



The County Line

ROADRUNNER

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Editor: Dave Heyboer, KF4KW, 521 Pine Grove Church Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101
270 597-2797 kf4kw@MARAC.org

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LaSalle Mobile

By: AD0H

The mystery is solved! Remember the pictures from last month? As Paul Harvey would say, here is the rest of the story.

If you worked AD0H/mobile between August 5 and 12, you may have heard me sign "LaSalle mobile." I know that the net disdains idle chit-chat but you have to admit that it isn't everyday that you work a county from a 1939 LaSalle 4-door Series 5019 with a 322 cubic inch flathead V-8 engine and 16 inch wheels. The car belongs to my brother, Don (W7NG), and we were driving it from his home in Seattle to the Cadillac-LaSalle Club Grand National meet in Denver, 1400 miles away. The route went from sea level to mountain passes as high as 9,658 feet and back down to lava fields and desert heat. These conditions were challenging for radio operating and for Sally (many LaSalle owners call their cars Sally), but a lot more fun than driving a modern air-conditioned anything on faceless freeways.

This was the second time I had operated mobile from the LaSalle. As I did in 1999 when the grand national was held in Santa Clara,

California, I flew to Seattle two days before departure to allow time to install an antenna, rig, and a battery. Most of the county hunters are old enough to recall when cars ran on 6-volt systems, requiring the borrowing of the 12-volt battery from Don's everyday Nissan. Also packed along was a battery charger, which was hooked up every second night in motel rooms along the way. (Yes, I had to carry the battery upstairs several times. The things we put up with in the hobby.)

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The antenna was a Hustler 5-ft. whip (which I had stored at Don's after the first trip), with one of Barry's 20-inch extensions (making the antenna a significant 33% longer), with the bracket for holding three loading coils. Other members of the car club said the antenna resembled a "music stand," and they had a point. The "where to mount it" question was easy. In the days preceding fiberglass, bumpers were made of steel and were bolted to a steel frame, providing a much better ground-plane system than today's cars. However, Don had recently had the bumpers re-chromed, as part of the on-going restoring project, and scratches were strictly discouraged. So I wrapped a 2-inch width of the bumper with cloth, and wrapped that with duct tape, and then fitted the steel strap of a Hustler bumper mount around that protective, but insulated, cover. A ground jumper made from the shield of a piece of coax completed the circuit to the frame of the LaSalle. A quick disconnect and the heavy duty spring (much stiffer than the Hustler version; I wish I could find more of these) completed the antenna. The coax was fed through the lip of the trunk and snaked into the back seat of the car. This crawling around in an old trunk and shifting the rear seat to reach the cable is always the hardest part of an installation.

I packed the antenna parts in my checked-in luggage, including a clear plastic peanut butter jar of nuts, bolts and connectors, and carried an Icom 706-II in a shoulder bag. The 706 makes up in small size what it may lack in intuitive operating ease; it drew no attention at any airports (although recent security measures may encourage me to add the rig to my checked-in bags the next time).

In the 1999 trip, operating enjoyment was curtailed by noise. Those old cars put out ignition, generator, and tire noise, and it was especially harsh on 20 meters; 15 meters was much quieter, but not open as often and no county hunters net. Another Seattle ham told

me about seeing a demonstration of the ClearSpeech digital noise filter. For \$150, it seemed worth a try—and it was. (A special thanks goes to Stacy at Am-Com, who arranged for a last minute Fed Ex Saturday delivery to Seattle after the brown truck didn't make its three-day guaranteed delivery before I left.) At highway speeds, only the very strongest stations were intelligible without the filter, but with it, I could hear anyone who could hear me. The audio sounded a little processed (because it was) and there was a loud rush of sound when switching from transmit to receive, but the little box plugged between the rig and the outboard speaker (and hooked to the 12-volt battery) spelled the difference between many contacts and frustration.

I learned patience operating in the mountains, when stations would fade out before a QSO could be completed. The net learned patience with me, such as the time I announced I was on the county line of Teton and Park, Wyoming. On the map, the line appeared to coincide with the Continental Divide, and we parked right beside that sign, but about a half-mile down the road, here was the sign for the next county—and it was Fremont, not Park. Thanks to net control for announcing the correction to the stations I had just worked. Those things happen.

I also mustered enough courage to try mobile CW again and with better results. It had been several years since the last CW attempts, when I couldn't keep up with the speed demons and keep my eyes on the road at the same time. (OK, maybe those guys are just better CW operators than I am. And from frequent use, those special Q signals were familiar to them, too.) In August, the net members seemed more relaxed and accepted my somewhat sloppy procedures. My CW operation was interrupted for several days when the parts of my Vibroplex paddle came loose and I was convinced that I had lost the small springs in the seat cushions. I

gathered up everything and managed to put it back together in the hotel room; nothing was missing after all. On the Sunday we left Denver for the return trip, I became a CW fan again, and worked 18 countries on 15 and 20 meters during the Worked All Europe contest. Ten meters provided no contacts then or anytime on the trip.

In total, I made 337 QSOs from 35 counties in 6 states. This was six times the 56 contacts made from the LaSalle two years prior. I've had longer runs with better conditions and put out rarer counties from the Midwest, but never from a 1939 LaSalle.

Publishing Policy

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and may not reflect those of the **Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club**. Articles appearing in the **Roadrunner** may be copied provided credit is given to the author and the **Roadrunner**. The **Roadrunner** is published monthly and articles from members are encouraged and welcomed. Articles from other sources are welcome also, provided the source allows re-publication and credit is given to the original author and the source. The Editor reserves the right to edit all articles for size and content. We will not publish any articles that are sexist, racial, or otherwise in poor taste. Direct submission of articles are encouraged by hard copy or diskette using MSWord to Dave Heyboer, KF4KW, 521 Pine Grove Church Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101 or via e-mail to kf8kw@MARAC.org. Deadline for submission of articles and changes is the first of the month for publication in the next issue of the **Roadrunner**.

From The MARAC

Secretary

Renewals

If your mailing label indicates 200205 or 200206, it is time to renew. Dues with a monthly printed newsletter are \$19.00 a year. Dues with the newsletter mailed via airmail to all continents other than North America are \$30.00 a year.

Members may receive the newsletter electronically, without a printed copy, for \$14.00 a year.

Multiple year renewals are welcome. Please make your money order or check payable to MARAC and mail to: MARAC Secretary, **W2LSH**, Norm Ellison, 21140 Golden Pond Road, Long Beach, MS 39560-9012.

MARAC Information Packet

For new members or persons interested in county hunting, a County Hunting Information Packet is available. The packet contains information about MARAC, MRC/QSL'ing, net operations, county hunter supplies, and more. The packet can be obtained from the MARAC Secretary in one of two ways. You may send for the packet yourself or it may be requested for you by a third party. A mailing label or SASE is appreciated. Address all requests to W2LSH, Norm Ellison, MARAC Secretary, 21140 Golden Pond Road, Long Beach, MS 39560-9012. MARAC will pay the return postage. European amateurs may request the information packet from Eddie Scholes, G4KHG.

Changes?

Please send all changes regarding your mailing address, phone number, call sign changes or other database information to the MARAC Secretary, W2LSH, Norm Ellison, 21140 Golden Pond Road, Long Beach, MS 39560-9012.. Alternate method of notification is via e-mail w2lsh@MARAC.org, or via telephone, 228-452-1807. This notification will include the mailing of the Roadrunner and the awards database. Posting the information on the WWW or sending to other sources does not guarantee that it is received at MARAC headquarters.

CQ Magazine

I am very pleased to announce that:

Robert Allen KK5MI has submitted a valid application for USA-CA 3077 and is hereby awarded #1042 dated April 24, 2002. Endorsed

for All SSB. Bob's e-mail address is:
kk5mi@juno.com

Congratulations:

Ted Melinovsky, K1BV

USA-CA Custodian

MARAC

On behalf of the officers, directors and other members of MARAC, I salute the following county hunters for their accomplishments:

Worked All USA Counties 2nd Time

K7TED #300 dated 4-6-02

Worked All USA Counties 3rd Time

K2JG #158 dated 4-16-02

Worked All USA Counties 4th Time

WV1Y #99 dated 3-11-02

Worked All USA Counties 5th Time

WG9A #56 Dated 4-14-02

WB9STT #57 dated 4-16-02

Master County Hunter (Bingo)

NOLN #218 dated 4-9-02

K5CKQ #219 dated 4-13-02

Master County Hunter (Bingo 4th Time)

KC4UG #1 dated 4-15-02

Master Gold

Eldon Hall – N8STF #7 dated 4-15-02

AWARDS REMINDER

When mailing applications for awards to the Awards Manager, please use the post office box address and not Gene's home address. The Assistant Awards Manager has access to the post office box and in Gene's absence, can pick up the applications and begin processing the awards. This will shorten any delay in issuance of awards. Another way to apply for awards is ON line via the internet at the addresses listed below:

MARAC AWARDS

PO Box 2295

Fond du Lac, WI 54936-2295

Or

Last County

www.marac.org/lastcounty

Worked All Counties

<http://marac.org/awards/onlineAppWorkedUSQ.htm>

On Line Data Base

www.marac.org/database

On Line Elections

www.marac.org/elections

President's Corner

Its Election time again

It is the time of year for those who wish to toss their names into the ring to do so – and time again for those who wish to sit on the sidelines just throwing jabs at those who wish to serve... Gee, just as the flowers start to come out of the ground – people start to cry something smells...

This year I have a unique perspective on the election, because I am running again for the Presidency and I am un-opposed. This could

mean that I have been doing such a wonderful job that this is a great vote of confidence... or... as Aaron put it when I told him I was going to run again... Why would anyone run for that office is beyond me!..

So, either way it came from, I am happy to serve another term. I will say this again – that if you have any ideas on what you wish the club to be, become or do – just drop me a line... pick up the phone or stop on by and lets discuss it. I am open to all ideas and try my hardest to keep out of politics (hard to do sometimes, but I really try to be as fair to all sides of an issue as can be done). This has led me to become a target from both sides of the isle, but then I have always been quite a target.. but as long as it is kept above the table I am happy. Some people attack the title and do it on a personal basis... I have broad shoulders and can take it (most of the time).

This election is both easy for me (I won... without trying) and hard to sit by and watch to see who I will be serving with. The only known factors are that an incumbent will return from the North Central District... congrats to John WB9STT who is also running un-opposed. And to Randy, N8ELQ who is also running un-opposed for the seat vacated by Dave KJ8V (don't hide too hard Amigo)... I wish to congratulate both of them and welcome aboard/welcome back.

Now we have to sit and see who the rest of the officers will be. Anyway we look at it MARAC is going to win because we have great people running for these offices. I have elected to stay out of the election this time because I could only loose by getting into the fight. I have friends on both sides running and if I support one above the other... I loose... If I support one and the other one wins office I loose... so I hate to loose, so I say good luck to all of you and I look forward to working with who ever wins.

Now onto happy thoughts. Gail and I just completed our first mobile trip of the season. We met with some friends and ran a bunch of counties. Put some miles on the old RV and seems to be all working great now (burnt up the coax when they did some work on the engine, it hit the exhaust manifold. That is why we dropped out the first day out). I have it spliced and it works great now (unless we step on the "temporary" splice... now I have to replace it ... but as usual – it will probably have to go bad for me to remember to do it. Hi...

I was amazed at all the new calls on the net (been away a while I guess, a bit too long chasing 6 meter DX). Great to hear some of the old ones on and was real nice to be able to go off frequency and chat with some. Had lots of good runs on CW as well as SSB, and great to see some of the guys down there also.

Wont be doing a bunch of travel this year. Our oldest daughter gets married in May – and I am due back in the hospital in either late June or early July to get this dang hernia repaired again (this time, hope old staph stays away!)... So I wont be making it to the national. Someone new will have to win **my** new radio this time ☺ - treat it well...

About all this month... Remember to vote early and often... but seriously, please vote – either on line, or by mailing your ballot to Stan (remember, it cost more to Canada (Sixty cents US)... but please vote – every one counts (except in Florida, they pick their own winners there).

73'
Bill Inkrote, K2NJ
MARAC President

Newbie's Testimonial

As a teenager in the mid fifties, I desperately wanted to be ham. Immaturity got in the way, however. No matter how much I listened to

those AMECO records (anybody remember them?) I never did get the code down for my Novice ticket. I settled for intense SWLing — and enjoyed it thoroughly. The years passed with college, marriage, career, kids and grandkids. Finally, in 1998 I was mature (in all respects) enough to think about ham radio again. I started out as KF4ZDP and did the HT/repeater thing for a while. I soon realized that the thrill of SWLing back in the fifties was hunting down those rare DX stations and getting QSL cards. (I wish I still had all those special-to-me cards.)

I quickly began the upgrade route, saved some money and bought a 706 so I could chase DX again. What a thrill to snag some of those rare ones — like Clipperton Island. I Worked All Continents, got my DXCC with great difficulty. I tried to get Worked All States but found that too many US hams didn't bother to return QSL cards.

I joined a local club but found it to be too social and too political. Another club was struggling but wanted to emphasize overall ham radio and education. They got me into ARES, class teaching and VE testing, field day and JOTA, among other things.

What's all this have to do with MARAC? Glad you asked. One our club's project's is to raise money to build a complete HF/VHF station for the local Boy Scout camp which serves about 2000 Scouts every summer. About this same time CQ magazine Awards Column had an article about a Worked All North Carolina counties certificate. Hey, that's not a bad idea for our club! After checking with Ted Melinosky (K1BV) and others, we decided to go ahead with a Worked All South Carolina certificate. I still didn't know much about county hunting. What could be the big deal? Little did I know! I had tried APRS and found it wanting. PSK-31? Not sure yet. I-Link? Nah!

One day in late February I decided to listen in to the net on 14.336. Whoa! This sounds cool. Let's see what I can do here. I threw out my call — Kilo Uniform Four Yankee Mike. I made the contact, exchanged the signal reports and then slam! Jim, KZ2P, quickly told me, " don't do that here. No Phonetics!" I thought, "What's going on here? Phonetics are de rigeur on DX! I may have screwed up some more but I did get the hang of it even if I was afraid to make many more contacts that day.

Thankfully, Doug, WA4UNS, quickly sent me a very encouraging e-mail that same morning introducing me to the net etiquette, web sites, MRCs and MARAC. Less discouraged, I decided to check all that out and try some more county hunting. What the hey, if I'm going to try this I ought to support the organization. I joined MARAC. About this time I got the World Radio with Ace Jansen's article. What I have done? Do I really want to be involved in all this?

Then I thought back a bit. When I first started chasing DX I also got slapped around a bit — and learned fast! If you want to get on a list on the 14.247DX Net, you'd better throw out your "last two" and you'd better use standard phonetics. Then the contacts require the full call — with standard phonetics. Each Dxpedition I've worked has had it's own routine. The most recent DXpedition, Ducie Island, wanted full calls only. The long and the short of it is, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," wherever you roam. The operative word in "net control" is "control," not net.

From what this newbie can see, the county hunters net is superb. MARAC is a super organization. And more importantly, the people are warm, friendly and giving. I started from zero and I've already made over 200 contacts in one month and most of them are already confirmed! I don't know if I'll ever make USA-CA the first time, much less Jim's 7 times but I'm sure going to have fun trying! I'm already

contemplating putting a rig in the car so I can give back some counties.

Thanks to Jim, KZ2P, for setting me on the straight and narrow path, to Doug, WA4UNS, for those encouraging words, to Dennis, KK7X, for helping me solve the AOL problem with the MARAC Members-Only Page and to all you mobiles who make this the exciting sport it is! I hope I can meet you all face to face someday.

Dave, KU4YM

Ohio Counties on the Air

Over 18 Ohio counties will be on the air the weekend of June 15 and 16 observing the Ohio Covered Bridge weekend. Operations will be during daylight hours between 10 and 5 each day. Stations will be using 1 x 1 special event calls. Information will be in the various publications. Many of these covered bridges are in remote or rural Ohio counties. QSLs from each county and a master certificate is to be issued for contacts with at least six stations. I hope several of my old county hunter friends drop by W8N and say HI.

73, John WA8KIW USACA 798

Editor's Notes

Believe it or not, the original copy of this month's newsletter was sent to Dennis for the Web page, Gene for printing and mailing, and Norm for on the 20th of the month. That put it on time for the first time in the last few months. Surprise! Not to be. Like humans, computers do have deficiencies and May's issue of the Roadrunner had a glitch that Dennis, Gene or Norm could not open it. Checking back, I could not open it again either. Some sort of fatal error had occurred when I saved it to a

CD to save room on the hard drive. Oh well, back to the keyboard and re-create it. So here it is, as best I can do.

I know it's been late the last few months but consider this. When I took the job as editor I was retired basically, running a traffic accident reconstruction business. I could allocate my time as needed and had plenty of time to spend on the Roadrunner. Not one to waste my management skills, I was enticed by very Christian, honest and ethical lawyer to help run his office. OK, a few hours a week grew into 50 hours a week in the office plus 15 to 20 or more hours at home working on cases. Now the firm has grown to 5 times it's original size and we are opening 2 more offices, one 60 miles away and another 120 miles away. So now I am spending more time on the road meeting clients and supervising personnel at the other 2 offices. The good news is I will be able to run more counties while mobile. The bad news is that time available for the Roadrunner has been curtailed significantly. All this time does not include trying to raise the last of five children that is also a full time job. Luckily, my XYL is very supportive of my new found career but also bristles when she reads some of the comments made. Her slant on some of it is not printable here.

There has been some criticism over the lateness of the Roadrunner lately and a lot of it I have big shoulders and can shake it off. But before you offer your comments up on a public forum, why check not with the source as to the reasons and offer to assist? Having to coerce articles out of people is a luxury that is past now. Believe it or not, June's issue is already started and it is only 5 pages long and we are out of material from the members. HELP! Be a part of the solution, not a part of the problem. In other words, not being one to always exercise tact, put up or shut up. -ed.

New Members

On behalf of the Board of Directors and other members of MARAC, I welcome the following new members:

Current Call	First Name	Last Name	City	State	Zip	Home County	MAR AC Number
W5UGD*	Susie	Hoyt	Easley	SC	29642-8368	Anderson	R 3001
AA4S	Ronald	Bailey	Shelby	NC	28152-8230		R 3006
KB0BA	Lowell	Tennyson	Blue Grass	IA	52726		R 3000
W8JJ	Timothy	Eklin	Grand Blanc	MI	48439	Genesee	R 2994
KF7CT	James	Hartwell	Sahuarita	AZ	85629	Pima	R 2995
KC8HWV	Lorraine 'Lori'	Peerenboom	Dayton	OH	45420	Montgomery	R 2996
N3CI	David	Edger	Choctaw	OK	73020	Oklahoma	R 2998
K7VNU	John	Barboe	Grand Junction	CO	81503-2875	Mesa	R 2997
WB9QYV	Rusty	Cordell	Rockford	IL	61109-3044	Winnebago	R 2999
N2KX	Robert	Wood	Watertown	NY	13601		R 3002
W0JAR	John	Ross	Alexandria	MN	56308	Douglas	R 3003
W4RSD	Roy	Dishmon	Statesville	NC	28625-9357	Alexander	R 3004
W5UGD	John	Hoyt	Easley	SC	29642-8368		R 3001
WA0RVG	Richard	Kjellberg	So ST Paul	MN	55075	Dakota	R 3005
N9WLJ	Perry	Myrick	Savanna	IL	61074		R 3007
KD3D	Frank	Graziano	Erie	PA	16506	Erie	R 3008
KU4YM	David	Hyatt	Summerville	SC	29485-6208	Dorchester	R 3009



County Hunter of the Year

It's that time of the year to again cast your ballot for the County Hunter of the Year. This years candidates is the cream of the crop of the county hunters, so the choices are not easy! Ballots must be received by May 31, 2002 either by mail or electronically at www.MARAC.org/elections.

This years' choices are:

SSB:

KC1NA

KI0JD

K4QFK

CW:

WB4FFV

KC4UG

<u>Your Call</u>	<u>Your Vote</u>
SSB	
KC1NA	
KI0JD	
K4QFK	
CW	
WB4FFV	
KC4UG	

Mail your ballots to:

Stan Heinsma
VE1BES
RR#2, Scotburn, Nova Scotia
Canada, B0K 1R0

The County Line Roadrunner
MARAC Secretary
21140 Golden Pond Road
Long Beach, MS 38560-9012

Stamp

A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird

RECIPIENT NAME
RECIPIENT ADDRESS
CITY, ST 01234-0000

Board of Directors

President: Bill Inkrote, K2NJ, 911 Route 579
Flemington, NJ 08822-5648 908-788-4827 K2NJ@MARAC.org

Vice-President: Roger Purdy, W2NWL, 1-B Potomac Lane
Whiting, NJ 08759-1813 732-350-5758 W2NWL@MARAC.org

Secretary: Norm Ellison, W2LSH, 732-920-4796 21140 Golden Pond Road
Long Beach, MS 39560-9012. 228-452-1807 W2LSH@MARAC.org
Treasurer: James Grandinetti, KZ2P, PO Box 106
Lakewood, NJ 08701-0106 732-370-8055 K2JG@MARAC.org

Great Lakes Director: Dave E. Ertel, KJ8V, 605 Crestview Dr.
Lebanon, OH 45036-1613 513-932-7468 KJ8V@MARAC.org
North Central Director: John Robson, WB9STT, 150 W. Wise Rd
Schaumburg, IL 60193 WB9STT@MARAC.org

Northeast Director: VE1BES, Stanley Heinsma, RR2
Scotsburn NS, BOK 1R0, Canada 902-485-6055 VE1BES@MARAC.org
South Central Director: Joyce Booth, WB9NUL, 27883 McLeiland Rd
Harlingen, TX 78552-2108 956-423-8660 WB9NUL@MARAC.org

Pacific Director: Robert T. Devine, 407 Alameda Del Prado
Novato, CA KC6AWX@MARAC.org

Southeast Director: Percy Ford, KA1JPR, PO Box 1450
Lady Lake, FL 32158-1450 352-750-0251 KA1JPR@MARAC.org

Appointees

Awards Manager: Gene A. Olig Sr., KD9ZP, PO Box 2295
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-2295 KD9ZP@MARAC.org 920-923-0130

Newsletter Editor: Dave Heyboer, KF4KW, 521 Pine Grove Church Road,
Bowling Green, KY 42101 KF8KW@MARAC.org 218-387-1546
270-597-2797 or 866-781-7500 ext 23

Sunshine Coordinator: Nancy Nosker, W0NAN, PO Box 98, 14 W. 4th Ave.
Grand Marais, MN 55604-0098 W0NAN@MARAC.org 218-387-1546
Information Coordinator: Dennis Hall, KK7X, 4518 W. Haney Road, Rathdrum,
ID KK7X@MARAC.org

Roadrunner Publisher-Custodian, Club Call WB0DPD: Bob Dyson, K0AYO,
8943 Overhill Circle, Desoto, KS 66018-9173 K0AYO@MARAC.org 913-
583-3212

Election Coordinator: VE1BES, Stanley Heinsma RR #2, Scotsburn, NS BOK
1R0, Canada VE1BES@MARAC.org

MARAC General Counsel: David Splitt, KE3VV, 6111 Utah Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20015-2461 KE3VV@MARAC.org 202-362-3355
MARAC Webmaster: (See Information Coordinator)