

County Hunter News

March 1, 2009
Volume 5, Issue 3

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

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

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

County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and **7056.5**, with activity nights on 3556.5 on Tuesday evenings around 8-9pm Eastern Time. Also, with low sunspot activity, most of the SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188/7185 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.915.5, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18135 or 18.132.5 for occasional 17M SSB runs.

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 . Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at www.CHNewsonline.com

De N4CD (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

1) **Mobile Activity in February**

The weather was decent in much of the country, and gas prices were below \$2 per gallon. Quite a few mobiles headed to the mini-convention in south Texas. Sunspots were no where to be seen, but the bands - especially 40M and 80M, were good. A few mobiles ventured on 3556.5 with hundreds of spots over the winter months. Contest activity (QSO Parties) also helped many get their needed counties.

At the end of January, Mark, W8MP, went out with Ron, KB6UF, and ran some desperately needed LA counties.

Ray, AB4YZ, was running lots of counties in GA. Jim, K0ARS, ran on a few trips.

In Feb, Lloyd, NX4W, was busy putting out counties on SSB and PSK all over SC and GA. Then he headed to TX for the mini and put out over 100 on SSB and PSK31.

Richard, NI7F, put out a bunch in UT, with CW on request. Nice job for the first time out on the county hunter nets mobile. A lot of those had not been run in a long time, especially on cw. He “couldn't believe all the pile-ups he had, running SSB and CW!

MN QSO Party – a good one. Lots of activity on cw, with AC0W, N0IJ, N0PI, KE0G, NE9U, N0PI, W0AAA, W0OR, WA0KNP, W3FAF, W0LD, N0IM, and a whole raft more.

W0GXQ wrote: “I don't believe that all 87 counties were run on 80cw, but I followed the mobiles most of the day. Managed to work a mobile in 73 counties which helped my 80m stats. Lots of fun!”

In the NM QSO Party, AA9JJ/N9QPQ ran some, K5XY, a busy KS5A, NI5T, W5CF, N5IC, N5TQ, K5PAX, K1GMD, W9XQ, K7IA, NM5NM, and more. Good activity with many counties on.

Ed, KN4Y wrote: “I did not hear a VT station, did work 4 DE stations and got a clean sweep. Hi. Worked 25 NM and 72 MN. I did not hear much activity on 80 meters.”

In the VT, QSO Party, we had NW1V, AA1SU, N1GB spotted. Likely more on, but not many available for the folks. Not many DE stations on. Hopefully you made at least one QSO – why? More later on why you might want to get in the state QSO Parties! This is the year of the state QSO parties! You'll have much more VT and NH activity in the NE QSO Party coming up.

Abe, W7GQK, gave out a bunch in AL, LA, and TX headed to Weslaco. He gave Charlie, W0RRY, the last in TX on cw with Orange. Charlie is slowly closing in on all CW.

Tom, K7REL wrote: “Finished up Minnesota today for both USA-CA and USA-CW, so 12 new ones there. Also heard a few in Vermont and Delaware. KS5A, K5XY and N2IC were the only stations I could hear in New Mexico.

Frank, AA9JJ/Kay, N9QPQ trekked east from AZ, running lots in NM, and TX on the way to the mini. Lowell, KB0BA/ Sandra, N0XYL were busy making contacts on their way to Weslaco and back. Matt, W0NAC, and Sharon, N0LXJ, also were active on the way to the mini. Milt, KY0E, another one of the Colorado gang, headed south, along with Ross, N0ZA, who started out going west, then south, then east to the mini. He ran into snow along the way. Carol, KA4TYG and Eleanor, KD4NFE came across to the mini from FL, then back, running them on SSB.

Perhaps the longest trek was Scottie, N4AAT, who ran through a lot of AL, then MS, into LA, AR, up through southern OK, to the panhandle of TX down through Donley, Floyd, over to Val Verde, La Salle, then across to Wilson, Bee, Refugio, and south to the mini. He was on a mission to get the last counties for N4CD on cw in TX. After the mini, he was on the road just after 1am, headed toward more counties for me, and getting to the last at 1pm – he then headed home the county hunter way, running more in LA and MS and AL, then zipping home.

Bob, N8KIE, started in CA, headed to TX for the mini, then on home, filling in transmitted counties and running his needs for Master Platinum.

The LA QSO Party was good with lots of activity from fixed and one very active mobile, KU5D, a few other mobiles out for several counties, and quite a few LA counties activated. The same weekend, the NH QSO Party ran, with a handful of stations on 20M, some spotted on 40 and 80, but likely enough for everyone to get a contact or two.

Dan, KM9X and Judy, KB9MGI took a trip. Here's their report from the K3IMC forum:

“2-12-09 trip IN, IL and KY.

Great day. Ran 31 counties, 63 total runs, ran 29 for the required MP 500. Had a total of 431 contacts, mostly 40ssb, some 20ssb, and one cw request

Biggest run Dubois/Spencer, IN county line: 36 contacts.

Gallatin/Hardin, IL had 28 contacts, including 1 WBOW and 3 LC

I got 17 new MP, and 5 for 3rd time. Judy got 28 for 2nd time.

Thanks to all that assisted, including NCS. Also the MP contacts all day and late into the night (WQ7A, W0GXQ, N2OCW, N4UJK and W3CR). We got home about 10pm with a 5am get up for work! Sorry we had to cut out two counties because of running late.(Orange, IN and Clay, IL) I needed BOTH for MP too! I'll be back later for those. Planning another trip soon across southern Ohio! “

Greg, NM2L, had a business trip up north, and ran them 40/80/30/20/17M in GA, TN, VA, WV, and back home.

Barry, N0KV, and Pat, N0DXE, took a nice trip from Colo to WY and UT and back.

Leo, WY7LL, and Chris, WY7ML, headed over to Pondera, MT (one that Leo needed himself) and then to Clark, ID. That's the nice thing about county hunting. You can bring a ham buddy, go to the county, and work them on 2M FM or other band, and get the county that way!

He reported on K3IMC on 2/22:

“Looks like a little over 1700 miles in 3 1/2 days. Three last counties for WY7ML that we are aware of. One last county for WY7LL.

WY7LL worked last Montana and Last Idaho counties. 11 counties ran in Montana IN THE WINTER !! Three counties ran in Idaho. Nine counties ran in Wyoming. 507 contacts for WY7LL around 300 contacts for WY7ML.

We had a great time. Weather was real good for us. Only about 40 miles of snow covered roads. Snow drifts 8 - 10 feet high in the Jackson, Yellowstone area.

Hope you all had as much fun as we did. WY7LL/WY7ML”

For those hunting MP counties, Dan, KM9X and Judy, KB9MGI headed over to eastern OH and then back home. Dan is now good for the MP award, having just received his MG award.

Rick, KG4NNK, and Sheila, KI4GKA, ran in KY. From the K3IMC forum:

“We ran 17 Kentucky counties yesterday: Madison, Whitley, Clinton, Monroe, Russell, Garrard, Rockcastle, McCreary, Cumberland, Barren, Pulaski, Jessamine, Laurel, Wayne, Metcalf, Adair, and Lincoln. 36 Kentucky counties have been run by our team in 2009. Shelia will begin planning the March run next week. Thank you to everyone that worked us and helped us! Sorry, 20 Meters is still not propping.” (2/22/09)

3) Blast from the past – Radio Shack Catalog

If you have a urge for nostalgia, visit the on-line 1960s vintage Radio Shack Catalog. Ham radio stuff starts about page 116. All sorts of vintage tube hi-fi, test equipment, parts, and of course, ham gear!

http://www.radioshackcatalogs.com/catalogs/1960_small/

Some history of Radio Shack is at the following:

<http://www.radioshackcatalogs.com/history.html>

4) New Car Companies struggle

Think, a Norwegian producer of electric cars that sell for \$30,000, filed for bankruptcy. They were hoping to expand production to 10,000 vehicles per year, but the financial downturn forced them to file for bankruptcy.

5) Texas QSO Party Results

The results for the TX QSO Party are out. For DX, DL3DXX was #1, followed by LY2ZZ. Logs seen from county hunters DL8USA, SM5COP, PA3ARM, DL6KVA, and OK1APV. The TX Single Op Mobile top billing went to W0BH, Bob.

Norm, W3DYA was near the top in TX Single Op CW only. K5SF's logs were in the SSB/CW Single Op category.

Lots of regulars from around the country were listed, with W0EAR near the top, and N8II, KS5A, and a raft of ‘county testers’ in the results.

Check out <http://txqp.net/archive/08result.pdf> if you participated. Lot’s of QSO parties coming up this year to snag new band counties or new counties.

Bob, W0BH, had quite an adventure – his tale later in the Newsletter.

6) LoTW

An observant reader sent in a clarification on ARRL LoTW. You do not have to be an ARRL Member to use LoTW. Anyone can upload logs to LoTW. They just reached 200 million QSOs in the data base. However, hams living in the US must be ARRL members to get electronic credit for the ARRL awards. DX hams do not have to be a member of ARRL.

7) ARRL State QSO Parties of the Year Award

Did you ever hear of this? Brand new program out this year! Now you have a reason to get into every state QSO party for at least a few contacts. With band-counties, many are jumping in to every one anyway to get new band-counties for the W6RK Toplist and for the MARAC County Challenge Award.

A new award – does not have to be confirmed. Loads of interesting stuff, including downloading your own tracking certificate. More later in the newsletter! Perfect for county hunters. You’ll have to track it manually, though, since Logger isn’t designed for this one-time ARRL award.

8) State QSO Party finder

Check out WA4PGM’s state qso party listing at:

http://www.wa4pgm.us/qso_parties.htm

and the WA7BNM listing at:

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/stateparties.html>

9) Dayton Hamvention County Hunter Forum

Tim, W8JJ, reports that there will be a county hunter forum this year in Dayton. He has been working with the committee to try to get us back to the normal Friday afternoon schedule. Plans are underway for the annual get together dinner afterwards on Friday evening.

10) Scottie finishes finishes N4CD up!

It was a good month. The last 100 on cw seemed to take forever, but slowly the needs got worked away. Richard, NI7F ran through my last in NV on cw, and Scottie, N4AAT, ran all over TX to get the remainder (13) of the counties that I needed to finish up Third Time CW – and 7th Time, too. I did both awards ‘all cw’. That keeps them in sync. Thanks to all the mobiles out there who gave me all the contacts along the way.

Now I have incentive to get on and work stations left and right, get in the QSO parties, and go mobile to get stations to call me – so I get their counties, too! Hi hi Starting over is always fun – you fill in counties left and right, and need everything, whether it is Cook County, IL, Orange County CA, or Collin, TX.

Those last 2 dozen took quite a while to work down to zero, but with help from friends, once again it happened. That’s what makes county hunting special!

11) Alaska – Judicial Districts

County Hunters use the four Judicial Districts in Alaska. If you make a contact, and don’t know the district, you might check out:

<http://www.qsl.net/kl7j/county.htm>

It’s got a lot of helpful information that should allow you to figure out where the hams are located.

[Steve, N0SM, sent along the link – thanks]

12) Natural Bingo????? Lost in space?

Last summer, after the National, the CHNews speculated on how long it would be before the rules for the National Bingo Award were finally issued and folks could start to work on it. Six months passed and nothing. Quiet. No one seems to think anyone is even working on it. If you recall, the board gave the awards committee very specific things it wanted to see. Hello Awards Committee? Hello Marac board? Maybe by the National Meeting? Or do we wait till 2010?

13) Dayton County Hunter Forum

“The 2009 Dayton Hamvention County Hunting Forum is officially scheduled for Friday, May 15 from 4PM until 5PM in Room 2. I need to have the list of speakers finalized in the coming weeks for publication in the event program directory. If you're interested in making a short presentation, please contact me ASAP. Your donation of time will result in a free ticket to Hamvention!” - de Tim, W8JJ, CH Forum Coordinator

14) ARRL DX Contest

The ARRL CW DX Contest held last weekend of February, where US works DX and vice versa. AK and HI are DX. For those working on the ARRL YSOSO Party award, since there is no AK QSO Party, this is one opportunity to work it and claim it for credit. There were many LOUD signals from AK on the air.

Mark, KO1U, noted on K3IMC Forum:

“ 23 AKs-61Qs....14HI-33Qs..No Kauai or 1st AK”

De N4CD: I caught 3rd and 4th AK, and Hawaii, Honolulu, and Maui from my QTH with vertical. There were spots on 160 through 10M for HI and AK. Not everyone had propagation, though. Still, excellent opportunity to snag something you needed.

On the Road with N4CD – I

The car sat for almost two weeks with no trips – January had been a busy month for weekend trips. In February, the South Central mini is held annually, and this year it was to be in Weslaco TX, hosted by WB9NUL, Joyce, and Barry, W9UCW.



Barry, W9UCW Joyce WB9NUL USCA #663

It's about 500-600 miles down the road, so I figured I'd mosey down there the county hunter way, and then zip on back. This year I had to come back early, and skip the Saturday forums, but I could still have time to yak and meet new faces for the two days before.

[Note: Those are real palm trees in the picture above at the motel – at that is where the swimming pool area is located.]

So Wednesday it was off headed southwest. I looked at what I had already run this year, and took a path just to the west of what I had previously run, going through some 'new' counties in 2009 on the way south – Erath, Comanche, Brown, Coleman, McCulloch, and south. On most trips, I print out a map from the coloring book, and mark the route through the counties. If you keep that sheet, you can keep plotting routes to get new ones on each trip. It also reminds you of what is next, or where you should be if you are on your route. If someone asks “Are you going to County X –it’s my last?” you can see how far it is to get there easily, and answer the question if you don’t recall where County X is. With 254 in TX, it’s easy to lose track of all of them occasionally!

If you have the time, you can take an extra few miles and an extra night to get somewhere, and run through ‘new ones’ that you haven’t run recently. The bands were decent on 40/30 and so-so on 20M. On SSB, especially 40M, there were lots of mobiles, activity, and runs.

Joe, N5UZW, and Kirby, W8DCD were busy running the nets, and Dan KM9X helped on Thursday from ‘up north’. Judy, KM9MGI helped run the net for hours as well. It was very quiet on 40M CW – much of the time, I was ‘the mobile’. At times, folks moved off frequency to 7185 or 7191 or 7193 to run the county as they hit new counties or lines. Scottie, N4AAT, was running mostly on SSB, but made CW contacts on request.

Bill, W4HMY, USCA # 929, was on the air – long time no hear on that call. Jim, KD4PY, USCA #397, also now active again.

Jim, N9JF ran occasionally on his business trip down to AL, Silver, N9QS headed east and then south putting them out, and Jim, K0ARS ran counties on a day or two during my trek south.

I wound up in Kerrville (Kerr County) the first night at the Motel 6 (decent and \$43 including tax). Dinner was at the Cracker Barrel. Kerrville is a nice town to stop – lots of reasonable motels and places to eat. On my trips around Texas, I tend to stop in certain towns because of motels and eating places, and tend to avoid others because they have high prices or few places to eat.

In the morning, I was up early, ate at the McDonald’s, and hit the road by 7am headed south. The further south you went, the harder it was to make

contacts on 40M in the middle of the day. You are just getting ‘too far’ from everyone back east and up north.

After six hours more, I arrived at the Best Western where the mini is held. As usual, the rooms weren’t ready until 2pm, and, as usual, there were a few complications on room reservations that got worked out OK. No one had to sleep on the lounge chairs by the pool.

The hospitality room was open, and dozens were swapping tall tales of county hunting – about the way it was 20 or 30 years ago – when the bands were always in great shape, the nets ran 24 hours a day (20M, 40M, 75M).....the ‘good ole days’ plus what was currently going on.

Quite a crowd showed up. Thursday night we had the Chuck Wagon dinner with good food. Some went to Mexico on Friday, or just stayed around, visited the hospitality room, went shopping, took a dip in the pool or enjoyed themselves. It was in the 80s, so most were wearing shorts and short sleeve shirts, or summer outfits. The motel offers ‘free’ breakfast buffet, including cooked-to-order omelets.



Dora, WB3JDC Charlie, WA3ZTY USCA #292

Eleanor, KD4NFE, and Carol, KA4TYG, made the trek from FL. W9JR came down from up north, and Walt, K1DFO, came in from California. Carol-Ann, AB2LS came in from the winter home in FL. Much of the TX contingent was present, including Gene, K5GE, Ron, N5MLP, Cheryl, KJ5PQ and Mike, KG5UZ, Bob, KK5MI, Norm, W3DYA, Bob, N5KUC, Tom, K9GTQ, Randy, AJ5ZX and Janet, KC5QCB, N4CD, Ray, WA5OPO, Barry, W9UCW, Joyce, WB9NUL, Carol, KI0JD, and Birger, KA0DDJ, and Charlie, WA3ZTY and Dora, WB3JDC. Lloyd, NX4W came over from the east. John, N5OHQ was in from LA. K5OH, Troy, came down from OK, and Cliff, K6JN, and Nelda, W6XJN, were there from CA/FL. Bob, N8KIE, and Jackie, N8RLJ stopped by on their way from Hawaii to home in MI. Ross, N0ZA, came down from Colorado through some snow.

Early Saturday morning, I departed to get home by evening. I'm president of another organization, and we had a big event going on Sunday afternoon, so I had to skip some of the fun.

I punched in the 'home' button on the Garmin Nav system, and followed it north through Jim Wells, Bee, Karnes, Wilson, Gonzales, Caldwell, Travis then up I35 to home. Other than the mandatory traffic slowdown/crawl through Austin and a few rain sprinkles, it was a quick trip – about 9 hours. On the bands there were a few giant pileups as K5D in Desecheo appeared.

I tried my luck on CW in that DX pileup, after figuring out how to get the radio in split mode, but no luck. Just too many thousand were calling for me to sneak through, although I heard several county hunters making it through.

The LA QSO Party was going on, and I hunted for some of those fixed and mobile stations. There were a few in the NH QSO Party to work as well.



Randy, AJ5ZX USCA #1160 Janet, KC5QCB USCA #1181

In the morning it was 65 degrees when I left Weslaco at 7am, but by the time I got home just north of Dallas, the temps were down to the 40s, and I still had my shorts on. Brrrr. Needless to say, as soon as I got home, I made a quick change back to 'winter' clothes.

The car is coming up on 220,000 miles. Maybe I'll wait to see what happens with the 'Big 3' and the government with the auto bailout situation before deciding what to do next. I'll have to buy some new tires soon if I keep on driving it. It looks like Hummer, Saab, and Saturn are on the chopping block. Who knows what else will change in the auto industry.

Many filled in band counties over the weekend – with the LA QSO Party, the returning mobiles from the mini, the NH and LA QSO Party, and the other events going on, there were lots of counties to be found. At times, 40M was good, and if the mobile were in a quiet spot, one could work 1500 miles at times getting over to the east coast. CW was doing fine – although

many had worked the counties from various mobiles going to and from the mini. CW activity was 'slim'.

Hidalgo got to be as rare as 'rare Rutherford TN' – where the 3M was held, and 20 mobiles ran the county during the few days of the mini. Conditions were not great to EU, with LY2ZZ about the only one getting through most days for a few hours.

On Sunday, Scottie, N4AAT, was headed up through some counties for N4CD on cw. I got a call at 6:45 am where he had already gone 300 miles to Fort Bend after leaving the motel (at 2 am or so) and he was sitting on a county line waiting for me on cw. Wow – I had gotten up an hour early at 5:45 am to get the Sunday paper at the corner store and grab some chow at the local McDonalds while reading the big paper, , expecting him to get there at 9:30 am, and he still got there earlier than I expected by 2 hours.

I quickly rushed home the one mile and turned on the radio. We made the QSO. Scottie then ran around getting Walker, Houston/Trinity, up to Kaufman and Van Zandt. That left exactly one to go. I had to leave to head to Ft Worth after I loaded up the car with accordions. I put the 40M SSB antenna on the car and the radio inside.

I left the house at 1pm and head west – making it even harder as the distance increased for the ground wave contact at about 80 miles. He called a few minutes later on the cell. He had made a real quick trip up to Hopkins to finish N4CD off in the 3077th for Third time CW.



N4AAT C/L Hopkins/Rains, TX – LC WBOW for N4CD

Wow – he was OK copy on cw on 7184 cw – I was just a few miles from home – the timing worked out fine. I couldn't hear him on SSB as the noise was too high mobiling down the highway in the suburban area. The narrow filter sure helps! That was the last WBOW and he had filled in lots of counties in my coloring book in SC, VA, NC and elsewhere.

It was a good trip to the mini and a good weekend for getting and giving counties! Mobiles were backed up on 40M SSB, and there were quite a few runs off frequency.

For the next couple days, mobiles were still on their way back home – lots of contacts for another few days. Spring is not too far off – today, temps near 70, but tomorrow only low 50s again.

The ducks decided once again that my pool is a good place to be. I'll have to work on 'de-ducking' my pool. I wouldn't really mind sharing the pool if they were potty trained, but that doesn't seem to be the case. It's a messy situation. As of now, I just have to scare the heck out of them every time I

see them there. Maybe I need to borrow a dog for a few weeks and keep it out by the pool?

Sunspots? Where are they?

Sept. 30, 2008: Astronomers who count sunspots have announced that 2008 is now the "blankest year" of the Space Age.

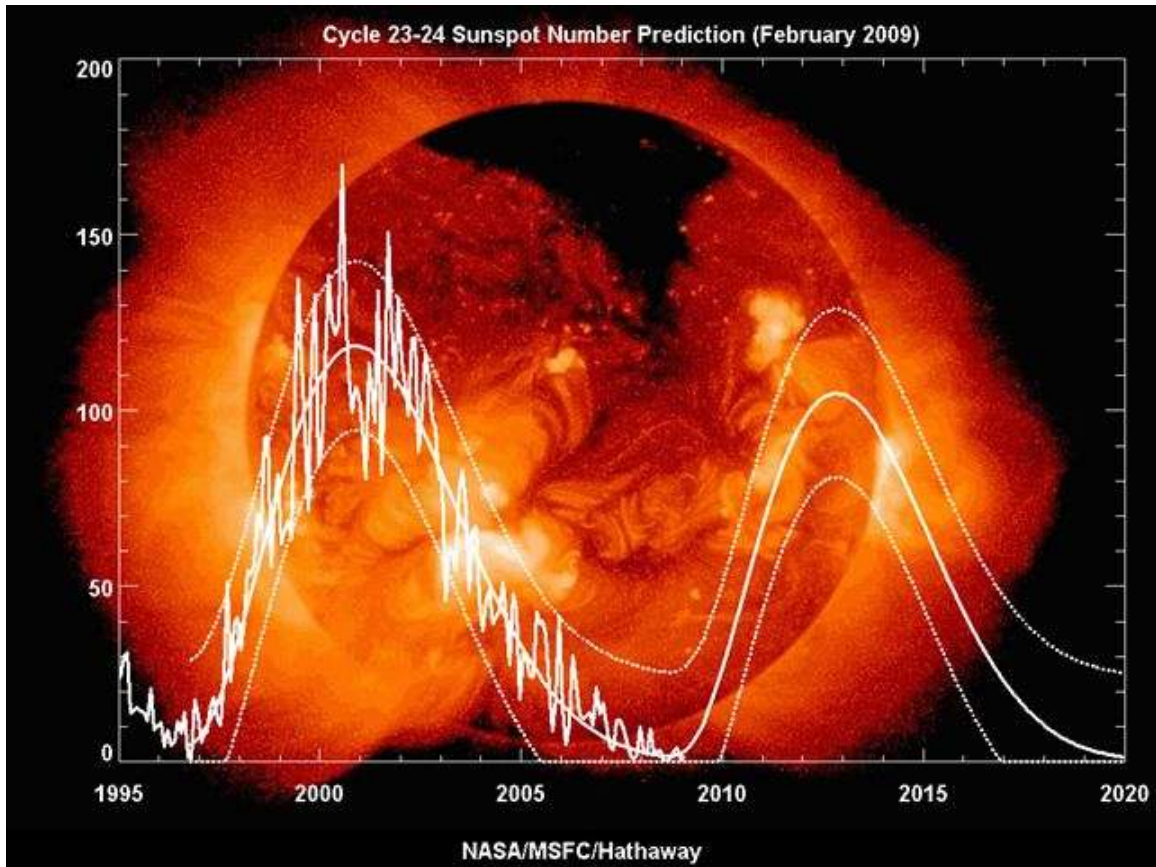
As of Sept. 27, 2008, the sun had been blank, *i.e.*, had no visible sunspots, on 200 days of the year. To find a year with more blank suns, you have to go back to 1954, three years before the launch of Sputnik, when the sun was blank 241 times.

"Sunspot counts are at a 50-year low," says solar physicist David Hathaway of the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center. "We're experiencing a deep minimum of the solar cycle."

And it is a *very* quiet time. If solar activity continues as low as it has been, 2008 could rack up a whopping 290 spotless days by the end of December, making it a century-level year in terms of spotlessness.

Hathaway cautions that this development may sound more exciting than it actually is: "While the solar minimum of 2008 is shaping up to be the deepest of the Space Age, it is still unremarkable compared to the long and deep solar minima of the late 19th and early 20th centuries." Those earlier minima routinely racked up 200 to 300 spotless days per year.

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2008/30sep_blankyear.htm



Cycle 23- 24 No Joy Yet

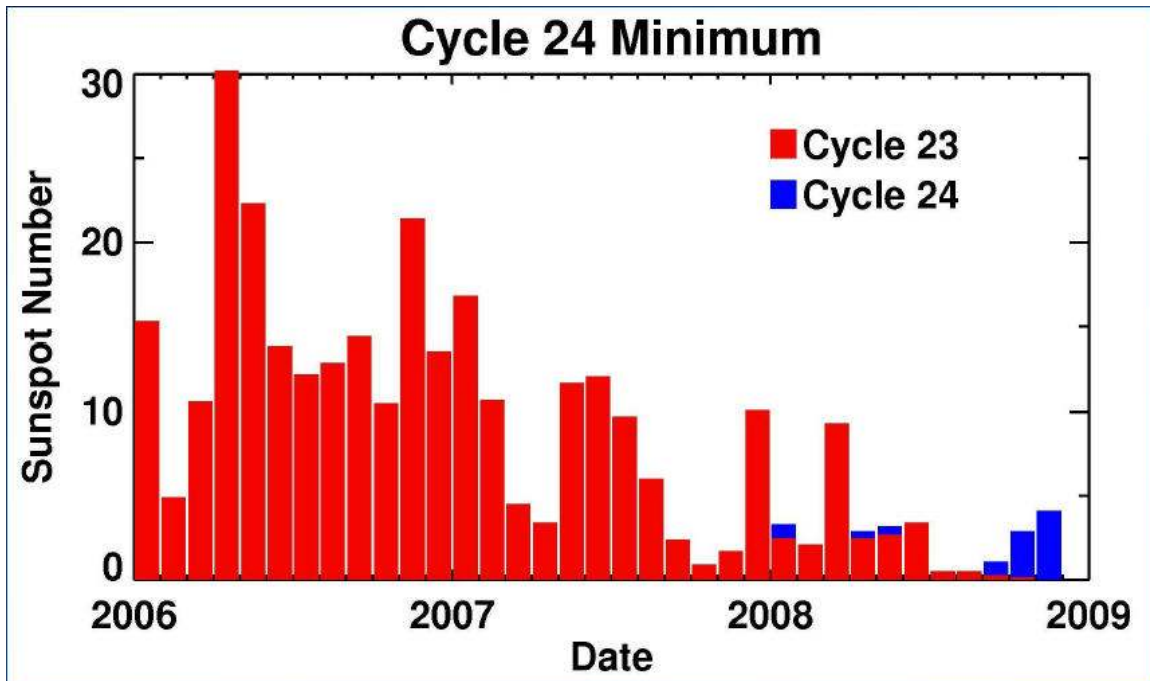
It not only looks like we are making no progress toward Cycle 24, but that the peak date keeps shifting back. We need some sunspots! Lots of them!

Above pic from:

http://solarscience.msfc.nasa.gov/images/ssn_predict_1.gif

Another good chart at:

<http://www.hfradio.org/progress/spotcompare.jpg>



According to latest ARRL Prop Bulletin (2/20/09), we appear to have reached minimum in August 2008, and the cycle length was a bit long at 12 years.

“ARLP008 Propagation de K7RA

On February 11-13 we saw a sunspot, then it was gone. Typical of sunspots recently, it was only seen briefly, and this one was a relic of Cycle 23 according to its magnetic signature. For at least a couple of years now we've been expecting Cycle 23 to bottom out and new Cycle 24 spots to emerge, but the sunspot minimum drags on. Most projections are based on past cycle activity, so according to the timing of past solar minimums, we keep thinking surely soon there will be an explosion of new solar activity, but the Sun seems to tease us.

Our recent experiment with a 3-month moving average of sunspot numbers points to August 2008 as the possible solar minimum. If it turns out to be the end of Cycle 23, that would make 23 nearly 12 years long, only a little longer than the less-than-eleven-year average cycle length.”

Electronic Confirmation Systems

Anonymous K3IMC forum Quote: “Am I still living in a cave or is there any one else out there that doesn't know what LoTW and eQSL's are?”

Last month, we announced that CQ is accepting eQSLs for USCA credit, and gave some of the details on the logistics of getting credit. Likely, many county hunters are totally unfamiliar with eQSL, and if folks aren't into contesting or DXing, may not be familiar with the ARRL Logbook of the World (LoTW) system either. So off we go on an investigation.

Logbook of the World

“ARRL's *Logbook of the World* (LoTW) system is a repository of log records submitted by users from around the world. When both participants in a QSO submit matching QSO records to LoTW, the result is a QSL that can be used for ARRL award credit.

To minimize the chance of fraudulent submissions to LoTW, all QSO records must be digitally signed using a digital certificate obtained from ARRL. Obtaining such a certificate requires verification of the licensee's identity either through mail verification (US) or inspection by ARRL of required documentation (non-US).

Software developed by ARRL can be used to convert a log file (in ADIF or Cabrillo file format) into a file of digitally signed QSO data, ready for submission to LoTW.

LoTW began operation on September 15, 2003. “

<http://www.arrl.org/lotw/>

There is no charge for using LoTW. Anyone can upload files to the LoTW to give credit to others for awards. US Hams must be a member of the ARRL to apply for awards. Awards are the same price as if you submit by mail. Foreign hams may use LoTW for no charge.

So why get excited about LoTW? If you've been DXing lately, and trying to get a QSL card from some country, waiting for years for the 'buro' to get there and back, or sending two or three expensive IRCs or 'green stamps' (Dollar Bills), along with the 94c postage to get it there, you realize very quickly that DXCC or 5BDXCC is going to cost a lot. If you want to get DXCC on multiple bands (160, 17, 12, 30) in addition, you can be looking at thousands of dollars in postage alone!

The first awards to be supported include WAS, DXCC, WAC, and VUCC, including satellite modes.

After years and years of development, the ARRL released LoTW in 2003. It now has 200 million QSO records. If you wish to apply for ARRL awards, you can work toward them with a combination of electronic and paper QSLs – for DXCC, Honor Roll position, WAS, Triple Play(LoTW only), etc. It cuts out the post office for many/most of the confirmations.

Naturally, if you are not the least bit interested in using it, that's fine. Nothing lost. However, if you are just starting out, or seeking other awards or challenges, it can sure cut down your postal bill.

Now, for some of the nitty-gritty.

From ARRL FAQ: "Logbook of the World is initially designed to create awards credit, that is to say, that if your QSO matches that of another station, either you or the other operator may be able to apply that confirmed QSO to various awards. (Creating an image based in-part on the QSO information for the purpose of making a file that can be printed, or creating a QSL card, is not presently part of LoTW).. There are other services available that can do that. LoTW goes a step or two beyond the conception of a QSL card (which is essentially a one-sided request for a confirmation from the other side of the QSO) by verifying that a QSO occurred between two stations, based on the 'signed' data submitted by each."

"The digital signatures used for the Logbook of the World system ensure that every QSO record can be traced to the participant who submitted it. The signature cannot be forged and the QSO data cannot be altered without detection. In order for participants to have confidence in an electronic QSL

system, they must be assured that each confirmation submitted to the system is authentic -- that it comes from the true owner of the associated call.

Until recently, such assurance would have been impossible. However, with the advent of digital signature technology, it is now possible for an amateur radio operator to indelibly mark QSO data with a signature connected to his/her call. The signature cannot be forged and the signed data cannot be changed without detection. The technology used for digital signatures is called *Public Key Infrastructure* or *PKI*. It relies on a pair of mathematically related numbers. One of the numbers is called the *public key*, which can be published, and the other is called the *private key*, which is kept secret.

However, in order for digital signatures to be trusted, we must be sure of the identity of each person to whom a key pair is assigned. The security of the entire system boils down to the methodology used for proving identity and assigning the keys. This process is called *Authentication*.

Authentication for U.S. calls relies on a combination of the *FCC license database* and postal mail addresses. The applicant initiates registration through a computer program. First, the program creates the keys that will be used for digitally signing QSL records. Then the log program sends a registration request to the *Logbook Registration Server* via the Internet. The server looks up the applicant's name and call in the FCC license database to verify that they are valid. The server then generates an identification record, called a *certificate*, and a unique activation password. The password is written to a postcard, along with the call sign owner's name and address from the FCC license database. The postcard is mailed to the applicant. When the applicant receives the postcard, he or she enters the password at the LoTW website, (or, eventually, into the appropriate space in a logging program which then sends it to the server via the Internet). The server activates the certificate and sends it back to the applicant via the Internet. The address in the FCC database and the security of the postal mail system identify the owner of the call and ensure that the certificate is issued to the right person.

eQSL - Electronic QSLs

from the eQSL FAQ

#What is an eQSL? Clever hams were sending electronic QSL cards by e-mail years ago. Back then, that was the only way to send them.

E-mail is not a very easy way of exchanging cards. So, in 1998, we created the first eQSL exchange and called it www.QSLCard.com, and it has attracted a huge following. Our system does not use e-mail at all. So you really don't "send" eQSLs. Instead, it stores your log in a large database. When another user uploads his log, we look at all the log entries that "match", and allow you to display and print eQSLs from those matching log entries.

In April, 2000, we converted the entire system to a very robust and high tech database-oriented system and renamed our site www.eQSL.cc, the Electronic QSL Card Centre.

We are now the ONLY exchange for electronic QSL cards, with 115.3 million eQSLs from 313 countries currently online.

And, since we have nearly as many members as ARRL, you can be assured that this will continue to be the place to maintain your online eQSL log!

Why do we need Electronic QSL cards?

- * Conventional QSL cards take time to write out
- * Conventional QSL cards cost money to print and mail
- * You have to wait a long time to get a conventional QSL card in the mail
- * If your QTH or other fixed data change, you have to reprint the cards
- * Rare DX stations would much rather use electronic QSL

What does an eQSL card cost? Nothing. The eQSL.cc basic service is free. We only ask that you make a donation if you want to use a custom graphic of your own design, or if you want to participate in contests and awards we offer.

What does an eQSL card look like? When printed, the card will typically be about the same size as a conventional QSL card.

Does ARRL accept eQSLs for awards and contests? No. ARRL started its own web service for submitting logs for DXCC called "Logbook of the World". You will need to download special logging software and submit your license and other identification to use their system. Then you must pay a fee for each credit used for DXCC. The ARRL system is NOT designed to generate QSL cards.

How do you prevent fraudulent eQSLs from being posted? Any user in the eQSL.cc system who wants to have his identity verified can upload a scanned image or a digital photo of his amateur operator or station license, or his SWL license. We will visually inspect it to verify that it appears to be a valid license issued to your callsign. Then we issue an Authenticity Guaranteed certificate and put the Authenticity Guaranteed logo onto each outgoing eQSL. This is the equivalent of a digital signature.

How does eQSL.cc make any money at this? Our expenses are covered by a few select advertisers and by donations from users who find our service valuable.

Why don't you just list all the QSL cards? In order for electronic QSL cards to become widely accepted by contest and awards authorities, there must be sufficient security in place to prevent fraud. So we cannot just list all the cards. Besides, with over 100 million cards in our database, it would take months to display them all on your computer!

If you are a registered user, you can log in and go to your InBox and see a list of all cards waiting for you.”

<http://eqsl.net/qsldata/FAQ.cfm>

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CQ Magazine announced it will accept eQSLs for county hunting credit toward USCA. As noted last month, both LoTW and eQSL are not mobile friendly at the moment. ARRL is likely to take years to change anything in

its format, especially since it is not involved with the USCA award. eQSL is working on the problem.

Hope that clears up a big of confusion about electronic QSLing systems.

Ethanol Engines

Author: Robert Rapier

Ethanol has a high octane rating (103), which means it does not easily pre-ignite. This has the potential to translate into higher fuel efficiencies than can be obtained with gasoline – despite ethanol's BTU deficit versus gasoline.

It is known that ethanol added to gasoline normally causes the fuel efficiency of the blend to drop. A gallon of ethanol contains about 2/3rds of the BTUs (heating value) as a gallon of gasoline, and gasoline/ethanol blends normally show the drop in fuel efficiency one would expect. However, because of ethanol's resistance to preignition, it should be theoretically possible to design an engine with a much higher compression ratio, which could then extract more useful work from the ethanol. Diesel engines are designed with high compression ratios, which are the key to their engine efficiencies of 40-45%, versus 25-30% for a gasoline engine.

Let's take a simple example, to show how ethanol's BTU deficit could be made up with an increase in engine efficiency. Gasoline contains about 115,000 BTUs/gallon. If the engine efficiency is 25%, then 28,750 BTUs/gallon ultimately power the vehicle. The rest are expelled as heat. Ethanol contains about 75,000 BTUs/gallon. One could in theory achieve the same fuel efficiency with ethanol as with gasoline if an engine was designed with an efficiency that resulted in the same 28,750 BTUs/gallon powering the vehicle (assuming same weight, frictional losses, etc.) That means that if the efficiency of the ethanol-powered car was $28,750/75,000$ - or 38.33%, then 1 gallon of ethanol could provide the same power to the vehicle as 1

gallon of gasoline could at a 25% efficiency. And of course if the efficiency of the ethanol vehicle could be increased further, it is possible to use 1 gallon of ethanol to travel farther than one could travel on 1 gallon of gasoline - despite the BTU deficit.

This has been true in theory, and some small scale engines have been created. The Saab Biopower, which was built a couple of years ago, showed that the BTU-deficit could be partially compensated for. The Saab engine was designed with a higher compression ratio, so that on E-85 it showed a 12.5% drop in fuel efficiency instead of the typical 20-30% drop that one typically sees on E-85. The Saab also achieved a reported 20% extra power and 15% extra torque from this engine.

Swedish automaker Scania has been producing ultra-high compression ratio engines designed for ethanol usage, and they reach engine efficiencies as high as 43%. Scania's Ethanol Diesel-Engine, Runs On Biodiesel Too

Scania's compression-ignition (CI) ethanol engine is a modified 9-liter diesel with a few modifications. Scania raised the compression ratio from 18:1 to 28:1, added larger fuel injection nozzles, and altered the injection timing. The fuel system also needs different gaskets and filters, and a larger fuel tank since the engine burns 65% to 70% more ethanol than diesel. The thermal efficiency of the engine is comparable to a diesel, 43% compared to 44%.

That means that if all else was equal (no significant weight penalty from the high-compression engine), a gallon of ethanol could enable a vehicle to travel farther than it could on a gallon of gasoline.

In reality, the comparison is not quite apples and oranges, as these Scania engines are used in heavy, commercial applications.

While this is all true in theory, it won't be achieved with a massive roll-out of E85 capable vehicles. Why not? Because these engines are designed to run on either gasoline or ethanol blends up to E85. Therefore, the compression ratio can't be too high, or the ability to run on gasoline would be lost. The best way to take advantage of the high compression issue would be to develop a fleet of vehicles that can run on pure ethanol, and whose compression ratios are designed specifically for ethanol. That would mean

that these vehicles would be incapable of running on gasoline (but could perhaps be made to run on diesel).

Caveats

I will point out for those who are particularly anal retentive that there are many factors that complicate a comparison of thermal efficiencies of engines to fuel efficiency. While one fuel may have fewer BTUs and get better fuel economy, the reverse is true as well: A fuel could contain more BTUs and get worse fuel economy. Fuel economy is a function of the thermal efficiency of an engine, but one must also consider the BTUs in the fuel, the frictional losses throughout the power train, and the size of the vehicle

Conclusions

As I have said numerous times, my primary opposition to corn ethanol is that only a small fraction of the ethanol that is produced can actually be called renewable. We primarily recycle fossil fuel into ethanol, and encourage that practice by paying massive subsidies to do it. This is the norm for corn ethanol, and it is a false solution to our fossil fuel dependence, rife with undesirable consequences. If we could produce corn ethanol with minimal fossil fuel inputs – as the Brazilians and Indians do with sugarcane ethanol - that would address the majority of my ethanol objections.

There are still thorny issues surrounding soil erosion, aquifer depletion, and the food supply, but let's not kid ourselves. Because of the politics of the situation, we are going to continue to produce corn ethanol. But I would like to see major modifications in the way we subsidize so that we encourage more sustainable practices. If we don't, for the next 30 years we will continue to subsidize as we have for the past 30 years – and there won't be much incentive for producers to minimize fossil fuel inputs. That is, until we run short of fossil fuel inputs quicker than we should have because we have been using them to expand the ethanol industry.

But the point of this essay was to address a legitimate urban legend, which is that BTUs tell the whole story. In reality a modified compression ratio has the potential to give the counter-intuitive result that a fuel with fewer BTUs per gallon can actually provide better fuel efficiency than another fuel with more BTUs per gallon.

Source: Oil Drum – post by Robert Rapier

Riley's Replacement at FCC

From ARRL News, ARRL, Inc, Newington, CT 06111

“Laura L. Smith of Pennsylvania has been named by the FCC to fill the vacancy created when Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, retired in 2008 as Special Counsel for the Spectrum Enforcement Division of the FCC's Enforcement Bureau. Hollingsworth served in that position for more than 10 years as the FCC's enforcement watchdog over the Amateur Radio Service.

A 1990 graduate of the Pepperdine University School of Law, Smith began her legal career with the FCC, working in the Mass Media Bureau and Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. She also served as Deputy Division Chief of the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division. Smith is currently licensed to practice in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In 1998, Smith left the FCC to become Executive Director of Governmental Affairs for the Industrial Telecommunications Association (ITA), now Enterprise Wireless Alliance. In that role, she monitored FCC and legislative proceedings and participated in all regulatory proceedings relevant to the private wireless industry. In 2001, Smith became ITA's President and Chief Executive Officer. While in that position, she was instrumental in the formation of the Consensus Group, a group of public safety and private wireless entities responsible for drafting the "Consensus Plan," a proposed resolution for interference in the 800 MHz band; this was adopted by the FCC in 2004.

Smith returns to the FCC after serving Of Counsel with the Maryland law firm of Shulman Rogers. While there, she dealt with telecommunications matters and provided counsel to numerous entities in the private radio and public safety communities. Smith has served as an industry consultant and written columns for a variety of trade publications including Mobile Radio Technology Magazine and The Private Wireless Magazine.

In an October 2008 letter to then-FCC Chairman Kevin Martin, ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, urged Martin to name a successor to Hollingsworth: "The appointment of a replacement Special Counsel in this position is of critical importance to the Amateur Radio Service, as the delay in finalizing the appointment stands to undermine in very short order an exceptionally successful and low-cost program of enforcement in the Amateur Service."

Calling the FCC's Amateur Radio enforcement program "spectacularly successful," Harrison reminded Martin of the "long period in the late 1980s and 1990s during which the Commission was essentially uninvolved in enforcement in the Amateur Service. The Amateur Service, consisting of some 680,000 licensees of the Commission, is in essence a self-regulating service; however, due to the shared frequency allocations in the Service and the long distance propagation of amateur communications, a very few rule violators can cause severe disruption in the Service. On the other hand, even a minimal Commission presence has a very strong deterrent value."

When Hollingsworth was appointed as Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement, Harrison said that Hollingsworth "established a visible presence in the Service and very quickly, and with very little investment of Commission resources, using little more than the awareness of an enforcement presence, created strong deterrence against rule violations."

Upon learning of Smith's move to the Amateur Radio enforcement role, Harrison remarked that he was "very pleased to see the Commission move forward with the hiring of a new Special Counsel responsible for enforcement of the Amateur Radio Service rules," said Harrison. "Ever since Riley Hollingsworth announced his retirement, we have met with the Enforcement Chief numerous times and corresponded with FCC Chairman Martin to ensure this position remains intact at FCC. The Commission acknowledges the self-regulating environment we maintain, but also understands that we need their assistance occasionally to resolve a few situations. They have continually reassured us that this is an important matter for them, and Ms Smith's hiring confirms that."

On the Hunt for Gold & Platinum

Many who start out county hunting do so with the goal to get the CQ sponsored USCA award. They assume that after doing that, they will go on to other challenges like Five Band DXCC or WAZ, 160M DXCC, DXCC Honor Roll, or similar. What many newcomers don't realize is that county hunting is addictive. You get 'hooked'. After you get your USCA, there are lots of other awards to work for while enjoying the fun of county hunting, and more than half who finish up are still busy on the nets working toward other MARAC awards.

First, as a dedicated county hunter, you then work on your 'Bingo Award' (Master County Hunter) and receive your Bingo number. It's a bit harder to get Bingo than USCA. After you get Bingo, then you can start work on the Master's Gold Award which is even harder to get. Now you are up in the 'precious metals' awards area – Gold, Platinum, and who knows what next.

There are two parts to Masters Gold – working all the counties/working from the counties with a qualifying contact, and accumulating 1500 points.

Wow...now 35 people have Master's Gold Award, so getting counties for Master Platinum is getting easier and easier all the time. N1BY and KD4HXM are 15 away from their MG requirement to get them all.

More and more have their Bingo number, so getting counties for MG is easier all the time, too. [you know you are a serious county hunter if you can explain the Bingo rules to a newcomer without confusing yourself and him/her].

Naturally, you have the 'points' requirement to satisfy as well for both awards. Harry, W6TPC needs about 23 counties for MG. Chuck, AD8W, needs 18 or so. Jeff, W9MSE, needs 45 or so. Charlie, W0RRY, needs 17 to go. You can also be working at accumulating your points toward the award – most chose putting out counties to run up the points total, but you can also accumulate points for MG as a convention host, for doing work for MARAC as a Director or Officer or Newsletter Editor.

For Master Platinum, everyone from day one can be chasing mobiles who have their Master Gold Award. That gives you county credit for the county they are in for the Master Platinum Award. You can start on MP at the same time you start on USCA! Or at any other time after the start date for the award.

Three or four are closing in on the Master Platinum Award itself. Scottie, N4AAT, is down to just a few in Alaska (plus one). Joyce, N9STL, is down to six to go, with 4 in NY State. Darrel, W6TMD, needs 14 or so. Ray, WG6X is down under 60. Bob, N8KIE will be down to just Second AK, and he plans on heading there in May!

There are two parts to the MP award – everyone can be working on the first part – working the counties. Quite a few are down to a couple hundred to go. Darrel, Joyce, Scottie, and Bob have run their 500 separate counties for MP after getting their MG, so they are set on that.

There are lots of needs for 2nd AK from a mobile good for MG and MP. Bob, N8KIE, is scheduled to head there this spring to run all 4 districts. With sunspot minimum conditions, that's going to be the tough one to get unless conditions improve. We'll see how it goes. If you need Second AK, and can manage a cw contact, listen for KL7HBK who gets on from Prudhoe Bay a few times each quarter with a good signal from as far north as you can get in AK. Good for the cw contact, for USCA and Nth time, and the K prefix...but not Bingo, MG, or MP.

Before you know it, 40 or 50 will have 'gold' status. Maybe six or seven will have Platinum within a year.

What then? Nothing to spur on mobile activity beyond that? It's time for the next challenge to appear!

W0BH's Texas QSO Party 2008 Trip

Author: Bob, W0BH

I've really come to enjoy mobile contesting, so when XYL Lorna (K0WHY)

volunteered to drive for me in the TQP, I couldn't resist. We headed out from Kansas Friday afternoon with 33 counties in the Texas Panhandle region waiting for us. I'd planned an overnight stop in Guymon OK figuring rooms would be easy to come by only to find that construction and a sports tournament had filled the town (depressing at 11:00 pm). After 45 minutes of "no vacancy", a room opened up due to a cancellation, so a few hours of sleep became more than a dream after all.

Up before dawn to get the antennas and computers installed in the '91 Chevy Astro van. The rig is an Icom 706MkIIg w/tuner running 100 watts to two Hustler vertical short masts on triple mag-mounts. The CW mast has 40/20/15 resonators, the SSB mast 40/20 (15 works for both) on a manual antenna switch. The computer is running NA for logging with rig control and CW keying enabled.

Saturday was hard work. Conditions were poor in the first three counties and signals were weak on all bands for the first several hours. Conditions improved as the day went along, but no real runs the entire day. With 20 so weak and RTTY taking out CW on 40, I spent lots more time than I would have guessed on 40 SSB and managed to work 54 Texas counties, most of them the first day. Even my one four-county line didn't produce a pile-up although I spent extra time there simply enjoying the rate meter finally hitting triple digits. In Carson County, we hit a pretty good bump in the road causing my hand to bounce on a number of keys totally locking up NA. Normally NA recovers, but this time when I reloaded, NA crashed indicating a scrambled file. I'd been backing up the QDF file after each county, so I reloaded the previous county file and kept going. On Sunday evening, I was able to recover all the Carson county Qs when I fixed the scrambled file with Norton Utilities (two bytes were indeed scrambled).

I probably should have stayed at the four-county line longer, because late Saturday afternoon and evening was really slow with lots of unanswered CQs and plenty of time to S&P. I even tried 80m CW and was surprised a few stations could hear me. When we finally pulled into Caprock Canyon State Park after dark, we found a wonderful campground and campsite where we set up our tent and had a late supper.

Morning showed us the incredible scenery in this part of Texas canyon country. The camp headquarters opened at 9:00, so while Lorna paid for our site, I put Briscoe County on the air. Conditions started out with louder

signals than I'd heard all day Saturday. Then 20 came in and FINALLY I knew why I'd made the trip down from Kansas! As Lorna maneuvered on sometimes really narrow dirt roads through the Texas bush country, she dodged a cow, occasional snakes, wild turkeys and prairie chickens and kept those counties and pileups coming. I just sat back and enjoyed. An experience you want over and over again!

With a couple of hours to go in the QP, we found ourselves cutting through the corner of Potter County near Amarillo on I40. Lorna missed the rest area, so she pulled off on the next exit and we parked near a bridge to work down the pile. After 15 minutes of non-stop action, I told her to head out since we were well behind our schedule and had a number of "rare" counties still in front of us.

With a Heil noise-canceling headset, I don't hear the van starting or running, but I do remember seeing a funny look on Lorna's face and definitely noticed that we weren't going anywhere. It's tough to leave a pileup, but when Lorna said the van wouldn't start, I was suddenly QRT and under the hood. The engine turned over just fine, plenty of gas, just wouldn't fire. Fuel pump? Ignition module? Computer? Couldn't tell. A very friendly Texan stopped to help and still no go. After 10 or 15 minutes, we decided it wasn't going to start. Lorna volunteered to arrange a tow and with nothing else to do, I decided to get back on the air. As I made Qs, I let folks know that POTT would unfortunately be my last county for the day.

The tow truck, a big flatbed type, arrived at 1930Z with 30 minutes left in the TQP and took only a few minutes to winch us up. The operator told us to stay in the van which suited me just fine because that meant I could once again get on the air to finish out the TQP and I did .. tow truck mobile!

The tow dropped us at the auto shop recommended by our friendly Texan who said it was also next to several motels and eating establishments. That all turned out to be true and this time there was room at the inn. No auto repairs on Sunday, so at 7:30 the next morning, I was at the front door and again met several very friendly Texans. They promised to get right on the van and did.

Around 11, I came back for a progress report and found the van missing, so I assumed it was out driving around. It was, but the surprise was that it had

started right up in the morning and the mechanic said they hadn't been able to make it not start. After a number of tests, the boss said that they didn't want to just change out parts, so I decided to drive it back to Kansas without turning off the engine. We did and we made it 400 miles back home with no problems. In my driveway, I turned off the engine, unloaded the van, started the van, backed it into the garage and took out the key. The next morning it wouldn't start again and still won't two days later. Another tow this morning, both covered by towing insurance. This time the van didn't start at the shop, either. End of van story for now!

Lorna and I drove a total of 1321 miles from Kansas round trip and had a great time, even with the van troubles. We both want to thank the members of the Texas QSO Party Committee for their hard work which obviously paid off. And thanks to all of you for riding along. Count us in for next year!"

Singularity University

February 3, 2009 Google Inc. is teaming up with NASA and world-renowned futurist Ray Kurzweil to create a university designed to help people learn how to handle "humanity's grand challenges. They are throwing their weight behind a new school for futurists in Silicon Valley to prepare scientists for an era when machines become cleverer than people.

Google and Nasa's backing demonstrates the growing mainstream acceptance of Mr Kurzweil's views, which include a claim that before the middle of this century artificial intelligence will outstrip human beings, ushering in a new era of civilization.

Proponents say that during the singularity, machines will be able to improve themselves using artificial intelligence and that smarter-than-human computers will solve problems including energy scarcity, climate change and hunger.

Yet many critics call the singularity dangerous. Some worry that a malicious artificial intelligence might annihilate the human race.

Singularity University (SU) will bring students together from around the world to study subjects like nanotechnology, biotechnology, human enhancements and artificial intelligence to see how the technologies can work together.

The university, unveiled today at the annual TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) Conference in Long Beach, Calif., will offer nine-week graduate-level classes. It will be temporarily housed on the on the NASA Research Park campus.

"We are reaching out across the globe to gather the smartest and most passionate future leaders and arm them with the tools and network they need to wrestle with the grand challenges of our day," said Diamandis in a written statement. "During the year, between the graduate summer program, SU will offer unique three-day and 10-day programs for CEOs and executives that will give them the forward-looking radar they need to determine how these key technologies might transform their companies and industries in the next five to 10 years."

The university, according to its Web site, will be offering a nine-week graduate-studies program, along with three-day and 10-day programs."

Working on Awards

Occasionally I check the Special Needs Page, and the TopList to see who is closing in on the USA-CW award, and on 'all 30M'.

30 Meters - A few years ago, we had a burst of 30M activity, then it tapered off to being a band where folks went after they ran 40M CW. Without spots, not many showed up. Conditions seem to be getting a bit better, so maybe more will get the MARAC Single Band Award for 30M. Four have done it so far. Quite a few have under 200 to go, and many have 2500 or more on the band.

On 30M, Ed, KN4Y is at 2885 worked, Jeff, W9MSE is at 2933, Arden, AA0IP is at 3007, and several others have around 2500 worked. Let's keep

the 30M runs and activity going, and get the runs spotted. Even if 30M only gets run in sequence, after 40, let's keep up the activity to let folks move ahead toward the Single Band Award for 30, and rack up counties for the County Challenge Award (W6RK toplist, too).

USA-CW - The other listings I also check are USACW needs, where are posted on the K3IMC web site. Only 100 or so have the coveted USACW award. In the last issue, we had the KA3MMM cw totals for the year. Larry, N2OCW, just finished up on cw this month. Starting only a few years ago, he went from zero to all in just a few years. Scottie, N4AAT, is up over 1500 worked now on CW, and one of these days he'll dig out the QSL cards from 'way back when' and the old, old logs and fill in even more.

AD1C needs about 30 to finish all CW. Henry, OH3JF needs about 30 to finish, too. Dave, KE3VV also needs about 30 to finish! WB4VFN needs only 9 to finish up on CW.

AA8R lists 12 for all CW. Ed, K8ZZ is down to just 2 (Fulton AR and Hardin OH). Jim, N9JF needs about 30 or so. Joyce, N9STL is down to 9 to go for USACW. NU0Q needs under 15 to go! Charlie, W0RRY, needs about 30 to finish.

17 Meters - On 17M, Larry, W0QE is running away with over 600 counties worked to date. Alan, K8CW, likely also is in the running for doing them all on 17M, and with some sunspots, this should be a hopping band. We need the SFI to get and stay above the low 70s for the excitement to start on 17M. Ed, KN4Y, is in the right spot in the country with the log skip, as is AB7RW.

If you look at spots for most of the state QSO parties, you'll see that for most of them, the activity is primarily CW oriented, but no WARC bands allowed there in contests.

So if your weather is good, you've grown tired of staying at home with the winter weather, check the special needs to see if you can't help out the folks with contacts for the various awards. Several others are closing in on first time, or Nth time, and you might be near ones they need.

The Global Warming Hype Story

The Amazing Story Behind The Global Warming Scam -- By John Coleman
(Founder of the Weather Channel)

The key players are now all in place in Washington and in state governments across America to officially label carbon dioxide as a pollutant and enact laws that tax we citizens for our carbon footprints. Only two details stand in the way, the faltering economic times and a dramatic turn toward a colder climate. The last two bitter winters have lead to a rise in public awareness that CO₂ is not a pollutant and is not a significant greenhouse gas that is triggering runaway global warming.

How did we ever get to this point where bad science is driving big government we have to struggle so to stop it?

The story begins with an Oceanographer named Roger Revelle. He served with the Navy in World War II. After the war he became the Director of the Scripps Oceanographic Institute in La Jolla in San Diego, California. Revelle saw the opportunity to obtain major funding from the Navy for doing measurements and research on the ocean around the Pacific Atolls where the US military was conducting atomic bomb tests. He greatly expanded the Institute's areas of interest and among others hired Hans Suess, a noted Chemist from the University of Chicago, who was very interested in the traces of carbon in the environment from the burning of fossil fuels. Revelle tagged on to Suess studies and co-authored a paper with him in 1957. The paper raises the possibility that the carbon dioxide might be creating a greenhouse effect and causing atmospheric warming. It seems to be a plea for funding for more studies. Funding, frankly, is where Revelle's mind was most of the time.

Next Revelle hired a Geochemist named David Keeling to devise a way to measure the atmospheric content of Carbon dioxide. In 1960 Keeling published his first paper showing the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and linking the increase to the burning of fossil fuels.

These two research papers became the bedrock of the science of global warming, even though they offered no proof that carbon dioxide was in fact a greenhouse gas. In addition they failed to explain how this trace gas, only a tiny fraction of the atmosphere, could have any significant impact on temperatures.

Now let me take you back to the 1950s when this was going on. Our cities were entrapped in a pall of pollution from the crude internal combustion engines that powered cars and trucks back then and from the uncontrolled emissions from power plants and factories. Cars and factories and power plants were filling the air with all sorts of pollutants. There was a valid and serious concern about the health consequences of this pollution and a strong environmental movement was developing to demand action. Government accepted this challenge and new environmental standards were set. Scientists and engineers came to the rescue. New reformulated fuels were developed for cars, as were new high tech, computer controlled engines and catalytic converters. By the mid seventies cars were no longer big time polluters, emitting only some carbon dioxide and water vapor from their tail pipes. Likewise, new fuel processing and smoke stack scrubbers were added to industrial and power plants and their emissions were greatly reduced, as well.

But an environmental movement had been established and its funding and very existence depended on having a continuing crisis issue. So the research papers from Scripps came at just the right moment. And, with them came the birth of an issue; man-made global warming from the carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels.

Revelle and Keeling used this new alarmism to keep their funding growing. Other researchers with environmental motivations and a hunger for funding saw this developing and climbed aboard as well. The research grants began to flow and alarming hypothesis began to show up everywhere.

The Keeling curve showed a steady rise in CO₂ in atmosphere during the period since oil and coal were discovered and used by man. As of today, carbon dioxide has increased from 215 to 385 parts per million. But, despite the increases, it is still only a trace gas in the atmosphere. While the increase is real, the percentage of the atmosphere that is CO₂ remains tiny, about .41 hundredths of one percent.

Several hypothesis emerged in the 70s and 80s about how this tiny atmospheric component of CO₂ might cause a significant warming. But they remained unproven. Years have passed and the scientists kept reaching out for evidence of the warming and proof of their theories. And, the money and environmental claims kept on building up.

Back in the 1960s, this global warming research came to the attention of a Canadian born United Nation's bureaucrat named Maurice Strong. He was looking for issues he could use to fulfill his dream of one-world government. Strong organized a World Earth Day event in Stockholm, Sweden in 1970. From this he developed a committee of scientists, environmentalists and political operatives from the UN to continue a series of meeting.

Strong developed the concept that the UN could demand payments from the advanced nations for the climatic damage from their burning of fossil fuels to benefit the underdeveloped nations, a sort of CO₂ tax that would be the funding for his one-world government. But, he needed more scientific evidence to support his primary thesis. So Strong championed the establishment of the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This was not a pure climate study scientific organization, as we have been lead to believe. It was an organization of one-world government UN bureaucrats, environmental activists and environmentalist scientists who craved the UN funding so they could produce the science they needed to stop the burning of fossil fuels. Over the last 25 years they have been very effective. Hundreds of scientific papers, four major international and reams of news stories about climatic Armageddon later, the UN IPCC has made its points to the satisfaction of most and even shared a Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore.

At the same time that Maurice Strong was busy at the UN, things were getting a bit out of hand for the man who is now called the grandfather of global warming, Roger Revelle. He had been very politically active in the late 1950's as he worked to have the University of California locate a San Diego campus adjacent to Scripps Institute in La Jolla. He won that major war, but lost an all important battle afterward when he was passed over in the selection of the first Chancellor of the new campus.

He left Scripps finally in 1963 and moved to Harvard University to establish a Center for Population Studies. It was there that Revelle inspired one of his students to become a major global warming activist. This student would say

later, "It felt like such a privilege to be able to hear about the readouts from some of those measurements in a group of no more than a dozen undergraduates. Here was this teacher presenting something not years old but fresh out of the lab, with profound implications for our future!" The student described him as "a wonderful, visionary professor" who was "one of the first people in the academic community to sound the alarm on global warming." That student was Al Gore. He thought of Dr. Revelle as his mentor and referred to him frequently, relaying his experiences as a student in his book *Earth in the Balance*, published in 1992.

So there it is, Roger Revelle was indeed the grandfather of global warming. His work had laid the foundation for the UN IPCC, provided the anti-fossil fuel ammunition to the environmental movement and sent Al Gore on his road to his books, his movie, his Nobel Peace Prize and a hundred million dollars from the carbon credits business.

What happened next is amazing. The global warming frenzy was becoming the cause celeb of the media. After all the media is mostly liberal, loves Al Gore, loves to warn us of impending disasters and tell us "the sky is falling, the sky is falling". The politicians and the environmentalist loved it, too.

But the tide was turning with Roger Revelle. He was forced out at Harvard at 65 and returned to California and a semi retirement position at UCSD. There he had time to rethink Carbon Dioxide and the greenhouse effect. The man who had inspired Al Gore and given the UN the basic research it needed to launch its Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was having second thoughts. In 1988 he wrote two cautionary letters to members of Congress. He wrote, "My own personal belief is that we should wait another 10 or 20 years to really be convinced that the greenhouse effect is going to be important for human beings, in both positive and negative ways." He added, "...we should be careful not to arouse too much alarm until the rate and amount of warming becomes clearer."

And in 1991 Revelle teamed up with Chauncey Starr, founding director of the Electric Power Research Institute and Fred Singer, the first director of the U.S. Weather Satellite Service, to write an article for *Cosmos* magazine. They urged more research and begged scientists and governments not to move too fast to curb greenhouse CO₂ emissions because the true impact of carbon dioxide was not at all certain and curbing the use of fossil fuels could have a huge negative impact on the economy and jobs and our standard of

living. I have discussed this collaboration with Dr. Singer. He assures me that Revelle was considerably more certain than he was at the time that carbon dioxide was not a problem.

Did Roger Revelle attend the Summer enclave at the Bohemian Grove in Northern California in the Summer of 1990 while working on that article? Did he deliver a lakeside speech there to the assembled movers and shakers from Washington and Wall Street in which he apologized for sending the UN IPCC and Al Gore onto this wild goose chase about global warming? Did he say that the key scientific conjecture of his lifetime had turned out wrong? The answer to those questions is, "I think so, but I do not know it for certain". I have not managed to get it confirmed as of this moment. It's a little like Las Vegas; what is said at the Bohemian Grove stays at the Bohemian Grove. There are no transcripts or recordings and people who attend are encouraged not to talk. Yet, the topic is so important, that some people have shared with me on an informal basis.

Roger Revelle died of a heart attack three months after the Cosmos story was printed. Oh, how I wish he were still alive today. He might be able to stop this scientific silliness and end the global warming scam.

Al Gore has dismissed Roger Revelle's Mea culpa as the actions of senile old man. And, the next year, while running for Vice President, he said the science behind global warming is settled and there will be no more debate. From 1992 until today, he and his cohorts have refused to debate global warming and when ask about we skeptics they simply insult us and call us names.

So today we have the acceptance of carbon dioxide as the culprit of global warming. It is concluded that when we burn fossil fuels we are leaving a dastardly carbon footprint which we must pay Al Gore or the environmentalists to offset. Our governments on all levels are considering taxing the use of fossil fuels. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency is on the verge of naming CO₂ as a pollutant and strictly regulating its use to protect our climate. The new President and the US congress are on board. Many state governments are moving on the same course.

We are already suffering from this CO₂ silliness in many ways. Our energy policy has been strictly hobbled by no drilling and no new refineries for decades. We pay for the shortage this has created every time we buy gas. On

top of that the whole thing about corn based ethanol costs us millions of tax dollars in subsidies. That also has driven up food prices. And, all of this is a long way from over.

And, I am totally convinced there is no scientific basis for any of it.

Global Warming. It is the hoax. It is bad science. It is a high jacking of public policy. It is no joke. It is the greatest scam in history.

John Coleman
1-29-09

KM9X Quest for Master Gold

The Hunt for Master Gold - KM9X (from K3IMC Forum)

As most know, the only contacts good for Master Gold are those with an amateur that not only has achieved the USCA worked all counties award, but they must also have completed and are awarded as a [MASTER COUNTY HUNTER](#), commonly known as BINGO!

Since you cannot work on your own Master Gold award until you have the USCA and your own Bingo, I did not get started until 4-16-2006 when I received my Master County Hunter award # 279 while in northeastern North Carolina where Judy (KB9MGI) and I went to finish up my Bingo contacts.

Since then, I have really worked on the Masters Gold award, starting that day, with every county I ran that morning counting”.

“It should be called THE MASTER COUNTY RUNNERS AWARD! Working on it, you can actually go to a county you need and make contact with someone good for the award, holding the star and a bingo. Since I run a lot of counties, this made the incentive to run more counties to work on this award.

And run I have...

In running counties and have them count, you must have a valid contact. Here is the breakdown of my "I RAN IT" counties

I transmitted from 381 of the Master Gold counties in 22 states. “

“Some of those late night contacts when we were running after 6pm out west became a "county saver" as without that one contact, I couldn't have counted it.

Ernie - W7KQZ is the top of that list. Ernie once told me that he sleeps about 45 min a day and has the radio on all the time. I can remember so many runs way after dark, where we went off the route to get something for someone and put us way late, no net control, but thankfully Ernie was there. **N7ID Jack and WQ7A** also made the only contact for me many time in IA, SD, ND, etc late evenings.

I have done a little work, in an effort to thank some of you that really helped me out on this award. I couldn't run all 3077 counties! This is by no means a complete list, but mainly the top 10 CHers I have logged for this award.

Call Log entries

KL1V 93

NX4W 93

W6TMD 99

WG6X 108

WQ7A 121

KB6UF 123

AB4YZ 126

N4CD 181

N8KIE 188

AA9JJ 241

This by no means is near all of the "helpers" I have had. Thanks to each of you that are in the log once or 200 times!

A big thanks always goes to those that help clear out the last few hurdles. Terry, WQ7A has spent considerable money on gas and ferry fees to go to San Juan, WA and Tillamook, OR to get me down to 2 left. When you just look at a county name, it doesn't express the trouble it takes to get there! Some of those most notable of course are 2nd District of AK, Nantucket and Dukes, MA (KB6UF on both of those!), Kalawao, HI, etc.

San Juan, WA, a group of islands, didn't bring the immense effort to mind as the others do now after research on them. AI5P wrote a fantastic story on the time, and costs of his trip to Dukes and Nantucket a few years ago. What an eye opener! Sometimes, especially for newbies, it just looks like you need a mountain of county names filled in the log and they all look the same!

I know as others do from running counties, some of these generic names really are a bear to get ran, costly time consuming, sometimes dangerous (did he really have a shotgun pointed at us on the porch while his wife was screaming and running towards us??!!)

Thanks also to N7ID Jack for going to the last two for the WBOW in Washington, in January no less! A four day trip into the winter wonderland. With the crappy conditions on 20m, and unpredictable snow storms in the mountains this time of year, this was a real gamble."

Now it's done, I know how hard the other 34 Master Gold holders had to work to obtain the award. I have over 90,000 miles driven so far and ran over 3500 counties on 20m and 40m and even a few of those dreaded "Country and Western dit dit contacts."

But look how many miles and counties the others have done in order for me to get those counties! Now I have 500 more counties to run at least to qualify for the Master Platinum award and almost 800 left to get. There is still more CHing left!"

De KM9X

- - - - -

de N4CD

And after you get your Master Platinum Award? After you run 500 separate counties, with a qualifying contact, for MP? Then what? What will keep the mobiles out there running, after they have MP, and have run all the counties? Quite a few are coming up on that point. There won't be challenges left as nothing appears in the Awards Pipeline at this point.

For Dan, he now has to give out 500 separate counties, making a contact good for MP from that county – which would include, for example, every county in his home state of IN (92), plus all of IL(102), plus all of KY (120), all of OH (88), plus roughly another 100 counties to meet the requirements for Master Platinum. With 35 MG holders, it is easier these days, but those early morning and late night contacts can be problematic! It's a challenge.

Iridium's satellite collision

"Wow: two satellites have collided in orbit, destroying both," said Phil Plait in *Discover* magazine. It was the first crash between two intact spacecraft, ever. The satellites—an old Russian Cosmos satellite and an Iridium satellite, one of a fleet of communication satellites launched by Motorola in the late 90s and early 2000s—slammed into each other over Siberia at 17,500 miles per hour, "which is pretty dang fast." The result was a "total wipeout."

As you might expect, this made space a bit messier, said Paul Rincon in BBC News. The crash created thousands of new pieces of debris, adding to the 17,000 man-made objects now orbiting the planet. The satellites were flying nearly 500 miles up. That's more than twice as high as the International Space Station, so the threat to the space station is low.

But by NASA's reckoning, said Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, orbiting debris is already "the most serious threat to flights by manned U.S. space flights—greater even than the take-off and re-entry phases of a mission." So with each new smattering of space junk the danger to all spacecraft only grows.

This is “still a big deal.” With no clear way to safely handle all the junk orbiting the planet, this crash—though a rare and low-probability event—is in all likelihood a harbinger of more orbital disasters to come.”

http://www.theweek.com/article/index/93177/Iridiums_satellite_collision

Observers expected a collision sooner or later, given the number of dead and defunct satellites beyond anyone's control in various orbits. Less than 10% of the 18,000 objects monitored in low- and high-Earth orbits are working satellites - the rest are dead craft, spent rocket stages and debris. Only the active ones can be controlled, or potentially moved to avoid space junk. The Iridium orbiter weighed 1,235 pounds and the decommissioned Cosmos-2251 military communications craft weighed nearly a ton. The Cosmos was launched in 1993 and went out of service two years later in 1995. It will cost about 50 to 100 million to replace the Iridium satellite.

U.S. and Russian officials traded shots Thursday over who was to blame for a huge satellite collision this week that spewed speeding clouds of debris into space, threatening other unmanned spacecraft in nearby orbits.

Scientists had put the probability of collision at about 1 in a million for Iridium. It has now been revised down to 1 in 7000.

Revival – North Dakota QSO Party

==> NORTH DAKOTA TO OFFER STATE QSO PARTY IN MARCH

Stations working on their Triple Play Award or Year of the State QSO Party Award <<http://www.arrl.org/awards/ysqso/>> will want to be on the air on Saturday, March 21 as North Dakota -- always a rare state -- will hold their first QSO Party in 14 years.

"The North Dakota QSO Party (NDQP) is certain to put North Dakota on the map -- and hopefully off the Needed List of many a deserving amateur," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. The contest is sponsored by the North Dakota Radio Association (NDRA) with help from several other North Dakota clubs.

Newly appointed North Dakota Section Manager Lynn Nelson, W0CQ, told Kutzko that interest has been high for starting the event up again. "I had many hams asking me to kick off a State QSO Party," Nelson said. "We are encouraging North Dakota stations to work 20 meters in the afternoon hours. This will help to tackle the demand of the state -- and its many rare counties -- for several Amateur Radio awards, including the ARRL's Triple Play and Year of the State QSO Party."

The North Dakota QSO Party runs from 1700 UTC Saturday, March 21-0100 UTC Sunday, March 22. All bands from 160-2 meters (except 60, 30, 17 and 12 meters) are acceptable. Complete rules and forms can be found on the NDRA Web site <<http://k0ln.com/>>. Don't miss your chance to work one of the rarest states in the country -- get in on the fun of the North Dakota QSO Party!

Source: ARRL Letter, ARRL, Newington CT 06111

Global Warming Non-Science

UN Global Warming Forecast Violates Accepted Principles

Study: UN Global Warming Forecast Violates Accepted Principles

Fri Feb 1, 2008 9:00am EST

NCPA Study Reveals Forecasting Flaws That Make Conclusions Unreliable

DALLAS, Feb. 1 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Predictions of melting ice caps, catastrophic sea level rise and severe floods and droughts are the result of a United Nation's report that violates nearly half of accepted forecasting principles, according to a new study published by the National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA). Consequently, the UN report is an unreliable tool for determining future public policy.

"These dire predictions are not the result of scientific forecasting," said J.

Scott Armstrong, an internationally known expert in forecasting methods from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania who co-authored the NCPA study. "Rather, they are opinions derived from a political process."

The most accepted forecasting methods were determined by internationally-known experts and expert reviewers and are available in the Principles of Forecasting handbook. These principles were designed to be applicable to making forecasts about diverse physical, social and economic phenomena. The NCPA study applied these forecasting principles to audit 2007's Fourth Assessment Report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which predicted big increases in average world temperature by 2100. The audit found that:

- Out of 140 forecasting principles, 127 are relevant to the procedures used to arrive at the climate projections in the IPCC report;
- Of these, the IPCC report clearly violated almost half (60);
- An additional 12 forecasting principles appear to be violated, and there is insufficient information in the report to assess the use of 38 others; therefore
- Only 17 out of 127 applicable forecasting principles can be shown to have been followed by the IPCC.

"How many jobs are there where you can do only 13 percent of what is required and still remain employed?" asked Armstrong.

The NCPA study notes that complex forecasting methods are only accurate when there is little uncertainty about the data and the situation. These conditions do not apply to climate forecasting where temperature data is highly variable over time and space and can often depend on when the data sample was chosen. The authors also note that the IPCC forecasters themselves are part of the unreliability problem, as political considerations influenced all stages of the IPCC process, including writing the final version expressly to reflect the language negotiated by the political appointees to the IPCC.

"As a result of these violations of forecasting principles, the forecasts in the IPCC report are invalid," says Armstrong. "There is no scientific

forecast supporting the widespread belief in dangerous human-caused 'global warming.' In fact, it has yet to be demonstrated that long-term forecasting of climate is possible at all."

The NCPA is an internationally known nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute with offices in Dallas and Washington, D. C. that advocates private solutions to public policy problems. We depend on the contributions of individuals, corporations and foundations that share our mission. The NCPA accepts no government grants.

SOURCE National Center for Policy Analysis

Year of the State QSO Party Award!

A new one on me! From ARRL:

(It's not too late to start!)

Award Program Description

In recognition of the organizations that sponsor State QSO Parties and to encourage all hams to participate in these exciting on-the-air activities, The ARRL announces the Year Of the State QSO Party Award for 2009! This award is available to any amateur that makes a contact with stations participating in their own State or Regional QSO Party during 2009.

Similar to collecting US state quarters, the downloadable, 8-1/2" x 11" certificate has blanks for state flag stickers from all fifty states. The stickers are available as a page of graphic images that can be printed on a sheet of standard labels, Avery label type 5160. As you make QSOs in each state, the appropriate flag is attached to the certificate, until all of the states have been worked.



Downloadable Award Certificate

[Download Certificate](#) as PDF file.

You type your Name and Callsign directly into the form and print it out.

Downloadable Award Sticker Image Sheet

[Download Image Sheet](#) as PDF file

The page of state flag [image stickers](#) is designed to print correctly on a sheet of Avery 5160 labels. Each label is 1 inch by 2-5/8 inches. If you do not wish to purchase the sheet of labels, you can:

1. print the page on white paper or
2. print the page on a single sheet of adhesive backed paper

Then cut the labels out manually and attach them to the certificate.

State QSO Party Schedule – see last issue CHNews

As of July 2008, no State or Regional QSO Parties are scheduled for Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, New York, or South Dakota.

List of Stations Working All 50 States

After the final State QSO Party is held in November, a list of stations having worked all 50 states in either their state or regional QSO party will be posted here. No endorsements or recognition will be posted, only call signs in alphabetical order. To submit your call sign for the list, download the [WAS application](#) and fill it out, showing each QSO made during the year. Email the application to contest@arrl.org or mail it to Year Of the State QSO Party, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

NOTE: Completion of the Year of the State QSO Party award DOES NOT qualify you for the Worked All States Award. W.A.S. requires stricter proof of QSO confirmation than the Year of the State QSO Party award. For more information on the Worked All States award, visit www.arrl.org/awards/was.

Year Of the State QSO Party Rules

RULES

1) A particular state flag sticker may be affixed to the certificate when a contact is made with that state during any of the following:

- a) the State QSO Party for that state
- b) a QSO Party for any region that includes the state
- c) any contest sponsored by the ARRL or *National Contest Journal* after (a) and (b) has passed or if no such event is conducted during 2009

An SWL may claim credit for a state by logging a QSO by a station in that state during any of these events. It is preferred that contacts be made or logged during (a) or (b).

2) Following the contact, the applicant must submit a log containing the contact to the contest sponsor within the time limit specified by the sponsor. Any log format and submission method accepted by the sponsor will be satisfactory. Submitting a checklog is acceptable for the purposes of this award. (See the article "[Submitting A Contest Log](#)".)

3) All contacts must comply with the rules of the contest in which they are made.

4) Contacts can be made using any band, mode, or power level accepted by the contest sponsor. The applicant can self-endorse a particular style of operating as noted on the award's Web site.

5) Applicants that submit a written list showing that all QSOs for the award were made solely during state or regional QSO parties will be listed on the Year Of the State QSO Party Web site.

6) All contacts must be completed between 0000Z on 1 Jan 2009 and 2359Z on 31 Dec 2009

<http://www.arrl.org/awards/ysqso/>

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This would seem to be a good opportunity to use the MARAC Counties Contest to fill in activity for these states. Several active county hunters are in AK, we might get a mobile or two into SD, IA, KS, and NY. Note the requirement that you must submit the contact to the State QSO party organization, even if only a 'check log'! If you missed the first few QSO parties, you have the opportunity to work those states in other contests – and for NH and VT, in the New England QSO Party.

If MARAC could get the MARAC counties contest involved in this, then just think how many more logs would get submitted, even if only for a few or dozens of contacts!

So if you missed a state, what are your options?

The National Contest Journal Contests are as follows:

“The *National Contest Journal* sponsors two popular contests: the North American QSO Party (NAQP) and the North American Sprint. Each contest occurs in three flavors, CW, SSB and RTTY and occurs in most cases twice per year.

The North American QSO Parties are favorites of beginners and seasoned operators alike. With their low-power only, multipliers-per-band format, these contests allow stations from all parts of North America to be in the

running for the top spots. And their 10/12 hour format allows participants to do some great contesting and still have time for other activities during the weekend! Participants can enter in the single op or multi-op categories and have the opportunity to combine up to five separate single op scores into a team score.

The North American Sprints (usually just called "Sprints") are short, intense competitions that challenge the best operators, while allowing others to sharpen their skills. Lasting only four hours and using only the 80, 40 and 20-meter bands, these contests demand that participants be on their toes at all times. The Sprints' unique QSY requirements eliminate the usual approach in many contests of dominant stations sitting on one frequency and running others. These are contests of constant motion. Although there is only one entry category (single op), similar to the NAQPs, participants can combine up to ten separate single op scores into a team score.”

Source: <http://www.ncjweb.com/contests.php>

ARRL Contests include the 10M contest, the 160M contest (Dec), Sweepstakes(Nov) , Field Day(June) , VHF(June, Sept) , and DX (March).

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html>

Here's the deal – for those that want to work on this. You can download and print your own certificate to get started. The ‘stickers’ for each state, as you work that QSO party, require that you buy a box of Avery labels (about \$14 with tax) that will print off a about 36 sets of labels. So having bought a box of labels – here's the deal. Send me a greenstamp and business size SASE, and I'll print you a sheet of the stickers for the award and send them to you. This offer good till the labels run out. Send me email first to reserve your set – first come first serve.

Postage Rates Going Up!

The Governors of the U.S. Postal Service have approved new prices for mailing services, including a 2-cent increase in the price of a First-Class Mail stamp to 44 cents. Prices for mailing services are reviewed annually and adjusted each May. The new prices will go into effect Monday, May 11.

Customers can continue to mail letters at today's prices by purchasing the Forever Stamp before May 11. Forever Stamps were developed to help consumers ease the transition during price changes. Forever Stamps do not have a denomination and will be honored whenever they are used with no need for additional postage for a one-ounce letter mailing. On May 11 the price of the Forever Stamp will be 44 cents.

Rising operational costs make the price adjustments necessary; the increase tracks the 2008 rate of inflation. "The Postal Service is not immune to rising costs which are affecting homes and businesses across America today," said Postmaster General John Potter. "Even with the increases, the Postal Service continues to offer some of the lowest postage prices in the world."

For the average household, the First-Class Mail stamp price change will represent an additional \$3 over the course of the year. When compared to annual increases in other household expenses, such as groceries, healthcare and utilities, the Postal Service continues to be an economical choice for shipping and mailing during tough economic times. For First-Class Mail, there will be no changes in the current additional ounce price, which remains at 17 cents.

http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2009/pr09_018.htm

Peal Oil News

1) **China auto sales seen surpassing US in January (from AP)**

China overtook the U.S. in vehicle sales for the first time last month, a trend that could make China into the world's largest auto market this year.

In the U.S., meanwhile, auto sales in January tumbled 37 percent to 656,976 vehicles, the lowest monthly level in 26 years.

"This is the first time in history that China has passed the United States in monthly sales," Mike DiGiovanni, General Motors Corp.'s executive director of global market and industry analysis, said in a conference call late Tuesday.

For all of 2009, DiGiovanni projected that Chinese auto sales are likely to hit 10.7 million vehicles, more than the estimated 9.8 million unit sales in the U.S. this year

China, with its 1.3 billion people, was bound to catch up with the U.S., population 300 million, sooner or later, and the latest trends suggest it may be sooner than expected due to the drastic contraction in the American auto market.

General Motors is one of China's biggest automakers, with billions of dollars invested in joint ventures and a record 1.09 million vehicles sold in 2008, up 6 percent from the year before.

Struggling GM has been counting on the growth in China, which passed up Japan in 2006 to become the world's second-largest vehicle market, thanks to strong sales to the country's fast-growing middle class.

2) **Ethanol**

"U.S. ethanol producer and grain processor Archer Daniels Midland Co. said Tuesday nearly 21% of U.S. ethanol production capacity has been shut due to weak demand and poor margins.

U.S. ethanol plants with a production capacity of 10.2 billion gallons per year are currently operating, down from a peak of 12.9 billion sometime mid-to-late last year, ADM Executive Vice President John Rice said on a conference call with analysts.

U.S. capacity to make the alternative fuel skyrocketed last year as companies raced to build plants amid generous government incentives designed to begin to reduce the country's dependence on oil imports.

The oil-price crash and credit crunch, however, proved too much for some producers. Many also have struggled with volatile prices for corn, from which most U.S. ethanol is made.”

After filing for bankruptcy protection in October, VeraSun Energy Corp. has shut 12 out of 16 ethanol plants. The company, which used to be the second largest U.S. producer of the fuel, suffered from costly hedging bets on the price of corn and the credit crunch.

Since then a string of plants have filed for bankruptcy protection, including a subsidiary of Panda Ethanol Inc., Northeast Biofuels and, last week, the private Wisconsin distiller Renew Energy LLC.

Source: Reuters News

Nasty Scam

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7872299.stm>

Hackers have discovered a new way of duping users onto fraudulent websites: fake parking tickets.

Cars in the US had traffic violation tickets placed on the windscreen, which then directed users to a website.

The website claimed to have photos of the alleged parking violation, but then tricks users into downloading a virus.

Anti-virus firm McAfee says the Vundo Trojan then gets users to install a fake anti-virus scanner.

Vehicles in Grand Forks, North Dakota were the targets for this new type of fraud.

Drivers found the following message on the yellow ticket on their windscreen: "PARKING VIOLATION This vehicle is in violation of standard parking regulations".

The ticket then instructed drivers to visit a website, where drivers could "view pictures with information about your parking preferences"

According to internet security watchdog The SANS Institute, the website then had photos of cars in various car parks around Grand Forks and instructed users to download a tool bar to find photos of their own vehicle.

But the tool bar was actually an executable file which installed a Trojan virus that then displayed a fake security alert when the PC was rebooted. The fake alert then prompted the user to install fake anti-virus software."

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In Dallas, some are running a fake 'Red Light Violation' notice scam. There are loads of red light photo enforcement systems around here. If you run a red light, or fail to stop 3 seconds before making a 'turn on red', the systems will send you a ticket by mail.

The scam artists send out random emails, telling folks that they have been caught, and that they must pay the fine (\$50 or \$100) by giving their credit card info at the listed web site, or their license will be suspended

Of course, it is a bogus email or mail, and corresponding website, and if you are gullible enough to give your credit card info, within 24 hours it will be run up to the max with bogus charges.

County Hunters – beware!

WG6X - Ray's Product Test

Personal test of the N1GY: Cellular Earset & Adapter Model IC

I tested out the N1GY Model IC Cellular Earset & Adapter for the Icom 706 series today. This item was featured in the Feb 2009 QST on New Products page 86. The unit worked, but from what I experienced during my test it would require adjusting the ALC and Comp to get the TX audio up to anything near the Heil Traveler headset. The receive audio was okay and the TX switch (button) box worked okay. The fine wiring used from the switch box to the cellular earset might become a problem in the long run usage in mobile operation.

With increasing laws concerning headsets usages being passed by state and city it may force the mobile ham operators who use headsets to look for something like this or other designs like bluetooth setups.

I am not sure this unit will meet the goals for county hunter type mobile operating. It might be okay for a back up setups.

Russia's Future Nightmare

“Russia Should Have Been Careful For What They Wished for

Anyone who was looking closely could see that beyond the grand announcements emanating weekly from the Kremlin, Russia's oil and gas development strategy was thin on substance and looking more than a little unrealistic. The first warning came in April 2008 when Rosneft's chief executive stated that Russia would need \$2.6 trillion to develop just its offshore oil and gas reserves between then and 2050, which equated to a yearly expenditure of \$62bn. To put this in perspective, the Sakhalin II project - one of the biggest and most complicated oil and gas projects every attempted and by far the largest in Russia - came in around \$22bn and during the peak of construction was costing about \$4bn per year. This means

that the Russian oil and gas development plans would see the equivalent of about 15 Sakhalin II sized megaprojects running in parallel across Russia for 40 years, executed and managed by just two companies - Gazprom and Rosneft - neither of whom have ever executed a project of such magnitude and complexity before. Even a casual observer would think the numbers to be slightly overambitious, and overly reliant on the performance of two companies with an untested track record of project delivery.

Consider the news which appeared in the oil and gas press in June 2008 that Gazprom had stumbled at the first hurdle along its path to becoming the pioneer of Russian oil and gas development: a relatively simple topside refurbishment of a second-hand platform, part of the first stage of Gazprom's much publicized flagship Shtokman project, was overdue with the budget blown due to the contractor not having enough skilled workers to complete the assignment.

Those with an interest in such matters may also have taken note of the enormous debts that the Kremlin's favored sons had accumulated. By March 2008, Gazprom had accumulated \$41.7bn in debt mostly due to acquisitions, and it is estimated that its current debt stands at about \$50bn. Rosneft was not in much better shape having amassed debts of \$23.8bn, also largely on acquisitions not least of which was the remains of bankrupt oil firm Yuzkos, flogged off the year before in a murky auction. Concerns about Gazprom and Rosneft debts were dismissed by those who would point to the oil price which at the time sat above \$140 per barrel generating massive revenues for the two companies, and the fabled wealth of the Russian government in terms of their foreign reserves and the oil stabilization fund. However, such responses could not hide the fact that both companies were heavily dependent on the western financial institutions to which they owed the debt, and would rely on these same institutions to provide the funding for future developments. It was also becoming more and more difficult to ignore the increased risk premium being attached to loans extended to Russian companies as a result of the government's contempt for contract law and the unpredictability such behavior brings.

Unfortunately for the Russians, by the end of 2008 their lofty position was soon beginning to look less secure than it had been six months previously, and by 2009 it was clear that their position was looking precarious. With the global financial crisis setting in, demand for oil and gas collapsed sending the crude price tumbling by over 70% and taking the Russian energy giants'

revenues with it. And the western financial institutions upon which they depended for debt refinancing and financing their lofty development plans were facing either complete ruin or a desperate struggle to survive. The two companies upon which all the Kremlin's hopes and dreams depended found themselves with diminished revenues and unserviceable debt going cap in hand to Moscow for a bailout.

Unsurprisingly given Russia's dependence on oil and gas, the collapse in the oil price was matched by a collapse in both the ruble and Russia's stock market. Gazprom and Rosneft stock plummeted as the market fell by 75%. The Russian government, which just months before had harbored deluded dreams of the ruble being adopted as a reserve currency, watched as it fell from a high of 23.1/\$ and raided their foreign reserves at a rate of \$15bn per week buying rubles in a desperate attempt to keep their currency from collapsing. At the time of writing the ruble has depreciated to 36.2/\$ (-36%) and continues to fall; Russia's foreign reserves stand at \$388bn down from \$600bn in August, a reduction of 35%.

The Stabilization Fund, designed to balance the federal budget when oil falls below a certain price, was established in 2004 and thanks to booming oil prices had reached \$157bn by January 2008. However, most of the fund was invested abroad and it is doubtful that the investments have avoided the carnage brought about by the financial crisis. Worse, in May 2007 Putin called for more of Russia's oil revenues to be invested in the Russian stock market, including Gazprom and Rosneft. This means that part of the money being set aside for when the oil price falls was being invested in oil and gas companies, whose very fortunes are dependent on the oil price. Speculation abounds as to the whereabouts and value of the money allocated to the Stabilization Fund, and Russians are not hopeful that they will see any of it any time soon.

In response to the crisis the Russian government acted in characteristic fashion: by playing a strong hand very badly. Eager to demonstrate its reliability as a supplier of energy to Europe, Russia entered its annual gas dispute with Ukraine in no mood to compromise culminating in their shutting off the gas flows leaving European customers shivering in the homes during a cold snap. European Union monitors were somewhat unimpressed at having to provide hard-copy papers of their proposed activities to the Russians in advance of their being allowed to work, and the presence of shady third-party intermediary companies based in Switzerland

in place of presented written contracts probably did little to reassure Europeans that their energy supplies were in good hands. Despite Ukraine sharing a large part of the blame for the dispute, Russia came away with its reputation as being a reliable energy partner shakier than ever, looking incapable of handling business matters without resorting to fiery ultimatums and brinkmanship, and with a \$1.1bn hole in Gazprom's revenues.

Seeing its financial position take a sharp turn for the worst, Gazprom is looking to cut costs. Having gleefully helped itself to 50% of the Sakhalin II project, it has now found itself required to stump up 50% of the operating costs. Year-round oil export from the project started in December 2008 but coincided with the lowest oil price in several years, reducing the project's revenues considerably. First export of LNG to customers in Korea and Japan is likely to take place in early March 2009, but some of the gas was paid for in advance and thus Sakhalin Energy will not see revenues immediately. Faced with the unexpected obligation of paying for businesses that it owns, Gazprom has ordered \$300m cuts in operating costs from the development in 2009 and all non-essential projects, such as the third LNG train, have been cancelled. Both expatriate and Russian staff are finding their terms and conditions being squeezed, and many are facing redundancy within the next few weeks and months. Departments vital to the safe and efficient operation of the project facilities are being told to look again at their organization and come up with ways to cut costs, which normally means do the job with fewer people. The Russians who were overjoyed by the new, assertive Russia when Gazprom gained control of the project are now glumly looking at what this means in practice: unpaid overtime, reduced wages, and unemployment. The expatriates are rolling their eyes wondering why turkeys vote for Christmas. Whether Gazprom are ruining their decision to effectively stop Shell from paying for the Sakhalin II project (something they seemed quite happy to do until Gazprom showed up) can only be guessed at. And Sakhalin Energy's ability to run the extremely complex offshore platforms and LNG facility - which require an uptime of 98.5% - safely and efficiently with Gazprom (whose operational experience is limited to running onshore pipelines) calling the shots is a test which will be watched with great interest by those who have worked on the project since its inception and are now being given the boot by a Gazprom HR director parachuted in from Moscow.

If that was not enough to make those employed on Sakhalin Island gloomy about their employment prospects, Exxon have called a halt to the Odoptu

field development, which was currently under construction as part of the Sakhalin I expansion. The reason behind this decision to demobilize the construction team leaving a facility unbuilt are neither clear nor public, but it is widely believed that the Russian government was attempting to strong-arm the consortium into accepting conditions not agreed to in the original contract. Exxon has an impressive record of not allowing itself to be pushed around, and probably calculated that the Russian government needs the revenues from the project more than Exxon does. What effect this will have on the rest of the Sakhalin I project remains to be seen.

In other areas of Russia, the Shtokman project is looking to be put onto the backburner as Gazprom officials say that the project can only proceed with oil prices between \$50-\$60 per barrel. Production in Russia is falling as the western Siberian fields go into decline with too few new projects coming online to replace them. Unemployment in Russia is spiraling upwards as the economy, so dependent on the export of industrial commodities, goes into rapid decline. Anti-government protests are starting to appear in major Russian cities as opinion polls see Putin and Medvedev's popularity waning. Without the injection of foreign capital into developing their reserves Russia's grand vision as being a global energy provider look to remain as mere dreams unrealized. Perhaps surprisingly, the cash rich western oil companies still have an appetite for investment in Russia, and several are showing an interest in partnering Gazprom in the giant Yamal development in Arctic Siberia. Without a doubt they will be far more careful the second (and for some the third) time around and we can expect to see guarantees in the form of internationally held bonds and cost-reimbursable contracts to be commonplace if such partnerships go ahead.

But having spent the past three years assuring its population that Russia is back to being a strong, independent country which does not need to partner with foreigners (a refrain which shows no sign of abating), how is the Russian government going to explain itself if it is once again signing "unfavorable" deals with western oil giants from a position of weakness? Or will Putin and Co. simply allow the Russian oil and gas industry to fall into inefficiency, stagnation, and mismanagement and blame everything on the west rather than admit that the policies they have pursued over the past few years have led them to disaster? We will find out soon enough."

<http://investorvillage.com/smbd.asp?mb=4288&mn=24252&pt=msg&mid=6635187>

de N4CD – keep in mind that Russia was the world’s largest producer of oil, and everyone assumes they can maintain and increase production to meet the world demand for oil. In 1990, Russian oil production declined within two years to less than 50% suddenly. That was then and this is now. The major producing fields are now 20 years older and because of that the need for cap-ex is even higher. That combined with this new go it alone approach may be the setting the stage for an even fast production decline. Even the recent world problems have only reduced world oil demand by a few percent. If you lose a large percent of Russian production, with little hope of increases realistically, and have an economic recovery, the results may be a horrendous uptick in oil prices and large shortages.

Mobile Contesting Program

You might be interested in checking out Chuck, NO5W’s program for GPS enabled mobile route preparation and logging for state QSO parties at:

<http://www.no5w.com>

from the website:

“CQ/X is a GPS-enabled logging program developed for use by mobile operators in state and regional QSO parties. It can, of course, also be used by fixed station operators both inside and outside of the state or region but the features that differentiate it from other contest logging programs are those that benefit the mobile operator. These advantages are best described by considering the three phases of QSO party operation:

- Pre-contest Planning
- Contest Operation
- Post-contest Reporting

During the pre-contest planning phase the operator performs the following steps using CQ/X and a mapping program such as Microsoft Streets & Trips:

1. CQ/X presents an outline map of the state and a list of counties from which a preliminary sequence of counties can be easily selected. As

- each county is selected the list presented for the possible next counties are only those counties that are adjacent to the most recently selected county.
2. Once a preliminary sequence of counties has been specified a sequence of polygon models of the selected counties is exported for importing into the mapping program
 3. A detailed road-by-road route development is prepared in the mapping program.
 4. Once the route is developed a text file sequential list of county line crossing points is developed in the mapping program.
 5. The list of county line crossing points is then imported into CQ/X and once validated by CQ/X will form the basis of calculations of the distance and time to the next county once the trip is underway.
 6. Following validation CQ/X provides a means of connecting and uploading this information to the County Hunter websites
 7. Also following validation CQ/X provides a means of using the county line crossing file to create a KML file for Google Maps. Placing this file on a webserver allows distribution of the route on the internet using Google Maps.

Contest Operation

Once it is time to begin the contest and CQ/X is receiving data from the GPS the program provides the following GPS-enabled functions updated on a default ten second period:

- Automatic detection of the current county
- Modifying all of the messages that are county dependent
- Calculation of the distance and time to the next county line
- Calculation of the distance to any waypoints that the user has defined
- Calculation of the accumulated time in each county
- Calculation of progress against any goal of a specified number of QSOs in each county and a recommendation on whether to speed up, slow down, or stop in order to reach the goal.
- Logging of the latitude and longitude at which each QSO was completed. This is useful in preparing any GPS-enabled QSLs. See the QSL Gallery for examples.
- Pass through of GPS data to a mapping program for real-time tracking of location

Post-contest Reporting

Following completion of the contest the program provides a means of performing the following activities

- Preparing statistical results including time in each county
- Ten-minute hourly rate at each county crossing
- Connection to 3830 for posting results
- Preparation of logs in either Cabrillo or ADIF format
- Preparation of summary sheets in those contests requiring them
- Preparation of GPS-enabled QSLs when requested.

Other Features

CQ/X also includes a number of other capabilities that are not dependent on the use of a GPS. These include:

- Ability to configure all function keys and their combinations with Alt, Ctrl, and Shift keys to minimize use of the mouse
- Ability to emulate many of the keys used by the logging program NA
- Ability to enter QSO information in any order in a single field
- Ability to sequence through the QSO using only the Enter key
- Ability to define your own help information and link it into the help menu including information on speed trap areas, reservation emails for Saturday evening lodging, etc
- Ability to efficiently operate on county lines “

Oil Price Prediction

<http://www.financialpost.com/analysis/story.html?id=6a0d1e82...>

Henry Groppe, founder of Houston-based Groppe, Long & Littell, is 83 years old, a vegetarian and has been a forecaster in the oil and gas business since 1955. And he is not afraid to go against the conventional wisdom. One year back he predicted the oil price would collapse in the second half of the year -- and not reach the much talked-about price of US\$200 a barrel.

Now Groppe, a special advisor to the Toronto-based Middlefield group of companies, has done his analysis and concluded that between now and year

end the price of oil will double. If that forecast pans out, oil will hit US\$80 a barrel, or more than double what others are predicting. His advice to consumers: Enjoy the current low gas prices, because they won't last for much longer.

"Given enough time, it's the fundamentals of supply and demand balances that control the price," Groppe said. "It's just like journalism: 'Get your facts straight,' " he said, when referring to moves inside the 80-million-barrel-a-day global oil business.

He bases his 2009 consumption forecast relative to 2008 on three such factors: the two-million-a-day barrel cut in production from OPEC, the bulk of which will come from three countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi); the four-million-barrel-a-day increase in demand that will result from the average 50% decline in the crude oil price; and the 1.2 million barrel drop in consumption that will flow from the global recession. Put them all together and what emerges is a 4.8-million-barrel-a-day net oil shortage.

On the Road with N4CD II

During the mini in South Texas, I met Bob, N5KUC. He mentioned he was down to two to go for Bingo – Comanche, OK, and Major, OK. After the mini, Jim, N9JF ran through Comanche and they worked each other. That left Major as the last one for the ‘whole ball of wax’.

The team of Charlie, W0RRY, and N4CD hadn't been mobile in months- a lot of them. A quick call to Charlie indicated he would be available on Monday after the DX Contest weekend, so a plan was hatched. I picked him up early (7am) and we headed north up the interstate to Oklahoma City. He would be the lead on SSB for most of the counties, and N4CD would run them on CW, and he'd be the logger.

The weather was good- 60s – with clouds and a bit of sun now and then. It went quick, as the car turned over 220,000s and still counting. About noon,

we reached the county line of Major/Blaine, and successfully hooked up with Bob, N5KUC, for his last WBOW.

Bob, N8KIE, was wandering around in AR/MS putting out counties. Bill, KM1C, ran Bronx, NY. Heard him on 3 bands, then listened on 17M. I didn't bring the 17M antenna along this trip – and there he is about S3 on a 20M antenna. Dang...with the right antenna, he would have been S9. He didn't hear me with only the watt or less the rig would put into a non-resonant antenna. Oh well! Jerry, W0GXQ ran one or two in MN, and there were a few other runs by other mobiles, but activity was slim otherwise.



N4CD Major/Blaine OK

We then headed over to Garfield/Kingfisher line, ran it, then retraced our steps going south, getting Charlie home for dinner. The Cracker Barrel was on my way home, so a Country Ham dinner was enjoyed by N4CD to celebrate a successful run, and getting N5UC finished. Home by 6:30pm.

It looks like there are lots more needs in OK, so maybe we'll plan some joint trips. We had the QRP rig set up, so N4CD, who needs everything again, worked Charlie in every county on 30M. Gas about \$1.70/gal on the trip.

Dan, KM9X, Joe, N5UZW, and others pitched in to do the NC duties all day. Scottie, N4AAT, Kirby, W8DCD, Ray WG6X and others helped out looking in their direction as well when needed. We went up on 20M SSB a few times – not much there – Bruce, KL7D, Terry, WQ7A, San N7PIB were about it. On 20CW, not much other than Jonas, LY2ZZ (599 at times) , PA3ARM, and one or two US stations. Lots in the log on 40M SSB, and same for 40/30 cw.

Future of AK Boonies

“Thousands of villagers in rural Alaska are struggling to survive, forced to choose between keeping their families warm and keeping their stomachs full, residents say. Harvested nuts and berries, small game animals, and dried fish are the only things keeping some from starving.”

*De N4CD: Great headline from CNN News – the ultra lib news outlet.
Hmmm....*

“To get to the nearest store, Ann Strongheart and her husband, who live in Nunam Iqua, Alaska, take an hour-and-15-minute snowmobile ride to Emmonak, Alaska. Their town does not have a store of its own.”

De N4CD: OK...these natives have lived here for thousands of years. I'd bet that nearly all their ancestors never had a snowmobile, or went to a 'store' in their lives!

“At the store, the Stronghearts buy groceries and supplies for the **family for the week, which cost more than \$400**. They buy only as much as their snowmobile can carry. In many stores, 2 pounds of cheese costs between \$15 and \$18, milk costs \$10 a gallon, a 5-pound bag of apples costs \$15, and a dozen eggs costs \$22 -- more than double the price in the area just two years ago. Many area residents don't even bother with fruits and vegetables, which can be damaged by freezing on the trip home.”

De N4CD: Wow...you think the natives 100 years ago had that kind of money to spend at the store?

“After shopping, the Stronghearts pack their groceries into boxes, tie them to the snowmobile, and begin the 25-mile trek home, passing moose, rabbit and fox tracks along the way.”

De N4CD: Hmmm...fresh meat for the taking!

“On top of high food prices, some residents are paying nearly \$1,500 a month to heat their homes. The Stronghearts live in one of a group of Native American communities along the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

These residents and their ancestors have lived for hundreds of years in the Yukon Delta, which Emmonak resident Cindy Beans describes as something out of National Geographic.”

De N4CD: Yes, but apparently the current generation is too lazy riding their snowmobiles to even know the ‘old ways’ of living. I suspect their parents didn’t have oil burners or cable TV or electricity.

“They have always had the comfort of food around them -- whatever they can pick, catch and hunt.

"But in order to have access to all the subsistence food, you have to be able to get out there and hunt for it," Beans said.””

De N4CD: I thought that was what dog sleds and snow shoes were for! For thousands of years, they survived. Now, they want the rest of us to provide them with food and fuel assistance so they can continue to try and live a modern lifestyle on the edge of the world?

“And that requires them to go out on their snowmobiles, which means using more fuel.”

No...it means they might have to actually use the sled dogs their ancestors used for thousands of years! Or walk!

"All summer long we are putting away fish for the winter, by fall working on moose, then setting nets under the ice for winter time. But now, this food

which used to supplement groceries is all that people have, since they can't afford to buy food at these prices."

De N4CD: Wow...if they don't buy veggies and fruit, and don't need to buy fish and meat, then just what are they spending \$400 a month for? Did the dingbat at CNN ever figure this out? Just how did natives survive for 4000 years up there? Without snowmobiles and gasoline and heated houses? Without electricity? Without store bought food! Makes you wonder! One or two generations, and they are totally dependent upon outside assistance it seems.

"So residents have been forced to rely more on these subsistence methods. "

Gosh, it worked for 5000 years. Why not?

"Beans said her brother walks three miles in 20-below-zero weather to check on nets under the ice for fish. The fish is a staple they need to keep themselves fed."

De N4CD: I guess if you want to live in AK, you have got to walk in the cold. If you want warm, move to the tropics! It's cold in Chicago and Minneapolis and International Falls, too. Folks walk all the time. What did they do before snowmobiles? For 4000 years?

It's totally amazing how folks living on the edge expect that someone (you and me) is going to subsidize their 21st century living on the fringes of 'livable land'. As energy becomes more expensive, it will be interesting to see how long many of these villages will hold out. And how long folks will try to keep these remote outposts open. For hundreds of years, Native Americans and pioneers in the eastern USA didn't have a store to go running to for food every week. They grew it, hunted it, fished for it – preserved it for the winter months. Maybe bought some molasses and sugar, and maybe some spices, coffee and tea, but that was it. It's going to get interesting!

From: <http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/02/09/rural.alaska.villages/index.html>

There are many places in the country/world that may face tremendous difficulties as the world runs short of fossil fuels, and the alternatives do not work well in extreme environments. It will be interesting, to put it mildly.

Awards

USCA #1181, Janet, KC5QCB, January 27, 2009
Master Gold #35, Dan, KM9X, January 30, 2009
USA-CW #98, Larry, N2OCW, February 7, 2009
USA-CW III #9, Bob, N4CD, February 16, 2009
Seventh Time #13, Silver, N9QS, February 13, 2009
Seventh Time #14, Bob, N4CD, February 16, 2009
Third Time #220, Jerry, N5KGY, February 13, 2009
Bingo #314, Mike, NF0N, February 12, 2009
Bingo II #57, Tony, WA9DLB, February 21, 2009
Bingo #304, Barry, N0KV, February 22, 2009

Janet, KC5QCB, announced the following people have received the all mobile to mobile award:

#3 N4AAT 8/13/07

#4 KC0JG 10/15/07

#5 AA9JJ 6/2/08
#6 N9QPQ 6/2/08
#7 N3AHA 11/15/08

Events for County Hunters

Courtesy ARRL Contest Corral, ARRL, Inc, Newington, CT 06111

Mississippi QSO Party RS(T) and MS county or S/P/C www.arrlmiss.org
Feb 28 1500Z - Mar 1 0300Z
CW 3.545,7.045,14.045,21.045, 28.045;
Phone 3.857-862-867,7.238,14.275,21.375,28.375

North American QSO Party Name and S/P/C www.ncjweb.com
Feb 28 1800Z - Mar 1 0600Z

Note: This is an NCJ sponsored event and can be used to fill in missing states that you missed in a State QSO Party from a previously held in 2009 QSO Party. For example, if you missed Delaware, you can work a station in DE, and fill in that state flag on the YSQSO certificate!

North Carolina QSO Party RS(T) and NC county or S/P/C
www.w4nc.com
Mar 1 1700Z - Mar 2 0300Z
CW 3.54,3.74,7.04,7.14,14.04,21.04,21.14,28.04,28.14,
Phone 3.86,7.26,14.26,21.36,28.36

W4MY: “ Just wanted to let you folks know that me, Marty Young/W4MY, and Paul Stoud/AA4TX, will be QRV mobile in the North Carolina QSO Party from 1700Z (Noon EST) to 0300Z (10pm EST) on Sunday March 1, 2009. Our planned route will take us through the following NC counties: Dare, Tyrell, Hyde, Beaufort, Pamlico, Craven, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne, Duplin, Sampson, Johnston, Wilson, Nash, Halifax, Northampton, Hertford, Gates, Chowan, Bertie, Washington, Martin, Pitt, and Edgecombe. They are

listed in roughly the order they will fall in the 10 hour period. You can find W4MY/xxx (xxx=county abbreviation) running on or near 7040 KHz switching to near 3540 KHz sometime around local darkness. There will be a number of other mobiles also in the western part of the state and there is a map on the website of counties to be activated (link below). Years past have activated all 100 counties. There is also an award (plaque) given for the log entry with the most NC counties worked in the 10 hour contest period. For more info go to www.w4nc.com/2009ncqsoparty.html . Please look for W4MY/mobile in NCQP and work us in as many counties as you need. All I ask in return is that you also work us in counties you may not need also to help our log! Will QSL 100%!!! 73 and CU Soon! Marty Young/W4MY Rocky Mount, NC w4my@yahoo.com “

Trip posted on K3IMC

ARRL International DX SSB - RS and state, province, or power
www.arrl.org/contests
Mar 7 0000Z - Mar 8 2400Z

Again, this is opportunity to work AK for the YSQSO award since there is no state/regional QSO Party for AK. It is an ARRL sponsored contest. There is a HI QSO Party later in the year.

Idaho QSO Party RS(T) and S/P/C www.nx7tt.com
Mar 14 1900Z - Mar 15 1900Z
CW 35 kHz above band edge;
Phone 7.260, 14.260, 21.335, 28.470 MHz, plus 50, 144, 440

Wisconsin QSO Party S/P/C or WI county www.warac.org
Mar 15 1800Z - Mar 16 0100Z
CW 3.550, 7.050, 14.050;
Phone 3.890, 7.230, 14.290, 21.350, 28.400.

10-10 Mobile QSO Party Call, Name, county & S/P/C, 10-10 number
www.ten-ten.org
Mar 21 0001Z - Mar 21 2359Z

Oklahoma QSO Party RS(T) and OK county or S/P/"DX" www.okdxa.org
Mar 21 1400Z - Mar 22 2000Z CW 3.545, 7.045, 14.045, 21.045, 28.045;
Phone 3.860, 7.260, 14.260, 21.360, 28.360.

North Dakota QSO Party RST and county or S/P/C <http://k0ln.com>

Mar 21 1700Z - Mar 22 0100Z

CW: 1.805, 3.550, 3.705, 7.050, 7.125, 14.050;

Phone: 1.890, 3.890, 7.230, 14.290, 21.350, 28.400.

Virginia QSO Party Serial and VA county/city or S/P/C

<http://http://www.qsl.net/sterling/ufl.htm>

Mar 21 1800Z - Mar 23 0100Z CW 1.805, 50 kHz+ band edge; Phone
1.845, 3.86, 7.26, 14.27, 21.37, 28.37; 50.130, clg freq 144/220/440.

CQ WPX SSB Contest RS and serial www.cqwpw.com

[CQ WPS good one to get band counties!]

Mar 28 0000Z - Mar 29 2400Z

As usual, you can check out the weekly upcoming contests (for other ones)
at:

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>

That's it for this month's CHNews. Your contributions of CH trips, mobile
installation pics, rig problems/cures, contesting, etc are welcomed. Share
them with the other readers of the CHNews.