry is totally exonerated. The adventures continue. They are on iceberg patrol for months and there are always ships to be rescued. Henry takes his shifts as operator and learns about the operation of the rest of the ship. He helps catch drug smugglers as well.

By the time he does get back to NYC, he has been at sea for over 90 days. The Captain 'passes' him for his 90 day probation period and officially gives him the now vacant wireless operator spot.

Good tale intended for the 12-18 year old teenagers of the day. Not very “PC” if that offends you.

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It's a good read. This was a reprint. Soon, likely it will be online.

Last Minute CW Stats to KK7X

from KK7X:

This is just a reminder that your CW Stats for 2014 are due.

If you work CW Counties please update your total counties worked as of December 31, 2014. If you do not update your totals you will be dropped from the list after a few years.

You may update your total by sending me an [email](#) or by visiting County Hunter Dot Com to update your stats at this [link](#).

The current stats can be seen by visiting CountyHunter Dot Com and from the dropdown menu select "Lists" and select "CW Stats 2014"

Submissions will be accepted until the end of January.

The 14336 Saga Continued

Last month we included a few comments from various county hunters. This month, a few more from the K3IMC forum:

W4SIG: "Although a county hunter on CW since 1979 I never checked into the 20 meter SSB net until about 6 years ago. And wouldn't you know I received an email from KZ2P within 5 minutes telling me what I could do and not do on HIS net. My first instinct was to put the mic back in the box and return to the fun times on CW. As you mentioned this is what a lot of newbies to 14336 end up doing. But I hung in there, tolerated the behavior, and hoped that pleasantries and assisting with relays would soften the NCS. Nothing changed. Like you, I didn't wait for the KZ2P insults to be directed directly at me. I heard what was going on to my friends on the net and could take it no longer. I do

not run on 336 anymore and don't even bother to ask for relays (wouldn't get them anyway). “

K7REL:”I cannot believe that guy had the gall to actually email you a list, telling you what you could do, and what you could not do on HIS net. Guess, that just about says it all!! :

W4SIG:”Actually it was only what I "couldn't do". I had asked him to request a mobile qsy to 40 meters after a run as I couldn't hear him on 20. (how dare I!) It was for one of my last 10 for WBOW first time. I was promptly put in my place.”

de N4CD: Don't ever dare mention 40M or ask for a mobile to go there. Even if it is your LC for WBOW.....not on 'his' net frequency'.....no way.....

K0RCJ:” Hello all. Just a word.. I have attempted to get a few (10-20) hams interested in CHing, however, as with others here, have run into the 20 mtr "snag" of, "Oh, I tried that, or heard of that, and have listened, and decided I didn't want to be treated like that" (or the reputation of the few has been to the detriment of the many). I have been quiet lately, and have dropped my membership in MARAC. “

WD9EJK:”since I have never wanted to take sides, i.e., be a black sheep nor approve of the stuff that continues on 14.336 with KZ2P, I only have 2 choices. I either quit county hunting altogether or I no longer run mobile on any frequency that doesn't allow all hams to participate on it. Two things have had the greatest influence on my decision.

First, in the past week I was invited to a breakfast of hams in Rockford, IL who mostly are involved with the local repeaters and chase DX. However, one ham had looked me up in QRZ or Callbook and noticed that I was involved in county hunting. He said he had tried county hunting back 10 years ago, but he quit because of the “Czar” in Florida running the net on 14.336. “Czar” was his word. I told him the “Czar” had moved to SC. Embarrassed I said the problem seems to be improving over the last few weekends.

Second reason for my decision has been the positive approach that was started by W4SIG a few weeks ago. I read his post on the forum. Therefore, I am not quitting county hunting, but I will no longer run mobile nor ask for relays on any frequency that

does not allow all hams to make contacts. I haven't quite figured out how I will do that when I go on my next county hunting trip. As a mobile it has always been nice when there is a frequency that is being run by a net control or at least a frequency that a base station is monitoring. Looking back I should have done this a long time ago. Thanks to W4SIG and my 2 meter Rockford ham. See you on the radio “

Sugar the Culprit?

Is sugar making us sick? A team of scientists at the University of California in San Francisco believes so, and they're doing something about it. They launched an initiative to bring information on food and drink and added sugar to the public by reviewing more than 8,000 scientific papers that show a strong link between the consumption of added sugar and chronic diseases.

The common belief until now was that sugar just makes us fat, but it's become clear through research that it's making us sick. For example, there's the rise in fatty-liver disease, the emergence of Type 2 diabetes as an epidemic in children and the dramatic increase in metabolic disorders.

Laura Schmidt, a UCSF professor at the School of Medicine and the lead investigator on the project, SugarScience, said the idea is to make the findings comprehensible and clear to everyone.

Added Sugars, Schmidt said, are sugars that don't occur naturally in foods. They are found in 74 percent of all packaged foods, have 61 names and often are difficult to decipher on food labels. Although the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires food companies to list ingredients on packaging, the suggested daily values of natural and added sugars can't be found.

The FDA is considering a proposal to require food manufacturers to list information on sugars in the same way they do for fats, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates and protein. But because so much added sugar is dumped into so many products, one average American breakfast of cereal would likely exceed a reasonable daily limit.

"SugarScience shows that a calorie is not a calorie but rather that the source of a calorie determines how it's metabolized," said pediatric endocrinologist Robert Lustig, a member of the SugarScience team and the author of "Fat Chance: Beating the Odds Against Sugar, Processed Food, Obesity, and Disease." Lustig said that more than half of the U.S. population is sick with metabolic syndrome, a group of risk factors for chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and liver disease that are directly related to the excessive consumption of added sugars in the Western diet.

Figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show the category of heart attack/stroke as the leading cause of death in the United States. Every day, 2,200 Americans die of cardiovascular disease. That's about 800,000 a year, or one in three deaths.

The latest statistics from the American Diabetes Association show that 29.1 million Americans, or 9.3 percent, have diabetes. Of that number, 21 million have been diagnosed and 8.1 million have not, and the numbers continue to grow, according to the association.

It doesn't stop there. The American Liver Foundation says at least 30 million Americans, or 1 in 10, has one of 100 kinds of liver disease.

Clinicians widely believe that obesity is the cause of metabolic disease. Although it is a marker for these diseases, Lustig said, it's not the cause. "Too much sugar causes chronic metabolic disease in both fat and thin people," he said, "and instead of focusing on obesity as the problem, we should be focusing on our processed-food supply."

The average American consumes 19.5 teaspoons (78 grams) of sugar a day, substantially more than the amount recommended by the American Heart Association. The association sets these limits: 6 teaspoons (24 grams) for women, 9 teaspoons (36 grams) for men, and 3-6 teaspoons (12-24 grams) for children, depending on age. Just one 12-ounce soda contains 8 to 9 teaspoons (32-36 grams) of sugar.

Liquid sugar in sodas, energy drinks and sports drinks is the leading source of added sugar in the American diet. That represents 36 percent of all added sugars consumed, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. And because liquid does not include fiber, the body processes it quickly. That causes more sugar to be sent to the pancreas and liver than either can process properly, and the resulting buildup of sugar leads to heart disease, diabetes and liver disease.

Consuming too much sugar causes the level of glucose sugar in the bloodstream to

increase. That, in turn, causes the pancreas to release high levels of insulin that cause the body to store extra calories as fat.

Too much insulin also affects the hormone leptin, a natural appetite suppressant that signals the brain to stop eating when full. But the imbalance of insulin levels caused by the intake of too much sugar causes lipid resistance, and the brain no longer gets that signal.

Another member of the SugarScience team, Dean Schillinger, is a professor of medicine at UCSF and a practicing primary care doctor at San Francisco General Hospital. He believes the overconsumption of added sugars is a social problem, not a problem of individual choice and freedom.

"People are becoming literate about the toxic effects of sugar," Schillinger said, "and have more understanding of the idea that high doses are bad for one's health." He sees evidence that those in a higher socioeconomic bracket are taking steps to limit intake of sugar when compared with poorer, less literate people.

Healthy food is expensive and less readily accessible in poorer neighborhoods, and because corn is so abundant and cheap, it is added to many food products. "Dumping high fructose corn syrup into cheap foods, sodas, sports drinks and energy drinks is toxic to the body, causing epidemic metabolic diseases and a serious health crisis," Schillinger said.

To underscore the scope of the problem, he pointed out that during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, 1,500 American soldiers lost a limb in combat. In that same period, 1.5 million people in the U.S. lost limbs to amputations from Type 2 diabetes, a preventable disease. "We have yet to mobilize for a public health war," he said, "but the time has come to do so."

Such a war would have to take on the root causes of the problem. As a nation, Schillinger added, we would need to look at our food policies, food pricing, availability of healthy foods, and the marketing being carried out by food and beverage industries to hook the public on unhealthy choices loaded with added sugar.

Frank Hu, a professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, is not a SugarScience researcher, but he agreed that the amount of sugar consumed by the American public is too high. SugarScience, he said, is being helpful by bringing the information about added sugar to public attention.

"It's just about impossible," Hu said, "to know from food labels what kinds and amounts of sugars are in a product." That's why he thinks the FDA should require food companies to list those amounts on all food labels so people know what they're eating, in what amounts they're eating it, and what amounts are safe.

Food labels are important, Schillinger said, and they need to be revised, but the most important change needed is to make the healthier choice the easier choice.

Source: <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-01-scientific-team-alarm-sugar-source.html>

On the Road with N4CD I

Friday – Day 1 – headed to the panhandle – Dec 27

The urge to go county hunting hit and there were needed counties in TX to be run. Way back when, I used to run the panhandle of TX twice a year. When I was working, I'd take a 3 day holiday and go zip up that way for a quick 3 day trip to put them out. Texas has 254 counties so no one is going to run the state each year.

I think back to the days of WA0SBR, who ran South Dakota – the whole state – twice a year. He'd take 2 weekends to run it – and then repeat again six months later. Ace, N9CHU, was busy putting out AL about the same way, and WB9OOG was off at least twice a month on epic weekend trips to get folks finished up – maybe 700-900 miles on a weekend. Scottie, N4AAT, kept SC off the needs list. There were mobiles in every state or area that kept the contacts coming. FL – GA – MD- New England – MI – y'all remember N8STF? Some days he'd almost never got home going this way, then back for someone else, then over here and there. We had mobiles everywhere. Now? It's getting mighty thin with mobiles in lots of states!

I tend to go different places and not repeat the same trips – other than Dayton and MD

each year. . Although the need for the panhandle is usually high for many MARAC awards, the TX QSO Party does a good job of getting the whole state run for USA-CA and Nth time.

The thermometer read 54 degrees outside when I left. Some of the 'worker' county hunters would be around today with the holiday season and extended days off from work. Traffic would also be light escaping from the Dallas Metroplex at 'rush hour'.

I started after breakfast on Friday morning headed northwest up the usual route of 287 out to Childress County. With a five mile detour at Wichita, I hit the county line of Wichita/Archer. That turned out to be a LC for Chuck, W3CR. Then it was back on course to Childress.

This time I took a short detour to Tillman, OK, a LC for KC3X and WG9A. At Okaunion, TX, it's less than a 10 mile detour up to the Red River – and Tillman County, OK, is on the other side. The 'line' is actually the high vegetation line on the south side of the river – but that is sort of ambiguous and shifts. This is not a 'wet line' in the normal sense.

I stopped in Childress at noon – good place to grab lunch at the Subway (long wait) and gas up the car. It's the last big town until Amarillo – if you keep on 287. Then back on course up to the town of Memphis, TX where you take a short detour over to Collingsworth – off the beaten path and often needed. Ten minutes to get to the line, 20 minutes to run it, 10 minutes back .

I'd run a few counties on SSB for the folks, usually down around 14271 plus or minus. Mr. Grouchy was on 14.336 spending most of his time looking for someone to run a county on his net. He almost sounded friendly when a few passer by folks appeared and happily went away with a signal report. No one got yelled at for a few days.

Route 287 follows the old Ft. Worth – Denver City railroad, which apparently followed a previous stage coach route – it's flat – not much to see – but there are towns along the way. It moves 70 mph plus.

After Donley County, you then head on smaller roads north – where you can run the counties two by two – Gray/Wheeler and Roberts/Hemphill. Since I got a late start, I figured I'd stop in the town of Canadian in Hemphill County. Several motels were listed in the yellow pages– I should have checked the prices first. There isn't much else in this neck of the woods and not much should be happening on a Friday night.. During

the spring, summer and fall, there is enough time before sunset to head on over to Dalhart in Dallam County – all the way west, but that takes another 3 hours or so to get there with stops. So that wasn't in the plan – and there isn't much in between either – most “town”s don't even have a motel - you'd have to take a 50 mile detour to maybe find one. There's nothing along my usual route for a long ways. .

It turns out that Hemphill County and the surrounding area is part of the big oil boom area. There's three motels in town.....a brand new Quiet Inn (looks like a Marriott), and brand new Best Western Oasis, and the 'remodeled' Canadian Courts. Other than a B&B, which I've never used on travels, that's about it for Canadian, TX. If you check nearby cities, you'll find most are well over \$100/night. Ouch! It's like Williston ND where the Motel 6 gets \$130/night for a room – if you can even get one! The high prices of motels wasn't in the plan. Think near triple digits for the lowest price room in town. Ouch. Oh well....next time, I'll sail right on through that town and head over to Dalhart with more motels at reasonable prices! (\$50-70). The other two motels in town were \$129 and \$140 plus tax...after your AAA, or AARP or Senior discounts. Avoid this town for overnight stays!

A while back – in the 1950s, one of the largest oil fields in Texas – the Panhandle – was under Collingsworth, Roberts, Potter, Carson, Moore, Gray and Wheeler – but that field is pretty well pumped out. I suppose some of those wells are being redone at the higher prices with horizontal drilling and fracking. Most of that oil came from wells 2500 feet or so in depth and the pump jacks would work well to bring that oil up to the surface. Now, oil folks are exploring down to 9000 feet to find new gas and oil fields.

Over just across the border in OK, there's new drilling in Major and Alfalfa Counties as well – so this area is now busy with new technology wells going back into the older fields and strata below them.

This was a Friday night, too, when most of the workers head home – not even filling up the motels on the weekends – just during the week. I didn't see any oil wells on the way up. So it was a mystery as to where the new oil was coming from. It was late afternoon and there wasn't time to get anywhere else with less expensive motels – if there are any within 75 miles. Oh well...so much for not having motel reservations made ahead of time. My bad.

Canadian is the county seat of Hemphill county – population about 2700 folks. The town is named for the Canadian River – a branch of the Arkansas River. Old travel trails go back 500 years or more – and the folks that settled the panhandle likely passed through this area headed west. There's ample water here – it's called the Oasis of the

High Plains. The railroad was brought through here which insured its survival.

The place to eat locally is the Cattle Exchange. Folks come from miles around for the fine cuisine. It's a steak and BBQ place and operates a bit differently. You walk in, and order what you want and pay for it. Everything from brisket to Fillet Mignon and you order what size you want. 1" or 1 1/2" or 2" thick pieces of steak. They give you a hotel key with a number on it – and you take an empty seat. When your order is completed, they call out your number and bring it out to your table. Lots of good food – pricey but great eating. It's in an old historic building downtown.

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

It was off to sleep at 9pm or so. Cold outside - low 30s - and getting colder. Only six cars in the parking lot for the 50 room motel. Mostly empty – but no bargain weekend prices.

Saturday Morning – Dec 27 – chilly – 24 degrees - brrrr

I'm up early even though the sun won't rise till about 7:45 am. Yuk. Dark Outside. This motel doesn't even offer breakfast at the sky high prices, so I zip on down the main street a mile or so to the Bucket Cafe and have a nice breakfast of pancakes, eggs and bacon. \$6.50. That fills you up on a chilly morning and will keep you going a long way. Once you leave this town, it's 100 miles along the route 281 until you see the next gas station.

By a bit after 7:30 I was mobile again headed for the line of Lipscomb/Ochiltree about 20 miles away. It's 20 degrees there. No sense to get there too early as the bands won't be open well. These temps seem more like Minnesota and W0GXQ's back yard than the Texas I am used to. (It was now zero up that way – really brrrr). There is no reason to worry as the heat in the Malibu works fine. There's lots of clouds and not much sun. The road looks clear but you still have to watch out for water on the road – frozen – and icy bridges.

I hit the line and put it out on the cw bands. Several needed those counties. On this trip, I self spotted on SSB to run. There are a few spots where that didn't work – no coverage. From there it is 'two by two' across the top of the panhandle – with favorite spots to run the county lines – usually on SSB. Sometimes I'll do cw on the run to make better time. There's not a lot of coverage on the web/data service but I seem to luck out

for this part of the trip with being able to spot the SSB runs, otherwise no one would find me down at 14271 or thereabouts.

Ah...I see tens of millions of dollars of new 'pump jacks' and oil storage tanks in Ochiltree County. Everywhere you look there are new and upgraded oil installations. What was formerly rusting away facilities are all bright new shiny and redone installations – every mile or two there are oil pumpjacks working away all the way to the horizon miles away! It goes on for mile after mile into Hansford. The old oil fields, at \$100 per barrel are making money again. I wonder what the drop in price will do? At least for the next six months most of that oil is already hedged at high prices – but we'll see after that.

The route west is 'lonely'. Route 281 – food/ gas station is 100 miles west. You better not be hungry because there is no place to stop for a snack. I zip along with the temps in the 20s. Brrrr. You can still feel the cold from inside the car – the windows are cold – the door is cold. Eventually I get to the west counties – Dallam and Deaf Smith and decide to head south. There's the residual clumps of snow on the sides of the road here – looks like it snowed a day or two ago. Roads are clear but you still have to watch out for icy spots. There's not much traffic to wear it down and no sun to melt it.

I really didn't have much of a plan other than hit the rarer ones out that way. I did have clothes for an extended trip if I wanted to continue. Might as well continue to put out the counties in the panhandle, so I jog south at the west end of TX to get the next lower 'rows' of counties 2x2. South to Oldham and Deaf Smith - Over to Carson, then down to Briscoe on one of the few 'scenic' roads out in that neck of the woods.

Route 207 heads down through Palo Verde Canyon. Yep, a real 'grand canyon' imitation in the panhandle of TX and worth the drive. Good roads. In the summer time, there are all sorts of activities and camping and hiking going on. With the temps now just above freezing there aren't too many visitors.

Here's a sign you don't see too often out in the 'high plains' of the panhandle – that is mostly flatter than a pancake for the most part. It's on the main highway (the only one) down through the canyon.



Rock Slide warning in Palo Duro Canyon

Maybe I see 10 cars in 50 miles of driving through the scenic lands. That gets you down to Briscoe County – relatively rare. I turn west and it is time to look for a motel. I've passed through Amarillo (Potter County) that must have 20,000 motel rooms. There are several Motel 6s, several Super 8s, and maybe 100 other motels. It's the place for low price rooms, but it is way too early when I go through there, so it is on to other towns.

In Motley County - at 'the intersection' in the 'town' of Matador– there's an old gas station. It's Bob's Oil Well. You can't miss it!

You mean you didn't know that Bob owned an oil well? Actually, there's a 85 foot high oil derrick towering over the gas station – but no oil well there.





From the historic plaque out front:

Greenville, Texas native Luther Bedford "Bob" Robertson (1894-1947), a veteran of World War I, came to Matador in the 1920s. He was a gas station attendant in 1932 when he decided to open a service station here. To promote his new business, he built a wooden oil derrick over the station. He patented his design, and in 1939 replaced the wooden derrick with one of steel that reached 84 feet in height and included lights.

Robertson was a gifted businessman and promoter, and he used any opportunity to advertise his operation and attract customers. He kept a cage of live rattlesnakes for the amusement of tourists, and from that initial attraction grew a zoo that included lions, monkeys, coyotes, a white buffalo and other animals. He paid long distance truckers to place advertising signs at strategic points across the nation noting the mileage to Bob's Oil Well in Matador, and they became well known to the motoring public. As a result of his success, Robertson enlarged his operation to include a grocery, café and garage.

In addition to his business skills, Robertson was an active civic leader in Matador. He was particularly interested in recognizing the efforts of those who served in the military during World War II.

Bob Robertson died in 1947, and two weeks later a high wind toppled the steel derrick that had been the trademark of his business. His widow, Olga (Cunningham) (d. 1993), restored it two years later with even larger lights. The business did not continue long after, however, and closed in the 1950s. Later efforts to reopen it were short-lived. Today, the site serves as a reminder of a time when such bold roadside architecture was in its infancy and of a man who, through his business, widely promoted his adopted hometown. (2005)"

Did you see the 'visible pumps' in the picture? They had clear glass globes so you could see the gas you were getting. Way back then, there was often a problem with contaminated gas – so these pumps allowed you to check to make sure there wasn't crud floating around in what you ordered up. You'd pump up five or 8 gallons of gas, and it would drain back down into your tank by gravity feed. (If you watch American Restoration or American Pickers – you'll know what they are – cable History Channel). Folks collect them these days – relics of the past.

Eventually, I wind up headed on down I-27 toward Lubbock. There's a bunch of motels there including a Motel 6 that I have stayed at. I check with the Motel 6 on the phone. Nothing going on, says the desk clerk, lots of rooms available. OK – still a few hours to get there and that is an option. Along the way, I see Plainview up ahead in Hale County. There's a Super 8 listed on the GPS database. I call and find out if there is a vacancy and how much. \$70 including tax. OK...I can do that. I get there about 4:30 which is fine with me. Lubbock would be another hour. Sunset is about 5:30 out this way – maybe a bit later – and that will give me time to gas up the car, find a dinner place, and get back to the motel before it gets way dark.

Hey, it's deja vu all over again. I've stayed at this Super 8 before. There's a budget place behind it for \$45/night plus tax, too, if you are watching pennies. I've stayed there before too! IHOP restaurant within walking distance.

Dinner is at the China Buffet nearby. It seems I forgot to pack underwear in my suitcase, so an emergency trip is made to department store to stock up on new. The suitcase is jammed full of flannel shirts, pants, tee shirts, and socks. Oh well, time to get rid of the old stuff in the drawer at home. Some of it is real old. . You can't buy less than a package of 7 these days.

The car was getting about 32 mpg – speeds were 60-75 mph on the roads. I filled up the car with gas and I was set to go the next morning.

I was back to the motel as the sun was setting.

In the room, I watched the weather on the TV set. That morning they had some snow (I missed it) and there was some freezing rain as well that caused hundreds of accidents around Lubbock. Didn't even know that it was that close – that bad weather was supposed to be further south at Midland down to the mountains of Jeff Davis.

However, the forecast for this area was now: one nice day followed by 30% chance of snow for the following days, with 50% chance of icy wintry mix on New Years day, extending south and east. Time to be gone! Worse, the cold front would head all the way to south TX and the moisture streaming in from Mexico would make a mess in 40 counties out that way with either freezing rain/snow or heavy rain. That sort of ruled out that direction for more travel plus I would have to get back to Dallas through some nasty weather as well later in the week.. That southern route had been an option but no longer made sense heading into a giant mess. That south trip will be another week with good weather forecast.

Nice motel. Sleep well. Only half a dozen cars in the parking lot – for maybe a 50 room place. 3 pillows on the king size bed.

Sunday morning – cold

I'm up early and enjoy a waffle, an apple, an orange, and a bowl of Bran Flakes. That should hold me for a while. It's near 20 outside and the car is frosted over with 1/8th inch of heavy frost or maybe from some rain. It takes a while to warm up the car and get set to go after scraping the ice off the windows. It didn't seem to stick on the antenna parts. I'd wind my way back to home to miss the bad weather in two or three days. Home is east and a bit south. So which way do I go?

Today I head a bit northwest to get to Castro – another one that is on the needs list. There's not much reason to go there. Then I head 3 counties south, then swing east to catch more, then a bit north jog to finish all in the panhandle...every county of the top five rows and most of the top 7 rows across. Between this trip and the trip in August for the MARAC CW contest, that's the top 9 rows of counties finished off. Whew. That's 55 or 60 counties.

It's after 1pm so it is time to figure out what next. I check the weather and it still OK for another day or so – so I can stay out this way. I could get home by 6pm but the county putting out would be curtailed and I'd miss Foard. I still had a day I could use.

I decide to head down to Knox County and the small town of Munday for the night. You pass through King County. There's not even a gas station in that county these days. Nothing. Zip. Nada. Other than the county seat with the tiny building for records – there isn't anything there but a giant ranch that owns 99.99% the county. Roughly 33 by 33 miles and just good roads and nothing else.

However, there's a sign there you won't find in Minnesota or New England...or California.....I see the sign, and circle back to get a picture. It doesn't get any better than this for unusual signs.



Wild Hog Warning! King County

Many counties now out in mid central and south TX are being overrun by feral hogs. Millions of them. They are nocturnal, so it's another reason not to be driving late at night out this way. They weigh hundreds of pounds and are mean.

There's a budget motel in Knox County that's decent there but not much else in the way of amenities. . There is one other motel in Aspermont - been there a few times too. I get to Munday and it is still early. I get a room – looks like I'm the only one there for the 20 rooms. \$50 including tax. I run down to Haskell County five miles away before going QRT for the day. I quit mid afternoon – and take a break. Now I can catch a few football games on the TV and just chill. It's been 3 days of solid driving so far. There is another 200 miles the short way to get home – but you know me- there will be more miles added in for more counties.

The only place for dinner here in winter is the DQ. It's a grilled chicken salad for dinner with a small Sundae for desert.

Slept well. Absolutely quiet. Two pillows on the bed.

Monday – Day 4 – headed to home

Nearly all of the panhandle counties had been transmitted - and only two in the 'north part' of TX remained- Foard and Baylor. Several had asked for Foard – so it was time to head that way.

At 6:30 in the morning in Knox County TX it was right at freezing and still dark. No sunrise till after 7:20 or so. No much goes on in the small town of Munday. It looks like I was the only one at the motel that night. I left at 7 and headed to the AllSup gas station/convenience store for a breakfast biscuit. It's the only place open in town now that the cafe closed down this past summer. There were half a dozen patrons there buying their breakfast biscuits and getting coffee.

From Munday it was straight north on highway 267 for 30 miles through the middle of nowhere. No towns. No villages. Nothing but 3 farm houses in 30 miles and only 3 cars seen on the road in 30 miles. The sun was coming up in the east but behind a solid cloud layer – the sky at the horizon was red.



Sunrise in mid-central TX\
N4CD mobile – 6 foot mast with 40/30/20/17m

Eventually you get to Foard County – it's a wet line – but not much water in the rivers out in NW Texas right now – the river bed is 500-800 feet wide, but the water in the river is not even 10 feet wide – just a trickle. We need lots of rain to catch up.

What's this? Snow still on the sides of the road on the north shadowed areas – didn't get melted yet. It would melt today as it was headed to 50 degrees for a day before the big chill moves in. That would get the surface temps down – two days of temps in the 20/30s all day, followed by day of rain/ice/winter precip on Thursday for this area. It's a good reason to be headed home! That wintry mix will make a real horror of trying to drive on the rural roads. I'm going to hunker down at home!

Foard County went in the log. At the far county line, when I hit Baylor, I ran on SSB for the folks. I've been using 14271-285 for most runs. At some times during the day it's hard to find an open frequency – other times it seems not too bad. There's still a dozen or so county hunters not yet converted to cw (W3CR, K8EMS, N5MLP, WB0CQO, WA9DLB, etc). Some are now chasing counties on data. W5QP was out in MO putting them out on data.

In Baylor, I stop for more breakfast – the stomach was growling – at the Maverick Cafe in Seymour. N4CD had 2 pancakes with ham for a quick fill. \$4.72 plus tip. Then back

on the road headed toward home.

The regular net control is on 14.336. Every now and then after I've run the 4 bands on cw, sometimes on SSB, I head to SSB to see what is happening and to work the mobiles to give them my county. Seems the FL loudmouth was there helping, but....he still had to resort to his old nasty comment tactics. He seemed to be trying not to....but when WB0CQO was on the county line of Wayne and Appanoose, IA..... he was back to his old self. Before he even announced the mobile, it was another stupid comment like “they've got a noose waiting for you there”.....as in Appanoose. Then he announced the mobile. Dumb. Stupid. He just can't help himself. People cringe when he's around just waiting for the next nasty, off color remark. It's just a matter of time. What, he was 'joking' about WB0CQO being lynched and hung? Pathetic.

Well, he went two or three days without a stupid comment. That I heard – then again, I'm only there a small part of the time as I'm busy running counties on cw...but there it was again. If he didn't do stupid things, there wouldn't be as much to write about. Yeah, they've got a noose waiting for you there!. No wonder folks cringe when Percival is around. It's just a matter of time. Maybe he thinks he is a Don Rickels wannabee? Rickel's type humor is only “funny” after you've had four or five drinks and are half sloshed.

It seems the regular 20m net control still has 40M net phobia. Joe, WB0CQO, couldn't work a few stations on 20M, even with relays and said he would go to 40M for them. Did the NC say after the 20M contact was not good – that CQO would go to 40M for him? Not on your life. You're just supposed to hope the mobile will go there and already hasn't run it there. 40M is not in the vocabulary of the current NC. How sad. There never was a problem in the past with folks like WA3TUC, WA9QNI, WA4KER, K1ER, etc, to tell the station who didn't succeed on 20m to go to 40m after the run. Never. Ever. And you could ask for a mobile to go to 40M for you. In the past. Not now. It would take too much 'valuable' net control time when he is spending over 20 minutes between mobiles looking for any mobile. I wonder how many last counties just never happened because of this? 40M net phobia. Some folks made special trips to put out counties and try and reach county hunters, and 'he' won't help them with 40M after 20M 'fails'? Sicko. Mobiles are spending money on gas to get those counties put out...and there's no help from South Carolina.

There was a bit of snow in Baylor – on the roof tops and yards. Looks like they had a couple inches - not all melted. No problem driving and the temps were getting up to 40 deg. Roads clear.

What's this? There's a big booming signal on 17M from K9FD. I haven't heard him before this trip on 17M - ever. Turns out Merv put up a new ground plane and it works! He's one of the louder signals on 17M - and from Maui, HI.

If you head to the town of Megarel in Archer County – you just hit the corner of the county, then head south on 210 – you can hit the county line of Throckmorton and Young – on a gravel road – good one – to put out another line. It's not on the regular TX map, but if you have the giant TX map book, you'll see it – or if you take the gravel road headed west when you are so so close on the main paved road – the GPS will show right when you get to the line in less than 1/2 mile. I put that out – then head east to home. No cell or web coverage from there – at least with Verizon. I can't 'Hear you Now?!'. Not from there – or many other spots in west TX either!

Bill, K2HVN, is on from SC. N9AC is headed south to FL and putting them out on 20M and 17M cw and on 20M SSB. KW1DX is up in NH and over into VT on CW and data modes. KO7X is out in UT headed back to WY. WB0CQO is running around in IA on SSB. Busy day and at times 30, 20 and 17 are jammed up. WD4OIN was out yesterday in NC and Jim, N4JT ran two over the weekend. N0HKK was on SSB in a half dozen counties.

It's a nice day outside – going up to 55 for a day before the big plunge and wintry mix then comes just in time for New Years. I just cruise along on the good roads and get home about 1pm. I'm home – time for lots of paperwork now.

1320 miles of driving in 3 1/2 days. It will be a few months before I'm out in the panhandle again.

Now time to hit the grocery store and stock up with the good stuff – veggies and fruit to get back on a better diet. Back to the gym. Travel does not work well for sticking to a healthy diet.

Hope I hit something you needed. Conditions were so so. HA9RE worked me in many on the trip, and LY5A and ON4AAC got through for several hours in the DX window. JH7VHZ was worked just a few times on 17M. I worked a few ARRL centennial stations – both cw and SSB – they were clustered around 270-290. . N4CD good for 5 pts as a VE in the challenge. Things were winding down with the last of the states again on the air for the second time (W1AW/x in each state).

It's time for an oil change and tire rotation. The miles add up. I'm still having fun. South Texas awaits.....

Diet News

Scientists crack why red meat is linked with cancer - and SUGAR may be to blame

Red meat may be linked with cancer because it contains a chemical that is unnatural to the human body, scientists say.

Previous studies have linked red-meat consumption to a number of cancers, especially colorectal, breast, prostate, ovarian and lung cancers. Now, U.S. researchers believe the culprit is a sugar molecule called Neu5Gc, found in beef, pork and lamb. When eaten, the body sees it as a foreign substance - and the immune system attacks it.

This leads to inflammation in the body, which over time is known to promote the formation of tumors. The same process could happen when people drink whole milk, certain cheeses and fish eggs, which all contain Neu5Gc, the researchers warned. As Neu5Gc naturally occurs in most mammals but not humans, this also explains why humans are more at risk cancer while other carnivores are not.

The research is significant as it diverges from the previously held theory about red meat and cancer. Previously it was believed there was an association between red meat and cancer because of the carcinogenic chemicals linked to grilling. But grilling fish and chicken generates the same carcinogenic molecules as grilling red meat and yet they are not associated with a risk of cancer.

Scientists said the fact that they have very little or no Neu5Gc could now explain why. Dr Ajit Varki, from the University of California San Diego, who led the study, said the Neu5Gc phenomenon is unprecedented. He said: 'In this case, the foreign sugar is like a Trojan Horse. It becomes part of your own cells.' 'When you react to a peanut or other allergy-causing substance, you're reacting to something foreign. This is the first example we know of something that's foreign, gets totally incorporated into you despite the fact that your immune system recognizes it.'

However, Dr Varki said Neu5Gc plays the role of 'gasoline on the fire'. That is, it boosts the cancer risk, but doesn't seem to be the ultimate cause of the disease.

'This is the first time we have directly shown that mimicking the exact situation in

humans - feeding non-human Neu5Gc and inducing anti-Neu5Gc antibodies - increases spontaneous cancers in mice.

He does not advise cutting red meat out of the diet, however.

Dr Varki continued: 'Of course, moderate amounts of red meat can be a source of good nutrition for young people. 'We hope that our work will eventually lead the way to practical solutions for this catch-22.' In fact, selective breeding could allow farmers to reduce the amount of NEu5Gc in meat, and it may be possible to develop an antidote to counteract the cancer risk.

The study was published online in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. It also advised eating processed meats like ham, bacon and salami as little as possible.

'Convincing evidence' that both types of meat increase the risk of bowel cancer - as well as other cancers - means people should seriously think about cutting down, it recommended.

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2890243/Scientists-crack-red-meat-linked-cancer-SUGAR-molecule-blame.html#ixzz3NOqKRziL>

AE3Z Trip to Cameron, PA

I was having a discussion with Charlie N2JNE via email and he mentioned that Jim WY8I needed Cameron County, PA. and that he had thought about running over there. Charlie lives a couple hundred miles east of me and Cameron County, PA. is about 110 miles “west” of here.... So, I went on Google Earth and figured out how to get there....

I had been in Cameron County, PA about 20 years ago. The route I took at that time wasn't the smartest decision I've ever made. We didn't have Google earth or GPS back in those days and so, you looked at a map and figured out the shortest route to get there.

The wife and I left home went 60 miles south to near Wellsboro, Pa. and then turned West on Route 6 which is one of the most popular roads in this part of the country. Ten

years ago, it was a toss-up between Rt. 6 in Northern Pa. and Rt. 17 across southern New York. Rt.6 is two lanes, very up and down and almost constant driving the curves along the creek where most likely the Indians cut out their route 200 years ago.

After two hours through Tioga and Potter Counties, we finally get near to Coudersport, PA and the GPS wants me to take a road that really didn't look all that great. So, we went on and found a "better" looking road and we turned south. Now the driving really gets to be fun. There are only three main roads that lead into Cameron County, PA. We still had 15 miles to go to get to one of them. It's like driving on a roller coaster! And no, you don't attempt to run a county while you are enroute to Cameron County. You're too dangd busy.

We finally see the sign for Cameron County, PA. There is no where to get off the road and besides, we had been riding for over two hours and Mother Nature was calling her head off by the time we got down there. You don't make the wife wait on that for very long...!! Decided to head on down to Sizerville, PA. and maybe find a restaurant to get a bite to eat and hit the bathroom... No such luck in Sizerville. Nothing there. So we keep going another five miles into Emporium, PA. Quite a nice little town. The GPS says there is an "Amity Family Bakery and Deli" so, we head for that. Great place to hit the bathroom and get lunch. They make 1/2 pound hamburgers. hi.... Coffee was great. A huge cup that held a pint of coffee for 94 cents... You didn't even need a refill.

After we finished running Cameron, we headed back up the road and I see the road going north that the GPS lady wanted me to take on the way down. Heck, I hadn't had enough adventure yet for the day so, we opted to try going "over the mountain" instead of "around". Seven miles shorter. I think it took us 10 minutes longer because of the crooked road and you go up and around and back around for 4 miles and then down the other side for three miles... Snowmobiles all over the place. Snowmobiles are almost the number one mode of transportation down in the area. You stop at a restaurant and there will be a whole pile of snowmobiles and more than likely just a few automobiles.

When we left our home in Big Flats, NY we had maybe 1/2 inch of snow on the ground. As soon as we got into Potter there was 6 to 8 inches and down in Cameron closer to 12 to 18 inches. And it's like that all winter. Lake effect snow from Lake Erie.

It's not as much fun as it used to be.... I tried to run CW out thru Rt. 6 and had to quit because it was just too much "driving" required. When I got home, I took the CW key out of the vehicle. Not sure if there will be any more road trips or not.

Don AE3Z

The Solar Coronal Hole

Mystery at the sun's south pole: Nasa reveals huge 'coronal hole' on the solar surface where winds reach 500 miles per SECOND

Coronal holes are regions of the corona where the magnetic field reaches out into space

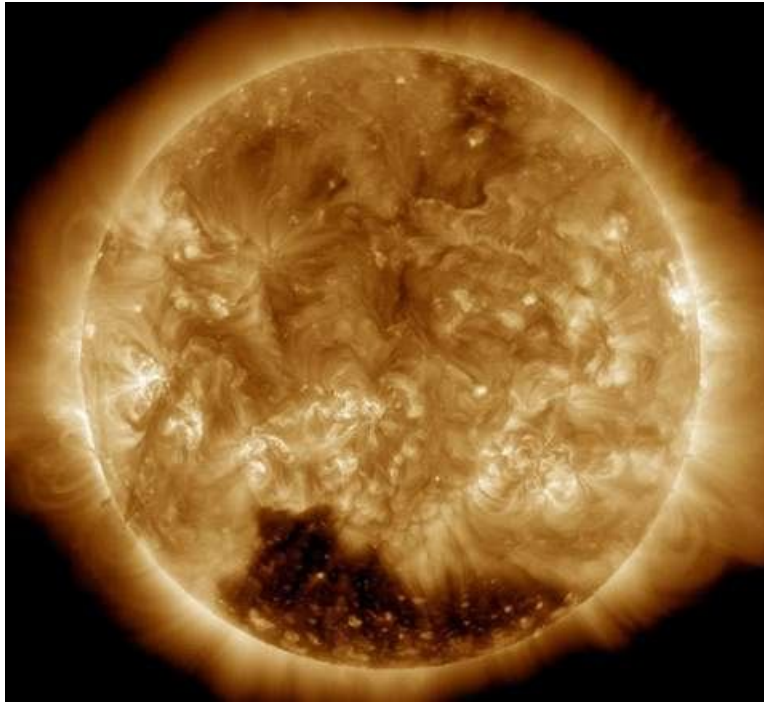
Particles moving along those magnetic fields can leave the sun rather than being trapped near the surface

Polar coronal hole can remain visible for five years or longer, although constantly changes shape

By Mark Prigg For Dailymail.com

There were no fireworks on the sun to welcome in the New Year - and in fact, scientists say the end of the year was relatively quiet on the solar surface. However, the sun has started 2015 with a mysterious event - a huge hole has appeared. Known as a coronal hole, the phenomenon occurred near the south pole - and is seen as a dark area covered all of its base in these stunning images.

The incredible image was captured on Jan. 1, 2015 by the Atmospheric Imaging Assembly (AIA) instrument on NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory, shows the coronal hole as a dark region in the south.



Coronal holes are regions of the corona where the magnetic field reaches out into space rather than looping back down onto the surface. Particles moving along those magnetic fields can leave the sun rather than being trapped near the surface. Those trapped particles can heat up and glow, giving us the lovely AIA images. In the parts of the corona where the particles leave the sun, the glow is much dimmer and the coronal hole looks dark.

Coronal holes were first seen in images taken by astronauts on board NASA's Skylab space station in 1973 and 1974. They can be seen for a long time, although the exact shape changes all the time. The polar coronal hole can remain visible for five years or longer.

Each time a coronal hole rotates by the Earth we can measure the particles flowing out of the hole as a high-speed stream, another source of space weather. Charged particles in the Earth's radiation belts are accelerated when the high-speed stream runs into the Earth's magnetosphere. The acceleration of particles in the magnetosphere is studied by NASA's Van Allen Probes mission.

As Solar Cycle 24 fades, the number of flares each day will get smaller, but the coronal holes provide another source of space weather that needs to be understood and predicted.

Coronal holes are a typical feature on the sun, though they appear at different places and with more frequency at different times of the sun's activity cycle. The holes are important to our understanding of space weather, as they are the source of a high-speed wind of solar particles that streams off the sun some three times faster than the slower wind elsewhere.

While it's unclear what causes coronal holes, they correlate to areas on the sun where magnetic fields soar up and away, failing to loop back down to the surface, as they do elsewhere. The material constantly flowing outward is called the solar wind, which typically 'blows' at around 250 miles (400 km) per second.

When a coronal hole is present, though, the wind speed can double to nearly 500 miles (800 km) per second. Late last year one of Nasa's most powerful space telescopes has turned its gaze on the Sun for the first time to capture this stunning image.



X-rays stream off the sun in this image showing observations from by NASA's Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array, or NuSTAR, overlaid on a picture taken by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO). The NuSTAR data, seen in green and blue, reveal solar high-energy emission (green shows energies between 2 and 3 kiloelectron volts, and blue shows energies between 3 and 5 kiloelectron volts).

Nasa's Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array, or NuSTAR, has produced the most sensitive solar portrait ever taken in high-energy X-rays. The mission is primarily designed to look at black holes and other objects far from our solar system.

'NuSTAR will give us a unique look at the sun, from the deepest to the highest parts of

its atmosphere,' said David Smith, a solar physicist and member of the NuSTAR team at University of California, Santa Cruz.

Solar scientists first thought of using NuSTAR to study the sun about seven years ago, after the space telescope's design and construction was already underway, but before the telescope launched into space in 2012. While the sun is too bright for other telescopes such as NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory, NuSTAR can safely look at it without the risk of damaging its detectors.

Future images will provide even better data as the sun winds down in its solar cycle. 'We will come into our own when the sun gets quiet,' said Smith, explaining that the sun's activity will dwindle over the next few years.

With NuSTAR's high-energy views, it has the potential to capture hypothesized nanoflares -- smaller versions of the sun's giant flares that erupt with charged particles and high-energy radiation. Nanoflares, should they exist, may explain why the sun's outer atmosphere, called the corona, is sizzling hot, a mystery called the 'coronal heating problem.' The corona is, on average, 1.8 million degrees Fahrenheit (1 million degrees Celsius), while the surface of the sun is relatively cooler at 10,800 Fahrenheit (6,000 degrees Celsius). It is like a flame coming out of an ice cube. Nanoflares, in combination with flares, may be sources of the intense heat.

If NuSTAR can catch nanoflares in action, it may help solve this decades-old puzzle. 'NuSTAR will be exquisitely sensitive to the faintest X-ray activity happening in the solar atmosphere, and that includes possible nanoflares,' said Smith.

What's more, the X-ray observatory can search for hypothesized dark matter particles called axions. Dark matter is five times more abundant than regular matter in the universe. Everyday matter familiar to us, for example in tables and chairs, planets and stars, is only a sliver of what's out there. While dark matter has been indirectly detected through its gravitational pull, its composition remains unknown. It's a long shot, say scientists, but NuSTAR may be able spot axions, one of the leading candidates for dark matter, should they exist. The axions would appear as a spot of X-rays in the center of the sun.

The images comes weeks after warnings that Earth could be hit by a series of damaging solar flares after the largest sunspot to be seen on the star for 24 years aligns with our planet. The sunspot, previously known as Active Region 12192, began facing Earth in October but did not produce any coronal mass ejection (CMEs). CMEs are the most energetic events in our solar system, involving huge bubbles of plasma and magnetic

fields being spewed from the sun's surface into space.

The region, renamed Active Region 12192, has now rotated around to face Earth again, and is likely to create CMEs, Nasa scientist Holly Gilbert told Space.com during a video interview. 'This time around, it's more likely to have some coronal mass ejections associated with it, even though the solar flares might be smaller,' she said. 'We have a good idea, based on the structure of that magnetic field and the sunspot, that it's very possible that it will create some mid-level flares.'

Magnetic fields in sunspots can store vast amounts of energy, but looping magnetic field lines can get tangled up and snap, releasing their energy as explosions called flares. According to Dr Gilbert, the sunspot is still large enough for 10 Earths to fit inside it, and is believed to be the 33rd largest of 32,908 active regions recorded since 1874.

The Jupiter-sized sunspot produced six eruptions in October and early November, before disappearing for two weeks. Earlier this year, Ashley Dale, who is a member of an international task force, dubbed Solarmax, warned that solar 'super-storms' pose a 'catastrophic' and 'long-lasting' threat to life on Earth. A solar superstorm occurs when a CME of sufficient magnitude tears into the Earth's surrounding magnetic field and rips it apart.

Such an event could induce huge surges of electrical currents in the ground and in overhead transmission lines, causing widespread power outages and severely damaging critical electrical components. Mr Dale, carrying out doctoral research in aerospace engineering at Bristol University, said it is only a 'matter of time' before an exceptionally violent solar storm is propelled towards Earth.

He says such a storm would wreak havoc with communication systems and power supplies, crippling vital services such as transport, sanitation and medicine. Without power, people would struggle to fuel their cars at petrol stations, get money from cash dispensers or pay online,' he said. 'Water and sewage systems would be affected too, meaning that health epidemics in urbanised areas would quickly take a grip, with diseases we thought we had left behind centuries ago soon returning.'

The largest ever solar super-storm on record occurred in 1859 and is known as the Carrington Event, named after the English astronomer Richard Carrington who spotted the preceding solar flare. This massive CME released about 10²² kJ of energy - the equivalent to 10 billion Hiroshima bombs exploding at the same time - and hurled around a trillion kilos of charged particles towards the Earth at speeds of up to 3000

km/s.

However, its impact on the human population was relatively benign as our electronic infrastructure at the time amounted to no more than about 124,000 miles (200,000 km) of telegraph lines. Mr Dale says these types of events are not just a threat, but inevitable. Nasa scientists have predicted that the Earth is in the path of a Carrington-level event every 150 years on average. This means that we are currently five years overdue - and that the likelihood of one occurring in the next decade is as high as 12 per cent.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2894840/Mystery-sun-s-south-pole-Nasa-reveals-huge-coronal-hole-solar-surface-winds-jet-500-miles-SECOND.html#ixzz3NlIKh0FO>

US Presents Award



One of the MARAC awards, from the 'way back days', is the US Presidents Award. I'm not exactly sure what the requirements are. At one time, there was a Washington Award, where you had to work all 31 counties named after George Washing, plus "Washington, DC" – which is really 'the District of Columbia' – but we won't quibble. So on to the MARAC rules: which state:

U.S. Presidents Award

OBJECTIVE: To make contacts with amateur radio operators in USA Counties that are named after Presidents of the United States.

SPECIAL RULES: Any Valid Contacts submitted for other MARAC awards may also be used for this award. The list of required counties is available from the Awards Manager or on the MARAC web site.

AWARD LEVELS: This award requires making Valid Contacts with all of the counties on the US Presidents counties list.

APPLICATION AND FEES: Standard application, logs, and fees

from p32 of MARAC Awards

For the life of me, I can't find the list of 195 required counties on the MRAC web site. Can you? If you use Logger, it's buried in the Logger program and you can print out an application for it when you worked all of them. If you don't use Logger, you apparently are left in the dark.

If you've worked all the counties, you've worked all the US Presidents counties too. With awards down to a buck for members, you should be just able to apply for this award once you have your USACA number in hand. Then hang it on the wall proudly.

WY8I was the last county hunter to earn this award getting number 43.

Peak Oil – by Tom Whipple

I know that it is getting harder all the time to believe that there really is a “peak oil crisis” lurking out there waiting to engulf our civilization and create all sorts of havoc.

Nearly every day now oil and gasoline prices are falling. We are forever told that America is on the verge of independence from foreign energy sources; that the world has decades of whatever we are burning left to burn; and climate change is something for the great-great-grandchildren to worry about. In the last five months, oil prices have fallen 40 dollars a barrel so that we Americans now have about \$800 million dollars more each day to spend on something other than oil products. To top it all off, those folks whose governments don’t like us very much — Russia, Iran, Venezuela for example — are really hurting as they slide into deeper economic troubles.

Leaving aside for the moment the possibility that some exotic and as yet not fully understood source of energy will emerge in the near future, saving us from climate change, reviving the global economy, and allowing us to fly further into space, the evidence is very strong that we are still on the verge of a crisis. In fact we probably are already in it and just don’t recognize it for what it is. It is a lot easier to blame troubles on high taxes or government regulation than to admit that shortages of natural resources are driving up prices and/or cutting growth.

It is now generally accepted by those actually studying the issue that production of “conventional oil,” which is what the early “peakists” were talking about 10 or 15 years ago, really did stop growing back in about 2005-2008. Since then official “oil” production numbers have continued to climb slowly, but included in the “official” numbers as put out by the US and international agencies is not all your grandfather’s oil. Instead the compilers of our oil statistics have learned to lump all sorts of liquid hydrocarbons of varying utility together and tell us that oil in the form of “all liquids” continues to grow. Now these hydrocarbons such as natural gas liquids, biofuels, tar sands, and shale oil have uses, but they either cost considerably more to produce than conventional oil, or do not have the same energy content as conventional oil. In at least one case, “refinery gains” which are sort of like whipping up a pint of cream into gallons of whipped cream, have no additional energy in their expanded state at all. They simply fill more barrels and let us pretend we have more energy to use than we actually do.

While the financial press continues to chatter endlessly about the technological breakthroughs that have brought us millions of barrels of new shale oil, sadly they have

the basics of the story wrong. It is the high prices that “oil” has been selling for in the last ten years, not the decades-old fracking technology that has allowed very expensive shale oil to be produced that is new. Even with the recent \$40 per barrel price decline, oil is still selling for four times what it was going for 12 or 13 years ago. It is the surge in prices to circa \$100 a barrel has allowed very expensive oil such as that from fracked shale wells, the Canadian tar sands, and deep offshore oil wells to be produced; now with oil selling for closer to \$70 a barrel the question is how long oil that is no longer economic to produce will keep being extracted. The other question is just how much of our oil supply is in danger of being mothballed until prices climb again as they surely will.

The reason for the current fall in prices is still in debate. The “oil” supply has continued to creep up in recent years, but starting last June the demand for \$100+ oil was no longer there. While demand in the “rich” OECD countries has been down since the 2008 oil price spike, this year it seems to be the slowing Chinese economy and its reduced demand for raw materials that has been behind the sinking demand. Many of the developing economies have been growing and using more oil each year due to growing trade with the Chinese.

Someday conventional wisdom will conclude that oil at circa \$100+ a barrel was simply too much to sustain high rates of economic growth and so the growth fell taking oil demand along with it. As nearly every action has a reactive feedback, we now are likely to see some sort of economic revival in those countries that have had to import a large share of their energy during the time of higher prices. Conversely the many states that have benefited from having large quantities of excess oil to export will not be doing so well for a while.

Where we are going from here is of course the question of the day. It currently looks as if oil prices will continue to fall a bit more. The Saudis say they expect \$60 a barrel will be the equilibrium place. If this happens in the next few months, then we clearly will see a reduction in the drilling for high-cost to produce oil. In the case of fracked shale oil, which requires constant drilling just to keep production even, this means we could see a reduction in output next year despite the protestations of many shale oil drillers that this will not happen.

Should US shale oil production actually fall next year, then global “all liquids” production could fall too. A few astute analysts are already mulling whether just perhaps 2014 will someday be recognized as the all-time high for global oil production or in other words “peak oil.” It is still years too early to pronounce that an all-time peak in what we now call “all liquids” has occurred, but it is an interesting thought. The

situation may just be worse than it seems.

Interesting Items from eBay



This is a complete working setup of Marconi's magnetic detector! Under the right conditions you can actually make this unit work and receive radio signals to demonstrate how Marconi used the device early in his radio building times! The Magnetic Detector was the second type of radio frequency detector Marconi used in his receivers.

The coherer was the first but it was almost unusable due to its erratic operation and very slow operating speed. The magnetic detector was invented by Rutherford in 1896 and Marconi picked up on it and built a model to see if it would work. It did and he worked at perfecting the design. It was not very successful but quite a large number of them were built and put into service by the British Navy.

In this auction you get a complete radio setup that is similar to what was used back in the early 1900's by Marconi. (of course he didn't have a solid state amplifier to go with his radios, but practicality is practicality!) The radio consists of a high Q antenna tuner which is used to select the stations and match the high impedance of the antenna to the

low impedance of the magnetic detector. The magnetic detector is built similarly to one of the early models Marconi built. The function is like a tape recorder in reverse. A permanent magnet places magnetism on a piece of steel wire. The RF signal ERASES the magnetism, like the erase head of a tape recorder. Since the signal is modulated, the strength of the "erase" signal varies at the rate of the modulation. The resulting magnetic field left on the wire is at the modulating frequency and is picked up by the output coil. Very clever but not very effective. It works but that is about all.

The demonstration apparatus includes a high gain AF amplifier that is used to bring the signal up to the audible level. The original detector used sensitive headphones. Also included in the auction is a reproduction of the FIRST MAGNETIC DETECTOR MARCONI MADE! Marconi was supposedly staying in a hotel room and had very little equipment available so he built the detector in a cigar box using parts he was able to scrounge up. This detector actually does work to some degree but since the movement of the wire is by hand the output is erratic. The two detectors make a wonderful addition to any serious early radio collection.

if you have a good outdoor antenna you can actually pick up radio stations using the equipment. It does take a good outdoor antenna at least 50 feet long to get enough signal. A youtube video of this equipment working is at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CAxWoKD-fw&feature=youtu.be>

This sold for \$1247 on eBay.

You will never see another working Magnetic Detector. Go look at the video! If you find an original Marconi one.....they sell for \$20,000 and up – each.

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Here's an item you don't see every day. This is a early 1919-1920 vintage Paragon VT single tube circuit, most commonly used as a detector after your 'tuner.' The tuner was typically 2 or 3 tuned circuits for selectivity and matching to the antenna. It's made on a bakelite base with a rheostat.



If you see one of these at a flea market inexpensively, buy it. It's worth over \$100, even more if the tube is good (VT-1 tube).

Digital Doings

Matt, W0NAC, writes a monthly column in the MARAC RoadRunner. Not all readers of the CHNews are MARAC members, so a few items of summary from the latest column.

“Digital county hunting made large strides forward in this last year. Many new people seem to be “jumping on the bandwagon” and actively pursuing the USA – Digital and 5 – Mode awards. I see the day rapidly approaching when MARAC will need some new digital awards to keep people challenged when they complete the existing awards. It was not that long ago that the 5 – Mode award was looked on as too hard to ever complete! Today, 11 people are over half way toward finishing with some over 60% done

The “digital highways” were extremely busy this month! Counting just the spots posted on W6RK, there were over 276 runs on various digital modes. I haven’t counted the number of counties, but there were many! Please keep in mind that the 276+ runs are only those spotted. Many times a mobile will be posted for the first mode ran, but will run 2-4 additional modes without being spotted!

There are now at least 6 mobile teams active in digital operations. These are: Mary & Neal (AB7NK/K9SEN), Bob & Ann (KA9JAC/KB9YVT), Mike & Cheryl (KG5UZ/KJ5PQ), Dennis & Susan (N6PDB/WA6OCV), Matt & Sharon (W0NAC/N0LXJ), and Darl & Tim (NA8W/N8EWQ).

Others who “put out” their home county (fixed operation) were: Leslie (WA4EEZ), Doug (WA4UNS), and Walt (W1ATV). Single mobiles operating digital in December include Jim (N4JT), Rick (W5QP), and Dave (KW1DX). If I missed anyone here, I apologize.

Also, early December caught the end of Dennis and Susan’s (N6PDB/WA6OCV) monumental trip which spanned the USA twice! Dennis reports that on this trip they “put out” 233 counties, made 4127 digital contacts, 1941 SSB contacts, and 2 CW contacts. In total they covered 6943 miles in their RV and survived lots of snow and ice!

14 digital county hunters have logged over 1000 counties toward completing the “USA – Digital Award”. Two more are “knocking on the door” with ~900 or more digital counties. As of 12/04/2014 a total of 7 people have applied for and received the first level of this award

12 digital county hunters have now logged over 50% of the 15385 mode/counties needed to complete the “5 – Mode Award”. The new leader for this award is Dennis (N6PDB) who has worked 9967 (64.8%) of the 15,385 Counties/Modes needed to complete this award.

The 14336 Saga Part II

Dave, KW1DX posted on the K3IMC forum:

I have requested to be unbanned from the #MARAC Chat Room and here is the

response I got from KZ2P, Nice words from the Secretary of the club

“ I ask you what were my "Actions"

My Request to W5UDG: John My logon to the #MARAC chat room has been banned for some unknown reason, I will assume mistakenly. Can you please remove this ban from my callsign. I will also assume that all other MARAC members are welcome in the MARAC chat room so could you ensure that no other MARAC members have been mistakenly banned from the room. Including the MARAC BOD since this pertains the club. Thank You Dave – KW1DX

KZ2P Response MARAC is an awards club – nothing more. The MARAC web site “advertises” several items and locations that are neither sponsored by nor controlled by MARAC. The W5UGD/mIRC rooms fall into this category. MARAC does not provide any financial support to W5UGD. There are some of us who are barred from using the W6RK room; you don’t hear us bemoaning that fact. Apparently you have been “disinvited” from one of the W5UGD rooms, grow up and live with the consequences of your actions. KZ2P

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Obviously, James is making excuses.

From Risto, W6RK:

KZ2P: "There are some of us who are barred from using the W6RK room; you don’t hear us bemoaning that fact."

W6RK: “This is absolutely not true... at least I am not aware of any bans. If some admins of the channel have done so, I would like to know. Purpose of the service is to provide county hunters neutral and friendly place to communicate. One thing people fail to understand is that it is absolutely right of owners of these services to do whatever they please and people can vote on their feet. But it is also the fact that UGD'S service is using MARAC name on it so members have all the right question how that is possible if it is not club sponsored or endorsed. And if so, what right they have to ban people? My services do not use MARAC name anywhere. “

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Comments:

W9JR: "When, how, why did all this mess on 14.336 (more)

Message: begin? I know that at one time, a long time ago, I used phonetics on the CH freq and I was jumped on ... hard ... by Jim. Then, I tried to justify my using phonetics but was told to go play in my own sandbox if I didn't like it. I guess I was ignorant at that time that no phoetics were to be used on "my net." Was it then? Or, even before that? Does anyone have a "history" site that I could visit to learn? After my 2nd time and Bingo, I don't County Hunt anymore ... I'm trying for a 3rd star using only PSK31 and am on 14.070. Thanks. "

It all began when KZ2P retired and made running folks off the net, oops...that is 'running' the net his full time job.

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WQ7A: come join us on IRC.W6RK.COM in the room #CH"

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Folks are still waiting for Percy, KA1JPR to send his apology letter to N9STL for his horrible speech on the net. As noted in the August 2008 issue of the Roadrunner Newsletter.

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On the Road with N4CD II

Every now and then, in Texas you get a winter break – where the cold air stays up north for a bit and the southern breezes take over. It had been running 10 to 15 degrees below normal for a 10 day period, and now the pendulum was set to swing the other way with 70 degree temps for five days before the cold and rain came back in. So it was time for a county hunting trip to south Texas! Temps would be in the 70s and loads of sun was expected.

There were lots of needs posted in TX and most were 'way down south' in the bottom part of Texas – out in the middle of nowhere – in the sparsely populated counties 'off the beaten path'. Not to worry, there are lots of good roads to get you there if you've got the time and desire to head there.

Not too many years ago, there was a mini down in Harlingen TX area – in Hidalgo County – hosted by Joyce, WB9NUL, and Barry, W9UCW, with help from a bunch of helpers including KJ5PQ, KG5UZ, WA9QNI, and others. That ended a couple years ago so there haven't been mobiles zipping through the counties year after year. Now, they are a bit tougher to get.

But first – the Fort Worth “Cowtown” hamfest was coming up, so it could be a double header. I'd hit the hamfest – they start early, then be underway an hour or two later after seeing everything there was to see at the event. Things start early in TX. I skipped the Friday afternoon flea market – and folks told me I didn't miss anything. I was over there at 7:30am in the morning after an hour drive. Things were in full swing with a couple hundred people and maybe 100 tables of 'stuff' for sale. This was in a new larger venue this year with room for more tables.

I browsed all the goodies – a few Heathkits, several Collins Radio units, a few Hallicrafters, and lots of 2m FM stuff. Didn't see anything I had to have, other than some 2014 issues of CQ magazine – 11 issues for \$3. I missed a few issues – let my subscription lapse. That was the 'find of the day'. There were 10 people outside selling stuff – but again, nothing I had to have. I left at 8:30 headed west from Tarrant County on I-20 for 150 miles.

Since I've started over on 3rd time transmit, the goal was to fill in lots of new transmitted counties and not leave any 'gaps' that would require long trips to fill. It's easy to miss a county then discover that you now need to go hundreds of miles out of the way to get back to it! However, likely, I'll be hitting many of them again as folks will still be needed those counties, or starting over again and need them. At least I'd try to make logical sense of what I'd run. If you are going to south TX, you might as run all of them because someone needs every single one of them for some award. There are no regular operators down that way these days. All the TX counties get run during the TX QSO party but some folks don't jump in to those. Some are only run on SSB, too. CW pileups in those can be amazing with 40 or 50 calling at once and making sense of it can be confusing for non-contesters.

This trip I figured I stop about 4pm rather than pushing it too far each day. That would give me time to find a motel, unpack things and unwind, then grab some dinner and get back to the motel before it got totally dark. Sunset now is about 6:30pm here. I'm not a fan of wandering around strange locales at night. I was flexible time wise with the only constraint to be back home in 4 1/2 days by mid Wednesday to avoid the returning cold front/rain/wintry mix.

Mike, NF0N was on the road in NE on a day trip. I'd be hunting for him in Washington NE, my LC when he got there. Ah, success! He made lots of folks happy with that trip.

As you head south, you hit the 'Hill Country'. Here's one of the signs you don't see too often – but there are loads of streams down this way that can flash flood. You'll see flood gauges in the dips in the road. Some roads cross the stream just a foot or two above normal level and it doesn't take much to flood that crossing.



Folks needed Coleman and McCulloch – so the route went straight south through those two, then to Mason – another posted need – past the I-10 continuing down through Edwards, Kerr and Real (another need by several).

Real is in interesting county – many months a year it is full of tourists – there's river rafting there – and 'ranches' - loads of campgrounds for RVs – only one tiny motel – one tiny town - a few B&Bs – and dozens of antique type stores. It's 700 square miles with a population of 3300. It's miles from anywhere. One big convenience/gas station is there – and that's about it. There were probably a few thousand 'visitors' around – more than the native population by far. It's a 'get away destination' if you have an RV and want to go some place interesting. When it's really hot in the summer, folks head here for the shade along the river and the water.

Real was a LC in TX for WA4UNS for USACW.

I continued south. Don, AE3Z was on a trip to Cameron County, PA putting out the counties. Worked him a few times.

On most of my trips, I take a bunch of “Percy Pictures”. Sometimes its for the LC ones which I send out to county hunters. At times, I'll find an interesting sign that's 'new' or unique and I can include it in the County Hunter News. Percy Pictures started about 10-15 years ago (before then they were just pictures – and mostly with a film camera that used 35mm film and required development and printing at a store). Now, with digital cameras you can snap away – or not – as you please. Some days I don't take too many.

Other times I snap just about every one. So how did Percy Pictures come about?

It seems that about 15 years ago, the “Grouch” on 336 had problems with 'uncontrolled YL's’. Still does apparently. That's YL that goes off and runs counties by herself like KI0JD. One who is not part of a team. For teams, James can always send the OM a nasty email if the YL 'mouths off’.

So Percy, as the helper, gets out his pencil and makes one of the biggest mistakes of his mathematical life (which is a very short book) and declares that there is no way that Carol, KI0JD, can be going through those counties and putting them out without going 90 or 100 mph. He and James label her the 'magic carpet' mobile – meaning she must be flying along on a magic carpet to get to those counties in the time period. Percy's math is faulty.

It didn't take long for others to do some simple time, speed, distance computations using a map and determine that it was Percy who was seriously wrong. It would only take a speed of under 50 mph to do that route that she ran, and she was running them 'on the run'. Didn't phase the twin twins. For the next couple months there was the daily tirades, and other mobiles got accused of being 'magic carpet mobiles' and not being in the county they were running. KI0JD was run off the net. Lots of folks jumped in to support her, and many of them were then run off the net.

So a bunch of us decided to take lots of pictures (many of us did anyway) and label them Percy Pictures.

Now, the sad part of this is every now and then there are some 'bad apples'. We trust county hunters to be where they say they are. Likely there have been a half dozen 'scammers' in county hunting circles over 50-55 years, with the last two 'outed' in the last 20 years or so.

What's even more amazing is that the net control station James, likely knew this was happening.....but happily ran the mobiles. There was lots of suspicion brewing for a lot of time before these two disappeared from the net.

One of the most infamous was K7OC. Folks suspected for a long time that he was playing games. He always had a great signal from 'his mobile' – and there was never any QSB. Always seemed to be going places on weekends to really needed counties, too – many of them on cw. Turns out he ran most of his counties from 'home'. He was a contract employee to the State of Oregon. The time he got caught – he was running counties from work in his mobile while “on vacation in Montana”:. The MARAC

director for that district finally tracked down his work number, and called his boss to verify he was 'on vacation' in Montana. Turns out that not only was he not in Montana, but at work in OR, he also had NO vacation days as a contract employee, and had never been out of the state of Oregon while working. So much for his 'business trips' to WA and CA and ID. Caught.

What did the NC and his cronies did? Oh, they complained that 'he wasn't caught fairly'. As if the bank robber gets to complain that the police caught him red handed and now considers himself a 'victim' of the police!. Har har har. Not only did James remove every contact from his own log with K7OC (Percy did not), just about every other county hunter with a conscious did, too. To this day, there are MARAC folks that buy the line 'he wasn't caught fairly.'. Duh! And of course, the MARAC director who finally 'outed' the cheater was excoriated by James and Percy. What do you have to do? Catch him transmitting in person with 8 other witnesses from a location 800 miles from where he claims to be? His goose was cooked.....but there were lots of hard feelings from brain dead county hunters who didn't want to 'lose those counties'. Duh, he never was in them!

MARAC, CQ, and others gave him an opportunity to present his case. Show any gas receipts, motel receipts, and refute his bosses claim he was at work for just the one week 'vacation in MT'. None was forthcoming. There wasn't any of course. Officially, MARAC and CQ and WorldRadio just 'voided' any contacts during that last week, but I, Scottie, KZ2P, and others cleansed our logs of all his contacts. K7OC was 'outed'. Sad case. He had given out at least 70 counties out in the Pacific Northwest.

Then there was another county hunter 'up north'. I won't name him. I'm not sure when he 'went bad'. When I got into county hunting, he was already getting up in age, having put out lots of ND and MN counties for years. He was a regular on the net. He gave N2TPH the last WBOW for first time with a county about 800 miles from his home. This might have been at the time he really 'wanted to be real helpful' but not the right way. Turns out he had to 'visit relatives' nearby that county that N2TPH needed for the WBOW on Thanksgiving weekend.

The normal mode of his operation was to appear one or two counties before the one you needed. Didn't run all the others. Then, an hour later, he's show up on the one you needed. Ran the county. Wow! Wasn't that great. Then ran no more on the way home. Folks didn't give it a second thought then as the nets were usually pretty busy with other mobiles. Now, I more than suspect that was a bogus WBOW contact with him nowhere near that county. (1995 timeframe). It could have been going on before that.

It got to a point where he magically got to be 'too helpful'. You call him on the phone on a Saturday or Sunday, and ask for a county within 300 miles of his home. Sure enough, that following Tuesday he magically had to be going to that county or a nearby one, 150 miles – 300 miles – made no difference. He'd get you that county on Tuesday. No problem. East, west, north, south – he'd be there. I needed one nearby. Called him on a Sunday. Sure enough, he'd get it on Tuesday. Didn't matter what direction. He had to be going that way for some reason. Showed up one or two counties away for the first time on the air, let folks know he'd be in XY county in 40 minutes, and did appear. Then he'd run 'silent' the whole way home.

Charlie, W0RRY, needed one – 150 miles away. He called him on a Sunday. Sure enough – the county hunter was going there on next Tuesday. Magically. He'd get on the net the county before and declare he'd be in county XXX in 30 minutes or so. A few other people tried it, and lo and behold, everyone got their county the following Tuesday – north, south, east, west. The county hunter would show up one or two counties away (didn't run anything else) then run the needed county, then disappear. It got really strange if you'd arrange for someone else to call his home 30 minutes after he put out the county 250 miles away. Hmmmm....he'd answer the phone!

Turns out this county hunter went into the nearby town every Tuesday for a weekly shopping trip. Never got more than 20 miles from home.

Eventually all the folks realized what was happening and the county hunter got the feedback and 'faded away'. Well, there's likely been 2000 county hunters, and less than one tenth of one percent 'bad apples' ain't too bad. Way back before I got into county hunting seriously, there was a 'airplane mobile' that wasn't. He got caught on the ground making contacts from his plane, never wasting gas on one of his 'trips'.

That's one of the reasons I take a lot of Percy Pics. And some others do. For years, the blabbermouths on 14.336 would allege that “XY isn't in ZX county” or 'can't possibly be'.....blabber blabber. You can guess who in FL did the blabbing. Besides, it's nice to send out Last County pictures when I remembered to get that county sign.

I had reserved a room at the Motel 6 in Uvalde – which would be a good stopping place on Saturday night. I arrived about 4pm and checked in. \$66 with tax for the room and these were the remodeled type rooms. Nice, but no breakfast included. No Super 8 there in town. Uvalde County is about 1550 sq miles with a population of 26,500 souls. Like many TX counties, most of the folks live in Uvalde- the county seat - with others in the 'other' small town of Sabinal. That's about it. Uvalde was a LC for N8CIJ- CW.

Did 433 miles today – ran a few county lines that takes a bit of time to do, too. Plus of course an hour at the hamfest. Sometimes you just hit the corner of a county – so you have to stop and run it if you want to 'put it out'. Good highways with 65-70 and 75 mph speed limits most of the way. I did hit ten miles of I-10 during the trip down where the speed limit was 80!

I asked the lady at the counter for dinner options – no Golden Corral or Ryans or Cracker Barrel here. Lots of Mexican restaurants and BBQ places but that's not my favorite. There was a Chinese Buffet place “down the main drag 'by the Walmart – next to the Radio Shack'. OK, how far is that? Well, just 'go till you see the Walmart'.....got it. Found the Walmart, found the Radio Shack and found Lin's Garden Buffet. Very nice and only \$8.75. Good deal and loads of good food including salmon, fruit, broccoli of course, and lots of other choices. Headed back to motel. 70 degrees out. Beautiful January weather – 13 degrees above 'average normal high'. It doesn't get much better. I had my short sleeve shirt on. At times I had to kick on the a/c in the car with the sun shining bright.

Sunday Morning

The Motel 6 has no alarm clock. None of them do. I use my ancient cellphone – it has a 'alarm clock' mode and I use it when there is no clock in the room. You can also put the phone in a 'airplane type mode' where the RF is off, so it doesn't use much power trying to keep in touch with the nearby cell site all night long. If you are in a weak signal area, that uses up a lot of battery power and the phone runs down – and isn't ready for the next day of county hunting. Just remember to switch it back to normal mode in the morning when you turn the alarm off.

Today I'd head all the way down to the Rio Grande River and the counties way down that way. Starr County was at the top of the TX needs list so I was headed that way. Folks also needed Dimmit, Zavala, Zapata, La Salle – the whole shebang of counties that way. The weather was great. 40 degrees starting out but warmed up very quickly to the 60s, peaking at 75 degrees. What's not to like for warm January weather!

Sometimes you don't find the big signs on a pole – just the older side by side county line signs off to the side of the road. If you aren't looking hard, they go by quick – and aren't easy to spot against the background.



Webb/La Salle*, TX
LC CW for AE3Z, W0EAR

It takes a while to do all those miles, with a few stops in places like La Salle where I just hit the corner – taking 20 minutes or more to put out the county on 4 cw bands and going over to SSB. There are vast stretches of highway with no cell coverage down this way – so it is hard to self spot in many places. Maybe you have coverage in the larger towns, and there is good coverage along the interstates, but less than 10% of the miles were on the interstates on this trip in south TX. You zip down to Laredo on the interstate then fight the city traffic getting back out going south – half hour delay sitting at dozens of traffic lights and congestion – a pain. They need some bypasses!

The bands were hopping but DX was really tough to work. Only had a few in the log for the trip. It's a long long way to Europe from south TX.

It took 2 hours to get through the city of Laredo in Webb down to Zapata. There were loads of fracking water trucks on the highway and lots of dust on the roads from all the vehicles. You can tell when you get near the shale oil fields in TX. The roads get beat up and are full of dust from the tens of thousands of trips of the trucks hauling the 1 to 1.5 million gallons of fracking water needed for each well. With motel names like 'Derrick Inn' you know you are in oil drilling country.

Lunch was at a Subway. In south TX, there are lots of miles to be covered and it takes a while with the huge counties to get to them all. Next up was Starr, TX – the 'poorest county' in TX and one of the most 'needed' by the county hunters.

Starr County has 61,000 people in 1300 sq miles with the largest city being Rio Grande City. It takes a while to get through it – there's nothing but strip development for 10

miles along the main and only road it seems.

When you enter Hidalgo, there are palm trees in the median for miles and miles. Looks nice and you think of warm and sunny climate.

After a while the highway gets better across Hidalgo and Cameron – almost like an interstate and you zip along over to Cameron in the 'tip' of TX.



Cameron TX – LC WBOW for KC3X 10th Time

I snapped this with the nice digital camera on full zoom across the interstate – maybe 150-200 feet away – as I exited the county! Nifty..... Cameron/Willacy line. Of course, I had to get the other two in TX that Hollis also needed to finish up – did and 'mission accomplished'.

I'm busy running all the counties as I go through them on the run. It's now time to head north (about 2pm) and think about where I'm going to stop for the night. There's a lot of oil territory 2 hours north – and the motel rates are higher if you chose the wrong town to stop in. I checked the map. OK.....last trip this way I picked the wrong town...then saw all the cheaper motels in Kingsville (Kleberg county on the interstate) and wished I had stopped there. This time I checked for motels and saw a Super 8 there at a good price so I headed that way. Only a 20 mile detour off the route to get there.

You head up through Kenedy TX – which is the King Ranch. Nothing there - good

highway through it, a border check point, no city, town motel or gas station. No hams, either. Nothing but flat coastal plain that is a few feet above sea level. Just north of that is Kleberg. I find the Super 8 - but head past it to Nueces County five miles up the road to run it....then backtrack to the motel. It's a good stopping time – 4pm or so. Super 8 is \$58 including a nice hot breakfast.

Dinner is at a nearby Big House BBQ place. I enjoy a 3 meat BBQ plate with sliced onion, tomato, pickle, bowl pinto beans, and a small salad. \$17 including tip.

Nice and warm outside – 70s all day and still 72 at 5pm. Good county hunting weather. Gas is around \$1.65-\$1.85/gal along the route. Car is getting 32 mpg.

Monday Morning

Today is the Martin Luther King holiday for many. There's still lots of traffic. MLK is best known for his "I have a dream speech". It seems our President has modified that to 'I have a scheme'. A scheme for open borders, granting amnesty to border runners, freeing the islamo fighters in Gtmo – where 35% of them rejoin the fight - now joining ISIS, and a scheme for more free give aways for tens of millions.

America used to be known as the land of the free. Now, for tens of millions, it is the "Land of the Freebie". Free food, free housing, free schooling, free childcare.....and of course, none of it is 'free' other than for the 'freeloaders'. The government dips its hands in our pockets to take what it wants, and Barack wants ever more and more and more of your hard earned money and labor and time.

Cross the border, and the Border Patrol, now on 'Social Service' duty to find, then feed, then transport the illegals to 100 'host cities' country wide in unmarked vans makes sure those illegals are treated better than most inner city kids or veterans.What happened to our country?

Back to county hunting.

Jerry, W0GXQ will be heading north today from IA back to the frozen northland in MN. We'll be working each other and watching out for the other when the frequency is in use. There hasn't been a whole lot of activity – most of the time when you are ready to run a county, the CHN is wide open.

Today I'll head west a bit after a 20 mile backtrack south to get back on course. You head right into the Eagleford shale area in much of the route as you head north. Today I

need to 'clean up' the southern counties with Jim Wells, Jim Hogg, Brooks, Duval then up to McMullen – needed by a bunch of folks. Then wander around San Antonio without hitting the congestion of that large city – circling to the west. In Northeast McMullen County – the roads are torn to shreds with potholes everywhere. The TX road department is failing to remove them and ship them up north where Mother Nature puts them into roads all winter long. It's a new experience dodging major axle busting potholes while trying to operate cw and do both without too many 'oops'. Every tenth pothole is deep. I miss most but hit a few that are hard to spot. Well, I'm glad I'm not headed back that way soon. Every other vehicle on the road is a giant water hauling truck for fracking the shale oil wells. Dozens and dozens of them!

I've gone 200 miles and only been through a handful of counties so far – lots of wide open spaces down here. Not to worry, I'm doing fine schedule wise and the weather is great. No need to hurry and get anywhere quick. There's still 3 days before the nasty cold rainy weather (with some wintry mix possible) returns. Out in west TX they will get 4-8 inches of snow – as will most of the panhandle. Yuk!

I listen every now and then on SSB to see what's going on. Hmmm...K9DIG is on 17m with a 60 over signal out of North Dakota on 18138. She's working stations left and right – about 2 min a QSOs – and she's a popular YL. She likes DX'ing and sled dogs. She's done the Iditirod race! She's telling folks the weather is 'warm' up that way - 35 deg and the snow on the ground is melting a bit. Heh heh.....75 degrees outside in TX and no snow. I didn't do too many runs on 17M SSB. Folks didn't stick around on 20M SSB on 14271....so no one around to go up to 17M if a frequency was available. In some counties I had lots of time before the next one. Anyway, I work K9DIG. Later this year, she's headed to Gitmo as part of a team and will be the first YL op there ever. She'll be KG4YL. If you need Grand Forks, ND or a YL in ND, she's around all the time. Drop her an email.

I work my way north and reach Gillespie County about 4pm. There's an interesting town of Fredericksburg ahead. I've been through it a half dozen times but never s been there at the end of the day. This is a town full of B&Bs. What's this? A sign for a Motel 6? Aha.....3 miles ahead as I head into town. OK.....I'll check it out and see if it is affordable. In the spring through fall, this town is crawling with visitors.

I find the Motel 6 – you need to be looking for it. In this town, everything is 'low key' sort of like California. No tall signs. Looks OK....new style – interior doors. I inquire about the availability and price. \$56 with tax. Great. I'm stopped for the day here. So far, I've done 1229 miles of county hunting in 3 days.

Oh...pillow count....first day the Motel 6 had 3 pillows on the King size bed. Super 8 had 3 on a King size bed. Tonight there were 3 pillows on a king size bed. More than enough but not overdone. I really don't need a king size bed but they seem to be the new normal. I guess with 35% of Americans now 'obese' they need the bigger beds.

I take out the radio and carry the suitcase inside, then head immediately to the downtown area to find a place to eat and wander around this town which is a tourist mecca. There are bike trails, a wine trail, and hundreds of tourist shops, German restaurants and shops selling doo-dads, wine shops, toy shops, a popcorn place, jams and jellies locally made – you name it and it is probably there. About 10,000 live in the town which is the county seat for Gillespie County.

The town capitalizes on its German Ancestry. Along with New Braunfels, to the east, its the heart of the German settlement areas in TX way back when in the mid 1800s. The downtown area is a national historic site. Admiral Chester Nimitz was born here – and there's a big Museum of the Pacific if you've got time to see it.

From Wiki:

“The National Museum of the Pacific War is located in Fredericksburg, Texas, the boyhood home of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. Fleet Admiral Nimitz served as CinCPAC, Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet during World War II. The six acre site includes the Admiral Nimitz Museum which is housed in the old Nimitz Hotel and tells the story of Fleet Admiral Nimitz beginning with his life as a young boy through his naval career as well as the evolution of the old hotel.

Charles Henry Nimitz, German merchant marine and grandfather of Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, moved to Fredericksburg with the initial settlers. Charles Nimitz built the Nimitz Hotel in 1852, and deeded it over to his son Charles H. Nimitz, Jr., in 1906. Locals referred to it as the Steamboat Hotel because of the ship's bow front. The hotel had its own saloon and brewery, a ballroom that doubled as a theater, a smokehouse, and a bath-house. In its heyday, the hotel hosted such guests as Horace Greeley, Johnny Ringo, President Rutherford B. Hayes, General Robert E. Lee, General James Longstreet, General Phil Sheridan, William Sydney Porter and General Ulysses S. Grant.

Anna Henke Nimitz, the wife of his son Chester Bernard Nimitz became pregnant with their only child Chester William Nimitz. The senior Chester died before his son was born on February 24, 1885. Little Chester's grandfather Charles served as a father figure the first five years of his life. While still a teenager, Chester was accepted for enrollment in the United States Naval Academy, where he graduated seventh out of a class of 114.

Chester Nimitz rose to the rank of Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Forces in World War II.

The Admiral Nimitz Foundation was established in 1964 to support a museum honoring Fredericksburg's native son.

The hotel owned by Nimitz's grandfather Charles Henry Nimitz was restored to its original design and renamed the Admiral Nimitz Museum by an act of the Texas legislature in 1968. In 2000, the complex was renamed Admiral Nimitz State Historic Site - National Museum of the Pacific War|National Museum of the Pacific War and is dedicated exclusively to the Pacific Theater battles of World War II. The conning tower of USS Pintado (SS-387) is at the main museum entrance.

The Pacific Combat Zone is a re-creation of a Pacific island battlefield, and includes a Quonset hut hospital, a PT boat and base, Japanese tank, palm trees, and machine gun placements. Re-enactments, called Living History exhibits, are held throughout the year.

George H.W. Bush cut the ribbon in 1991 for the \$3 million gallery bearing his name. The George H.W. Bush Gallery is home to an I.J.N. Ko-hyoteki class midget submarine (which participated in the attack on Pearl Harbor), a Japanese N1K "Rex" floatplane, and an American B-25. “

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I ate dinner at the Auslander Restaurant – big place probably seating a couple hundred between the dining room and outdoor 'beer garden'. I sat outside – nice 70 degree weather and enjoyed a dinner of Rouladen, green beans, salad, spaetzle, and fresh made bread. Delicious. The menu is full of great German food – plus some standard American items like BBQ for those not wanting Jaeger Schnitzel, Wiener Schnitzel, Sausage platter, Sauerbraten, etc. Lots of beer to choose from, if you like beer! I filled up and then wandered up and down the street in the historic district with all the shops. There were hundreds milling about – many in shorts and tee shirts in the great weather. It's usually a bit cooler – jacket weather this time of year. You could easily spend a day or two between the museum and the shops just wandering around. It's a couple hour drive from San Antonio or Austin for the day trippers, too.

I got in my exercise for the day, then headed back to the Motel 6 a few miles away. Didn't get a chance to visit the museum. That will be on another trip and I'll leave time. There's still loads of TX counties to be run!

Tuesday Morning – Gillespie County

Woke up early at 6am. No breakfast at the Motel 6 – just coffee. I wandered a mile down the road to an all night Denny's – not easy to find as they can't have big signs here. Everything is 'low key', but I finally found it. I had some nice blueberry pancakes and eggs and bacon to hold me for a while. Then I loaded up the car and headed out for new counties – going north on highway 16. It was still a bit dark at 7:30am as the sun was just rising. Temp was 40 degrees in town.

I didn't get far before there were lots of flashing lights in the rear view mirror coming my way. I was doing 65 or so – the speed limit....and they were in a hurry to somewhere. I pulled over and two police cars – probably doing about 90 mph – sailed on past. About two miles down the road were even more flashing lights – looks like an accident – that just happened. One car was off to the side of the road – with the driver side all smashed in from front to back. Didn't see another car or didn't have time to see what else on the car was mangled. There's no clue as to whether it was a single car accident or someone else involved – didn't see a second vehicle. Slowed down but you couldn't tell. Time to get back up to highway speed.

Well, no time to 'gawk'. There were counties to run.

About one mile down the road a truck was pulled over, but it didn't look like any damage to the truck. Who knows? There were even more flashing lights coming my way from the other direction. Half the emergency vehicles and police in the county must have been headed to the scene of the accident.

No time to worry about that – time to head for home via Mills, San Saba, Comanche then east toward home. Vic, SM7ZDI needed San Saba and we were able to hook up. The conditions were not good to EU on this trip with only a handful of contacts made in the previous 3 days.

It dipped down to 34 degrees out in the country side. Hmmm....still winter here but it will warm up again to above normal 70s today!

K0FG was on the road headed out on a multi-day trip; - otherwise it was very very quiet on SSB and cw. I ran a few county lines on or about 14271 to 273.

Weather was great. Sunny day and temps up to 70 degrees by noon.

Stopped for a Subway chopped salad in Erath County just before noon – then back on the road.

Barry, N0KV, needed Somervell for a LC in Texas, so the route was selected to head through that small county – then across route 67 over to Dallas. I run Somervell twice a year on the way home from the bi-annual Bell County Hamfest/Swapmeet. It's one of the smaller counties in TX along with Hood and Rockwall.



Somervell/Erath Line. LC for N0KV

All went well till five miles from downtown Dallas, when the 4 lanes headed north came to a stop. We then crept along at 3 mph or so for 20 minutes – looked for detour - then I got off at exit on going east on I-30 – over to I-45 then north – sailed right on through that way. Whew. That likely saved me an hour delay the other way. It was only 2 pm, too. Rush hour is always a zoo in downtown – you don't want to try it, believe me. Think 3mph creep, crawl and stop and go for 20 miles in every direction leaving downtown every work day.

Home at 2:30pm after 1533.4 miles in 3 1/2 days.

Hope I hit what you needed! There were a few SSB runs but not as many as I wanted. In many cases there was no cell or data service.....so no way to self spot. Later, I would

hit a new county and announce on 20cw that I was going to 14271 SSB and a half dozen followed and the runs were usually spotted so others showed up. Most of the time, I stop to run on SSB – often at a county line. Then take off again and run CW on the run.

It was a good trip for me and luckily I was able to clean up lots of needs. Someone has to take care of the TX counties! I'm taking it a bit easier on these winter trips and trying to enjoy myself more. I've got a habit of just zipping through the counties and never stopping to enjoy some of the touristy things to do. There's lots more Texas to visit again - so stay tuned!

On the Trail Of Regens

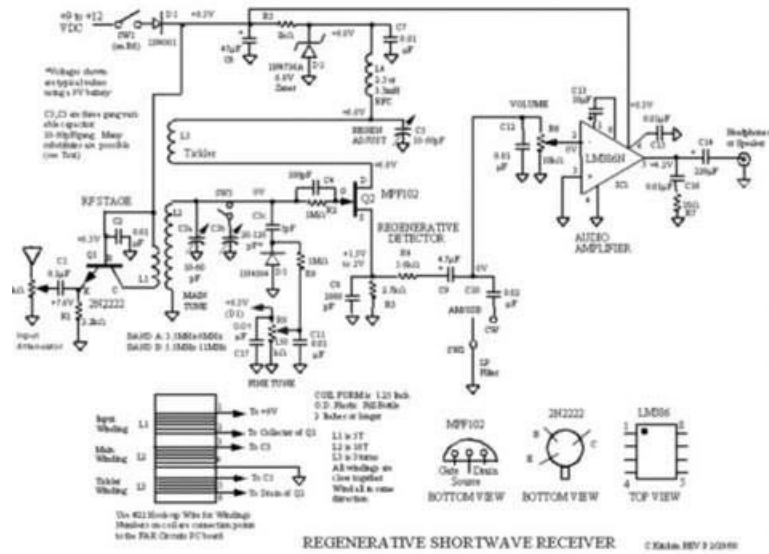
A nicely built 'homebrew' radio showed up on eBay. This was made from a printed circuit board by FAR radio (they sell PC boards for many projects in QST, ARRL Handbook, CQ – even going back to Ham Radio and 73 Magazine). The design is by Charles Kitchen – who has written many, many articles on regens.



Here is a regenerative shortwave receiver I built using a Far Circuits PCB. Circuit design is by Charles Kitchin.

See info at <http://www.electronics-tutorials.com/receivers/regen-radio-receiver.htm>

This sensitive receiver tunes about 4500 kHz to 10200 kHz using a smooth National vernier tuning dial. The throttle (regen) control is a variable capacitor with a reduction drive making fine adjustments possible. Volume control has on/off switch, and there is a small green power on LED. Size is 6.5" tall, 8" wide, and 5" deep. Construction is plywood with the exception of the front panel which is made from double sided PCB material. All panel mounted components are grounded to the PCB material eliminating hand capacitance. Power requirement is 10VDC up to 16VDC or so.



Here's another Ebay goodie that went by. It's a two tube regen using a pair of 1G4 tubes



It has a nice vernier type dial with a plug in coil. Didn't buy it. Probably 1930s vintage and likely covers 3-10 Mhz with the coil in it. \$40 plus shipping on eBay.

It's not often something 'rare' goes by. I guess I've got too much junk already. Finding new stuff is getting harder and harder. Hi hi

Economy Keyer Winter Project

from Paul, N7JPF

I just finished assembling the new Ultra PicoKeyer Kit from HamGadgets. It is a really nice little kit for so very little money. As many do, I use an IC-706 for mobile which does a really nice job with CW. As I venture out and want to give out more counties CW



mobile, and wanted a simple keyer that allows me to adjust keying speed without going into the menu, as well as storing my call and county name in a memory without too much difficulty. It is a really nice, SMALL unit that attaches to my 706-mobile with no problems. Price was right at \$29...plus \$3 shipping, and a perfect reputation and guarantee. Great little one-hour winter kit.

<http://www.hamgadgets.com/ULTRA-PICOKEYER>

Oil Prices – Art Berman

With all the conspiracy theories surrounding OPEC's November decision not cut production, is it really not just a case of simple economics? The U.S. shale boom has seen huge hype but the numbers speak for themselves and such overflowing optimism may have been unwarranted. When discussing harsh truths in energy, no sector is in greater need of a reality check than renewable energy.

Energy expert Arthur Berman explores:

- How the oil price situation came about and what was really behind OPEC's decision
- What the future really holds in store for U.S. shale
- Why the U.S. oil exports debate is nonsensical for many reasons
- What lessons can be learned from the U.S. shale boom
- Why technology doesn't have as much of an influence on oil prices as you might think
- How the global energy mix is likely to change but not in the way many might have hoped

The Current Oil Situation – What is your assessment?

Arthur Berman: The current situation with oil price is really very simple. Demand is down because of a high price for too long. Supply is up because of U.S. shale oil and the return of Libya's production. Decreased demand and increased supply equals low price.

As far as Saudi Arabia and its motives, that is very simple also. The Saudis are good at money and arithmetic. Faced with the painful choice of losing money maintaining current production at \$60/barrel or taking 2 million barrels per day off the market and losing much more money—it's an easy choice: take the path that is less painful. If there are secondary reasons like hurting U.S. tight oil producers or hurting Iran and Russia, that's great, but it's really just about the money.

Saudi Arabia met with Russia before the November OPEC meeting and proposed that if Russia cut production, Saudi Arabia would also cut and get Kuwait and the Emirates at least to cut with it. Russia said, "No," so Saudi Arabia said, "Fine, maybe you will change your mind in six months." I think that Russia and maybe Iran, Venezuela, Nigeria and Angola will change their minds by the next OPEC meeting in June.

We've seen several announcements by U.S. companies that they will spend less money drilling tight oil in the Bakken and Eagle Ford Shale Plays and in the Permian Basin in 2015. That's great but it will take a while before we see decreased production. In fact, it is more likely that production will increase before it decreases. That's because it takes time to finish the drilling that's started, do less drilling in 2015 and finally see a drop in production. Eventually though, U.S. tight oil production will decrease. About that time—perhaps near the end of 2015—world oil prices will recover somewhat due to OPEC and Russian cuts after June and increased demand because of lower oil price. Then, U.S. companies will drill more in 2016.

How do you see the shale landscape changing in the U.S. given the current oil price slump?

Arthur Berman: We've read a lot of silly articles since oil prices started falling about how U.S. shale plays can break-even at whatever the latest, lowest price of oil happens to be. Doesn't anyone realize that the investment banks that do the research behind these articles have a vested interest in making people believe that the companies they've put billions of dollars into won't go broke because prices have fallen? This is total propaganda.

We've done real work to determine the EUR (estimated ultimate recovery) of all the wells in the core of the Bakken Shale play, for example. It's about 450,000 barrels of oil equivalent per well counting gas. When we take the costs and realized oil and gas prices that the companies involved provide to the Securities and Exchange Commission in their 10-Qs, we get a break-even WTI price of \$80-85/barrel. Bakken economics are at least as good or better than the Eagle Ford and Permian so this is a fairly representative price range for break-even oil prices.

But smart people don't invest in things that break-even. I mean, why should I take a risk

to make no money on an energy company when I can invest in a variable annuity or a REIT that has almost no risk that will pay me a reasonable margin?

Oil prices need to be around \$90 to attract investment capital. So, are companies OK at current oil prices? Hell no! They are dying at these prices. That's the truth based on real data. The crap that we read that companies are fine at \$60/barrel is just that. They get to those prices by excluding important costs like everything except drilling and completion. Why does anyone believe this stuff?

If you somehow don't believe or understand EURs and 10-Qs, just get on Google Finance and look at third quarter financial data for the companies that say they are doing fine at low oil prices.

Continental Resources is the biggest player in the Bakken. Their free cash flow—cash from operating activities minus capital expenditures—was -\$1.1 billion in the third-quarter of 2014. That means that they spent more than \$1 billion more than they made. Their debt was 120% of equity. That means that if they sold everything they own, they couldn't pay off all their debt. That was at \$93 oil prices.

And they say that they will be fine at \$60 oil prices? Are you kidding? People need to wake up and click on Google Finance to see that I am right. Capital costs, by the way, don't begin to reflect all of their costs like overhead, debt service, taxes, or operating costs so the true situation is really a lot worse.

So, how do I see the shale landscape changing in the U.S. given the current oil price slump? It was pretty awful before the price slump so it can only get worse. The real question is "when will people stop giving these companies money?" When the drilling slows down and production drops—which won't happen until at least mid-2016—we will see the truth about the U.S. shale plays. They only work at high oil prices. Period.

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In global terms, what do you think developing producer nations can learn from the US shale boom?

Arthur Berman: The biggest take-away about the U.S. shale boom for other countries is that prices have to be high and stay high for the plays to work. Another important message is that drilling can never stop once it begins because decline rates are high. Finally, no matter how big the play is, only about 10-15% of it—the core or sweet spot—has any chance of being commercial. If you don't know how to identify the core early on, the play will probably fail.

Not all shale plays work. Only marine shales that are known oil source rocks seem to work based on empirical evidence from U.S. plays. Source rock quality and source

maturity are the next big filter. Total organic carbon (TOC) has to be at least 2% by weight in a fairly thick sequence of shale. Vitrinite reflectance (Ro) needs to be 1.1 or higher.

If your shale doesn't meet these threshold criteria, it probably won't be commercial. Even if it does meet them, it may not work. There is a lot more uncertainty about shale plays than most people think.

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Given technological advances in both the onshore and offshore sectors which greatly increase production, how likely is it that oil will stay below \$80 for years to come?

Arthur Berman: First of all, I'm not sure that the premise of the question is correct. Who said that technology is responsible for increasing production? Higher price has led to drilling more wells. That has increased production. It's true that many of these wells were drilled using advances in technology like horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing but these weren't free. Has the unit cost of a barrel of oil gas gone down in recent years? No, it has gone up. That's why the price of oil is such a big deal right now.

Domestic oil prices were below about \$30/barrel until 2004 and companies made enough money to stay in business. WTI averaged about \$97/barrel from 2011 until August of 2014. That's when we saw the tight oil boom. I would say that technology followed price and that price was the driver. Now that prices are low, all the technology in the world won't stop falling production.

Many people think that the resurgence of U.S. oil production shows that Peak Oil was wrong. Peak oil doesn't mean that we are running out of oil. It simply means that once conventional oil production begins to decline, future supply will have to come from more difficult sources that will be more expensive or of lower quality or both. This means production from deep water, shale and heavy oil. It seems to me that Peak Oil predictions are right on track.

Technology will not reduce the break-even price of oil. The cost of technology requires high oil prices. The companies involved in these plays never stop singing the praises of their increasing efficiency through technology—this has been a constant litany since about 2007—but we never see those improvements reflected in their financial statements. I don't doubt that the companies learn and get better at things like drilling time but other costs must be increasing to explain the continued negative cash flow and high debt of most of these companies.

The price of oil will recover. Opinions that it will remain low for a long time do not take into account that all producers need about \$100/barrel. The big exporting nations need

this price to balance their fiscal budgets. The deep-water, shale and heavy oil producers need \$100 oil to make a small profit on their expensive projects. If oil price stays at \$80 or lower, only conventional producers will be able to stay in business by ignoring the cost of social overhead to support their regimes. If this happens, global supply will fall and the price will increase above \$80/barrel. Only a global economic collapse would permit low oil prices to persist for very long.

Source: Peak Oil News Board

Global Warming Fraud

You see the Lame Stream Media pronouncing happily that 2014 was supposedly the 'warmest year' in decades. Well, let's look at the actual results.

From NASA press release – after statement analysis:

the NASA press release failed to mention...that the alleged 'record' amounted to an increase over 2010, the previous 'warmest year', of just two-hundredths of a degree—or 0.02C. The margin of error is said by scientists to be approximately 0.1C—several times as much.

Pause for a moment to digest that. The margin of error was plus or minus one tenth of a degree. The difference supposedly being measured here is two hundredths of a degree—five times smaller than the margin of error. The Daily Mail continues:

As a result, GISS's director Gavin Schmidt has now admitted NASA thinks the likelihood that 2014 was the warmest year since 1880 is just 38 per cent. However, when asked by this newspaper whether he regretted that the news release did not mention this, he did not respond.

If you are a scientist, the odds are that 2014 is NOT the warmest year on record. You can't even measure it – your margin of error is larger than what you read. It's like trying

to read 100ths of a degree on your thermometer outside on the porch! You can't!

DXCC – He's Gotta Be Kidding

I was catching up on my reading of the past couple issues of CQ Magazine...accidentally let it expire. Did you catch the article by N7NG in the October 2014 issue of CQ?

Wayne, in a 'Commentary' asks if Shipboard Operating should be allowed for DXCC credit if 'landing' is impossible. Wow. Talk about the land of the liberals and the everyone deserves a trophy mentality these days!

He starts out by noting that some DXCC entities must be accessed by water. Some are remote and uninhabited islands that take ocean going ships to reach. In some cases, even when the ships get to the island, landing is temporarily impossible due to storms.

He noted that 'some' past DXCC operations were actually scammers who never made it to the island and operated on land as required for DXCC credit. Most were caught and exposed over time and the DXCC rules were toughened to demand proof that an expedition actually made it ON TO the shore and set up and operated there. The idea of 'cheating a little' when you were 'close' may have occurred more than a few times. As a result, now stringent documentation is required – including a statement from the ship's captain, photos of operating positions and people on the shore, landing permits, license permits, etc.

Then he goes on to discuss the current situation of certain islands now being 'off limits' to ham radio DX-peditions. These are mostly 'wildlife' preserves. Some DX-peditors have managed to gain access every 10 years or so, but it is 'tough'. Many have not been activated in many, many years.

The DXCC rule about operating on land goes back to the very beginning of the program. In the 1990s, a survey of done with DXCC-ers and the result was 'don't mess with the rules'.

Back about 12 years ago, I had the fun of going on a major DX-pedition to Cocos Island (TI9) for 10 days. It was a MAJOR hassle to get a ham radio license for the group of 15. It took months and was a cliff hanger to the end as one or two TI hams tried valiantly to derail the expedition which was their honey pot of QSL money (and one of the guys operated on a ship near the island, would 'loose' your first 2 or 3 envelopes with green stamps or IRCs – collecting thousands a year bogusly).

We had to obtain 'landing permission' and 'park entry' permission as this was a Marine Sanctuary. WE did....and used a 110 foot ocean going ship to haul us and several tons of equipment to the island. (\$\$\$\$) It took a Zodiac boat to get the stuff ashore....plus we had to sleep on the ship (no 'camping' on the island). It was a major hassle but we put 80,000 QSOs in the log from TI9M. No one ever thought of operating from the ship....even though of course it was air conditioned instead of sweating on the tropical island with 90 deg temps and 90% humidity and daily deluges of rain. We took lots of pictures and submitted all the data – including a statement from the ship's captain, official stamps in our passport from the 'guards' on the island, the landing permits, the license, etc.



TI9M Group on the island at the Ranger Station



The Zodiac ride- easy at low tide.....you jump in water 5 feet deep at high tide

Each day we'd haul 20 gallons of gas to the generators to run the five stations. We'd shuttle ops back and forth every 4 hours during the day. No sleeping or fires on the island. (not that you could light a fire....everything was sopping wet – this place gets 400 inches of rain a year and it rains every day).....

Now, Wayne wants to let some weenies operate off shore, instead of all the hassle of getting to land...oh, those poor babies, they'll get soaked getting to shore, and at high tide, have to jump in water five feet deep and wade ashore!.....and vice versa if they want to get back for food and sleep on the ship! Oh, the horror! And carry tons of stuff to the shore and take the time to put up antennas, take them down, set up stations, tents,....and leave time to take them down, repack stuff.

Now, it seems with the 'everyone wins a trophy' mentality pervading society, that the issue of letting folks get 'countries' for working folks on a ship 'nearly' has surfaced once again. Maybe it is the scammers on the 3905 Century Club net that get and 'borrow' club callsigns daily....so they can work a 'K7' in Connecticut using a borrowed K7 club call operated by a CT ham. Or vice versa. Cheap contacts in their quest to work a state

with all 'call area callsigns'. Ho ho. One day a ham borrows a K7 call. Next day he checks in using a W6 call. Next day it is a N5 club call. Wow....talk about 'worthless' contacts and sort of bending the 'club call' rules way beyond what the FCC intended. Right....dozens of 'temporary members' to get around the license problem. In the other 49 states.

Oh, those poor newcomers that can't get DXCC 200+ in under five years because Navassa hasn't been on lately. Well, let's make it 'easier' for them. Fudge the rules. Get them changed. Why should they have to do it 'the old fashioned way'? Just let folks operate from a ship 'nearby'. Same for KP5 and those pesky Pacific Islands.

Wayne, N7NG goes on about the few places where folks set up on scaffolds to keep getting swept away at high tide....or where folks might be operating from one of those vacation huts on poles in Tahiti....and whether than counts. He notes that in 'the past' ships didn't know exactly where they were. Now they can determine within feet if they are within the 'territorial waters' of a DXCC entity. That's typically 12 miles.

Then somehow he goes into grids....where shipboard operation is OK....duh! Some grids don't even have land...and the rules for 'grids' just say you must work someone IN that grid. Nothing about them being on land! But he uses it as an excuse to justify ship board operating for DXCC.

He goes on to say that Operation from a vessel in the water of the legal boundaries of a DX entity should be acceptable for all purposes. A critical requirement would be that the sponsor devise an acceptable method of determining that the operation actually was conducted from within those boundaries.

He notes there will be hardliners who would stay with tradition.....to the detriment of DX'ing. There are definitely some concepts involving DX'ing geography that need to be reviewed.

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Dang. I guess I'm a hard boiled hardliner. No way. The detriment to the DXCC program would be letting folks just be 'near' a DXCC entity. What next? Giving credit for North Korea if you can see it from South Korea? You won't even need a North Korea radio license, right? Just sign portable!...heh heh....Who needs a 'stinkin license'?

About the only award I know that uses 'close' is Lighthouse Activation. There – the goal is to try and be 'on the lighthouse grounds' or 'from the lighthouse'. However,

some of the lighthouses now are in private hands, and so those folks let you operate from a parking lot at the lighthouse – or where you can 'see' the lighthouse. Those have been the rules all long. Maybe there are one or two other things for other awards.

For county hunting, you can actually be 'mobile' on a ship off the coast of a county – like sailing in the intercoastal waterway or just offshore. Even give out Nantucket by being on a boat within a mile or in a harbor. That's because we allow 'mobiles'. Even air mobiles, which don't count for WAS or DXCC. When I first started, N7OTR and a pilot friend would make a trip every year or so flying over counties. But those are OUR rules. You don't get to run the next county by being 'close'. Or the one across the river that is hard to get to without a 75 mile detour to the next bridge.

Yes, there are cases where DX-peditions get to an island and wait days to land for seas to quiet down. And they have to haul a ton or more stuff to set up and run for days including generators and fuel, food, tents, tables, equipment, antennas, coax, Power wire, etc. It's no easy task, but it has been done for 8 decades now. You aren't 'on the island' if you are 'close'. Just because a few liberal progressive weenies might have to wait 10 or 12 years for that country to be activated by a live DX-pediton ON the island.....oh..those poor babies seeking instant gratification. Folks should be able to do 250 counties in the first 3 years of DX'ing. Let's not make it 'too hard'! Honor Roll in 5. Everyone at the top in 10!

Now...I can just see these same liberals messing with county hunting. Oh...you need Kalawao...well, that is 'tough'. Hey, you can see Kalawao from Oahu!....Why not let folks 'run the country' as long as they can 'see it'? I've been in lots of places where I can 'see' the next county – maybe across the river – and the next bridge is 70 miles away...but heck, it's only 1000 feet to the county – close enough!.....Duh! Why make folks waste gas and time?

I'm sorry...but these 'doo gooder' liberal progressives, who would rather 'dumb down thngs' and 'water them down' so little Johnny doesn't have his 'feelings hurt' when he can't achieve things the old fashioned way (work hard and diligently – maybe with some talent)..... has got to go. Schools, work....and ham radio. All the weenies want is 'shortcuts'. From desk clerk to CEO in two years.. Everyone on the Honor Roll. Trophies for everyone. Sickening.

My 2c worth.

Maybe I'm just getting to be one of those 'old' hams. Gee...I remember DX'ing before there were spots. You had to actually listen to the radio....tune around. Maybe be the first to find that DX station and work him before a pile started. Now....you just sit back, your computer beeps at you if you need a new country or county – no need to listen to the radio. No need to be there to help mobiles run – just wait for your computer alarm to go off. Newcomers can work 200 countries in 2 or 3 years and never 'listen' to the radio. Just wait for the beeps, click on the frequency, the antenna automatically rotates, and you jump in, work the station, and disappear just as fast. DX and county hunting. Seems it was a lot more personable back then. More cooperation and more fun with others working your way up. Now, newbies want it easier and easier. Why should they have to 'work hard' at it? Other people have 'all those counties/countries'...and they want to 'get up there quickly'.

Hopefully the same liberal progressive 'everyone gets a trophy' mentality won't ruin county hunting. The spots have changed it a whole lot already.

Obama's Recession

About that Recovery

In his State of the Union address — perhaps, based on the recommendations for government involvement and control he made therein, better described as his Statist of the Union address — President Obama referenced the "growing" U.S. economy at least three times, but "recovery" only once. Specifically, he claimed that "thanks to a growing economy, the recovery is touching more and more lives."

The recovery, which Obama acknowledged is still in progress over 5-1/2 years after the recession officially ended, has a great deal more "touching" to do. On January 12, the National Association of Counties released a detailed study which most of the press ignored, but which would have been front-page and broadcast-leading news in a Republican or conservative presidential administration. The NACo report showed that only 65 of the nation's 3,069 counties have fully recovered from the recession. That's bad enough, but even with that ugly statistic, the results involved are worse than they appear.

Eric Morath's coverage of the report at the Wall Street Journal's Real Time Economics blog missed a key point, namely how sparsely populated the 65 fully recovered counties are:

... The recovered counties are largely located in energy-rich areas and have small populations. Of the 65 recovered counties, 24 are in Texas and 16 are in North Dakota. The others are generally in the middle of the country, including nine in Minnesota and eight in Kansas.

None of the recovered counties has more than 500,000 residents.

TX Counties: Dimmit, Donley, ectro, Frio, Karnes, Kenedy, La Salle, Live Oak, Martin, Maverick, McMullen, Midland, Pecos, Refugio, Schleicher, Scurry, Shackelford, Upton, Ward, Yoakum, Zapata

- Source: <http://newsbusters.org/blogs/tom-blumer/2015/01/23/not-news-fewer-05-americans-live-fully-recovered-counties#sthash.7zSzc294.dpuf>

–

de N4CD

Most of those counties have populations well under 50,000 people. Some under 10,000 people! They are all in 'oil country'.....

The rest of the 3000 counties in the US have not recovered back to the level they were at before Obama took office.

Getting Folks Finished Up

This month a few selected from the K3IMC needs page. See if you can help out

NT2A - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/23/2015

VA: Middlesex, Northumberland

NT2A - BINGO using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/24/2015
PA: Forest

K2MF - USACA using SSB - Updated: 01/03/2015
CA: Del Norte

K3IMC - MASTER'S GOLD using All Modes - Updated: 09/19/2014
KS: Graham
MO: Knox
NC: Martin
NY: Queens
OH: Brown, Highland
VA: Franklin

OH3JF - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/02/2015
Many thanks to all county hunter friends that my dream has been realized CQ USA-CA #1221 and USA-CW #127! My new goal is working all counties on 20m CW "single band and mobile QSO".
CA: Alameda, Merced, San Benito And Sierra

KE3VV - 2ND using CW - Updated: 12/26/2014
CO: Jackson

AE3Z - BINGO3 using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/02/2015
AL: Winston.
MT: Beaverhead.

AE3Z - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/18/2015
AL: Perry
GA: Bacon.
IN: Monroe, Morgan.
KY: Franklin, Larue.
ME: Washington.
MT: Flathead, Lincoln.
ND: Golden Valley.
NE: Jefferson.
OR: Curry.
UT: Sanpete.
VA: Bedford.

VT: Windham.

N4AAT - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/23/2015

AR: Garland, Perry
CO: Eagle
GA: Tattnall
IN: Johnson, Shelby
KS: Morton
KY: Knox
MI: Mason
NC: Alleghany, Lee
NE: Cuming, Pierce
SC: Bamberg, Barnwell
SD: Buffalo, Dewey
TX: Briscoe
VA: King William, Powhatan
VT: Orange
WI: Buffalo, Pepin

N4AAT - USACA Nth time using All Modes - Updated: 01/23/2015

FL: Broward, Miami-dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Osceola, Seminole
IN: Monroe
MA: Franklin
MD: Carroll
NH: Cheshire
WV: Pleasants, Tyler

KS4BO - USACA using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/10/2015

Need to Finish USA-CA for the First Time.

GA: Terrell
IL: Perry
KY: Simpson
NJ: Atlantic, Somerset
NY: Erie, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Wayne
PA: Berks, Bradford, Cambria
RI: Newport
VA: Alleghany, (one reserved) Patrick, Tazewell

N4CD - 5TH using CW - Updated: 01/15/2015

LA: Jackson, Iberville

NE: Washington

TX: Deaf Smith

WV: Hampshire

WA4EEZ - BINGO using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 12/29/2014

MT: McCone

OR: Coos, Lincoln

AA4GT - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/01/2015

FL: Gilchrist, Hernando, Lake, Sumter

GA: Lincoln, Madison, Terrell

IA: Lucaus

IN: Fulton, Harrison, Randolph

KY: Bracken, Fleming, Harlan, Johnson, Marion Wayne

LA: Desoto

MT: Glacier

NE: Hayes

NV: Mineral

OH: Perry

Email to aa4gt@comcast.net

WD4OIN - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/04/2015

ID: Lincoln

UT: Piute

WV: Wetzel

K4XI - BINGO3 using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/23/2015

MT: Lake

SD: Dewey

K4YFH - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/22/2015

CA: Madera, Sutter.

CO: Otero, San Juan.

GA: Decatur, Jones.

MS: Greene, Leake.

NE: Grant, Wayne.

OR: Clackmas, Crook.

PA: Montour, Sullivan.

TX: Irion, Mason, Menard.
UT: Duchesne, Piute, Sanpete.

KM6HB - 3RD using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/20/2015

GA: Pierce

NC: Bladen, Chowan, Clay, Columbus, Currituck, Davie, Jackson, Transylvania,
Washington

KM6HB - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/20/2015

GA: Wayne

IL: Hancock

KY: Knox, Lewis

NC: Allegany, Burke, Harnett, Haywood, Scotland

TX: Bastrop, Glasscock

WV: Hancock, Hardy, Pleasants, Wetzel

DL6KVA - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/17/2015

FIRST TIME

CO: Rio Blanco

ID: Clearwater

KY: Estill

LA: Evangeline

NE: Cuming

NM: Sierra

TX: Caldwell, Gonzales, Jackson

WV: Mingo

WE7G - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/02/2015

AL: Dallas, Lowndes

GA: Crawford

KY: Lawrence, Menifee, Mercer

TN: Rhea

WV: Barbour, Doddridge, Hampshire, Upshur

KA7ICF - USACA using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 12/30/2014

FIRST TIME!

AL: Monroe

KY: Owen, Perry
NC: Perquimans

N7JPF - BINGO using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/22/2015

IL: Christian
MI: Benzie, Leelanau
MN: Morrison

N7LFX - BINGO using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/07/2015

GA: Wayne
IA: Ida
IN: Montgomery
KS: Lincoln
KY: Larue
MD: Carroll
MN: Aitkin
NJ: Hunterdon
NY: Sullivan
OH: Madison
OR: Benton, Lane
VA: Page
OH: Knox

KC7YE - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/16/2015

FIRST TIME!

AZ: Santa Cruz
CA: Lake
DE: Kent, Sussex
MA: Essex, Franklin, Nantucket
NJ: Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean, Union, Warren
OK: Harper, Washita
OR: Morrow, Union, Wasco
SD: Deuel, Turner, Union, Walworth
UT: Daggett, Garfield, Kane, Piute, Unitah, Wayne
VT: Addison

SM7ZDI - USACA using CW - Updated: 01/20/2015

FIRST TIME!

AL: Clarke, Perry, Sumter, Wilcox
CO: Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Dolores, Mineral, San Miguel
GA: Evans, Tattnall, Wheeler, Wilkes
IA: Allamakee, Calhoun, Clayton
KY: Clay, Magoffin, Martin
MT: Broadwater, Chouteau, Fallon, Meagher, Toole
ND: Divide, Sioux
NE: Pierce, Sherman
SD: Bennett, Hanson, Lake, Marshall, Miner, Potter, Sanborn
TX: Donley, Hudspeth, Irion, Mason, Menard, Mitchell
WA: Chelan, Ferry, Lewis, Pend Oreille

WY8I - USACA using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/17/2015

FIRST TIME!

ND: Emmons, Morton, Oliver

KG8N - 2ND using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/20/2015

AL: Choctaw, Geneva
GA: Baker, Warren
IL: Perry
KY: McLean
MN: Kanabec, Lake Of The Woods
NY: Orleans, Oswego

NA8W - BINGO using SSB - Updated: 01/02/2015

AR: Cross, Van Buren
GA: Calhoun, Chattooga, Haralson, Harris
MD: Harford
MI: Wayne
NJ: Bergen
OH: Carroll, Seneca
PA: Blair, Clinton, Potter, Wyoming
VA: Bath, Hanover, Madison
VT: Windsor

KB9AIT - USACA using All Modes (SSB, CW or Digital) - Updated: 01/21/2015

The last I need for work them all first time.

AR: Ouachita, Montgomery

CA: Sierra
IA: Hardin, Shelby
KS: Linn, Cheyenne
MI: Tuscola
MN: Morrison, Waseca, Wabasha
MO: Audrain, Howard
MT: Musselshell
ND: Rolette
NY: Cayuga, Genesee, Schuyler
OH: Noble, Ottawa
SD: Moody
TX: Houston
WI: Door
WV: Wayne, Wirt

NN9K - 4TH using CW - Updated: 01/05/2015

MO: Sullivan
OH: Marion, Washington
OR: Crook, Grant, Wheeler
SD: Buffalo
WV: Doddridge, Wirt

There are a couple people listed above working on getting their First Time USACA. See if you can help them reach that goal!

Check the K3IMC special needs page to see if YOU can help someone get done!

Awards Issued

USA-CA #1247	WA2NEW, Bob	December 25, 2014.
USA-CA #1248	W4PFZ, Phil	January 21, 2015
USA-CA CW II #33	W0EAR, Don	1.22.15
USA-CA 10th Time #6	KC3X, Hollis	1.18.15,
Bingo #362	KA4RRU, Mike	12.26.14
Bingo #363	Neil, K7SEN	1/2/15
Bingo VI #4	KC3X Hollis	1.16.15,
Five Star #69	Dennis, N6PDB	12.29.14, The 2014
Call Combo 1x3 #17	W4YDY, Dave	1.23.15
Native American Award #46	Jim, WY8I	1.1.15,
US Presidents Award #43	Jim, WY8I	1.1.15

Events for County Hunters

QSO Party season has started! MN should be a good one. NH and VT are a toss up. Many there wait till the New England QSO Party but you never know! The county you need may be on the air.

from the ARRL contest corral:

Vermont QSO Party

RS(T) and VT county or S/P/C

www.ranv.org

Feb 7, 0000Z - Feb 8, 2400Z

Ten-Ten Winter Phone QSO Party

Call sign, name, QTH, 10-10 number

www.ten-ten.org

Feb 7, 0001Z - Feb 8, 2359Z

Minnesota QSO Party

Name and MN county or S/P/C

www.w0aa.org

Feb 7, 1400Z - Feb 7, 2359Z

CW 1.850,3.550,7.050,14.050,21.050,28.050;

SSB 1.870,3.850,7.250,14.270,21.350,28.450 MHz

New Hampshire QSO Party

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

www.w1wqm.org

Feb 14, 1600Z - Feb 15, 0400Z

CW - 1.815 and band edge + 45kHz;

Phone - 1.875, 3.935, 3.950, 7.235, 14.280, 21.380, 28.390 MHz

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Future Planning

Michigan Mini is hosted by Ed, K8ZZ and Joe, W8TVT and will be held at the

West Bay Beach - Holiday Inn Resort 615 East Front Street • Traverse City, Michigan 49686 Phone: **(231) 947-3700** • Toll Free: **(800) 888-8020**

Room rates of: **\$89.95** plus tax per night if reserved by March 27th, 2015.

Date for 2015 MICHIGAN MINI is April 23 - 24 & 25th..

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Dayton Hamfest May 15-17 Hara Arena (same place as usual).

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July 13-15 – County Hunter National Convention – The Villages, FL

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The MMM will be held in Murfreesboro, TN October 8-11 details in the N4CD newsletter..... this NOT a MARAC sponsored event so don't look for info in the RR. Hotel will be the Clarion (previously Holidome) at 2227 Old Fort Parkway. Mention "The Old Timers Radio Club Group" to get our discounted rate of \$80/ night including a full hot breakfast and parking right outside the rooms. Cracker Barrel next door plus other places for meals. Pets are free... remind them so you get an outside room. Reservations at: 615-896-2420 .

Friday lunch group at Mary BoBos being planned as well. You do not have to be an Old Timer to attend..... just be a friendly face wanting to meet other kindred spirits and honor Bill Bell... KM4W.... who initiated this meeting and ran it for 25 years.

That's all folks - 73