



THE COUNTY LINE

ROADRUNNER

Published Monthly by the Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club, Inc.



Volume XXXIII

November 2002

Number 11

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Bill K2NJ

Sad, Sad, Sad

I got an email from someone who, I thought was a friend of mine – who took offense to my column last month. I re-read every word of the column three times since I got his email and I'll be damn if I can find what he is mad at.

He said **“only dirty politics I have seen in MARAC elections has come from your side of the fence. Why did you not just let the dead horse die, instead of rubbing the mess in our face.”**

I read and re-read the column and there it was under the Election Coordinator where I said **“Not an easy task with some of the dirty politics of late (where someone joins MARAC, vote, and when their candidates lost, they then resign from MARAC and want their money back – Yep we have some of them in our midst).”**

I wrote back to him and told him I don't understand why he is angry. Ya see – This person I referred to in last month's column QUIT MARAC... then she re-Joined just prior to the election and then after the results were published... QUIT AGAIN and asked for her money back. Like we were supposed to not know why she re-joined, and then again threw this in our faces and re-quit.... There are no provisions in the C&BL to prevent this... Only common courtesy and decency... but then, maybe — nah, never-mind...

He then in his next email to me agreed this was not right... but then said it was dirty that Norm and Jim sent emails (and letters) out using the MARAC database. What he failed to mention was that as soon as I found out about this I told Jim and Norm this was not right and I emailed all the candidates and told them that the MARAC database would be made available to them if they wished. They declined the invitation. So how is this dirty politics??? Please tell me, because I am confused.

I hate politics (funny for a President of a club to say this eh?). I hate political advertisements and campaigning with negative adds where a candidate comes out and says something as innocent as **“ I like to watch old Steam trains go by”** and the other side run campaign adds saying



MINUTES OF THE October 9, 2002 MEETING Norm Ellison , W2LSH

The Meeting of the MARAC Board of Directors was called to order at 0800 PM EST (0100Z) by Bill (K2NJ).

The Officers present were:

President Bill Inkrote – K2NJ
Vice President Bob Voss – N4CD
Secretary Norm Ellison — W2LSH
Treasurer Jim Grandinetti – KZ2P
Great Lakes Director

Randy Davis – N8ELQ

North Central Director

John Robson – WB9STT

Northeast Director

Stanley Heinsma – VE1BES

Southeast Director

Percy Ford – KA1JPR

South Central Director

Joyce Boothe – WB9NUL

Pacific Director Robert t. Devine – KC6AWX

The Members present were:

Dennis (KK7X), Hugh (K8GPC), Dave (KE3VV)
Chuck (W3CR), John (W5UGD), Ed (NT9V)

Upon a motion by Bob (N4CD) and seconded by Jim (KZ2P) the minutes of the September 11, 2002 meeting were approved. Roll call indicated 8 in favor, 0 opposed.

Upon a motion by Bob (N4CD) and seconded by Joyce (WB9NUL) the Treasurer's report of September 30, 2002 was accepted. Roll call indicated 7 in favor, 1 abstention and none opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

A: Upon a motion by Bob (KC6AWX) and seconded by Norm (W2LSH) the Board authorized Roger (W2NWL), the Road Runner Editor, to purchase a new laser printer. Roll call indicated 8 in favor none opposed.

NEW BUSINESS

A: Recommendations from the Awards Manager and the Awards Committee:

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(President Continued from page 1)

that “**Bill contributes to air pollution by fostering coal burning power plants**”... you all know the type of adds I am talking about... It really makes me want to just turn off the TV and stop reading papers, forums etc...

I try to separate the running of the club from the push-n-pull of the different sides of the isle. I have always tried to be as middle of the road as possible (even with the personal attacks – non truth and totally out of content attacks were going on during the election time)... Every decision I have made was with the good of MARAC, and not anyone’s political fate in mind. I don’t want to rehash this, and that is not the issue here. I am just taken aghast by someone taking issue with last month’s column where I praised volunteerism. I still don’t get it, and as Gail tells me – you have 99% of the people behind you, and the other 1% you will never get, so why waste your time on them (and believe me, I spend about 90% of my time on these 1%er’s – well, until now I have anyway). And before someone accuses me of not listening to the members, I do read and will continue to read **EVERY** mail/email I get. I may not like what I read, but I do read it.

Back to the task at hand.... John, K6OHM also wrote to me and said I was correct... I would forget to mention someone while patting people on the back. Your right John, and that is why I put that caveat in there... to cover my butt for forgetting to mention some and I know there are others (see, another weasel move on my part)... The **Convention Conveners**.. Your so correct John... These people bust their butts so that when we show up, everything is running smooth and we have nothing but a good time... Since my tenure the conventions in Idaho, Virginia, Michigan and California have gone off without a hitch. Looking now to Indiana and Texas, these people sure have their work cut-out for them to even try to measure up to the high standards put out by their predecessors. Not only are the National convention people to be thanked but also the fellas and gals that year after year put on the mini’s. Some people only get brain dead once but these guys do it year after year. When are they going to learn???

But seriously, one hell of a job and I applaud you and your staff. I know that Willy KM4W and his crew have done a wonderful job at 3M year in and year out. I have had the privilege of attending their fine shindig for two years, but then as things would have it – they were forced to change the date and this prevents me from attending it again this year (damn)... This is the premiere maxi-mini that stories are told for generations. Not to forget Joyce and Barry and their Texas crew (who by the way are stepping up to do the National in 2004 along with the

Mini) and Paula and crew up there in Holland always during the Tulip time... Great job all ... So, who else did I forget?

I just got off the phone with Gene (KD9ZP) as we discussed the BOD vote coming up Wednesday evening about the proposal of W3CR wanting to discriminate against two-meter FM contacts for LCA etc... I know I made my feelings known to the BOD in the letters we write back and forth between eachother (like I said before, where it looks like we are all in lockstep in the meeting and all is well and we are all happy... yada yada). I do not want to discriminate against anyone – let alone the guys who chase VHF counties. This is not the intent of Chuck’s proposal – as I found out from Gene - It is to stop some of the members who run an entire state – working eachother on 2M FM from each county and NOT putting a dang one of them out to the public on HF. Chuck, you are correct in being angry with this practice. I know it peeved me off to hear about it going on and it just aint right.. Here this couple gets credit for putting out these counties by working eachother on 2M... Just as if they ran each county on 20M and worked 200 people from each... they count the same... **THIS IS NOT RIGHT.** But before we go and ban 2M-FM contacts... How many couples work eachother on 2M either right before or after they work the world on 20M? This is the only way they can work eachother, because most of us do not have two separate HF setups in our cars. Should we penalize everyone because one couple does something I find repugnant? I vote no, we don’t need any more restrictions.. If someone wants to find loopholes or shortcuts – let them. It really doesn’t hurt me any does it? If we make a rule or fill every loophole, the only ones we hurt are the guys going by the rules. You see it every day when your doing the speed limit and get passed... Your gonna have someone always pushing the envelope – let them do it... sometime – someplace there gonna get caught and you can smile and wave to them as they are sitting there explaining to the police officer why they were speeding ... wave twice – once for me...

Thanks To All

Thank you to WG6X for all his phone calls to get a tow truck to me when I was stalled coming home from TN. This is not an easy task on Sunday. Also all his good advise telling me not to try run the car as it could be serious (which it was). Also to WA4IDT who would not leave 72.43 and me until the tow truck had me hooked up and ready to tow off. His concern for a women traveling alone was very gratifying. Thank you to all you wonderful county hunters who expressed your concern while I was broke down and expression of happeniness when I was finally back on the road again. You proved to me what it really meant to be a county hunter once again. Thanks all, Carol KI0JD

(Minutes Continued)

1. The MARAC USA- Counties award to be eliminated on January 1, 2003.

Bill (K2NJ) stated, with the approval of the BOD, that he would contact the Awards Manager and direct him to continue to issue the Award (numbered concurrently with CQ's award). Bill will ask the Awards Manager for further clarification of this proposal. The BOD approved this action. Roll call indicated 7 approved, none disapproved, one abstention.

2. Masters Platinum Award (New)

There was much confusion expressed by the BOD about the wording of this Award. Bill (K2NJ) called for a motion to send this Award back to committee for further clarification. Bob (N4CD) so moved, second by Jim (KZ2P) Roll call indicated 6 in favor sending it back none opposed, 1 abstention.

3. MARAC Senior County Hunter Award (New)

The majority of the BOD thought that this Award was too restrictive. (K2NJ) called for a motion to send this Award back to committee for further revisions. Bob (KC6AWX) so moved, second by Bob (N4CD) Roll call indicated 5 in favor sending it back none opposed, 1 abstention.

B: The MARAC Election Coordinator would like the BOD to reconsider its previous position removing the separate ballots post cards from the RoadRunner.

Randy (N8ELQ), the Election Coordinator, indicated that there are very few ballots being cast since eliminating the post cards.

Jim (KZ2P) made a motion that we insert post cards for the next quarterly ballot for NC, Mobile Ops and Teams and have the EC report back to the BOD with the results of the number of ballots received compared to previous quarters. Percy (KA1JPR) seconded the motion. A roll call indicated 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention.

C: A motion was made by Norm (W2LSH) second by Jim (KZ2P) to send \$300 to KK5MI for the South Central Mini. A roll call indicated 6 in favor, none opposed.

OPEN MEETING

Nothing at this time. With no further Business to come before the Board Norm (W2LSH) moved that we adjourn. Seconded by Bob (KC6AWX) the motion Carried, 6 in favor, none opposed.

We adjourned at 09:15 EDT.

Respectfully Submitted, Norm Ellison W2LSH,

Major Awards Issued For The Month Of October

KD9ZP - Awards Manager

Award	Number
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LC-1	227
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LC-2	14
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LC-3	9
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All Others	14
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Call	Date	Award	Number
WB0CQO	10/3/02	BINGO	222
KB6UF	10/17/02	BINGO	223
K7TED	10/24/02	Last County 100	174
WG6X	10/24/02	Last County 200	75
K5VYT	10/24/02	Last County 225	57
KA9JAC	10/29/02	Last County 25	389
K2HVN	10/9/02	Last County 300	36
WW0G	10/9/02	Last County 50	260
KD5CXO	10/29/02	Last County 50	261
K9DAF	10/9/02	Last County 75	189
N4CD	10/9/02	Last County 875	3

N3ISH	10/3/02	CQ: USA – CA, MARAC 1 st Time	1053
WA4VOC	10/12/02	CQ: USA – CA, MARAC 1 st Time	1054

KA7AKJ	10/7/02	Worked all Counties - 3rd Time	163
N1FJR	10/10/02	Worked all Counties - 3rd Time	164
WW0G	10/10/02	Worked all Counties - 3rd Time	165
W0DFK	10/10/02	Worked all Counties - 4th Time	103
W6TPC	10/17/02	Worked all Counties - 4th Time	104
KA9PZS	10/28/02	Worked all Counties - 5th Time	60
KA4NZG	10/29/02	YL Mobile	250 Counties
KC4UG	10/8/02	Presidents	
WG6X	10/20/02	Merit Cat 1 – From KI0JD	
Car Breakdown			
WA4IDT	10/20/02	Merit Cat 1 – From KI0JD	
Car Breakdown			

Function	URL
MARAC – Home Page	www.marac.org
Application - Last County	www.marac.org/lastcounty
Application – Worked All Counties	www.marac.org/wkallcounties.htm
N8EIAApplication - Membership	www.marac.org/membership
N8EIElections	www.marac.org/elections
MARAC Database	www.marac.org/database

DATELINE CW

By KN4Y

The weather was great until the last day of the Twenty-Second Southeast Mini Convention known to all as the 3M. A light mist was falling as I left the site but an hour down the interstate it cleared and the sun came out. It was a great convention but it is always good to get back home. I knew Gator had seen me come down the back road, I hear his straight pipe exhaust barking at the moon. I hate to open the cooler after setting in a hot shack for four days. Gator slides to a stop just outside the shack, his ninety-six inch whip making Zorro sound like an amateur.

I leave the door open until the air conditioner can make it bearable. I give a wave and yell, "Come in Gator." "Hey Dude, glad you are back safe and sound, how be the mini? Was Al and Jerry there?" Gator has a six pack of spirited lemonade and pops the top on two of them. A good sip of a cool drink is always refreshing in a hot shack. "They sure were. Al said hello and Jerry thought you had been in the slammer." "I have been in the way back forty trying to grow the century plant." "AGAVE, what the heck for?" "Think of making some tequila. Tell me about the 3M. "Gator glances at the desk and yells, "WHAT IS THIS?"

"That is my ticket stub for the Grand Ole Opry." Gator is about to go ballistic, "YOU went to the OPRY?" "Yes that is what I said." The Opry is Gators favorite happening, he watches the Opry on television every week. I get two more lemonade to give Gator time to settle down, "Was Porter Wagoner there?" "Yes, and Jimmy Dickens and Bill Anderson. Trisha Yearwood sang three songs," That did it, Gator takes out a chew of tobacco to settle down. He stares into space like a bulldog on steroids. "How be it you went to the Opry?"

"County hunter Ralph, WB4FFV, set the whole trip up." "Ralph or his wife?" "Ralph said he did it, but who did it matters not. We went to the Opry." "There be a trip next year?" "Probably." "Can I go?" "Get your license." Gator ignores me and gets two more lemonade. "What else did you do at the Mini?"

The air conditioner has cooled down the shack so I shut the door I do not want anything unlicensed flying around. I sit down in my recliner and point to the chair, Gator sits down. "Most of our time was spent enjoying fellowship in the hospitality room while washing down snacks with various liquids." "Getting smashed."

I give Gator the New York salute, "Saturday was the meeting day." "Did you all have a CW meeting and I bet AL was the commentator." "No, Bob, N4CD, was the commentator. We discussed various net operating pet peeves." "You all do that every year." "Yes, one of the items discussed was the first person to work a mobile should announce the location of the mobile. The person does not have to act as net control unless they want too. The other items we discuss at every meeting, for instance, code speed and how to check into the net. The recommended method is to ask CHN QRL?, and if no reply start running the county."

Gator is still thinking about Trisha Yearwood. "Did that antenna Dude from Texas talk about antennas?" "You mean Barry, he did a great job as usual." "Did you learn anything?" "No. But you remember when all the SWR's fell out of the mobile rig. I collected them in a cut in half bleach container. I asked Barry what I could do with them. He gave me some negative Db paint and I can make net enhancers." "You be pulling my leg. What you do next?"

I get a couple more lemonades. I think I will have to go to the store tomorrow and get some snacks. I continue, "Also a bunch of county hunters went to Mary Bobo's restaurant as usual." "You go?" "No, been there, done that." Gator pulls his pager out, "Got customers, have to run. Will talk to you later." Gator is out the door and over the roar of his exhaust I hear, brain cells come and brain cells go, but fat cells live forever. Dang it. I forgot to tell Gator that Ken, KC4UG relinquished the annual 3M ugliest county hunters trophy to Ray, WG6X.

This was a great convention. Bill Bell, KM4W, again put a great one together. There were 176 county hunters signed up and 160 made it to the banquet. Next year it will be October 16,17,18, 2003. I better make my calendar right now. I need to log the great 40 meter contacts made while mobile. Maybe tomorrow. I need to see if anything was in the cooler. Maybe tomorrow.

NOTICE

In the December issue you will find the next quarterly ballot for the MARAC Annual Awards. In the printed copy there will be a card inserted for you to use. The on line version will have the ballot on the back page in place of the officers list. Please use the ballot. "PLEASE VOTE"

**Mobile Amateur Radio
Awards Club
Treasurer's Report
October 31, 2002**

Funds Balance 9/30/02 \$28,452.76

Income:

Awards	\$738.00
Dues	\$809.00
Interest	<u>\$17.73</u>
	\$1,564.73

Expenses:

Gene Olig – expenses	\$128.71
Norm Ellison - expenses	\$258.99
Nancy Nosker - sunshine expenses	\$75.42
Roger Purdy - Road Runner printer	\$794.98
Bob Allen - SW Mini	\$300.00
Fairmont Awards - awards	\$387.25
Stafford Engraving - awards	\$39.00
Print Rite, Inc – newsletter	<u>\$481.94</u>
	\$(901.56)

Account Balances: \$27,551.20

Money Market Account \$26,176.78

Checking Account \$1,374.42

\$27,551.20

Note:

The following monies are not included in the above:

Awards Chairman's Funds \$1,200.00

Convention Chairman's Funds \$2,500.00

New Members

R-3051 WB5CYS Cal P Barton 1907 S. Robertson
Tyler, TX 75701 Smith wb5cys@arrl.net

R-3052 N9QEI Raymond E Mott 622 N 4th Street
Vincennes, IN 47591 Knox raymott@bestonline.net

R-3053 N2WMD John S VanZandt 6916 Qualified
Lane Bartlett, TN 38135-3025 Shelby
scott@vzandt.net

R-3054 K7GA Geoffrey L Morse 1302 322nd Place
Ocean Park, WA 98640 Pacific
mrmorse@willapabay.org

R-3055 KC9CNG Jim Zacher 39W 345 Central Dr.
Elgin, IL 60123 Kane n9jz@arrl.net

**REMEMBERING 50 YEARS OF HAM
RADIO**

By Bill Herbert, WA2ZYM

I was sitting in the truck trying to get a readable signal from the net the other day when it hit me – I had been a ham for 50 years. I then had the idea of putting some of my experiences down on paper. Maybe someone might enjoy some of them.

While some of these experiences are probably unique to me, many are not. I am sure other hams have operated for as long or longer than I have and I know many have operated from more exotic locations or more unusual circumstances. I also know that many, many hams have accomplished much more in the way of awards, ARRL activities, club participation, etc. than I have done. However, I have always looked on ham radio as a hobby – something done at leisure. There have been times over the years when I have been very active and involved. There have also been long periods of time when the hobby was more or less an afterthought. But I have enjoyed all of it.

Fifty years - That's half a century and believe it or not I can remember almost all of it, including getting my first ham ticket. The circumstances were memorable to say the least. In those days (1952) you had to go to the FCC office to get a license or wait for one of the examiners to make an infrequent trip to a large city near your home. I was a college freshman at the time (Manhattan College) in New York City. After some intensive study, I cut classes one bright morning and took the subway down to the FCC office in NYC.

I arrived at the office about ten minutes before it opened. As luck would have it the first person to show up was the district examiner. He greeted me, opened the place up and sat me down for the exam. His suggestion was to "let's do the code test first – without that the rest is a waste of time". I took his friendly smile with a grain of salt. After all this was UNCLE. I was to be proven wrong very quickly. In those days you had to pass the whole thing at once or wait 30 days to take it over. No certificates of completion! Nervously I agreed with him. Now at the time you had to both send and receive. He had me receive first. I flunked. The examiner decided that I had come very close and no one else was there so "let's try one more time" I didn't realize it then but he sent the second test group about twice as fast as the first. I still flunked.

(Continued on page 6)

(50 Years Continued)

He then asked me to send to him since I had only missed by a letter or two. He said that if I could send well he would try one more time with the receiving. Still no one else in the office. I took the key (a straight key) and proceeded to send the text that he gave me. With a strange look on his face he suggested that we go and get a cup of coffee down the hall. He said I needed to relax. I was ready for the bad news.

Over coffee he asked me what I did for a living. When I told him I was in college he wanted to know what I did during vacations. I told him, truthfully, that I was a telegraph operator for the New York Central Railroad.

The examiner burst out laughing. "I thought it would be something like that"

I asked him what he meant and he said that on the sending test he timed me at 30 words a minute, but there were some strange letters in there. The light finally dawned as I realized then that I was unconsciously using what we called "Land Line Morse" or technically the American Morse code instead of International Morse. There were subtle but telling differences in the two, enough to cause one to flunk the FCC exam. For example, the letter "P" is 5 dots, same as the international numeral 5. A "C" was two dots, a short space and another dot. In international Morse this would be an "T" and "E". Obviously, a land line op would copy the "T" and "E" as the letter C. One result of this is that the land line operator would copy W5IE as WPC. This would obviously cause one trouble when trying for a ham ticket!

The examiner at this point gave me credit for the CW portion of the test and I took and passed the novice written. Three weeks later I was on the air from the college club station as KN2OSS. My very first contact was with California in the novice portion of 80 meters and I was hooked.

I worked a number of contacts during the school year that followed. During the summer I was back at the railroad key or teletype (high tech in those days). I actually spent two summers working with a real old time op. The stories you hear are not fiction. I watched him answer a call with a flick of the key. As the other end started sending (about 45 words a minute) he would roll some paper in the typewriter, get out his pipe, fill and light it and, finally, after all this, he would start typing and never miss a letter.

Since most of what we handled were train consists made up almost exclusively of car numbers this was no mean feat. To say that I stood in awe of him was a gross understatement.

Unfortunately my school work came first and I let the license lapse. Then came military service, marriage and several years of getting established in civilian life as a teacher and basketball coach. In 1962, I got interested in starting in again and took the test for a Tech license and was successful. I shortly received WA2ZYM as my call and I have held it ever since.

In the first couple of years I operated almost exclusively 6 meters, using a Lafayette HE-45 on AM that I had modified to accept 8Mc crystals (no hertz, yet). I bought the rig from Fort Orange Radio in Albany, NY (anyone remember Uncle Dave Marks?) for the grand total of \$15. Originally it took 3rd overtone crystals which were notoriously unstable. Of course, in those days, you also had to fight the TVI battle with the neighbors who were using really bad black and white TVs! They heard everything from your rig to the diathermy machines in the local medical center.

In 1976, after a rather on and off operation, I found myself with a little money that I was able to use to obtain a new Yaesu FT-101. After a lot of listening and practice I was back up to speed. I took the CW test and upgraded to General. I was off and running. To coin a phrase, I never looked back. The 101 was supplemented by a FT-1200 amplifier, antenna rotor, tuner, and a whole bunch of miscellaneous gear. The photo shows the ham shack as it looked in about 1982, not neat, but effective.

I operated more or less haphazardly for a year, although I did manage to get WAS and DXCC along the way, and then stumbled onto the 3905 Century Club on 75 meters. One of the regular check ins in those days was WA2SRM, currently our well known NCS – K2JG/KZ2P. I got interested in the club and operated it almost exclusively for about six years. During this time I held every office in the club and even had a hand in drawing up the original constitution and by-laws.

One of the most active members was WA3ZMY (SK) who was also an active county hunter. Bill and I developed a very strong friendship, went to eyeballs together, and visited each other several times. A good many people said – 1. We were nuts and 2. We looked just alike and deserved each other.

(Continued in the December Issue)

2003 SOUTH CENTRAL MINI

WHEN: February 20, 21 & 22, 2003

WHERE: Drury Inn & Suites, 6711 N. IH 35, Austin, Texas

ROOM RATE: \$59.99/night plus tax. Includes free Quikstart Breakfast. Free local calls. Exercise facilities.

RESERVATIONS: Call 512-467-9500 and mention MARAC to get the special rate. Same rate applies if you come in early or stay late. Our block of rooms will be held at the \$59.99 rate until Feb. 6...they will be released after that date. Please reserve before then if possible.

Directions to Hotel: Hotel is on the east frontage road of IH-35 just north of US-290. Southbound on IH-35, take exit 238B-A, then A and then take the turnaround to the north frontage. Northbound on IH-35, take exit 238A, stay on frontage through the light at US-290.

AREA ATTRACTIONS: State Capital, LBJ Museum, Texas State History Museum, Outlet Mall shopping, six restaurants within walking distance, shopping mall across highway, many more. If you are interested in golf, please email Bob in advance—kk5mi@juno.com.

CONVENTION ACTIVITIES: Hospitality room, Technical/antenna sessions, Thursday night BBQ dinner at the Salt Lick, Friday morning golf (weather permitting), Saturday night dinner and prize drawing.

PRIZES: Please consider donating a door prize.

CONVENTION FEES-REGISTRATION FORM

Registration-Includes name badge, group photo and prize drawing

Single.....\$9.00 = \$_____

OM/YL Couple.....\$14.00 = \$_____

Bar-B-Que Dinner at the Salt Lick (Thursday night).....\$15.00 pp = \$_____

Saturday Night Dinner...(Country-Style Casual).....\$15.00 pp = \$_____

Total.....\$_____

NAME_____ CALL_____ USACA#_____

NAME_____ CALL_____ USACA#_____ RELATION _____

E-mail address of primary registrant:_____

Send a check for the total of registration & dinner fees Payable to Bob Allen, KK5MI, to PO Box 1669, Dripping Springs, Tx. 78620. For more info, call or email Bob...512-894-3684 kk5mi@juno.com

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

“A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird”

Board of Directors

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