



THE COUNTY LINE

ROADRUNNER

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Number 3

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Bill K2NJ



Another day in winter wonderland... Gawd, I am getting tired of winter... I cant wait till I can bitch about the stinking hot summer days.

Winter in New Jersey is different than most other places. In Michigan, winter meant Ice-fishing, Snowmobiling, skiing, Ice Sailing, and on and on... People got outside when it was 0F and did all kinds of things, it was actually something to look forward to. We used to go into these little shacks that were permanently mounted on the ice – they would be towed from shore and sunk into the ice at a predetermined spot on the lake as soon as the ice was thick enough. People would run Romex cable from their bungalow out to these shacks and pour water on top of it so it disappeared in the ice. We had a potbellied stove in the ice shack... we had a TV antenna on the bloody thing, so we sat there on a bench in our shirt sleeves, watching Green Bay whoop butt – drinking beer and listening for the bell that was on our tip-up (short fishing rod). We would get on Snow Mobiles and go exploring the woods... or get on Ice racing thingamajigs we built out of 2x4 lumber and old ice-skates with a sail on it... (usually after many beers in the shack). They do this in most of the REAL Northern states (and Canada too). In the south, winter means being able to drive without air conditioning till almost noon.

Here in New Jersey, the ice is not thick enough to go skating on –let alone put a shanty on top of it. I tell locals about the stuff we did in Michigan and they think I am making it up... (Especially about the guy who took green spray paint and painted a lawn around his shack and drilled holes in the ice and planted plastic flowers)... In New Jersey, there is not enough snow to warrant having a snow mobile... or mostly not even ski's. but there is enough snow to make it miserable – and with all the out of staters living here because they cant find work “back home” – and they cant drive in snow (or rain, or dry, or)... two snow flakes means 20 minute backups on every road.

So I sit here in the shack – my dogs want out... the Husky/Lab will lay in the snow all day – when she gets up, there is not a mark on top of the snow – no evidence where she laid except for the impression of her body... nothing is melted.. she is dry... The other one (we were told she is Australian Sheep Dog) goes outside and 30 seconds later is up by the window in the shack shivering like crazy.. whining for me to get up and let her in. Then she whines at the door for her friend – which I finally get to get off the snow mound and come into the house.. She then whines to go out... aaagh!!! Women... err.. I mean dogs...

Since I have finished up my third time and Gail finally has her number – I have no drive to get on and listen to 22 22 22 I don't hear you either... - I don't have much drive to even get on the CW net, and in the past two weeks have not even made a PSK QSO.. It must be winter doldrums... I keep the birdfeeders all full, and still enjoy watching the little creatures come to feed. I enjoy the snap of the .22 when a squirrel comes to the feeders.. (but then I have to go out and pick it up before the dogs go out and play with it). This week we had a group of 5 pheasants picking at the scraps on the ground and two turkeys. Neat eh?

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(President Continued from page 1)

This past weekend Gail and I drove up to Maine and spent our 28th wedding anniversary with Jim and Mel (NE/VE9DH). What a great time with great friends. And no, we did not have Lobstah... only Mel did... I think I had my fill of them on Saint Paul Island a few years ago... but love the other fresh seafood you get there. But mostly we enjoyed sitting around talking about this and that. Making plans for the convention in Texas this July. This was also our inaugural trip with our new GPS unit. Neat to know you are within xx miles of a line... etc.. no watching for signs – just watch the arrow go, and when you get close then look for sign.. a lot less arguments between us.

We also made up our minds that we will get work done on the RV and take that to Texas. Sitting in our little Hyundai for six hours convinced us of that... let alone 6 days...

A few things come to mind and I want input from members on how to go on these things.

I listen to someone running on the net.. he is a W8 and has the club call of AA8 or something else. Now people work him, he gives one report for “BOTH” calls. Something just strikes me as wrong with this. I see Willis and Ray and few others jump on Jim for using NE9DH when operating in the states... some think he should use both calls so he is good for the A prefix (not to happen). They don’t understand the regulations where he must use his N call in the USA... and that eliminates using the VE call... but back to the other thing... Is it right for ONE operator to use TWO calls (or one time I heard three)... I for one don’t think so. Pick one, and use it... don’t switch back and forth or give multiple contacts for one QSO... your thoughts on this?

Jim has a bunch of “Ran all counties in XXX State” awards.. Real pretty things. This interests me a bunch.. but then talking to Jim.. he has to pay for them. HMMMM! Get my train of thought on this. Here is a mobile doing a favor to all county hunters by going out of his way to put out all the counties in a state... and then has to pay for the documentation for doing it... Should this be made a free award? I think yes on this one, how do you (the members feel). It may mean one less door prize at our annual convention... or maybe some other fee going up, but ??? just food for thought.

Now if this was a free award, should we surprise some state QSO party people who operate from all the counties in a state with it? What great exposure for MARAC to someone who probably doesn’t know us... and what advertisement in their next QSO party? HMMMM?

Change gears.

I just threw my hat in the ring for another term. It is election time and all four officers are up for grabs along with two (this time three) directors. Don AE3Z was appointed to fulfill the office vacated by Stan VE1BES, but must run for this office (if he wants to) at the next election to fill out the full term. Anyone interested in running for office, let K9IA know... he is the Election Coordinator in MARAC.

That’s about it for this month. I think I will just sit back and watch the birdies... and dream of sitting in the ice shack with a 25 pound Northern Pike on the line... yep, good ole days.

73’

Bill Inkrote, K2NJ
MARAC President

MINUTES
MARAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBER MEETING
Date: February 11, 2004

The Meeting of the MARAC Board of Directors was called to order at 0808 PM EST (0108Z) by Bill (K2NJ).

The Officers present were:

President	Bill Inkrote – K2NJ
Secretary	Norm Ellison — W2LSH
Treasurer	Jim Grandinetti – KZ2P
Great Lakes Director	Randy Davis – N8ELQ
North Central Director	John Robson – WB9STT
Northeast Director	Don Kimble – AE3Z
Southeast Director	David Splitt – KE3VV
Pacific Director	Robert t. Devine – KC6AWX

The Members present were: AB4YZ, KC3X, N8CIJ, KL7D, and KA1JPR.

Upon a motion by Don (AE3Z) and seconded by Dave KE3VV, the minutes of the January 17, 2004 meeting were approved. Roll call indicated 7 in favor, none opposed.

Upon a motion by Dave (KE3VV) and seconded by Bob (KC6AWX), the Treasurer's report of January 31, 2004 was accepted. Roll call indicated 6 in favor, 1 abstention and none opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

A: None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

A: Bill (K2NJ) made a motion to forgive Bill Moore's (K7IOO) dues. Bill has made the antennas for the MARAC awards for several years and has never accepted any money for it. The motion was second by Bob (KC6AWX). Roll call indicated 6 in favor, 1 abstention and none opposed. The motion carried.

B: Bill (K2NJ) announced that he has spoken to Chuck (K9IA), the MARAC Election Coordinator, who stated that he has received letters from all of the incumbent Officers and Directors stating that they would all serve for another term, if elected. Bill (K2NJ) has directed Roger to place a notice in this months RoadRunner asking for additional nominations. Bill also went on record advising anyone who desires to run for one of the vacant Officers or Directorships to contact Chuck (K9IA).

C: 2005 MARAC National Convention: Ray (AB4YZ) reported that he had negotiated but not signed a contract with the Wyndham Hotel in Roanoke, VA for July 21, 2005 through July 24, 2005. He would reserve 75 Rooms. Dave (KE3VV) moved that the Board authorize Dave to sign the contract and MARAC will guarantee payment for the rooms, the motion was second by Don (AE3Z). Roll call indicated 7 in favor, none opposed. The motion carried. Ray mentioned that the Hotel required a credit card with a high enough limit to cover the expenses of the convention. Since MARAC does not have a credit card, Jim (KZ2P) offered the use of his.

OPEN MEETING: Nothing at this time.

With no further Business to come before the Board, Dave (KE3VV) moved that we adjourn, the motion was seconded by Bob (KC6AWX). The motion Carried, 7 in favor, none opposed. We adjourned at 0828 EDT.

Respectfully Submitted,
Norm Ellison W2LSH
Secretary, MARAC

**Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club
Treasurer's Report
February 29, 2004**

Funds Balance 1/31/04			\$28,599.56
Income:			
Awards	\$689.00		
Dues	\$590.00		
Interest	<u> \$5.49</u>		
		\$1,284.49	
Expenses:			
Gene Olig – expenses	\$342.53		
Stafford Engraving - awards	\$109.00		
Fairmont Awards - awards	\$302.00		
Print-Right, Inc – newsletter	<u> \$532.76</u>		
		\$1,286.29	
			<u> (1.80)</u>
Account Balances:			\$28,597.76
Money Market Account		\$26,797.59	
Checking Account		<u> 1,800.17</u>	
			\$28,597.76

Note:

The following monies are not included in the above:

Awards Chairman's Funds	\$1,200.00
2004 Convention Chairman's Funds	\$2,500.00

**DEADLINE FOR
THE APRIL ISSUE
IS
MARCH 25th.**

**MARAC Board Meeting
Schedule for 2004**

Mar 10, Apr 14, May 12, June 9,
July Saturday morning at
convention.

DATELINE CW**By Ed, KN4Y****“Do you know that county hunting is one of the greatest pleasures in life? But it wants leisure.”**

I am outside the radio shack taking down the blinking Christmas lights and I hear the barking of Gator's four by four as he turns off the main road. The sky blackens as blackbirds take to flight made wary by the New Year firecracker celebration. Gator stops at the recycled railroad tie, the ninety-six inch whip antenna swishing valentines from the air. “Hey Dude, what you be doing?” “I am taking down these blinking Christmas lights.” “But it is March, why now?” “Been too cold.” “You too lazy be more like it.” I give Gator a robust New York taxicab salute. “Got a question Dude, what be zero beat?” I motion Gator to go inside the shack as I put the last of the Christmas lights in the box marked Christmas Lights. County hunters are like so organized.

“Okay Gator where did you hear about zero beat?” “I am listening to the CW net and reading the mail. That means I was copying the code.” “I know what reading the mail means.” “Don't get huffy, anyhow Jerry told Al to zero beat his signal. I want to know what Jerry meant.” “I guess Jerry's signal was naughty and he wanted it punished.” Gator gives me a look that would sour milk and goes to the cooler. He gets two cool ones and hands me one. “Let's start over Dude. What be zero beat?” I grab a copy of the net Q signals and hand it to Gator.

“Okay Gator, listen up. What is the last Q signal on the list?” “That be QNZ.” “Read what it means.” “It say zero beat your signal with mine. So?” “When you are having a net operation what is important?” “That others are listening?” “That is important, but most important is that everyone is on the same frequency.” “The net control tunes to the net frequency and the other stations and mobiles get on the same frequency.” “But what if the net control is not on frequency.” “The net control determines the frequency and cannot be off frequency.” “But what if the mobile is in motion and off frequency, it might not be safe to adjust the radio?” Go to sideband, no I am kidding.” Gator has lost interest and gets two more cool ones.

“Most mobile radios have a digital readout and can easily be tuned to the net frequency. Sometimes the driver hits the tuning knob and goes off frequency. The net control then tells the mobile QNZ and sends a series of V's. The mobile readjusts his readout. The biggest problem is the fixed stations that use older radios and cannot tell when they are on frequency and depend on the net control. Are you listening?” “Yes and zero beat this.” Gator hands me a pickled pig knuckle and says, “You may live in Arkansas if your idea of a traffic jam is ten cars waiting to pass a tractor on the highway.” That is so true where did you hear it?” “Al told me, he be from Arkansas you know.” It is my turn to loose interest; I pop the top on a couple of cool ones. This pig knuckle is tasty.

Gator picks up a sheet of paper off the desk.”This be from that Guff fellow.” “Yes Gator KS5A sent me information about pink eye purple hull peas.” “They be in the purple hull group.” “That is correct, how did you know that?” “Al told me about the southern pea breeding program at the University of Arkansas.” This is more than I want to know about Al and breeding peas so I change the subject. “Guff recommends cooking the pink eyes in water with a little bacon grease, salt and pepper. Then serve with onions and fresh sliced tomatoes. Use white corn bread as the pusher and soaker.” “Darn that makes my mouth water.”

Suddenly Gator looks down at his belt line, “My pager tells me I have customers whose addiction must be fulfilled. So gotta go Dude.” Gator is out the door and heading down the road before you can say, is this frequency in use. I sit back in my recliner, a move patented by Norm. The problem of being off frequency is not a big problem on the CW net. Almost all CW mobile stations have a CW filter in their rig and if you are too far off frequency you will not be heard. This is a good reason to pay attention.

The FISTS group has a net up from the county hunters net. They need a net control with zero beat capabilities. The FISTS stations have a problem finding their net frequency. I know where Toad Suck and Booger Holler are located, would that mean I came from Arkansas? I finally finished putting grounding straps on the van bonnet and chassis to frame. That really helped remove the noise from my receive signal. Braid is a great item to have in the shack. The way time flies I should have left the Christmas lights up. I take the box to the storage shed. I wonder if the Valentine candy is on sale yet? I turn on the radio and zero beat the county hunters CW net. I work WB4FFV/M. I guess Ralph also got his vehicle noise problem corrected. Good to hear him again running on the net. Better hurry I do not want to miss nap time.

36th Annual MARAC National Convention
14 July - 17 July 2004 WESLACO, TX
Convention Site: Best Western Palm Aire Hotel

NAME (First, MI, Last)

ADDRESS

CITY ST/PROV POSTAL CODE

NAME ON BADGE CALL USACA #

Registration Fee: \$ 30.00

Additional NAME BADGES Total # of additional badge \$5.00 each = \$

NAME CALL USACA # RELATION

NAME CALL USACA # RELATION

NAME CALL USACA # RELATION

RELATION: W - Wife, H - Husband D - Daughter, S - Son, H - Mother, F - Father, X - Friend, GD - Grand Daughter, GS - Grand Son
For any additional badges please attach or enclose a note

Enter Number of Persons Attending Events

Wednesday July 14

Chuck Wagon Buffet Diner # Adults x \$16.00 + # Children x \$16.00 = \$

Thursday July 15

Island Dolphin Watch Tour # Adults x \$28.00 + # Children x \$28.00 = \$

Friday July 16

Mexico Trip # Adults x \$14.00 + # Children x \$14.00 = \$

Saturday July 1

Banquet — Beef Stroganoff # Adults x \$18.00 + # Children x \$18.00 = \$

Banquet — Chicken Dijon # Adults x \$18.00 + # Children x \$18.00 = \$

PRIZE TICKETS

MERCHANDISE

Ham (single) x \$1.00 = \$ Extra Photo x \$6.00 = \$

Ham (12 tickets) x \$10.00 = \$ YL Photo x \$6.00 = \$

Cash (single) x \$1.00 = \$ USA-CA Photo x \$6.00 = \$

Cash (12 tickets) x \$10.00 = \$ CW Photo x \$6.00 = \$

Total for Tickets \$ Total for Merchandise \$

HOTEL RESERVATIONS - Call Direct 1-800-248-6511
Mention "MARAC"

Convention rooms for one or two persons \$48.00 + tax

Includes Buffet / Cook-to-order Breakfast

Mall Registration Form and Check To:

Total Amount Enclosed: \$

2004 MARAC CONVENTION

Please Make Checks Payable to: 2004 MARAC CONVENTION

Joyce Boothe

(DO NOT SEND CASH)

21175 FM 2556

Santa Rosa, TX 78593

Anticipated date of arrival at the Convention: / / 2004

If staying at the Convention Site Hotel, please enter Arrival Date: / / 2004 Departure Date: / / 2004

Mail early for a chance to win the PRE-REGISTRATION PRIZE! PRE-REGISTRATION CUT-OFF DATE: 05/01/2004

ALOHA HAWAII !
by KS5A and KD7TOL
(Continued From February)

Other visits need a local's support. Scheduled air service with Island Air is currently discontinued. Those tourists on the mule train are flown back out to the main Molokai airport. The flight is in a small twin engine aircraft that usually leaves the Molokai airport empty on the way down to pick up those returning from the mule rides. The visitors' bureau in Kaunakakai, the main town on Molokai, is a great place to check out the county boundaries and travel options to Kalawao. They have US Geodetic Survey maps of the island, to include county boundaries and information on visits and tours to Kalawao. If Kalawao is in your plans, definitely talk to some of those who have made the trip.

EQUIPMENT

What equipment to take? It's simple – take as little as possible to get the job done. Check with the airlines, but we had a 50 pound limit per bag (two small carry-ons and two checked, maximum per person). Island Air has a 45 pound limit per bag. The goal is to give out Hawaii counties from a mobile, not win the ARRL DX competition.

I pulled the IC-706MKIIG from the truck and soldered two spring operated, battery clamps on the DC power cable. The rig, a small travel key, mic, GPS receiver, digital voice recorder, 2m handheld, and antenna analyzer all went in a light weight, aluminum camera case with dividers and cut-out foam insulation for the radio. My other carry-on was a laptop computer with our itineraries/reservations, beam headings from Hawaii, internet access numbers, and Street Atlas software. The checked baggage had the rest. I think my socks were in Linda's purse – not real sure as we dressed casual except for dinner!

We had absolutely, no trouble with security at the airports. All those items capable of becoming weaponized were in the checked luggage (leatherman tool, pocket knife, antenna masts/arms, etc.). I included a copy of our FCC station licenses in each piece of luggage, carry-on and checked. Only one x-ray technician questioned what was in the camera case. I said, "Ham radios," and that satisfied his curiosity. Your checked baggage **WILL BE** opened and searched, especially when the X-rays indicate wires/batteries/electronic items and the like. Your equipment needs to be secure in the luggage, but do not make it difficult for the TSA agents to check the contents.

The antenna was another story. My mobile antennas have lengthy masts, too long for suitcases. I needed height, multiple bands and varying polarizations, if possible. I have seen a new antenna on the market called the Buddipole at some of the conventions/hamfests. A call to Budd, W3FF, convinced me to give it a try. Excellent construction, a 6 foot collapsible mast, off center fed dipole with 10-40 meter capability and could be set in varying configurations – dipole (vertical or horizontal), sloper, L, or V (vertical or inverted). All of this fits in individual pockets in a roll up nylon bag that inserts in a sturdy, plastic tube with screw on top that is 37 inches tall. For backup, I took a 20m wire dipole and coax for portable operations. The backup wasn't needed.

For mobile operations, the Buddipole mast went inside the rental car's back window. Lashed to the door post with bungee cords, we were completely mobile. Horizontal configurations require no ground. The vertical set up also did not require a ground as it is a vertical dipole. Just a little extra care is needed when changing locations! We operated from the car in areas away from buildings and towns. Usually, this meant on high mountain roads or in the clear near the ocean. Street Atlas was a great map as we didn't waste time by stopping and asking for directions. Just turn on the computer and the GPS and start driving. The only mobile glitch was in windy and wet conditions. Then, Linda maintained azimuth orientation as an antenna brake with the horizontal dipole configuration. She got a little wet once. Ya'll owe her!

OPERATIONS

The plan was to be available early in the morning, Hawaiian time, and in the mid-afternoon. This would put the
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ALOHA HAWAII (continued)

sunrise/sunset line between the islands and the US mainland. And, for this stage of the sunspot cycle, that worked about as good as expected. If I started operations on the SSB net, I needed a west coast station to help me get into the net. KZ2P was great at having someone watch for me around those times. On CW, I always got in after a couple of QNFs? Only once did someone not hear me on voice to run a county. As N4CD's wisdom indicated, it's almost a guarantee that someone out west has to be listening for you to insure success.

Without relay stations (I owe you guys) the QSO count would have been slim at best. Several mobile to mobile contacts were made during a few of the good runs. Only two runs had extremely poor propagation. The East and Northeast were the toughest. I know several stations tried but were unable to validate a good QSO. For that, I apologize. I know those stations were disappointed.

Overall, it was a successful trip. We accomplished our goal – put out each county on CW and SSB, at least with two runs in each county at different time frames. Numerous QSO's were on 15 meters. And several that were “no copy” on 20 meters, made it on the higher frequency. No contacts were on 10 meters. If there was propagation on 10, it was not at the hours we were running on 20 and 15. We tried 40 meters a couple of times during the night time, but only heard one CH'er, and he could not copy me. Again, a west coast station is needed with a more definitive time table to insure 40 meter contacts with a Hawaiian mobile. Approximately 70 percent of the 500+ contacts were made on SSB.

SUMMARY

Can you take a nice vacation and include a little ham radio? You bet you can. It's a little work to put out the counties several times a day and play tourists at the same time - all of this with a fairly tight schedule. Although not the cheapest outing you will make, it's worth it once, to visit great places, play the tourist, and help out some great County Hunters. For a personal touch, I made QSL cards from pictures in the actual county. Not a professional product, but a little something different with a personal touch.

Will we do it again? Linda says, “Yes”, as we did not go to the main, Maui island.

Aloha,
Guff and Linda.

Database Printouts Available

**KD9ZP
Awards Manager**

Cost:
**\$5 for MARAC Members – This includes \$3.85
for Priority Mail shipping
\$10 for non Members**

Make check out to **MARAC Awards** and mail to :
**MARAC Awards
P.O Box 2295
Fond du Lac, WI
54936-2295**

March Birthdays

N5MIV	March 1	W3ZUH	March 2
KL7D	March 3	K9FDL	March 10
KS8W	March 10	AA4VN	March 14
N7ID	March 17	K7VAY	March 17
KN4XP	March 19	KM4W	March 22
N3TA	March 22	K0QD	March 24
WA2DWP	March 24	WA0QFY	March 26
WA4RNN	March 27	NR2H	March 30
WA7SLD	March 31	N4RS	March 31
WA2JTY	March 31		

If your birthday is not in the database at:

www.marac.org/database

Send it to:

kd9zp@marac.org

The Master County Hunters Test

by W7FGD - David Waterman

Hidden in these limericks are the names of counties which should identify the state in which each event occurred. Identify the counties and the state for each poem. Read each word carefully.

- 1- My butler, named Scott Lafayette,
Won a trip that he'll never forget;
He enjoyed the snow
From Cape Girardeau,
To which midwest state was he sent?
- 2 - "Eureka!", Clark yelled at his find
Of a mineral lode at White Pine.
This story is great,
But in which western state
Did Clark dig his fabulous mine?
- 3- Franklin, the Duke of Hampshire,
Poured worchester sauce on a fire.
The flames grew so great,
In this small eastern state,
That he burnt off each Plymouth car's tire.
- 4- In a far southern state, by mistake,
My St. Bernard fell in Beauregard lake.
She fell into a red river,
Vermilion water made her shiver,
And it's my assumption that the "rapides" made her shake.
- 5- Way up north, while cementing some bricks,
Charles Faulk got himself in a fix;
Filling the mixer with clay,
He fell in all the way,
And his friends said, "Just look at Charles Mix!"
- 6- A midwest county hunter swore aloud,
When his solar cells were covered by clouds.
With gray skies and no power,
He drank bourbon by the hour,
Not even coffee could get him un-plowed.
- 7- The outrageously fat Floyd Dinwiddie
Broke every bath scale in the city.
Cops who came to his door,
Said not to weigh anymore,
And Floyd said, "Aw Pooh! What an old pity!"
- 8- Down south, Larry's girls were all cry'en
When he was shot with a bullitt for spy'en;
When he shouted, "I'm dead!",

Together they said,
"Lawrence, you Letcher, your Ly'en!"

- 9- Out east, in the forests dark light,
All the hunting done there was at night;
With Winchesters and lamps
Bucks and elk had no chance
Though the hunters all knew it weren't right.
- 10- Spoke Ann to her husband, "My dear,
Were lost on this island, I fear!"
But they're fears were divest
On they're trip way out west,
When the Grays Harbor ferry drew near.

Answers

- #10- Spokane, Island, Gray's Harbor, Ferry - Va. - 5 points
- #9- Forest, Huntingdon, Winchester, Bucks, Elk - Pa. - 6 points
- #8- Bullitt, Lawrence, Letcher, Lyon - Ky - 5 points
- #7- Floyd, Dinwiddie, Bath, Nottoway, Powhatan - Va. - 6 points
- #6 - Cloud, Gray, Bourbon, Coffey - Kans - 5 points
- #5- Faulk, Clay, Charles Mix - S.D. - 4 points
- Assumption Rapides- La. - 7 points max.
- #4- St. Bernard, Beauregard, Red River, Vermillion, Mass. - 6 points max.
- #3- Franklin, Dukes, Hampshire, Worcester, Plymouth - points max.
- #2- Eureka, Clark, Mineral, White Pine, Storey - Nev. - 6 point for each county and state. - 5 point max.
- #1- Butler, Scott, Lafayette, Cape Girardeau - Mo. - 1 point (No fair peeking! Go back and give it your best shot).

Nominations

Are Open For The Following:

The 4 officers in MARAC

President, Vice President,

Treasurer, Secretary

The Two District Directors

Southwestern, Western

And To Fill The Rest of the Term

Northeastern Director.

"If you are interested in running for one of these slots, please Contact the Election Coordinator".

**Chuck Theisen, K9IA, N. 5563 County Road
K, Fond Du Luc, WI 54935 920-927-1605**

K9IA@MARAC.org

REFLECTIONS ON MY PARTICIPATION ON THE COUNTY HUNTERS' NET

When I first started hunting counties on 14.336 and 7.238, I guess I was just like the rest of the "newbies". When Jim asked if someone would look in another direction, call a mobile he didn't hear, or even when the net was in open session and a mobile was asking for someone to run him, I just sat there like a dummy. Yuppers, I just waited until someone else decided to help Jim or run the mobile, and of course, I worked him "cause I could hear him and needed the county.

Well, one day Jim asked if anyone heard anyone else calling or would they like to look in a different direction. I told myself, "Girlfriend, get off your fat butt and start helping here a little bit." First I offered to look for relays and that that didn't work out too bad.. Then when Jim would ask if anyone would look for a mobile he couldn't hear, again I waited for someone else to call that mobile. Well, I could hear him, but I didn't offer and neither did anyone else. We all lost that county. Again I said to myself, "girlfriend, get off your fat butt and offer for God's sake." Well, I tried that and found it wasn't too bad to have the mobile hear me and run him/her and Jim help with double relays. Then there were the times the net was in open session and a mobile would ask for someone to run him. I just sat there like a dummy waiting for someone else to do it. No confidence in myself and afraid of screwing up, I guess. Again I told myself to get off my duff and go ahead and ask the mobile if he could hear me, and if he could, I took my first shot at running a mobile in open session net.

Now if I'm on the rig and I hear Jim working alone, asking for help, a mobile asking for someone to run him in open session, I just jump in and do it. I don't know why I thought I couldn't do it, but it was nice to find out I could.

Moral of the story, we all want to work the mobiles, but not all of us want to assist Net Control or take up the net when it's in open session. We will work the mobiles if someone else does the job of acting as Net Control. Yes, I am guilty of that too. But if we want those counties, and we want those mobiles to continue to run them for us, we all have to dive in and help. Seems this is just like the club I belong to—everyone wants everything done but they don't want to do it and it's the same people doing it all for the club all the time. We need to remember that hams need to help other hams.

I may not do the best of jobs running the Net when it's in open session, but I do my damndest to try to do the best I can. And if I hear Jim asking for help, I will offer to jump in and help. One person can't do it all, but Jim seems to be able to do so. Even with that, he could use some help from time to time.

Another pet peeve I have now that I've jumped into the assisting and running mobiles when in open session, is when I ask if someone heard someone I didn't or would someone look in a different direction and no one offers. Of course, everyone who worked him/her before relays with a 55 or 59 is just sitting there. And there's always those who work him/her on their last call with a 55 or 59. Hey, guys, how about if you can hear him/her that great with that report you received . why can't you help with relays? Maybe it's cause you can't hear me or something, but surely there is someone out there who heard me ask, even if I was a 2/2 or 3/3, and could have jumped in. Okay, I was guilty on that count too before I started to help out here and there A lot have just jumped in and ran relays when I didn't hear anyone one and was signing the mobile out. Thanks, guys. Some of you have just jumped in and helped run the mobiles when I or the other net control couldn't hear the mobile. Thanks to you guys.

Moving mobiles who are in another county or on a county line and it's 3-4 more mobiles before their turn—why don't more people offer to move them? Yeah, I was guilty of that too. Look at it this way, you are not only depriving yourself of getting that county, but what of your fellow hams? And what if the mobile just says the heck with it because no one wants to move him or help with relays or not? Yes, it's a queasy stomach the first time you do this, but you get better at it each time you do it, not to mention all your fellow county hunters who wouldn't get that county if someone didn't move the mobile.

And Mobiles, I know Jim or whomever announces who you are and where you are when you start your run, but how about identifying yourself and your county every 5 or 6 contacts for those of us who just tuned in? If I'm picking on everyone else, guess I should do at least one pick on you, too. There's nothing worse than hearing a mobile and not knowing who he is or where he is, and then not being able to hear who is running the net so you still don't know who's where and it could be a county I need. And I hate to work you just to find out I already have worked you or have you confirmed. Yeah, I'm guilty of that too. I ran my first county, and forgot to ID with my callsign every so many contacts and only mentioned the county. So everyone knew where I was, and except for the folks who knew my call from the net, and the other guys had to wait until my call was announced. So I'm picking on myself too. At least I did remember to announce the county every so often. Now if I can coordinate my announcing the county with my call, I will be in business so to speak. So you see guys and gals, I even find fault with myself.

(Continued on page 11)

Reflections (continued)

I guess after most people read this, they will think I'm a B—H—have to tell you I took B—H 1 & 2 and have a degree in it. I usually call them like I sees them and like they say, sometimes the truth hurts, even for me.

Okay, enuf complaining for now. What I 'd really like to see is more people pitching in and helping on the net. I t's your net, not just Jim's or whoever is running it, so pitch in and help out once in awhile. You may even get hooked on assisting net control and running the net when it's in open session. And when Jim isn't available to run the net, I hope you all will pitch in and help run the mobiles. I try to do this, even if I can't hear them I try to help with double relays. With this I guess I'll shut up for now. All of you are a great bunch, and we can make the net bigger and better if we all pitch in—the old teamwork adage does work, folks.

Alrighty, then, that 's my editorial piece—or whatever you wish to call it. I'm not the best at county hunting yet, and I'm not the best at assisting Net Control or running it in open session, but at least I have started to get off my fat butt—and yeah, it ain't skinny no more—and try to help the best I can. Let's all do it. Jim would appreciate the help, not to mention the mobiles and all the other folks who need the counties, especially when the net is in open session.

I f this has offended anyone, I apologize. I just meant it to spark some others into helping out instead of just sitting there waiting for someone else to do it. Yeah, you can include me that category, too. We all need to work together to keep it going so all of us can get the awards we are working for. One alone can accomplish only so much, but a bunch of us together can do a whole damned lot.

As always, happy hamming and happy county hunting and I'll catch you on the net. If you wish to chew me out, e-mail me. I'm a big girl and I can take it. Wait, have to change that last statement a little as I've lost 30# so I'm just medium-big now, but I can still take it on the chin or wherever. My e-mail is in the database if you really wish to chew me out or whatever. Let's try to make 2004 bigger and better for the net than 2003, which was pretty darned good anyway.

Lori, KC8HWV

**Major Awards Issued For
The Month Of
February**

KD9ZP - Awards Manager

Award	Number
LC-1	139
LC-2	4
LC-3	4
All Others	9

Call	Date	Award	Number
WB9STT	2/1/04	5 Star	19
W8TVT	2/17/04	Big Rig	504 Counties
K8ZZ	2/29/04	Last County Count	25 415
K2NJ	2/12/04	Last County Count	400 26
N9JF	2/29/04	Last County Count	50 275
WA0JCE	2/12/04	Last County Count	75 203

**USA-CA Numbers
For February**

K1BV – CQ Awards

To Call	Award Date	Certificate Number
W9JL	2/5/04	1087
N8RYD	2/5/04	1088
VE1WT	2/13/04	1089

New members

Please Welcome Our New Members And Add Them To Your Database.

Marac # Call Name Address Cnty E Mail

R-3111 KD4ZAT Kenneth J Adler 6513 Loch Lommond Dr. Keystone Heights, FL 32656 Clay kd4zat@yahoo.com

R-3112 N8AVR Brian R Buckstiegel 7080 Ginger Lane Saginaw, MI 48609 Saginaw n8avr@buckstiegel.com

R-3113 WB0DUL Richard L Thompson 3405 Sinton Road #175 Colorado Springs, CO 80907 El Paso wb0dul@wb0dul.com

R-3114 WD5EPB Reynolds L Foster P.O. Box 996 Sterling City, TX 76951 Sterling wd5epb@aol.com

The County Line Roadrunner
MARAC Secretary
117 Hayden Ave.
Pass Christian Ms. 39871

“A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird”

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