

County Hunter News

September 1, 2005

Volume 1, Issue 9

Welcome to Issue 9 of the County Hunter News, a monthly on-line publication for all county hunters, with an orientation toward CW operation. Thanks to Dennis, KK7X, who has provided us web space to bring you each edition of the CHN. Please visit his site, www.countyhunter.com and explore the many pages and pictures located there.

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

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

We hope you will enjoy the new County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all (except to MARAC, Inc, or Officers/Directors of MARAC), provided credit is given.

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@prodigy.net)

.....

Notes from the Editor

Every now and then, I hear from folks who return to county hunting after being away for years and years, and are surprised at the operation on the 20M SSB. Shocked might be the word. They recall a time when folks were treated with respect, and everyone managed to 'get along' without major problems.

This month we address an issue that seems to 'fester' on the 14.336 net. The 20M SSB net must really sound like a 'worthwhile' use of valuable radio spectrum to various administrations around the world, who all have one vote in the WARC,

the worldwide group that allocates (and takes away) frequencies from all services. Imagine them tape recording and playing back some of the happenings on 14.336 over the past few years at a WARC, and then using that as a prime example of justification for taking our spectrum for other uses. We have already lost part of the 220 MHz band (40% of it), the 11 meter band years ago, pieces of the 1296 band, and now have millions of cordless telephones, wireless routers and other digital stuff in the 2.3 and 5.6 GHz ham bands. The Low Earth Orbit Satellite folks have been after 2M band for a decade. The 420-450 band is being nibbled away around the world for commercial services, with many countries having only a small portion of that reserved now for amateur radio.

It may get more challenging as we fill up the bands with 'no code' licenses, and need to bring them quickly up to speed on good operating practices. Worse yet, others are more than willing to QRM amateurs to death with BPL (broadband over power line) to try and make a lot of money, have made tremendous lobbying efforts to convince folks that they can 'share' the amateur spectrum, in order to make some big bucks, ala the dot-com bubble and speculation, and they must be held at bay, or we all wind up with 40 over S9 QRM from every power line throughout America. Foreign governments want spectrum for 'digital shortwave broadcasting' – say most of the 40M band – which is prime territory. Recently, some dot.com millionaires have invested \$100 million to bring BPL to the masses.

Already the abuse (bashing, trashing, banning) on 14.336 that has gone on for years does the image of Amateur Radio no good throughout the world. The net control stations on 14.336 are heard worldwide (witness having a VK early in the morning as an assistant, and having a hundred Europeans involved in CH during the past few years.), let alone claimed DXCC records of having worked 'every country in the world'.

This issue, we have devoted an article to the very shameful incidents that were seen in June/July of 2005, ONLY on the 20M SSB net. (Amazing how the same mobiles had no problem running when the 2 responsible folks for the 'bashing, trashing, and banning' on 14.336 were absent –) Hopefully this will be the last article of its type that needs to run.

This issue of 'bashing, trashing, and banning' has escalated now to the highest 'authorities' in ham radio.

Keep in mind a ham license is just like a drivers license. It is a 'privilege' that can be suspended, ended, or modified. Let's leave it at that.

Effective August 5, 2005, the 'bashing and trashing and banning' on 14.336 has ceased. In large part, due to exactly what is described later in the CHN news. If it continues, it's possible you may no longer hear certain 'net control stations'. **It's that simple.** That's the 'bottom line'.

Folks have noted an immediate change for the better. In the spirit of rebuilding bridges, John, W5UGD, Jeffrey, AF3X, and Risto, W6RK worked to once again interconnect the two spotting sites together and they are now once again exchanging spotting information. This benefits all, and allows more accurate statistics to be generated to show mobile activity, counties activated, and bands/modes used. A definite win/win for everyone.

While personal conflicts will never be resolved, wouldn't it be nice to go back to the time of mutual respect, courtesy, and diplomacy on the nets?

Did you know you can actually get your MARAC Bingo award before you get your USACA from CQ Magazine? For MARAC, there is no requirement for confirmations. Thus, if you happen to work stations, and don't have confirmations, those count toward your Bingo award (if they meet the criteria for letters or wild cards). It is possible that you worked all 3077 counties, but not all are confirmed yet. If you worked hard at it, usually working at least half or more of the counties multiple times with different mobiles, and jumping in to state QSO parties, contests, to catch other hard to get ones, you might finish your Bingo before you finish your USACA. Getting confirmations from stations in state QSO parties is often challenging. If you go via the buros, it can take several months to get cards back.

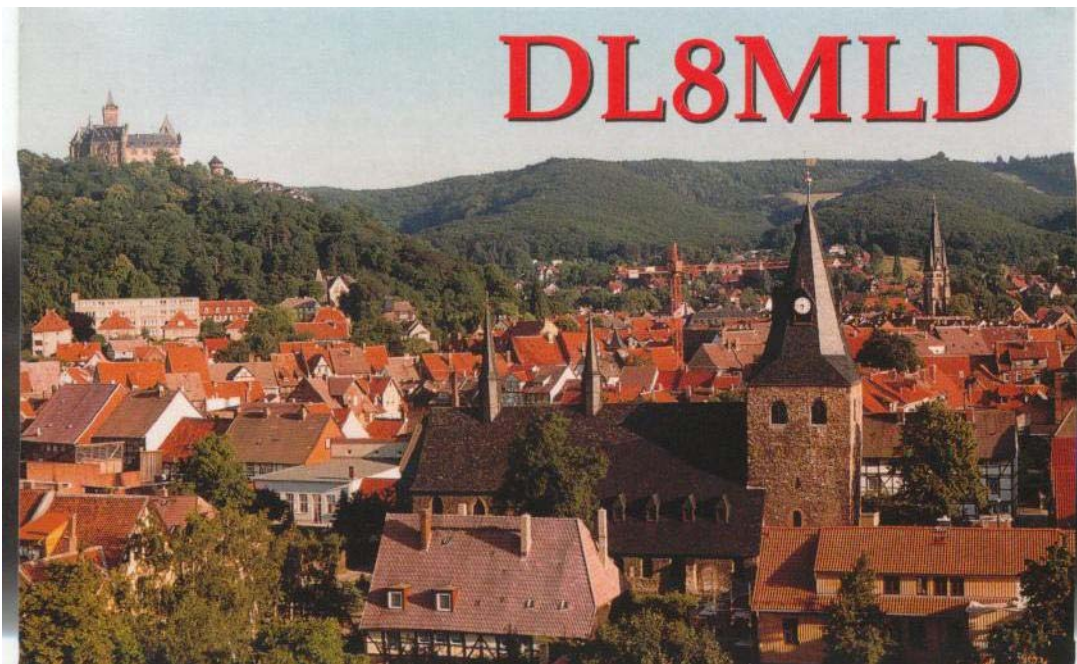
Additionally, you can be working toward other awards while you are still working on USACA. Those unconfirmed contacts count toward the prefix award, YL award, Five Star award, Big Rig, Team, Master Platinum and other awards. About the only award you can't be working on with contacts, without a USACA, is the Master Gold award. There, contacts you make only count after you have both your USACA and Bingo. (Naturally, you can't be working on second time until you finish first time!)

Pictures of the Month

This month we have some DX pictures send in from Europe. Here's the home QTH and antenna system of DL8MLD, frequently heard on the 20M CW net.



Antenna of DL8MLD

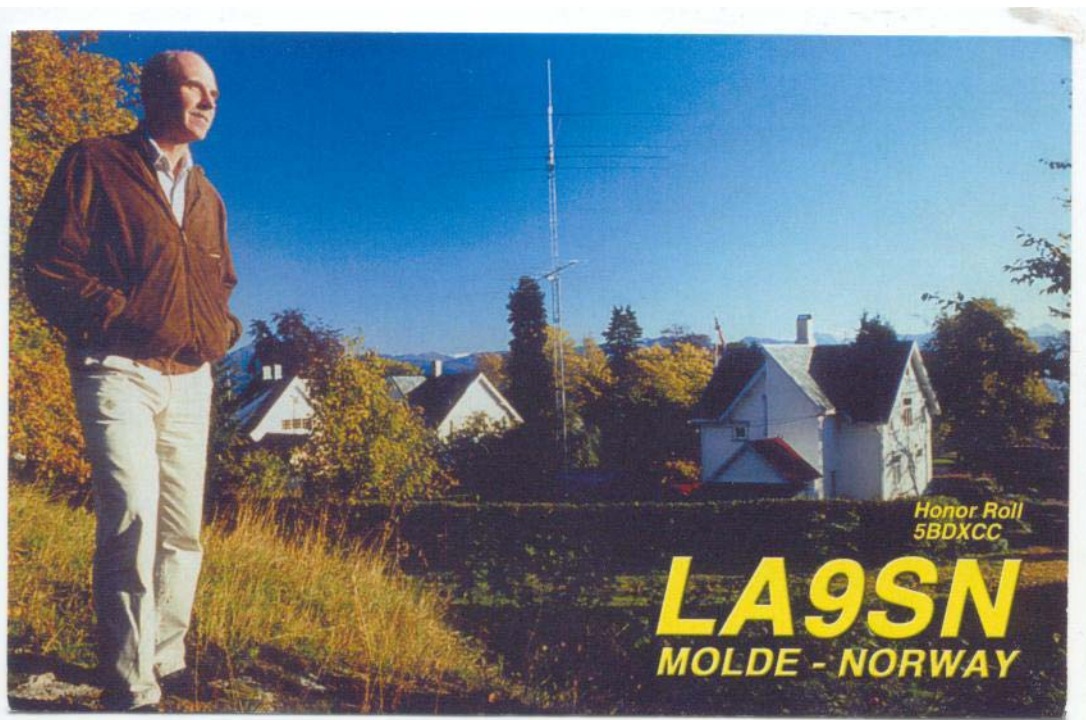


QTH of DL8MLD

Here is Picture of LY2ZZ QTH and antennas!



Here's a picture of LA9SN



Awards Issued

Bingo II - #37 Frank, K4UNF 7/29/05
Master's Gold #13 Bob KC6AWX 7/28/05
Bingo #272 Kent, KL1V 7/21/05
5th Time #75, Cooter, N4EED, 8/1/2005
4th Time #122, Frank, AA9JJ, 8/2/2005
3rd Time #189, Kay, N9QRQ, 8/2/2005
Bingo II, #38, Frank, AA9JJ, 8/2/2005
Bingo #273, Bob KK5MI, 8/2/2005
Bingo #274, Jack WD4OIN 8/7/2005
5th Time #76, Rolf, KK7LX 8/8/2005
4th Time #123, Joyce, N9STL 8/13/05
USACA #1125 Bob, N4XML 8/15/05

The Non-Meeting at the Annual Convention

If you attended the National Convention, Saturday morning, on the schedule of events was the annual meeting, as required by the by-laws, to be held at the annual convention. MARAC bylaws:

1.3 MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS

(a) The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at the MARAC annual convention.

KC6AWX posted:

“SECTIONS 1.3 and 1.4 state what a quorum is and also the annual meeting. To me last Saturday was a valid meeting as there were enough people present. There is no mention in the BY LAWS about a BOD member having to be physically at the convention.”

Well, it turns out, there wasn't a quorum. According to Dave, KE3VV, it requires a **physical presence** of the BOD/Officers at the meeting to establish a quorum. There were insufficient members present.

KE3VV, Dave's post on K3IMC forum:

” The applicable MARAC bylaw provision is:

Section 1.3(e) Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be held at a physical location or by electronic means including (but not limited to) amateur radio, Internet teleconferencing, or conference telephone call.

The annual meeting of directors is **not** a "special" meeting. In parliamentary parlance it is a "regular" meeting, or a meeting that is established by a specific bylaw provision. When these revised bylaws were adopted, there was a strong feeling that members of the Board should attend the annual meeting in person. “

The new ‘interim’ South Central Director, Mike, **W0MU, was **absent**.

The candidate running for President of MARAC, and who missed a very large number of BOD meetings while a Director, Randy, **N8ELQ was **not present**. He was one of the missing Directors.

** The past President, Jim, **W0FF**, was ‘run off’ as the “**Joisey Gang**”, took over control of MARAC and has never attended a meeting since. I’ve met him at Dayton, and he wants “nothing to do with that bunch”. MARAC might have either asked him to resign his board post as ‘former president’, or voted to remove him for failing to attend meetings after a year. In that case, the quorum requirements would have been half of 10, and the annual meeting could have proceeded, and conducted business with the five present!

**Several other BOD members weren’t present, physically, but were ‘on line’. That doesn’t count for the annual meeting, by the current by-laws. Several had conflicts and could not attend.

Amazing, the group that was so anxious to ‘rewrite’ the “old” bylaws because they were poor, then created a quagmire that led to an annual meeting that couldn’t establish a quorum to conduct any business. Likely the first time in history!

So attendees at the convention got to see a ‘meeting’ which could conduct no official business - Where the two people running as candidates for the top offices were ‘no shows’.

Guess it is time to once **again change** the by-laws (membership approval required) to allow ‘on-line’ annual meetings. Or round up all the directors/BOD members and get them physically to the convention site?

Joyce, **WB9NUL** is the new President, and Mark, **W9OP** is the new Vice President for the coming year.

Mobile Longevity

I was browsing through the list of folks who have worked all counties at least 5 times – award numbers now up in the 70s. Y'all know that one of the awards that folks work toward is the MARAC Five Star Award, which requires working a total of 'five stars' in each county.

A 'star' is received each time an operator works all counties and applies for an award. Someone who has received the USACA award from CQ Magazine now has 'one star'. If you work them all again a second time, you have 2 stars. To qualify for the award, you can use any combination of stations, equaling at least five stars. You can work five separate stations, each good for one star, one mobile good for 4 stars, plus another, or two mobiles each good for 3 stars, for example.

Naturally, if you catch a mobile good for five stars, you don't need to work anyone else in that county. So, 'five star' mobiles are valuable in helping you finish. Yet, every with a star helps you toward your goal. The more stars, the better, up to 5. Over that is 'overkill'.

How many "five star" mobiles are still active, running counties in the past year? I did some checking of the two spotting sites to see who had run at least one county, starting at the beginning of the list. Of course, as time goes on, and more and more people get more and more stars, it becomes easier and easier to earn the five star award. Imagine what it was like in the 70s and 80s, when most folks out mobile had zero or one star!

N7AKT, Scottie, who received his fifth star, award #5, back in 1992, is still putting out counties in SC! He's also headed for TX and HI this year. W4RKV, Mitch, #11, has put out some counties in TN, N7BKW, Dave, #14, was spotted in 2 counties. Then NV4Z, Mary - #17, KG5J, Al - #18, and AK8A, Steve, #19, and Ken, W7LQT - #29, have been spotted. There's a lot of stations, though, having gotten their 5th star in 2000 or before, that are no longer mobile, according to the spots logs. Either burned out, or sidelined due to medical problems, or else Silent Keys. However, there are many after 2000 that are still very active putting out thousands of counties a year combined, so you can work toward your five star award, and get all five stars for counties from just one mobile.

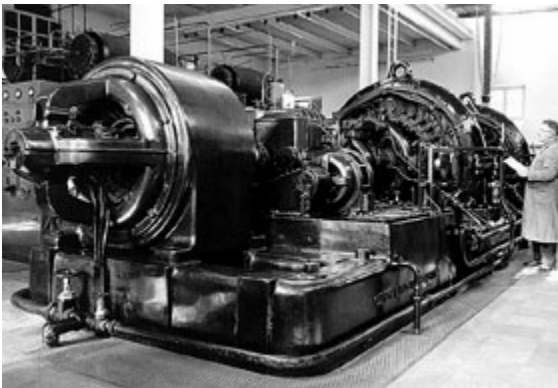
Would you believe 17.2 Kilohertz?

From ARRL Website:

Swedish VLF transmitter on the air July 2-3 (Jun 27, 2005) -- The [SAQ](#)

[Alexanderson alternator transmitter](#) operating on 17.2 kHz from Sweden was on the air Saturday and Sunday, July 2 and 3. The July 2 transmission at 1230 UTC will mark the inauguration of a new visitor's center at the Grimeton site, and July 3 is "Alexanderson Day," when the station will be open to the general public (between 10 AM and 4 PM local time).

Picture from website of the mechanical alternator that produced r.f. at 17.2 KHZ



The communication across the Atlantic did not function well during World War I and the need of telegram traffic with America was great. The Swedish Parliament therefore decided in 1920 that a Swedish long wave transmitting station and a receiving station should be built under the direction of the "Telegrafverket".

Important for the location of the establishment was that the wave propagation path was run across open waters - south of Norway and north of Denmark and Scotland. In Grimeton, east of Varberg, the open landscape gave free way for the radio waves out towards the Western Sea and besides, the name was easy to pronounce for Americans.

The Great Radio Station was built during the years 1922-1924.

The transmitter, the heart of which is an alternating-current generator (alternator), was developed by the Swedish engineer Ernst Alexanderson, pioneer in radio, employed at General Electric in Schenectady and chief engineer at Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

In the autumn of 1923 the establishment was ready except for the six 127 meters high antenna towers, which were delayed one year because of strikes at the ironworks. The towers are placed at intervals of 380 meters with the 46 meters long cross-arms on top carrying the eight copper wires, which make up antenna capacitance and feed energy to the six vertical radiating elements.

A little village with houses for seven families was built for the employees.

On December 1, 1924, the great radio station Grimeton went into traffic with

the call signal SAQ on 16.1 kHz (wavelength 18.6 kilometers), but soon changed to 17.2 kHz (wavelength 17.4 kilometers).

How about trying to build a half wave antenna of 8.7 kilometers in length?

How Many Hams in USA?

As of May 14, 2000:

Novice - 49,329
Tech/+ - 334,254
General - 112,677
Advanced - 99,782
Extra - 78,750

Total all classes - 674,792

As of June 30, 2005

Novice - 28,151 (-42.94%) (-21,178)
Total/+ - 317,655 (-4.97%) (-16,597)
General - 136,435 (+21.08%) (+23,758)
Advanced - 75,812 (-24.04%) (-23,970)
Extra - 106,852 (+35.68%) (+28,102)

Total All Classes - 664,905 (-550 Since the last reporting period)

Total all classes (5/14/00) - 674,792
Total all Classes (4/21/03) - 687,860
Total all classes (9/6/04) - 674,788
Total all classes (6/30/05) - 664,905

Total loss of 9,887 since 5/14/2000 (Was 674,792)
Total loss of 9,883 since 9/6/2004 (Was 674,788)
Total Loss of 22,955 since 4/2003 (all time high of 687,860)

We Lost:
211 Novice
37 Tech/+
135 General

301 Advanced

We Gained:

134 Extra

Notes,

* For the 12th straight reporting period, all classes except for Extra declined. There was a net loss of 550 licensees in this reporting period from the last reporting period.

* The Tech/+ category came very close to staying even for the month, showing only a small loss.

* This month's loss was a less than half the average monthly loss. I would suspect that VE testing during the Spring/Summer hamfest schedule was responsible for some of the drop.

* Numbers are now being posted monthly

the base totals are from implementation of the then new licensing changes in May 2000. September 6, 2004 is the date I started measuring the changes. The peak number was in April 2003.

73

George

K3UD

Confusing MARAC Award Rules

If you look at the MARAC 're-written' award rules, there is certainly lots of room for confusion. For example, under "Transmitted Counties" you find:

Transmitted Counties

Transmitted Counties are the counties where a mobile operator is located when making a **Valid Contact**. When the mobile operator is located on a **County Line**, both of the counties count as **Transmitted Counties**. For purposes of different awards, **Valid Contacts** made on multiple **Bands** and **Modes** each count as a **Transmitted County**.

Now, one can conclude that if you make contacts on multiple bands or multiple modes, you can give yourself credit for **each** band/mode as a 'Transmitted County', right? Do it on two bands on the same day, and claim '2 transmitted

counties' for some award?? Don't get your hopes up! But that 'each count' as a transmitted county is going to mislead some!!!!

Why would you define something in a way that is currently useless for any award?

Then you look at the rules for Master's Gold, which state:

An applicant may substitute *transmitted counties* for hours of service at the rate of one transmitted county equals one hour of service. You may transmit from the same county multiple times (but no more than once on the same date), and the same county may only be counted a maximum of 50 times.

OK...that says quite specifically you **cannot run the 'same county' more than once a day**. Currently. For Masters Gold. No other award, other than Master Platinum, which has even more stringent requirements for its definition of 'transmitted county', and doesn't allow repeats, exists that allows you to run it multiple times a day!

With the attempt to define things in one section of the rules, and then use that definition in another section, what happens if you delete the last sentence of the definition above for 'simplicity'? You get to run to multiple bands/modes as separate counties. Well, now that CHN has brought this to your attention, hopefully the last sentence in the requirements for MG above won't mysteriously get dropped since 'transmitted counties' as defined.

KD9ZP, MARAC awards chairperson, acknowledged you need to run repeated counties on separate days for MG.

Then again, some interesting emails went back on forth on this, with some claiming the 'For various awards' negated the 'each' counts as a separate county. Huh? You work KC0JG in a county; it counts for USACA/nth time. It counts for Bingo/N. For MG, if you have your Bingo already. For the K prefix. For five star. One contact counts for all. If you are working all cw, you naturally need a cw contact, for the USACW award. But he doesn't get transmitted county credit for working you both on cw and SSB. Just one transmitted county.

In the 'parlance' of many on the BOD, you can work toward "Endorsements", say if you want to transmit all counties -cw, all counties SSB, all counties on 6M. But you don't get 'transmitted county' credit toward any of the awards that require it by multiple modes on the same day. Just count it toward your endorsements.

So how is it, that suddenly rules are now 'interpreted' in the 'common wisdom' to allow you to run the same county multiple times a day by running it on different bands as a 'Transmitted County'? Well, just like much of the stuff you see/read on .336/chat room, just 'unsubstantiated rumors' and 'information' that isn't true.

They seem to apply for nothing. A definition that doesn't apply anywhere! The 'common wisdom' spread in the chat room and on .336 has been wrong for half a year or longer, along with many of the other 'pronouncements'.

Only two awards talk about transmitted counties. Yet, under Transmitted Counties, a different interpretation is made that for each of the two award requiring transmitted counties (Masters Gold and Platinum). So now you wind up with three different definitions of what counts as a valid 'transmitted county' for an award - one that is useless, and two that are useful.

You don't get awards (Roadmaster award) for putting out 250 counties by running the same ones again – they have to be all different!

Seems the original intent of the Master's Gold award was to require the operator, if he/she elected to use 'transmitted counties' as part of the 1500 'points' required, to actually run 1500 different counties, or the same county but on different days up to 50 times on 50 different days! The rules say that, but a simple deletion of the second sentence in the MG rules would then just say 'you need 1500 transmitted counties' (as defined in that section). Let's hope that doesn't mysteriously disappear.

It is also interesting to note the change in wording. Originally, the MG award required 1500 points** – to be earned either as:

- a) 1500 Net Control/Assistant Net Control hours
Or
- b) 1500 hours/credit for work for MARAC as Officer/BOD member, editor or awards chairman, or work on a convention, or similar other "MARAC" business
Or
- c) 1500 transmitted counties.

Or a combination of the three totaling 1500 points. With at least half obtained after June 1, 1994, the start of the MG award.

Now, it seems the wording has been changed to '**allow you to substitute**' transmitted counties for net control hours or being one of the few who can earn credits by being an elected or appointed person.

Only a few get to be an officer/director or hold other appointed office- out of 600 MARAC members that is a small handful. A dozen a year? Out of a MARAC membership of 600+? That is about 2%. TWO PERCENT!!!! Surely not an option for most is it, since 98% are not elected or appointed.

Host a convention? Not so easy, and the next couple years are already spoken for. That, too, is ONE OR TWO PERCENT of the membership per year, at best.

Maybe too many folks on the awards committee who never go out mobile??? Or aren't thinking of how most folks out there will qualify for this award? Or too tied up in their 'important' MARAC jobs?

Run the 20M net? Heck, try and start running the net on a Saturday or Sunday (when many folks have off from work) and you'll find "the frequency is already in use". More folks have been run off as 'net assistant' in the past few years than have actually accumulated more than 500 hours of Net Control time. You might get asked to 'volunteer' to call a mobile, but that is about it, yet alone get the required 1500 hours. How often do you hear a 'co-equal' net control station? Who won't get run off for 'relaying in the 'wrong' mobile'? !!! Or when a 'banned' mobile calls in to be added to the list and the assistant has to swallow their pride and tell them, 'Uh, I can't run you since Jim will un-invite me to be his net helper'? For some strange reason, NC now seems to have a 'very selective receiver' that no longer can hear folks who were on the former 'banned list', yet can copy 22 mobiles in AK and HI with not much trouble. If you really believe he 'can't hear them', then I've got a bridge to sell you, cheap!

If you live within a few hundred miles of south Florida, you can't do any good anyway as you have the same coverage. Depending where you live, you may or may not have an option to help on 40M. If you live in New England, or CA, WA, OR, NV, AK, there isn't going too much you can do on 40m, is there?

Keep in mind that MARAC does not sponsor a net - there is no "MARAC" net. Of course, the SSB and CW NC on the various bands do help folks get awards, including MARAC awards. Some put in hours and hours. Always room to have folks help out on 20, 30, and 40m CW nets.

However, even for this "requirement", you could be off running the Century Club Net, since folks 'county hunt' down there as well (some of the most active mobiles hang out there at night), as well as many CH home stations. You could be running a state net, where folks stop by to work counties. The world doesn't start and stop with 20 meters SSB (especially these days!). Since MARAC doesn't sponsor any net, any hours as 'net control' would appear to count.

For the vast majority of county hunters, the only option is running counties and getting credits, and suddenly that is **allowed as a 'substitute'**. Heck, if it weren't for the mobiles out there running (Those that have already got their Bingo, and one star), most folks wouldn't be making any progress toward the MG award.

Let's see. It takes about as much time to put out counties for a day as it does to run a net. Typically, on a mobile trip, I'm on the road by 7-7:30am. Go to 6pm or so. If I run the net, I'm on the radio normally by 8am, sometimes sooner, and stay till 5-6pm, sometimes later. Same amount of time, although at home, I have all the conveniences - bathroom nearby, refig and meals, TV, internet. While on the road, you have all the inconveniences of travel. Bad weather at times. Snow

– Blizzards – 110 deg temps – flat tires – breakdowns – floods – closed roads and detours – traffic jams. It costs me about \$1/day for electricity to run the radio all day at home. On the road it costs me \$100/day for county hunting trips. Now, a mobile is spending 100 times as much to help out the county hunters, and suddenly those efforts just allow those transmitted counties as a ‘substitute’? You gotta be kidding. With gas approaching \$3/gal?

Since most folks working toward this award will be likely to use a lot of transmitted county credits, since their other options are limited, and giving out counties is certainly ‘helping the county hunting community’, it should be at least equal with the others, not a “substitute”. **If the counties aren’t run, no one is going to get any awards**, whether there is a net control or awards organization to give them out or not. The award should require primarily transmitted counties, and ‘allow’ NC time and service hours as a ‘substitute’. Heck, you don’t need a NC to work counties – but you do need someone to work in all those counties. Methinks they really got it backwards! Meanwhile, the mobile is spending 100 times as much to give out those counties.

Maybe all the mobiles should just stay at home, and earn credits by some other means? In the early days of county hunting, it was mainly fixed stations working each other for their counties. You could do a good job just hunting counties in state QSO parties, and never get on a CH net freq.

If you look at the 2004-2005 MARAC BOD/directors, you see a bunch of folks who seldom go out mobile (stats as of 8/1/05). For the past year, according to the superhosts spot search: - KZ2P, Treasurer, (zero spots), W2IBB, Secretary, (zero spots), KE3VV, Director, (<100 spots), KC6AWX, Director, (under 20 spots), WB9STT, Director, (no spots), W0MU, Director, (150 spots), N8ELQ, Director, and candidate for top job, President, (now off the board) (ZERO spots).

There are 3077 counties. Lots to be run. You likely aren’t going to get there working just the officers/directors of MARAC anytime soon! .

Let’s give some credit to the mobiles that make it all so much easier.

The simple solution is that the definition of transmitted county should be clarified, and the wording about different bands/modes “each” counting for separate TC credit simply deleted.

‘Transmitted Counties’ should be co-equal to generate points for the Master’s Gold award, not a ‘substitute’.

Footnote:

*** According to email received, initially when the Masters Gold award was first conceived, the requirement was 3077 'points'. It was later reduced, and wound up at '1500 points' shortly thereafter, as set by Roger, W2NWL (who was the Awards Chairperson at the time of the awards committee.

By the rules, up to half your" points" could be earned prior to June 1, 1994.

Master's Gold Award Original Intent By Bud Webb, N6OQB

"In the August 05 on-line newsletter, you wrote an article about the Master's Gold Award. I wanted to let you know that you are 100% correct about the INTENT of Master's Gold. **In 1995/1996 when this award was turned over to the MARAC Awards Committee it was agreed that MARAC would not change the INTENT or basic parameters of that award.**

"The intent of the Master's Gold was, and should always remain, that of a service award. Those who gave their time in support of the hobby of County Hunting would be the ONLY folks eligible to qualify. It was never intended to be an award for the masses, unless the masses decided to recommit themselves to helping others."

In a second email, Bud wrote:

On the subject of receiving credit for Net Control and other requirements of the MGA, there was to be absolutely no leeway, or understanding, for excuses and rationales. The rules were meant to be strict for a reason. Again, it wasn't meant to be an award for the masses. I had actually hoped that since my absence in 1996 the concept of brotherhood and understanding would have found its way back into the ranks. As for Net Control, the accepted main frequencies for both SSB and CW were all that would count, but would include running the alternate recognized frequency on busy days, as long as the period of time as Net Control exceeded the specified time allocation.

However, **I believe the 1500 figure(s) are separated by an 'or', so I don't understand the issue with substitution because it's really not.** Anyway, running counties, the way it is written below, is accurate. Any person, who wants the Basic MGA, can achieve 1500 points without undue effort or cost. Easy to say, I know! ☺

This may help, or not:

Rule #1: The MGA is a service award issued to those who dedicate themselves to improve the overall County Hunting experience for others. It requires tenure in all major areas of County Hunting. It 'is not' an award for the masses.

Rule #2: When in doubt, refer to Rule #1.

Sincerely,

H.C. "Bud" Webb, N6OQZ
Master's Gold Originator

The text referred to was:

de N4CD: " Seems the original intent of the Master's Gold award was to require the operator, if he/she elected to use 'transmitted counties' as part of the 1500 'points' required, to actually run 1500 different counties, or the same county but on different days up to 50 times on 50 different days! The rules say that, but a simple deletion of the second sentence in the MG rules would then just say 'you need 1500 transmitted counties' (as currently defined in that section, allowing credit for repeats on the same day). Let's hope that part of the sentence doesn't mysteriously disappear. "

Note that the 'or' disappeared as of the last rules rewrite.

OOPS – Brain Teaser Correction

Oh, looks like N4CD goofed on the Brain Teaser. VE9DH correctly noted that since the last two contacts went back to 1986, that K1ER had not received his USACA yet, and therefore was not good for the Bingo contact. Hmmmm.....so the total is 16 out of 20 that are good. I got caught by a last minute change here at CHN HQ. OOPS...even caught myself in the quiz, and the two who checked it. Sorry about that...but I guess we can see how many were up to the 'challenge'. Or caught that one! Bonus points to VE9DH!

LIAR! LIAR! CAUGHT AGAIN

If you listened on the .336 20M SSB net, especially when the vanity call Club of One station (Atlantic Radio Club – K2JG) is away, you sometimes hear Percy, KA1JPR 'occupying' the frequency. Likely telling a few lies. And a few more lies. He seems to imagine lots of things that don't happen. Just seems to make things up to bash about 25 different mobiles, and repeat the 'club of one' rants. Ask him for details, and he suddenly goes blank, but blabbers "Well, I just know it". He doesn't have any details. Or "remember" any dates. Or he says that "Jim knows". He has been proven wrong time and time again. What does he do,

dream this stuff, and then 'remember it' the next day? Maybe he thinks that by repeating the lies day in and day out, folks will actually believe anything he says? Or he actually begins to believe it himself? Then insists often "I never said that" when caught in a lie. Sad!

Of course, if you only listened to the 20M net, you might begin to believe this baloney, but with the forum and other news sources, the folks will get the correct scoop. Hey, folks make mistakes occasionally. But repeated day in day out, falsehoods are libel and slander is something to be called on. This is heard world-wide, and is clearly an embarrassment to all Amateur Radio Ops, and those who love their operating privileges granted by the FCC.

This picture below was taken while KA3DRO was trying to run a county on SSB on the 20M net in 'open session' (i.e., NO formal net control). KA1JPR came on, spouted off about how "KA3DRO wasn't even mobile". Then he started on the 'the frequency is in use' bit. (It wasn't since KA1JPR kept repeating 'It's in open session! open session! - after he stopped after a few minutes of no mobile activity!'). Oh, right, he was 'occupying the frequency'. This kept up for hours, on multiple days. I happened to be out mobile and heard that exchange. First hand. I, too, would have liked to run the county I was in so the county hunters who operate only SSB could have gotten credit for Master Platinum, five star, or other awards they are working on. I just listened for a while, between runs on cw, as Percy made an idiot of out himself. He also denied you those counties.

If you put the net in open session, you don't have the right to jump in there 5 minutes later when a mobile comes on and starts to run, and claim 'the frequency is already in use!' to keep a mobile from running! Or start looking for another mobile ready to run, when you know there is one there waiting. Plain and simple. The mobile who came on frequency to run the county now has use of the frequency. Instead, you got to hear things like: "As long as I'm here, you are not going to run your county on my frequency."

Others heard it, too, naturally, although there aren't many listening as most are now in the 'Zombie' mode most of the day, watching their computer screen, not listening to the radio

That was one of several times that KA1JPR was just plain more interested in '**running mobiles off the net**' rather than **running mobiles on net**. Imagine, sitting on net frequency, 'looking for a number one mobile', and running only a few mobiles for hours, while running those willing to run off! It doesn't sound very productive, and worse, he is doing it only to 'imitate' someone else. Even worse, this 'bashing and trashing' is heard worldwide. Now, what did KA3DRO do to Percy? Nothing. KA3DRO gave N7BKW (who was banned at the time) the last county WBOW. At that point, the 'net control' station then banned him. And Percy figured out that to imitate the big bully was fun????

Shame! If the net is in open session, anyone can run. If you want to be 'net control' put the net in formal session and run it like a net according to the MARAC guidelines. Take a list, call the mobiles on the list, and run them in order. Any mobile. Every mobile.

Oh, then he tell you, it is only 'one or two trouble makers' that he won't run. Guess he can't count there either. It is W9GBH, KF8UN, N3AHA, W7LQT, W7WBZ, N7BKW, N4CD, K9HUH, N9STL, WB4UPW, KF0LZ, WA4UNS and that is 'more than a few to start' that he labels 'troublemakers'. He can't seem to add numbers right there either, as it is dozens that have been denied access to 14.336, or bashed and trashed over the years.

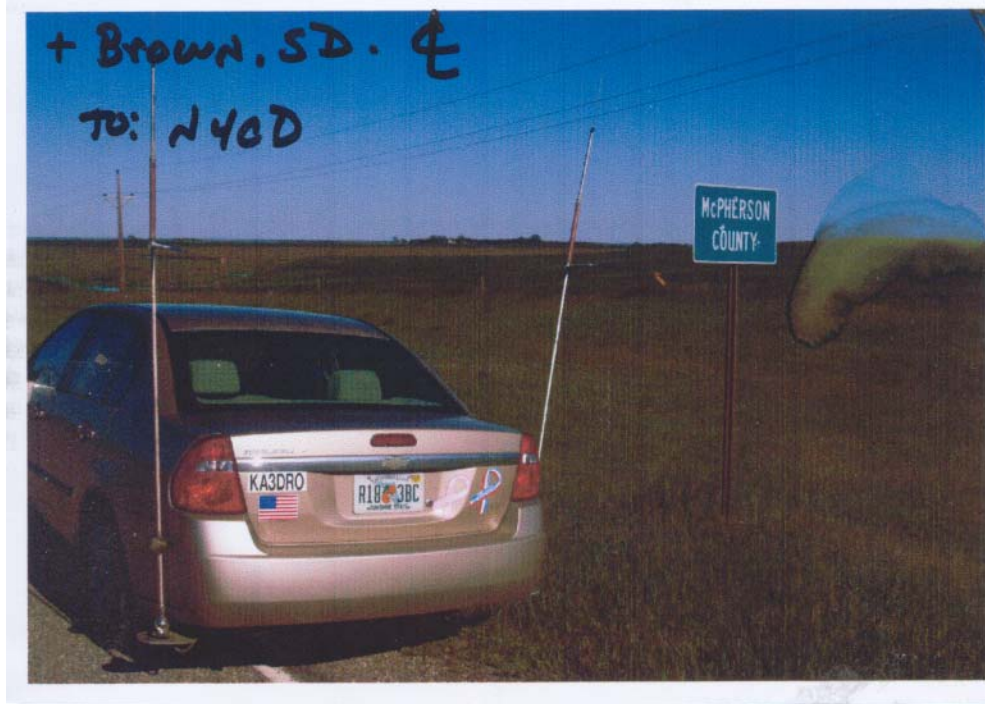
What is more amazing is that if he and the 'other' net control aren't around, the 'banned' mobiles have no problems running. Seems only he and the 'other' net control have any perceived 'trouble' with anyone running counties on the net. Funny, isn't it? When both aren't around, the county hunters get to work the mobiles who get 'run off', and not run by those two alone. No trouble. No problems.

I guess their definition of 'trouble makers' simply means that they are on the 'banned list' for some likely imagined infraction on some unspecified date for some unspecified reason to ONLY these two net control stations. (Or if you have criticized them for the actions of banning other mobiles!)

As Percy was, once again, off blabbing on the net about mobiles and his imagining of things that weren't, Ron snapped this picture of the county line he was on. Not mobile? Hardly. Judge for yourself.

And the next time you hear him or the other "NC" Club of One station asking "Any mobile ready to run a county?" You'll likely suspect they don't mean it. Will they run "any" mobile that calls in? You be the judge.

Or they'll simply 'not hear' the mobile. Maybe 40 over S9, but it is "I don't hear anything". Really? More likely it is 'Well, I can't ban them, but I can pretend I don't hear them'. But maybe not for long, especially if the county hunters insist that every mobile gets run.



KA3DRO mobile CL McPherson & Brown, SD
Taken at the instant Percy claimed “KA3DRO wasn’t even mobile”

Ron was towing his car behind the motor home, and would stop in an area, then run around for a day or more making contacts with the mobile. But even contacts from a mobile home in motion (or stopped) are allowed as long as you can start moving without having to collapse antennas, etc. Heck, even the “Atlantic Radio Club”, callsign K2JG, has a motor home it used to used to put out counties (inactive for the past year) as it traveled to Tennessee (3M) and South Carolina.

Once again, Percy is “called” on his lies. He continually bashes many on the net, for infractions he imagines. “Magic Carpet Mobile” debacle - (He was proven wrong by several experienced county hunters who proved Percy couldn’t add and divide mileage and time on a simple route), by his bashing of N9STL (for allegedly counting contacts her students made under the callsign W9DUG) for ‘phantom’ contacts – how he can figure that out, no one has yet determined. Dreaming again? Just plain lies, and more lies. Even funnier when you hear the Club of One or KA1JPR occasionally getting his report wrong some days working stations close in, and likely still logging it. Few are going to tell them, ‘you goofed’ – **phantom contacts**.

Recently, I was the US QSL/MRC manager for HK3JJH, as he works toward his USACA. I sent out at least a hundred MRCs, some direct, some via the buro. All came back signed, except for exactly one MRC. The first time, I sent it direct to the mobile (KA1JPR). . Now, I happened to be on the air that day that Pedro worked those two counties and heard the contact made. (They were the last two in

Florida, and Pedro was down under 100 to go). So I know the contact occurred and what the reports were. The MRC came back 'unsigned'. OK, once, someone can 'forget' to sign an MRC. It happens. Then again, N4CD is one of the 25 or so mobiles 'run off' by his buddy and him.

I sent it again via the buro. A few months later, it came back unsigned. Maybe Percy thought he was 'playing games' since N4CD was doing the handling of the MRCs for Pedro, but he made the contact, they simply returned the MRCs unsigned. OK, once can be an 'oversight'. Heck, I've accidentally missed signing an MRC after I had checked them, or missed one that was stuck together. Once, I can see something coming back unsigned. Twice? I don't think so. Do you?

Then Percy has the utter gall to get on, and continue the bashing tactics on other mobiles for 'They don't sign MRCs, work them if you want, but you'll never get a MRC from them' baloney. Called again on his lies. He was the ONLY one who twice returned MRCs unsigned for Pedro. Of course, normally without recourse to the SSB net to air a complaint, who would ever know, right? As far as I can tell, Percy never had a problem with a mobile not signing an MRC.

Now YOU know. Now who is the liar???? Who is the one who refused to sign MRCs for a valid contact heard made by others? Yet bashes others for the same imagined and 'made up' infraction? Even sillier, it was not Percy who had this problem. He is bashing someone else for someone else's alleged problem.

None of the experienced motor home drivers seem to have a problem out in the western USA stopping on some of the county lines where the road is often 60 feet wide, with paved shoulders 10 feet wide, and areas you can park several semi trucks, yet Percy bashes 'motor homes' that 'can't possibly be on a county line', or states that this operator can't possibly be on a county line in his motor home. Then another day, he runs an 18-wheeler pulled over on a CL (WB4FFV, KD5JSS, N6HH). I don't know what he is thinking, do you? Heck, on at least half the county lines in TX, you can park on paved shoulders, with room to spare. If you can park an 18 wheeler on county lines, there is no way to claim you can't park motor homes on one. But Percy did. Loud and clear. Time after time. Oh, right, that person is on 'the club of one' banned list.

And by his lies about the other 25+ stations that have been 'run off' the 20M SSB net, and whom he seems to delight in spreading innuendos and falsehoods.

His track record is stellar. Just about everything he 'proclaims' is proven to be a lie. Those who repeat his lies are equally guilty. Those who 'help' him to continue the abuse might consider what they are encouraging. It's called 'enabling'. You re-inforce or tacitly approve of bad behavior, it continues.

Here's picture proof. You be the judge. Was KA3DRO mobile on the CL of Brown/McPherson, SD? Was Percy telling lies again? Next you'll him backpedaling, saying "I never said that". Can you believe anything he says?

Next you'll see they will file complaints against the "banned" mobiles for 'disrupting' the net for checking in when they say 'any mobile ready to run a county?'...come to think of it, someone has already done that, and recently sent a complaint letter to Riley Hollingsworth at the FCC. One of the net control stations filed a formal complaint at the FCC as KA3DRO tried to check in daily when he asked: "Is **ANY** mobile ready to run a county". Likely he was thinking: "Are any mobiles on **the** approved list, not including those on **the banned list** of 25, ready to run a county?" Why doesn't he just say it? Most know that is EXACTLY what he means. And they'll tell lie to you and claim it is 'Just one or two troublemakers' when everyone else knows better. Now you know differently. .

Now imagine, if you had a net control stations trying to get a mobile station in trouble with the FCC for simply trying to check in and run a county! (Alleging he was 'disrupting the net') That would be incredible. It happened. KA3DRO was notified by the FCC that a certain 'net control' station had filed a formal complaint. Talk about 'running off' mobiles. What one can't do himself, he now is asking the FCC to do for him????? **How low can you stoop?**

NOTE: Let us hope that after Aug 5, 2005 that all the problems go away. Many incidents have occurred. If you look back and want to keep bringing in up this issue or that issue, and don't want to go forward, nothing will change. With the elimination of 'bashing and trashing', it is also time to eliminate the 'banning' and 'I don't hear you' stuff as well. If you hear mobiles trying to check in, help out net control to make sure they get checked in, get on the list, and get called when it is their turn to run.

De N4CD

Master Gold Rules

Maybe some confusion here? You can start accumulating your 1500 points required for this award from day one. Up to half of the points for this can be accumulated before the start date of this award in June 1994, if you're an old time county hunter. Any or all of the points can be earned after this.

You get one point per transmitted county (one time a day, up to a total of 50 times from the same county).

So if you are just starting out, keep track of your transmitted counties and any net control time that you have. The definition of 'net control' time is still 'murky' and likely to be refined over the next few months, especially since MARAC doesn't sponsor or isn't associated with any frequency or county hunting net.

Make contacts in every county you go through, preferably putting it out on one of the regular CH frequencies to obtain the most number of contacts. But one contact, any band, any mode is sufficient! (Of course, almost no one will get any awards if mobile ops just work others in their party as they pass through counties, so please do your part! Put out counties)

Now what is 'net control time'? Well, I guess if I had to write some rules, it might go like:

Net Control Time – Net control time is time spent assisting mobiles to 'put out' their counties. It is actual hours spent where you:

- a) Run a net or are co-equal net control/assistant on one of the recognized County Hunter Frequencies (i.e., 14.336, 7238/43, 14.0565, 10.114, 7039) following the normally accepted practices of running all mobiles wishing to get on the list and run counties in a controlled manner. This includes announcing the mobile/county, doing relays for the mobiles (when you have copy), and signing the mobiles. If the NC/ANC has internet access available, it includes spotting the mobile on the spotting web sites. This requires running all mobiles wishing to run a county (other than those formally disbarred from MARAC awards by a formal decision of the awards committee for infractions of the MARAC rules regarding mobile operation), and performing relays for all stations wishing a relay. Courteously ask non-net stations to QSY off frequency when necessary.
- b) Move mobiles off frequency, and announce, spot (if you have available internet access), and perform relays if requested and possible while 'off' the normal net frequency. A minimum of 10 minutes of NC control is assumed for each move off a net frequency, or actual time spent off frequency
- c) Run a secondary net, such as at convention times, on a secondary frequency such as 14.343 or 7243 when sufficient mobiles wish to run.
- d) Run a net as NC or ANC on other frequencies where stations can be worked for county hunting credit – such nets as the Century Club net, or state nets, that allow the counties to be exchanged during a contact, will be valid for 'net control time'.

No hours when the net is in 'open session' when no mobiles are running shall be used toward NC hours.

However, if the net is in 'open session' and you run a mobile, you receive credit for a minimum of 10 minutes for announcing, spotting (if possible) and doing relays for a mobile (or acting as ANC for that mobile). Total time cannot exceed actual time, i.e., running 8 mobiles an hour in open session gives you only 1 hour NC time. To receive credit, you must announce and do relays for the mobile.

Mobile net control hours must be tracked, and a day by day accounting of net control hours submitted with daily totals and grand totals for the various awards requiring net control time (ex: Karl Adkins Net Control Hours Award, and Master's Gold award).

Well, that would be my input to the Awards Committee. If you have ideas on it, contact your MARAC Director and give him input.

**Special Certificate for KS5A, Guff, from WB4FFV,
Ralph**



Who says we can't have some fun along the way?

An Old Cowboy's Advice:

- * Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.
- * Keep skunks, bankers, and lawyers at a distance.
- * Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- * A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- * Words that soak into your ears are whispered...not yelled.
- * Meanness don't jes' happen overnight.

- * Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.
- * Do not corner something you know is meaner than you.
- * It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.
- * You cannot unsay a cruel word.
- * Every path has a few puddles.
- * When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- * The best sermons are lived, not preached.
- * Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
- * Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- * Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- * Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
- * Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.
- * Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance.
- * If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- * Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.
- * Always drink upstream from the herd.
- * Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.
- * Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.
- * If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.
- * Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly.

Scottie Goes Hawaiian

Scottie, N7AKT is headed to Hawaii. He is planning to run all the counties in Hawaii. The schedule is:

October 28 th and 29 th	- Maui & Kalawao
October 30 and 31 st	Honolulu
November 1 & 2	Kauai
Nov 4 th and 5 th	Maui & Kalawao
Nov 6-9 th	Hawaii

He will run different bands upon request, including CW. He's a little rusty on CW, not having been on since 1977.

Let him know what you need – Dick Scott, 147 Roost Court, Lexington, SC
29073-9695 , tel 803-892-3964 no email



ALOHA FROM N7AKT

County Hunter Events – September

Arkansas QSO Party – 1400Z Sept 10 to 0600z Sept 11, and 18—Z Sept 11 to 0200 Z Sept 12. Info at www.arkan.us

Tennessee QSO Party – 1800Z Sept 11 to 0100Z Sept 12. rules at www.k4ro.net/tcg/tqp/tqp05_rules.html

Washington State Salmon Run – 1600Z Sept 17 to 0700Z Sept 18, and 1600Z - 2400Z Sept 18. Rules at www.wwdx.org

South Carolina QSO Party – 1300Z Sept 17 to 2100Z Sept 18. info at www.kf4ghc.net/scqp.shtml

Texas QSP Party – 1400Z Sept 24 to 0200Z Sept 25, and 1400Z to 2000Z Sept 25. info at www.txqp.org

Alabama QSO Party – 1800-2400Z Sept 25. Info at www.arrl.org/contests/months/sep.html

The monthly contests can be found the above URL from the ARRL, and at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>

Letter received from Guff, KS5A

One of the topics discussed at the National Convention CW Forum was the current 40M frequency, which seems to experience QRM from beacons outside the USA. .

“After talking to several guys at the convention, I found out that the Russian beacon interference on 40 meters is affecting more of us than I thought. The guys back east seem to have problems with them in the evenings. Hollis, especially, had problems with them as well as a Canadian SSB net.

On the west coast, as you may be aware, the beacons can last from 1000Z all the way up to 1700Z. They will kill any chance of a western mobile hearing anyone back east. Equally as bad, fixed stations have difficult times working a weak mobile. Without the

beacons, the contacts could be made, sometimes direct and others with a relay. Even under our current, propagation conditions, these beacons cause real havoc to those out west.

Several of us in Risto's chatroom have at times listened on 40 m, trying to locate a clearer freq at different times of the day. W6RK, K5OT and I have found 7038.5 to be a potentially good freq. During your upcoming trip to CA and other spots out west, see if you find the 7038.5 a better freq vs the Russian garbage on the net freq. If you find it to be better, let's make a decision to move the 40m CW net.

Most stations east of the Rockies, may only hear these beacons infrequently and way down in signal strength. But to the guys out west, they absolutely kill any 449/339 mobile.

One way to get everyone used to a new freq is to announce it in the trips sections and to use it. That's what I plan to do, especially out here in the west"

De KS5A

1,000 Counties on PSK31

by Bill, KD7KST

My first goal was to work and confirm 500 counties for CQ Magazines USA-CA award using the digital mode PSK31. I completed that goal and figured I better continue on to see if it was possible to work 1,000 counties using only my favorite digital mode PSK31. On July 28, 2005 I reached the thousand county mark when I worked Matt, W0NAC in Hays, Nebraska, Kansas on his return from the County Hunter National Convention.

Should I continue to the next stage of the USA-CA award which is 1500 counties? I think I will, this County Hunting stuff gets addictive. Besides I'll probably have to work around 1,200 counties to get 1,000 counties which is generally the lag I see between working and getting a county confirmed.

I was also encouraged when Risto, W6RK setup a PSK31-County Hunter Mailing list in August. While the mailing list is only a couple of weeks old, I was surprised by the response. A lot of people said they had given up on 14.336 and were interested in hunting counties using a different mode such as PSK31. We are using the mailing list to post trips, spot portable or special event stations that are in counties people might need and just generally helping people get there base and mobile stations setup for digital modes.

If would like to take a look at the CH-PSK31 mailing list, just do one of the following to join the list:

- email an empty message to ch-psk31-subscribe@w6rk.com
- go to <http://w6rk.com/mailman/listinfo/ch-psk31>

So I plan to keep plugging away on PSK31 and see what's possible. I work fixed, portable and mobile stations, digital contests, special events or any other way I can scrounge up a new county on PSK31. You'll also find me out running counties mobile on a lot of weekends using PSK31.

Bill, KD7KST

That's it for this issue! See you next month. De N4CD