



THE COUNTY LINE ROADRUNNER

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



Volume XLIII

July 2013

Number 7

Riding the County Lion

Dave – KE3VV

This time next week the County Lion and I will be winging our way to South Dakota for the MARAC annual convention in Deadwood. I know we are not technically “winging” it because the Big Green Dragon is a largish pick-em-up-truck, but the Dragon assures me that getting there in three days means we will be flying. We are looking forward to the magical wonders of the Black Hills, and now the County Lion insists he is going to hit the gaming tables at the casino. Good luck, noble beast. Watch out for the Cheetahs.

The big news for this 2013 convention (unless you are all aquiver about adding JT-9 to the list of modes that are eligible for the Five Mode Award) is the proposed reduction of ALL paperless certificates to just \$1.00 – you can still get a certificate by email and print it yourself. Those well-heeled among us who want to save their own paper and ink can still order a paper award certificate, but there will be a surcharge for the extra service and postage. Keep in mind that this is the certificates for all MARAC awards, not just the last county paperless (which will be reduced from \$1.50), so you can get a graphics file of your Master Aluminum Siding Award and blow it up large enough for Grandma to read without her specs.(More)

Contents

Awards	13	New Members	4
Awards Manager’s Report	23	Notes	25
Birthdays	11	Riding the County Lion	1
Calendar	24	SE Mini	8
Dateline CW	3	Treasurer’s Report (W0NAC)	22
Digital Happenings #11	14	VOTING	5
History Happens	7		
National Attendees	10		

While we are going to have a good time at the 2013 convention in deadwood, for the President of MARAC, happiness is having next year's 2014 annual convention spoken for, and for the third time Bob (KC6AWX) has agreed to host the confab in Visalia, California. Not only that, but our intrepid Awards Manager and District Director has managed to negotiate with the hotel and get THE SAME RATES as last time. So start planning your trip to Visalia for the 2014 convention.

For those of you thinking about the long trip to the West Coast for the annual to-do, you might consider hosting the 2015 convention in your own backyard – save gas and earn the kudos and plaques and admiration of all, as well as a lifetime immunity from accidental scorching by the Big Green Dragon. It is not as much work as you might think, and it is even easier if you get a group in the same local area to share some of the chores. I would like to make getting to Visalia a five-day road trip, but I am also contemplating taking that great train ride through the Rockies on the Amtrak California Zephyr.

I hope to see many of you in Deadwood. Be safe on the road and good luck carting away a few door prizes! The road Warriors – Dave, the Lion, and the Dragon - bid you Good Traveling and 73's and 88's to all.



Dateline CW

Ed, KN4Y

When the Lord sent me forth into the world, he gave me the correct pronunciation of each county.

I just received my Icom 706 from the repair shop. I open the shipping carton with my trusty hone sharpened switchblade and remove the radio. I take the radio out to the van and install it. I hook up the antenna and make a few calls on CW for a successful radio check (signal was tree top tall). I am ready for the 47th MARAC U.S. Counties QSO party I must tell Gator that Norm, W3DYA, will again be the contest manager. Speaking of Gator, I hear his truck slide to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. He comes into the shack with a white paper carton. "I got the perfect county hunters county line snack, it be a bagel half covered with spicy Jalapeno cream cheese." Gator generously spreads the spicy cream cheese on the bagel half and hands it to me. Halfway through the bagel half I think to myself Gator has got a winner. Gator picks up a piece of paper, wiping off the cream cheese, "This paper has 2400z written on it, what is this all about."

I take a big bite out of my bagel getting cream cheese on my nose, "Norm, W3DYA, is the contest manager for the MARAC contest and he set the operating time from 14:00z to 24:00z. I mentioned to him the ARRL contests are 00:00z to 23:59. I pointed out a clock never indicates 24:00z." "Did Norm agree with you?" "No, I was ready for the coup de grâce when CQ Magazine came out with their contest time as 00:00z to 24:00z." Gator is laughing as he turns on the computer, "No one ever said contesting, county hunting and logic co-exist." Gator clicks on the logging program.

"I see you operated the CQ WPX CW contest only on 10-meters." "Yes, I set a goal of 200 QSO's and at that point I shut down." "You should have gone longer. You only worked two 2X2 calls and got three new counties." I hand Gator a fresh brewed coffee. "I went to baby sit that woman down the road that has dementia." Gator sips his coffee, "I see you got your Alabama QSO party hand written logs entered, let's see how we did despite the lousy band conditions." Gator reads off the county statistics: Houston 93 Q's, Dale 33 Q's, Pike 42 Q's, Bullock 48 Q's, Macon 51 Q's, Tallapoosa 90 Q's, Randolph 27 Q's, Chambers 49 Q's, Lee 37 Q's, Russell 66 Q's, Barbour 43 Q's, and Henry 39 Q's. A total of 618 QSO's traveling 645 miles. The band condition resulted in a low DX count. We worked 40 States and three north of the border Dudes." "I thought you did not like statistics." "Yours are boring, mine are vibrant." I go get two hot vibrant coffees.

Gator is staring at the computer; I see you worked the ARRL VHF QSO party on 6-meters. You did get seven new counties on 6-meters, not bad for such a low QSO count," "I was only able to work a few hours and the band was not cooperative at all. A station would come in and be gone before a grid square exchange could be made. It was not a fun QSO party." I hand Gator a coffee and we sit and sip while checking the summary sheets before entering the data into 3830scores.com. I hand Gator my Stew Perry 160-meter contest and the West Virginia QSO party logs. "Dude listen and let me know if that Elvis Dude W4SIG is running." Gator turns around in the chair, "You did not do well in the contest or the QSO party. You got 2 new counties on 160-meters and 3 No stars and your last 1x3 call in the West Virginia QSO party." I look dejected, "Yes, the conditions were not the best on 160-meters and very few CW operators in the West Virginia QSO party. It was not a good weekend" Suddenly Gators cell phone sounds off. "Got to go Dude, see if you can get the field day logs by the time I get back," and I did not say: Nope, no more for me. I'm driving." He is gone like a thought leaving two kicking Kamikaze

squirrels by the roadside.

The printer stops and I get the list of stations heard during June on the county hunters CW call frequencies: AF3X, AF5CC, K2HVN, K4YT, K5AX, K5YAA, K7TM, K8ZZ, K9JWV, KA4RRU, KA9JAC, KB0BA, KC3X, KC7YE, KN4Y, KW1DX, N4CD, N4JT, N7IV, N8II, NF0N, W0EAR, W0GXA, W0GXQ, W0MU, W0NAC, W4HSA, W4SIG, W5OP, W7FEN, W9MSE, W9OO, and WB0PYF,

Ready to be radio active? The CW operator can start the first day (Monday) of July with the Canada Day Contest. This is a fun contest. The amateurs that are mode variable can operate for 7 days using 6 modes: USB, RTTY, CW, FM, PSK, AM, .in the Ten-Ten contest, Spirit of 76. The big event is the IARU HF World Championships. The Alaska VHF QSO Party has been cancelled and I need all the counties on 6-meters. Speaking of 6-meters there is the CQ WW VHF Contest. The big event county hunters all over the world have waiting for is the MARAC US Counties QSO party with a lot of counties up for grabs and at the same time the New Jersey QSO party with 21 counties up for grabs. Get on the air and double your operating pleasure.

I call Gator and get his voice mail. Gator you mentioned you were going to try and update my MARAC logger in a couple of days. You can cancel this project, Matt, W0NAC, called and he held my cursor and slowly walked me though the process. The sun was shining as we started then it got dark, thunder was heard, the power flickered, the rain was heavy and then the sun came back out just as Matt finished the main computer and the laptop. That is real time support. I know you are disappointed. I hang up and think that is one great logger team, past nap time.



New Members

MARAC Number

R4534

R4535

Callsign

WB0TRG

KD8HSV

Name

Martin Potts

Robert Gibbs



VOTING

MARAC 1st QUARTER AWARD

April, May & June 2013

Voting will be open from July 1st through July 31st for the best net control, mobile and team awards. The easiest way to place your vote is at the MARAC web site <http://marac.org/elections/>. All you will need to enter on the sign in page is your callsign and your MARAC voting key. If you have lost or do not know your voting key, enter your callsign and then click on the button below to request your key. The key will be immediately emailed to your email address on record. If you do not receive it, please go to <http://marac.org/database> to verify that your email address is correct. If you need to change/correct your email address, please contact KZ2P at K2JG@Comcast.net. You may also send me your vote via regular mail. However I must receive the ballot by the closing date of the voting window to be counted. Please include your callsign, MARAC membership and key numbers along with your choices for each class to my address listed below.

A vote for 1st choice is awarded 2 points and 2nd choice is awarded 1 point. **Please do not vote for the same call for both choices.** Of course any choices can be left blank.

1st quarter

Best Net Control SSB: 1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Best Net Control CW: 1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Best Mobile SSB: 1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Best Mobile CW: 1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Best Mobile Team: 1st Choice _____ / _____
2nd Choice _____ / _____

Your call sign: _____ MARAC # or Election Key _____

Kent Reinke, KV7N
MARAC Election Coordinator
1826 East 4500 North
Buhl, Idaho 83316

MARAC VOTING INFORMATION

Remember, if you are a new member or are **REJOINING** following a lapse in membership, you are **NOT** eligible to submit nominations or vote in an election until the first day of the month following receipt of initial payment of dues and valid membership application to the Secretary of MARAC.

Those individuals maintaining uninterrupted membership status are not restricted from nominating or voting in the current month.

If you are unsure of your membership status, please go to the MARAC County Hunters Database web site <http://marac.org/database> and enter your call in Call Lookup to determine your MARAC Expiration Date.

Kent Reinke
MARAC Election Coordinator



History Happens

Gary, K4EXT

Thanks again for all of the county line pictures that filled my inbox this past month. We now have over 1400 counties represented in the County Sign Picture Database which are displayed on the CH History website at:

<http://www.CHarchive.com/cntys.asp>

Many people may find this hard to believe, but I was skinny and scrawny as a little kid. My older brother, on the other hand, was the athlete of the family. I was busy with nerdy activities (ie, radio and electronics) while he was busy with sports activities (ie, football, baseball, and wrestling).

One of his favorite ways of teasing me was by tickling. For whatever reason, I was extremely ticklish during my formative years. Due to his size and strength versus my size and strength, he would often hold me upside down by my ankles and tickle away at the same time ... forcing me to cry for help of course. His bullying is still a vivid memory for me, even after 50+ years!

A reminder of my tickling-terror occurred recently after receiving the picture below from Ross, W6FG (MARAC #R-3410). Todd County, Minnesota ... upside down ... oh my! It was not a County Hunting picture, but rather a gift to Ross's brother Todd demonstrating that they had found a US county named Todd. This all happened when Ross and his girlfriend were on a bicycle ride from Bar Harbor, ME to Rugby, ND back in August 1988. By the way, Ross is very radio-active these days ... 99% on CW he says. However, I have no clue if he ever tickled his brother.



SE Mini

2013 SE Mini

- Location: Quality Inn & Suites; Mount Pleasant, SC
Dates: October 7, 8 & 9, 2013
Directions: Follow I-26 East until it ends and take exit 220. Follow signs to Mt. Pleasant/Hwy 17 North. Cross Cooper River Bridge and take Coleman Blvd./Hwy 703 exit. On Coleman Blvd/Hwy 703 turn right at first traffic light. Hotel is on the right.
More details will be posted at <http://www.SEMINI.org>
Room Rate: \$99.99 per night plus tax. Call the hotel directly for reservations and mention "amateur radio". The phone number is 800-704-4480.
The rate is valid only through September 13th - Make your reservations early!
Hotel Notes: There is a 2 night minimum stay, and a one night deposit is required. Cancellations must be done 2 weeks in advance, and all but \$25 of your deposit will be refunded. Cancellations within 2 weeks will be charged for 2 nights.
Parking: Ample FREE parking, with no overhangs to eat antennas!
Activities: Dinner at the "Fat Hen" and walking the bridge are planned. Other area attractions include Historic Charleston tours, shopping, dining, golfing, plantations, Patriot's Point, The Hunley & Fort Sumter.
Dinner: Buffet Style Dinner- \$28 per person.
Registration \$10 per person.
Website: More information, including online registration is available at: <http://www.semini.org>

Send registration and fees to:

John M. Hoyt – W5UGD
118 Halifax Rd
Easley, SC 29642

Email: w5ugd@homelandsecureit.com for additional information

2012 SE Mini Registration

Callsign: _____

Name (to be put on badge):

Address:

USA-CA#: _____

Additional Names/Calls/USA-CA Numbers:

Basic Registration:		10.00
Additional Registrations	_____ x 10.00	_____
Banquet Tickets	_____ x 28.00	_____
Total		_____

National Attendees

AA9JJ - N9QPQ
WQ7A - BONNIE
KZ2P
K1DFO
KB0BA - NOXYL
KD9ZP - K9FDL
AB7CW - AC7UH
K1TKL
W0NAC - N0LXJ
AB2LS
N5MLP - EVELYN
NA8W - KA8JQP
W0GXQ
K7TM - WA7YEI
N4AAT
K7SEN - AB7NK
N0KV - N0DXE
K7RE - KD7GLY
WB9NUL
WA0RKQ - SUE
AC0HW - ROSE - IAN
N7JPF - DARLENE
W4OWY - JANIE
KG5UZ - KJ5PQ
NX4W
KA9JAC - KB9YVT
W9LHG - VIRGINIA
KE3VV
NX0X - KB0MHH
WG9A - SANDY
K5OH - EVELYN
KU4YM - ELLEN
NF0N
W9GUY - NIKKI
N4CD
WA3QNT - JACKIE
KC7YE
KA1YZV - BARBARA
AC0B - KATHY
W7FEN - RITA
KY0E - N0CWX
K3IMC - JEAN
W9OP - W3PIP
AF3X - WV8LNX - KATRINA
K8ZZ
W5AL - VIOLET
AJ5ZX - KC5QCB
WA9DLB - HELEN
WY7LL - WY7ML



Birthdays

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
KB8TIN	Jul - 01
K4CQW	Jul - 01
W7AXY	Jul - 01
AL7GY	Jul - 02
KC7YE	Jul - 03
KF0E	Jul - 03
KA6BTU	Jul - 03
NC4J	Jul - 03
KA9QKN	Jul - 04
N0AC	Jul - 04
W1WLW	Jul - 05
K5UH	Jul - 05
W0WYJ	Jul - 05
W0ULU	Jul - 05
KE5WL	Jul - 06
WB5LFO	Jul - 06
NN5B	Jul - 06
VA3RJ	Jul - 07
K8EMS	Jul - 07
W5FHL	Jul - 07
KI0HF	Jul - 07
AA9ZZ	Jul - 07
KU4QG	Jul - 08
KG7GV	Jul - 08
KK0V	Jul - 08
N4ANV	Jul - 08
KE5RH	Jul - 10
N4GQQ	Jul - 10
N8GEQ	Jul - 11
AA6JR	Jul - 11
WA7AIM	Jul - 11
W8YL	Jul - 12
AA4GL	Jul - 12
WD8AYN	Jul - 12
WA4WIN	Jul - 13
N8OYY	Jul - 13
AF1HS	Jul - 13

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
KB4ET	Jul - 13
WF0B	Jul - 13
N5SGC	Jul - 13
K9FA	Jul - 13
AE5Q	Jul - 14
KC3AD	Jul - 14
VK4AAR	Jul - 14
N3FC	Jul - 14
WB0PYF	Jul - 14
W5OBT	Jul - 14
W0GYR	Jul - 14
K1VMT	Jul - 14
WA1JYO	Jul - 14
KE6LF	Jul - 14
K8ZXY	Jul - 15
N4XE	Jul - 15
KD1TH	Jul - 15
K5TT	Jul - 15
KA1NX	Jul - 16
W4DRR	Jul - 16
K0UB	Jul - 16
W2ARP	Jul - 16
KP4CZ	Jul - 17
AA9CW	Jul - 17
KT1M	Jul - 17
K6PJ	Jul - 17
WL7X	Jul - 17
K5XY	Jul - 18
KI4W	Jul - 18
KE6US	Jul - 18
KC0ZU	Jul - 18
K0SDA	Jul - 18
K8MM	Jul - 19
WE7G	Jul - 19
KW3H	Jul - 20
W8YRB	Jul - 20
K5VYT	Jul - 20

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
W4GNS	Jul - 21
N8IPG	Jul - 21
W4ZMB	Jul - 21
KU4YM	Jul - 21
K2RPM	Jul - 21
KB9MGI	Jul - 22
WB2ABD	Jul - 22
KM8U	Jul - 22
W4BOB	Jul - 23
WU3H	Jul - 23
K9OC	Jul - 24
KV3D	Jul - 24
W5JBP	Jul - 24
KA3QLF	Jul - 24
KE4MW	Jul - 24
W4VIC	Jul - 25
WS9V	Jul - 25
KF7PKL	Jul - 25
KE2EA	Jul - 26
N4IXV	Jul - 26
VE4AE	Jul - 26
K1NIT	Jul - 26
W5LOR	Jul - 26
K4BF	Jul - 26
W7SAR	Jul - 26
KD8HB	Jul - 26
W9AAW	Jul - 26
W5DR	Jul - 27
WB1EEN	Jul - 27
NC1N	Jul - 27
KF0Q	Jul - 27
N8HAM	Jul - 27
K9IA	Jul - 27
KF4WC	Jul - 27
W6PXE	Jul - 27
N5OAO	Jul - 28
N4AKP	Jul - 28

Roadrunner - Birthdays

Call	Birthday Date
KF8UN	Jul - 28
WA4LZI	Jul - 28
N0EHS	Jul - 29
N4AAT	Jul - 29
W4YDY	Jul - 29
K0NII	Jul - 29
WN8QII	Jul - 30
KW5USA	Jul - 30
WD4OIN	Jul - 30
K9GTQ	Jul - 30
W6XLR	Jul - 30
KD4DJ	Jul - 30
KU9G	Jul - 30
KY9Y	Jul - 30
KA9JAC	Jul - 31
W0FLZ	Jul - 31
W6XJN	Jul - 31



Awards

Awards Issued For June			
Call	Date	Award	Number
WQ7A	5/18/2013	Big Rig	# 2004 Counties
WG9A	6/19/2013	Master's Gold	# 58
KM6HB	6/14/2013	BINGO	# 350
VE5EGK	6/25/2013	USA-CA WAC 1 st Time	# 1235
W4YDY	6/8/2013	BINGO III	# 28
KW4V	5/31/2013	Worked all Counties - 5th Time	# 111

Roadrunner Issued For June				
Call	Date	Count	Award	Number
N4CD	6/24/2013	Last County Count 2200	Last County Count 2200	# 1
AF3X	6/24/2013	Last County Count 250	Last County Count 250	# 81
N0KV	6/16/2013	Last County Count 475	Last County Count 475	# 35
AF3X	6/1/2013	Last County Count 225	Last County Count 225	# 90
K7TM	6/1/2013	Last County Count 100	Last County Count 100	# 238



Digital Happenings #11

(June 2013)

By WONAC ("Matt")

One of my favorite people was Will Rogers. His most famous quote was "I never met a man I didn't like". He also once said: "There are three kinds of men. The one that learns by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves." As I get older (and hopefully a little wiser), I find myself wondering which category I fall into. I'm pretty sure there are a few county hunters out there that would happily place me in the last category and they may be right! Which category do you fall into? Hmmmmmm . . . ?

Let me ask another question. Are you still having fun with county hunting? If not so much anymore, maybe you need to try digital operations, especially mobile. Sure, it is new and different, but it just might get the ol' brain cells active again (which is a good thing for us older folks!). Also, there is a world of help available just for the asking.

This month I am going to re-visit the subject of digital interfaces. This is one of the most confusing aspects of operating digital. Yes, I have discussed this topic before, but I have learned a lot over the last few months while helping others set up their digital operations using several different interfaces and different rigs. The possible combinations of software, interfaces, and rigs are astronomical! I will try and make some sense out of all this for you later in this article, but first

Challenge Department:

Last month I challenged you to solve a puzzle as stated below:

What 6 letter English word contains NO common vowels (AEIOU), but does contain 3 Y's used as vowels. Hint: an astronomical term.

Maybe this was too easy. The correct answer is "SYZYGY" which means "the nearly straight-line configuration of three celestial bodies (as the sun, moon, and earth during a solar or lunar eclipse) in a gravitational system.

Four people sent in the right word very quickly. Here they are in order of receipt:

- 1) W2CC – Dave
- 2) WA4UNS – Doug
- 3) KB9VQM – Louie
- 4) AB2LS - Carol

Now, I would like to challenge you again with a number problem that you may find a bit more difficult!

What is the next number in the following sequence: -7, 0, 17, 50, 105, ??

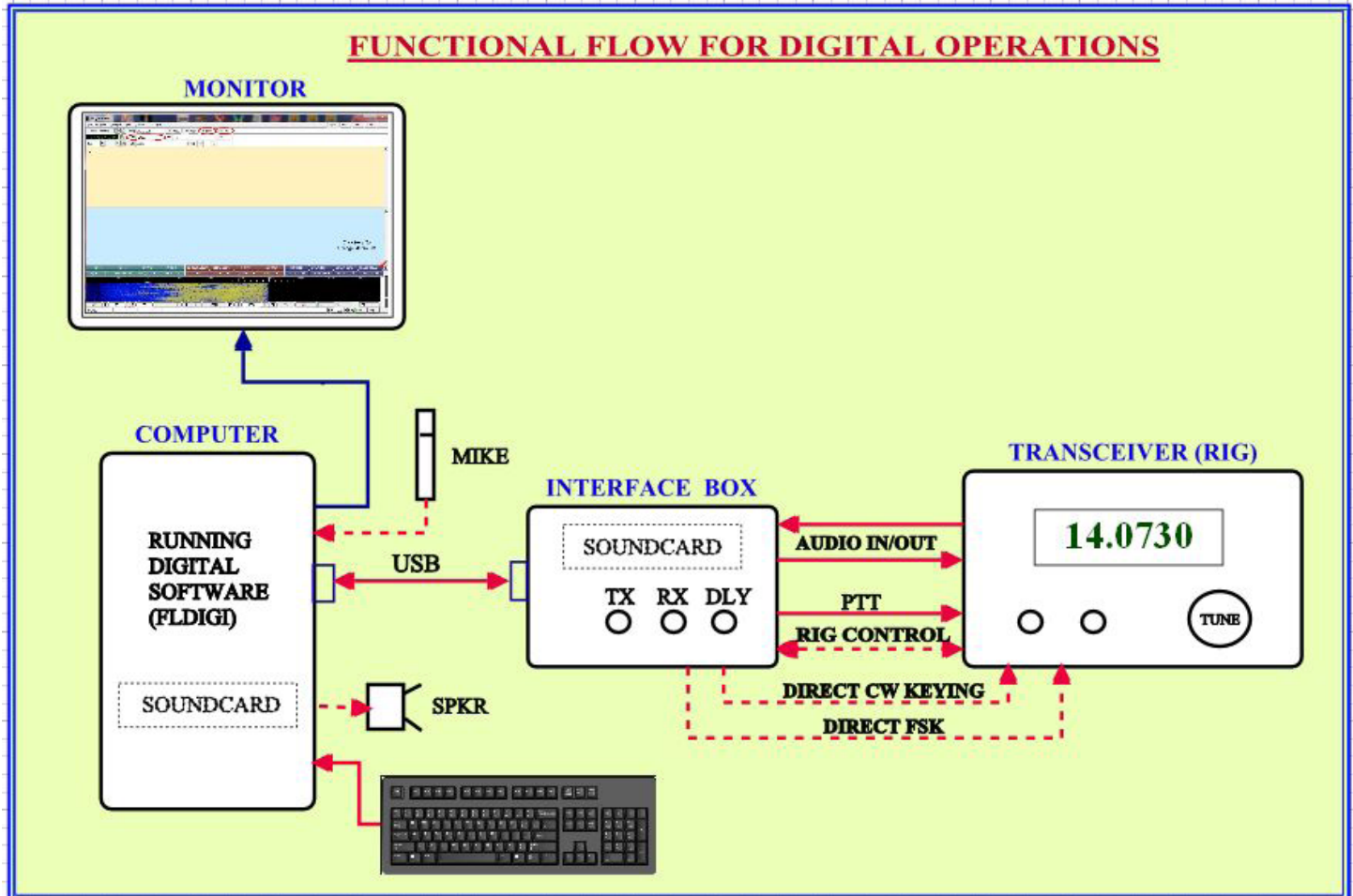
I'll again provide the correct solution in next month's article along with a list of any that send in the correct answer. Send your solution to w0nac@comcast.net.

Digital Interfaces (Re-Visited):

To operate using any of the many digital modes, your system must support certain functions. Other functions are optional. A list of both is given below:

- 1) Computer - including monitor, keyboard (microphone & speakers optional) capable of running your digital software.
- 2) Transceiver – capable of operating USB on desired bands with audio input/output ports and PTT connection (these can be an 8-pin mike connector, modular mike connector, or accessory jack on rear panel). Optionally, it can also have a CW keying port and an FSK keying port.
- 3) Soundcard – This can be located inside the computer or optionally, a second soundcard can be located in your interface box.
- 4) Interface – This can range from simple direct audio connections between your XCVR and your computer soundcard to full function interface boxes that contain one or more of the following additional functions:
 - a) – Audio isolation of both Audio IN and Audio OUT (usually with transformers) to prevent ground loops.
 - b) – PTT (Push-To-Talk) to automatically toggle your XCVR between transmit and receive. Some interfaces avoid ground loops by using opto-isolators in this circuit.
 - c) – USB port connectivity to your computer with single cable. Older interfaces still use RS-232 serial port connectivity, but they are a dying breed because most modern computers no longer have RS-232 serial ports. USB connections are much easier to set up and also provide power to run the interface box.
 - d) – Rig Control (CAT) – Allows for direct control (via computer software) of almost all XCVR functions including frequency, RF gain, Audio gain, Band, Mode, etc. This function also reports back to your computer the state of these XCVR settings. For digital ops, probably the most important XCVR setting reported back is frequency.
 - e) – Direct CW keying – This function allows your computer to directly key your XCVR CW keying jack when operating your digital software in the CW mode with your keyboard.
 - f) – Direct FSK keying – If your XCVR has a direct keying FSK port available, you can use this function to produce “true” FSK RTTY. Without this function your digital software must create your RTTY signal using AFSC (Audio Frequency Shift Keying) techniques. Use of AFSC is not necessarily “bad”, but it is more prone to producing a distorted signal if you over drive your XCVR.

Again, the possible combinations of these functions are almost limitless! In the figure below, I attempt to show what I would recommend as a “good” digital setup configuration and show how the various parts connect flow-wise:



The actual physical connections will vary considerably based on your XCVR, choice of Interface Box, and your Computer model. Since your choice of XCVR and Computer are probably givens (they are what you already have!), let's go on to choosing an Interface. However, before you make your final choice, I recommend that you consider several constraints:

- 1) Select an interface that connects to your computer with a single USB cable. I would stay away from interfaces that still use RS-232 serial connections as these are complex to set up and get very confusing. Of course, if you already have an interface that lacks USB connectivity and you can't afford to upgrade, then it can be made to "work". Just be prepared for a lot of digging around in your various manuals and lots of frustration!
- 2) I strongly recommend that any interface you consider will support the PTT function. It's very inconvenient to manually toggle your XCVR between transmit and receive! Yes, your XCVR VOX function can be used to trigger PTT, but it is difficult to set up correctly and is not as reliable as having your interface box trigger the XCVR PTT circuit directly. Incidentally, there are two types of PTT functions used in the various interface models. The first uses direct logic control and requires additional USB to COM Port conversion chips (read higher cost to make!). The second uses a simple VOX circuit (internal to the interface box) to trigger an external PTT line to the XCVR. This method is simpler and less expensive to make (the SignalLink USB box uses this method) and works well.
- 3) I strongly recommend that any interface you buy have adjustable Transmit and Receive audio level controls on the front face of the box. Of these two, the Transmit level control is the

most important as it will be your primary way of adjusting the RF power out from your XCVR. The Receive level control is less necessary as adjustments to Receive level are changed infrequently once set.

- 4) Whether or not you need any of the many other functions must be a personal choice based on your particular operating desires.

To help you make your choice, I have prepared a matrix showing many interface selections. I'm sure that I have missed some choices out there, but I have covered all that I could find. My comments and evaluation of functions on these choices are strictly my personal interpretations. You should not take these at face value, but go to the links provided (use <CTRL> Click) for more detailed information. Features change and new devices are coming out all the time, so the following table will have a very short half-life!

DIGITAL INTERFACE FEATURE COMPARISONS

#	INTERFACE	LINK	COST	Has Own Sound card?	Computer Interface	XCVR Interface	Audio Level Controls?	PTT?	CAT?	CW or FSK?	
1	SignalLink USB (Tigertronics)	http://www.tigertronics.com/slusbmain.htm	~ \$100	Yes	USB Cable	Acc Jack Cable or Mike Cable	Yes, Both Rx and TX	Yes VOX	No	No	Very simple & inexpensive, but works well! Neat little box! Highly Recommended!
2	Computer Mike In Front Of XCVR Speaker	N/A	Free	No	Mike Cable	Speaker	No	No	No	No	Simple way to receive and decode digital signals, but not much else. Use only to get your feet wet.
3	Homebrew Simple Interfaces	http://www.google.com/search?q=Simple+PSK+interface&sa=X&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ei=ApvLUbuiMpDy8ASExIDwBg&ved=0CCwQsAQ&biw=1100&bih=664	Varies		Various	Various	Varies	Most Yes	Most Yes	Most NO	This site contains a wealth of ideas on interfaces you can build yourself as well as info on some commercial products.

4	US Navigator Interface	http://navigator-interface.com/	\$200 ? (Only)	Yes	USB Cable	Cables To ACC Jack/Mike, Key	Yes, Both Rx and TX	Yes	Yes	Yes	Extremely competent box with all the bells and whistles! Setup is complex. No longer made. Will have to find used.
5	MFJ-1275	http://www.	\$110	No	RS-232 Serial Cable	Cable To 8-Pin Mike Jack	No	No	No	No	Inexpensive, but very dated box. Still uses serial interface. Not Recommended.
6	MFJ-1279M	http://www.	\$140	No	RS-232 Serial Cable	Cable To 8-Pin Mike Jack	No	No	No	Yes	Has Direct Keying Jack for keying Radio in CW or FSK. Still uses serial interface. Not Recommended.
7	TIMEWAVE PK-232SC Interface	http://www.timewave.com/support/PK-232/PK232SC.html	\$600	Yes	USB Cable	Various Cables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Very Expensive, but this is probably the "Cadillac" of interfaces. It has almost everything you could wish for.
8	West Mountain Radio RIGblaster Pro	http://www.	\$300	No	RS-232 Serial Cables plus many audio cables	Variety of Cables	Yes, TX Only	Yes	Yes	Yes	A bit outdated. Still uses RS-232 Serial interface. Very complex to set up. Not recommended.
9	West Mountain Radio RIGblaster Advantage	http://www.	\$200	Yes	USB Cable	Cable To 8-Pin or Modular Mike Jack	Yes, Both Rx and TX	Yes	Yes	Yes	Very nice box! Kind of like a Signalink USB, but includes Rig Control which Signalink lacks. Recommended.
	West Mountain Radio RIGblaster Plus II	http://www.	\$160	No	USB Cable	Cable To 8-Pin or Modular Mike Jack	Yes, TX Only	Yes	Yes	Yes	Updated model to USB Interface, but has NO internal sound card. Not recommended.

Essentially all commercial interface manufactures make their hardware so that you can properly connect to almost all common brand or model transceivers, but you will still need to carefully study both your transceiver manual and the instructions that come with your interface. If you have done all

this and are still confused, I can probably help you. My phone number is 303-799-3658.

June Activities:

Digital Activities during June seem to have slacked off a bit. About the only digital mobile I have heard running counties this month is W5QP (Rick). He put out several counties in OK using BPSK-63. We (W0NAC/N0LXJ) put out our home county (Douglas, CO) using MFSK-32, RTTY 75N, and BPSK-63 on June 15th. Sharon and I will be putting out a lot of digital counties on the way to and from the National in Deadwood. I will publish our trip plan soon. The results of our trip will be listed in Digital Happenings #12.

Support calls related to digital setup, etc. have also slowed (maybe everyone is on vacation?). As always, I stand ready to help anyone who has problems or wishes to get started with digital operations. Just email me or call me on the phone. My email is w0nac@comcast.net and my home phone number is 303-799-3658. Call any time.

Table 3 (below) has again been updated from last month. I updated several people using files they sent in to me. Please check your status in the table, and if you believe that your numbers are not right, please drop me a quick email and include your correct stats, if you know them. If you haven't the "foggiest" idea what your stats are, please attach zipped copies of your most current Logger call sign database (two if you are a team), and your Common database and I can extract your stats from these. For example, our databases file names are

"County Hunter – W0NAC.mdb", "County Hunter – N0LXJ.mdb", and "County Hunters – Common.mdb". These files can normally be found in the folder: "C:\Logger Data\". Again, please "ZIP" these files as my email provider won't pass files with an "mdb" file extension.

The latest version of Logger (4614) will still only report your status for the USA – Digital Award (go to "View/Edit/Book/USA-Digital/All") and for fully completed counties for the 5 - Mode Award. A fix is still in the works that will report on the status of 1, 2, 3, and 4 completed counties. In the meantime, your only options are to manually count them (from a Logger printed 5-Mode report) or, as mentioned above, send your data files to me for manual extraction.

Establishing an interactive web site for digital matters is still in the works, but has been held up by more pressing matters. One of the functions I hope to have on the site is an interactive way for digital folk to input their status so I can update the table. I have a server and a domain name, but still need to develop the software for the site. It will probably be several more months before the site is up and functional.

The updated Table 3 is given below. It now has 2 new columns – Total 5 - Mode contacts for Modes 1 - 5, and % Completed for the 5 - Mode Award.

It is interesting to note that of those reporting, 2 people (N0KV and W0NAC) have completed over 50% of the

5 - Mode Award. 9 other people have completed over 40% of the 5 - Mode Award. Maybe the 5 - Mode Award is not as difficult to finish as some people might have thought when it was originally proposed?

Table 3 - Active Digital County Hunters Award Status

#	CALL	NAME	STATUS* (M,F,I)	USA - DIGITAL Counties (of 3077)	(1 MODE)	(2 MODES)	FIVE MODE COUNTRIES (3 MODES)	(4 MODES)	(5 MODES)	TOTAL	% 5-Mode Completed	LAST UPDATED
1	AA8R	Randy	F	1000+	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	9/30/2012
2	AC0B	Cliff	F	205	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	12/10/2012
3	AD1C	Jim	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
4	K0DEQ	Bill	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
5	K0PWW	Rob	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
6	K0WJ	Lou	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
7	K4PBX	Jim	F	106	2575	84	6	0	0	2665	17.3%	10/15/2012
8	K5GE	Gene	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
9	K5SF	Dick	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
10	K5WAF	Bill	F	599	3044	?	?	?	?	3044	19.8%	5/2/2013
11	K7REL	Tom	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
12	K8QWY	Ed	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
13	K8ZZ	Ed	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
14	KA8IQP	Pamela	M/F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
15	KC3X	Hollis	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
16	KC6AWX	Bob	F	450	3077	1592	264	59	14	5006	32.5%	5/7/2013
17	KC7YE	Jack	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
18	KD5YUK	Billv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
19	KD7KST	Bill	M/F	1792	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	9/30/2012
20	KG5RJ	Greg	F	557	3048	2062	496	147	34	5787	37.6%	5/2/2013
21	KM1C	Bill	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
22	KM6HB	Mark	F	714	3077	2936	694	87	1	6795	44.2%	2/3/2013
23	N0KV	Barrv	M/F	412	3077	2996	2064	249	24	8410	54.7%	8/26/2012
24	N0LXI	Sharon	M/F	1334	3077	2237	1164	423	201	7102	46.2%	6/28/2013
25	N1API	Al	F	313	3077	519	128	22	6	3752	24.4%	4/10/2013
26	N3HOO	Ed	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
27	N4JT	Jim	F	572	3077	3058	575	99	55	6864	44.6%	10/30/2012
28	N5MLP	Ron	M/F	391	3077	409	54	37	9	3586	23.3%	5/19/2013
29	N6PDB	Dennis	M/F	375	3077	2633	413	138	115	6376	41.4%	3/28/2013
30	N8CIJ	Dick	F	481	3077	2971	393	117	109	6667	43.3%	1/21/2013
31	N8HAM	Jim	I	0	3077	0	0	0	0	3077	20.0%	4/2/2013
32	N9W/NN	Steve	F	0	2180	0	0	0	0	2180	14.2%	2/24/2013
33	NA8W	Darl	F	535	2993	?	?	?	55	3048	19.8%	4/6/2013
34	NE0N	Mike	F	785	3077	3077	915	108	50	7227	47.0%	12/31/2012
35	NN9K	Pete	F	816	3077	859	78	1	0	4015	26.1%	3/23/2012
36	NT2A	Gene	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
37	NU4C	Paul	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
38	NW6S	Jim	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
39	NX4W	Lloyd	M/F	1128	3077	1211	329	176	88	4881	31.7%	5/31/2013
40	W0NAC	Matt	M/F	1773	3077	2806	1932	999	357	9171	59.6%	6/28/2013
41	W3DLM	Don	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
42	W4IHI	Garv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
43	W4SIG	Kerrv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
44	W4YDY	Dave	F	752	3077	3077	921	213	46	7334	47.7%	3/6/2013
45	W5QP	Rick	M/F	138	3077	2362	137	57	46	5679	36.9%	5/30/2013
46	W6RK	Risto	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
47	W6RLL	Joe	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
48	W7IN	Larrv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
49	W7QO	Bill	M/F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
50	W9JR	Rich	F	90	3077	1674	44	0	0	4795	31.2%	10/31/2012
51	W9SUO	Larrv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
52	WA4EEZ	Leslie	F	1034	3075	1257	483	69	6	4890	31.8%	6/4/2013
53	WA4UNS	Doug	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
54	WA6OCV	Susan	M/F	328	3077	328	320	130	10	3865	25.1%	3/28/2013
55	WA7JHQ	Sterling	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
56	WB0M	Jeff	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
57	WB2ABD	Paul	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
58	WD4OIN	Jack	F	395	3077	3065	410	67	8	6627	43.1%	3/3/2013
59	WQ7A	Terrv	F	158	3077	3011	163	96	81	6428	41.8%	5/26/2013
60	WY4D	Bennie	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	

Possible topics for the coming months include –

“How To Log Your Digital Contacts In Logger”

“Macros – Revisited”

“New Digital Awards?”

“Digital Software Installation – Revisited”

“Award Difficulty Index”

“Additional Digital Mode Test Results”

“Digital Software Choices”

So long again.....Please email me with your comments/suggestions at w0nac@comcast.net and don't forget to send me your counties worked status on the USA – Digital and 5 - Mode Awards so I can update the Digital County Hunter Status List again next month.

73's and we hope to see you at the National Convention in Deadwood. Please plan on attending the first “Digital” meeting at 11:00 AM Saturday.

Matt – W0NAC



**Treasurer's Report (W0NAC)
May 2013***

Beginning Account Balances May 10, 2013		\$34,222.35
May Income:		
Money Market Interest	\$2.28	
Awards Manager Income	\$977.50 #	
Membership Income	\$361.77	
Logger distribution	\$20.00	
Total Income:		<u>\$1361.55</u>
May Expenses:		
Awards Manager Expenses	\$529.32 @	
Office Expenses	\$0.00	
Total Expenses:		<u>\$529.32</u>
May Net Income Less Expenses		\$832.23
New Total Balance ALL Accounts:		\$35,054.58
Checking Account Balance	<u>\$9034.51</u>	
Money Market Account Balance	<u>\$26,020.07</u>	
Total:		\$35,054.58

Note:

The following monies are not included in the above:

Awards Chairman's Funds \$1,500.00

* Includes May Transactions Through 6/8/2013

@ Includes both April/May Expenses

Award Manager Income For April/May Combined



**Awards Manager's Report
June 30, 2013**

Funds Balance May 31, 2013		\$1,500.00
Income	\$ 647.00	
	<u>\$ 647.00</u>	
Expenses:		
Office supplies	\$ 0.00	
Plaque Suppliers	\$ 418.75	
Postage	\$ 102.40	
	<u>\$ 521.15</u>	
Sent to Treasurer		\$ 647.00
Reimbursement received from Treasurer		\$ 521.15
Funds Balance June 30, 2013		\$1500.00



Calendar

~ July 2013 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
ONLY START DATE SHOWN	1 10-10 QP	2	3	4 MI QRP QP HAPPY FOURTH!	5	6
7	8	9	10 NATIONAL	11	12 FIST SPRINT	13 STRT KEY SPRINT
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 NA RTTY QP
21	22 RUN4BACON	23	24	25	26	27 MARAC QP NJ QP
28	29	30	31	Notes: CLICK ON EVENT TO GO TO THAT WEB SITE		



Notes

#1 -- Hello fellow county hunters,

I and my son had a great time running counties on Sunday. We did not get lost even one time. The car, radio and antenna system functioned as expected. But not every trip goes without failure. My recorder failed to record on two county runs. The tape was running but recorded absolutely no sounds in Jasper, IA and Johnson, IA. I guess I didn't push the record button down firmly.

I would like each of you to provide me with your contact details for these two counties. The Jasper county run started at 2153 UTC and ended before 2249 UTC. The Johnson county run started at 2331 UTC and ended at 2347 UTC. I need time, frequency and both signal reports. You may not have worked me in either or both counties.

Thanks for the help on Sunday and this request.

W3CR Chuck-a-luck 73's and 88's.

#2 -- KL7/W3ZUH/mobile

Trip canceled – health problems – Doctor says no!! Lung problems.

Sorry

Dick

Awards Committee

These MARAC members are serving on the Awards Committee:

Awards Manager - Bob Devine (KC6AWX)

Phil Yasson (AB7RW)

Bob Gedemer (KA9JAC)

Dave Splitt (KE3VV)

Kent Reinke (KL1V)

Ed Palagyi (KN4Y)

Leo Bingham (WY7LL)

“Matt” Matthew (W0NAC)

David Pyle (KW1DX)

The County Line Roadrunner
MARAC Secretary
2690 Bohicket Rd
Johns Island, SC 29455

“A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird”

Monthly Deadline for Articles is the 25th!

Board of Directors

President: David Splitt, KE3VV, 6111 Utah Ave NW, Washington DC 20015, 301-300-2818, davidsplitt@erols.com

Vice-President: Leo Bingham, WY7LL, 28 Buck Dr, Pine Haven, WY 82721, 307-686-8230, wy7ll.lightningleo@gmail.com

Secretary: Jim Grandinetti, KZ2P, 2690 Bohicket Rd, Johns Island, SC 29455, 843-323-8385, k2jg@comcast.net

Treasurer: Matt Matthew, W0NAC, 17525 Wilde Ave, Unit 108, Parker CO 80134, 303-941-0867, w0nac@comcast.net

Great Lakes Director: Dan Mulford, KM9X, 5225 N Co Rd 100E, Osgood IN 47037, 812-498-6702, km9x@frontier.com

North Central Director: Tony Mazzocco, WA9DLB, 275 E County Line RD, Barrington, IL 60010, 224-678-5265, wa9dlb@hotmail.com

Northeast Director: Carol-Ann Reitman, AB2LS, 100 Woodbury Rd, Highland Mills, NY 10930, 845-928-6238, ab2ls@optonline.net

South Central Director: Barry Mitchell, N0KV, 12200 Boothill Dr, Parker, CO 80138, 303-842-5635, n0kv@arrl.net

Pacific Director: Robert T. Devine, KC6AWX, 407 Alameda Del Prado, Novato, CA 94949-6302, 415-883-8980, kc6awx@marac.org

Southeast Director: Kerry Long, W4SIG, 1385 Auburn Woods Dr, Collierville TN 38017, 901-331-1881, kerrylong@comcast.net

Immediate Past President: Joyce Boothe, WB9NUL, 21175 FM2556, Santa Rosa, TX 78593 1-956-202-3373, joycenul@aol.com

Appointees

Historian: Gary Beam, K4EXT, 195 Nanny Goat Hill Rd, Elizabethton, TN 37643, ch2@k4ext.com

Newsletter Editor: Dave Hyatt, KU4YM, 159 Schooler Bend Ave, Summerville, SC 29483, 843-442-8666, dhhyatt@ieee.org

Sunshine Coordinator: Pat Reiner, KM6QF, 16931 Aldon Rd, Encino, CA, 91436, 213-999-0100, lovedoxies@aol.com

Webmaster: Mike Fatchett, W0MU, PO Box 3500, Parker, CO 80134, 303-790-4611, w0mu@w0mu.com

Custodian, Club Call, K9DCJ: Joyce Boothe, WB9NUL, 21175 FM2556, Santa Rosa, TX 78593 1-956-202-3373, joycenul@aol.com

Election Coordinator: Kent Reinke, KV7N, 1826 East 4500 North, Buhl ID 83316, 208-543-6083, kr@gci.net

MARAC General Counsel: David Splitt, KE3VV, 6111 Utah Avenue NW Washington, D.C. 20015-2461, 1-202-362-3355, ke3vv@marac.org

Computer Data Manager: Gene A Olig Sr, KD9ZP, W 4325 4th St Rd, Fond du Lac, WI 54937, 920-923-0130, kd9zp@att.net

Dues with an Electronic copy of the Newsletter copy are \$14.00 per year, check or money order; \$14.75 via PayPal.