



THE COUNTY LINE ROADRUNNER

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MUsings from W0MU

This is becoming far too common but I am sad to pass on the news that long time county hunters W7GQK-Abe USA-CA 579 and HB9RG-Rudi USA-CA791 have become a silent keys. KN4Y's wife also passed away recently. Our Historian, K4EXT-Gary, was recently hospitalized with some heart problems. He is home now pending further evaluations and possible surgery. WQ7A is doing well after his recent medical issues.



forums asking is low. The a cold freeze homes where it and others have A few people

I have received a number of emails and I have seen comments on the where are all the mobiles? Winter is always a period where activity very cold weather that engulfed much of the nation and put it into alone with very very poor propagation have kept people in their is warm and safe. N4CD, N4UP, AB4WL/KF4INA, W4SIG, NU0Q been out and about. Things should improve as we move into spring. mentioned that nobody runs on the net frequencies anymore and nobody is running a net. Can you really blame them? Who wants to sit around all day with so few mobiles running? We have some really great tools that allow mobiles to spot themselves. Most mobiles try the normal frequencies first but if they are busy they will move to a clear frequency. The days of putting your receiver on a frequency all day are over. Many of the POTA-WWFF-KFF activators who are good for counties too will run on other frequencies and most are kind enough to spot themselves so we can find them. You really should be watching the spotting apps or you will certainly miss lots of counties.

According to an article I read the other day, FT8 contacts are now 20 percent of all contact made today. FT8 has been great for the lousy band conditions. 20m is usually filled to the brim especially on the weekends and 40m and 80m are usually quite crowded in the evenings. I spend a lot of time on 160 in the evenings and have worked many familiar faces there! During the day I am usually on 30, 20 or 17 meters. If you are already using FT8 please make sure you are running the latest release version or the newest beta. The older betas do not support some of the new additions like RR73.

A number of people have expressed some concerns about stability of CQ Magazine, as they were unable to print the November or December 2017 of the magazine. I have not had any discussions with K1BV on what would happen if CQ had to close. I am sure that Ted would carry on with the awards on his

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own but MARAC would be open to taking over the USA-CA award if it should ever come to that.

The Board and the Awards Committee have been working on ideas that will encourage new people to try county hunting and encourage more mobile activity with new awards. The caveat is that whatever we decide to do will have to be more automated. There have been no decisions made but some of the ideas that have been discussed have been a repeat offender award for a mobile activating a county a number of times and a late night award for activating counties between 0000z and 1200z. These awards have been pretty popular with the POTA activators and chaser/hunters. Other thoughts are to have some nice entry level awards to chase such as 100 counties, 200, 500, 1000 etc. QRZ offers their own county certificate with levels and they have issued over 8300 of their online awards. We need to figure out how to get those people into MARAC.

Another option is to change our 1st time award and remove the dependency on USA-CA and allow people to apply for 1st time using our current rules or a modified rules set for this award. Most of the more difficult and prestigious MARAC awards require USA-CA. It seems odd to me that MARAC would be limited by an award it does not control or offer. USA-CA will not be available on LOTW maybe ever and even if it were, the one time out of pocket costs of 15 cents a contact plus award fees would make the award cost over \$500.00. There is currently no bureau system to help negate some of the post costs and electronic means of confirmation other than EQSL have been dismissed such as scanned or email confirmations. So obtaining USA-CA is harder than ever. Yes we all did it and we paid our dues etc. So what! It should be obvious to most that activity is way down and MARAC as a whole is not a young group. Many very active mobiles are no longer capable of running any more and we need to find some new people to continue the tradition.

We are looking at some other solutions on how to get people their certificates such as a server based system where you upload your application, it is approved and the award is automatically generated for download. The major problem that we continue to have, is that either people with the skills to help are not interested in helping anymore or we simply don't have the skill sets to move forward with improving and upgrading our technologies. I appreciate the hard work of K4PBX, K8EMS, WQ7A, W0NAC, N5MLP and of course KD9ZP. These people are already working very hard for us. Maybe with some new blood will come people with these skills sets who can help.

AB7RW-Phil is getting the hang of thing and processed a bunch of awards recently. If you are still waiting for an award please contact Phil as a few awards have slipped through our grasp and we want to make sure that everyone gets every award they deserve.

Don't forget the Michigan Mini is coming up in April and our 50th National will be in Kansas City in October. I will not be able to attend the mini but I hope to see everyone in KC! I am always open to suggestions and comments so feel free to email or call.

W0MU
Mike Fatchett
President

Dateline CW

Ed, KN4Y

It (County line) is the starting handkerchief of the Lord.

I am listening to the county hunter's twenty meter CW frequency while enjoying the warmth from the maxed out space heater. I look at month of February and winter is winding down; County hunters enjoy the shorter month celebrating two past presidents George Washington and Abe which I have been told were county hunters. I toss received at the ground hog day event into the empty container; it was a total waste of time. I am getting Gator's down shift his 4X4 and he slides to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. I smile, that is good timing, one of the traits of a CW county hunter.



the calendar; it is the an event I enjoy. the birthdays of Lincoln, neither of the brochure that I five gallon trash thirsty when I hear

Gator stops at the mailbox on the way into the shack. I smile, he is carrying a white cardboard container, I almost choke as my saliva glands activate. Gator sets the mail and the white cardboard box on the desk and takes out two super sized lattes and hands me one. We both take a short February month sip, "Thanks Gator this is just what the doctor ordered for the February blues. How was your trip to the redneck ethanol meeting?" Gator smiles, "I cannot say much as we have been sworn to secrecy, but sure good to get back home."

Gator picks up a small envelope from the pile of mail and opens the envelope, "Look here Dude, this is a QSL card from that Rick Dude, AI5P, for his Route 66 adventure trip." I look at the card, "This is neat, remind me to send Rick one of my QSL cards." Gator nods affirmatively, "Also Dude here is your brown envelope you sent to the ARRL incoming QSL bureau for the fourth call area." Gator picks up and opens the brown envelope, "This is awesome Dude you got 45 DX QSL cards." I look at the cards, "Just set them on the table and I will prepare return QSL cards." Gator is not paying attention.

Gator picks up a Post-it, "This has MFJ written on it, is this important?" I sip my latte, "No, not really. I had purchased a new MFJ keyer for the van and when it arrived there was neither a power cord nor a manual. I e-mailed MFJ and was told there were two power cord options and I could order the cord I needed. They also told me the manual could be downloaded. I never thought I would purchase something I could not use. I ordered the power cord." Gator laughs, "Welcome to the internet."

Gator turns on the computer and sips his latte as the computer screen lights up. Gator mouses around, “Dude, I notice you operated in the RAEM HF CW contest, what the heck is that contest?” I smile, “That is a contest in memory of Ernst Krenkel a famous Russian polar explorer and radio operator with the call RAEM. A part of the exchange is latitude and longitude, so I gave it a try.” Gator is looking at the log, “I see you made 30 contacts is that good?” “I don’t know, I did not have a logging program for the contest and could not send in a Cabrillo log.” Gator is not paying attention. He is staring at the computer screen.

“I can relate to this Canada Winter CW contest and you worked only Canadian stations and made 100 QSO’s on six bands. That is awesome.” I grin like a county hunter in a hospitality room, “Yes Gator, I have been trying to do that for years and finally did it. Next year I will shoot for 150 Canada QSO’s.” Gator is not paying attention as he stares at the computer screen. “Alright Dude, I notice on the same weekend you worked the Stew Perry Topband Distance Challenge and made 76 QSO’s, why 76?” I laugh, “I was doing search and pounce when things slowed down so I decided to call and stop at 75 QSO’s. I worked QSO 75 and ready to shut down when a station called me. So I finished with 76 QSO’s.” Gator is checking counties needed on 160 meters, “Alright Dude you logged 15 new counties on the top band.” I give the high sign and take a sip of my latte.

“Dude, I just read Bob, W4MYA, Abe, W7GQK, and Rudi, HB9RG are silent keys. Did you know them?” “I don’t think Bob was a county hunter but I worked him many times while mobile in the State QSO parties. I worked Abe many times logging Alabama Counties for various awards and enjoyed chatting with him at the National Conventions. I think Rudi operated mostly sideband but I talked to him at conventions.” We bow our heads as Gator recites the Irish Blessing.

Gator glances out of the window, he waves. “Dude the mail lady just put a large package in the mailbox.” Gator goes out the door and returns with a large envelope. “Dude you want me to open the package?” I nod yes. Gator gets his illegal redneck switch blade out and zips open the envelope. He takes out a plaque, “Awesome Dude, you won first place out of State in the Colorado QSO party for CW, single operator, high power.” I look surprised, “Probably a typo, I have never used high power since I left CB.” Gator sets the beautiful plaque on the table, “You have no wall space left to mount it.” I shake my head in agreement.

Gator’s cell phone goes CQ CQ CQ, “Sorry Dude I got to get back to the plant, one of the condensation traps froze during shut down and is hindering tower start-up.” He is gone like Matt Lauer, I hear him yell; “Remember old Dude, once over the hill, you pick up speed.” I hear the printer start and stop I get the printout and it is a list of the mobile county

hunters heard on the CW call frequencies. Counties run are many, mobiles are few, weather too brutal.

I read: AB4WL, AI5P, K0FG, K8ZZ, N4CD, N4UP, N9JT, NF0N, NU0Q, and W4SIG.

In February there are four State QSO parties; Minnesota, Vermont, with North and South Carolina on one weekend. But your paddle won't rust there is the British Columbia QSO party, the North American CW Sprint and the Dutch PACC Contest to mention a few. The biggie contest is the ARRL International CW DX Contest. Have faith. summer will soon be here and bitching about the heat can be resumed. Nap time.

I thank all MARAC county hunters for the prayers, sympathy and ultra kind words and cards I received after my wife, Helen, passed away in January. She enjoyed all the MARAC conventions we attended from 1998 to 2004. The last five years she had dementia and slowly her memory disappeared. She was 91 years old and last December we celebrated 50 years of an awesome marriage. I miss her.

Conventions

**2018 Michigan Mini
April 26, 27 & 28th
Traverse City, Mi**

For more details and to register, visit marac.org and click on corresponding link.

Mark your calendars for October 3 - 6, 2018 and plan on attending the

50th National Convention

to be held at the Holiday Inn Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, MO.

One East 45th St.
Kansas City, MO. 64111
816-753-7400

Book your room online at:

<http://ichotelsgroup.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI&GPC=MAR&hotelCode=MKCOE&PMID=99801505>

or call the hotel directly and use code **MAR**

Rooms are \$119.00 per night (1 king or 2 queen beds) plus tax.

More details to follow on the MARAC website and next month's Road Runner.

See you in October!

Ed - K8ZZ Chairman

Awards

Awards Committee

Information from the Awards Secretary

The Awards Secretary, Phil, AB7RW has processed most of the backlog of awards requests received in the past month and you may continue to submit new applications from this time forward.

Quite a few awards submissions have been received that are duplicates, incomplete, or otherwise not correct. Please review your submissions carefully before clicking the “Submit” button.

If you find an error after submitting it, please send an email to: marac.awards@gmail.com and Phil will delete that entry. However, he cannot correct your submission so you will need to submit a replacement document with the correct information.

If you wish to give another operator a last county award for giving you a contact in a last county, please ensure you use the correct application form titled “Last Application (LC1 and LC2)” on the “Awards” tab of the MARAC website. Note:

- LC-1 awards are for the last county in one particular state
- LC-2 awards are for the last county in the entire USA (known as “Whole Ball of Wax” – WBOW)

The selection of either of these awards is accomplished in box 20 of the form (see screenshot below). If it is a LC-2 and you wish to give a plaque to that operator for the WBOW, be sure and select “Yes” from the dropdown for Box 21 and then enter a message you wish to have engraved on the plaque in box 22 (40-character limit).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Box 20 Award Type</p> | <p>Box 21 LC2 Plaque</p> | <p>Box 22 LC-2 Engraving</p> |
| <p>LC-1 - Last In The State</p> <p>LC-2 - Last For The !Whole Ball Of Wax!</p> | <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> | |
| <p>Box 23 Note to the Awards Manager (50 Character Limit - one line only)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 400px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | | |

Detailed instructions for all fields (boxes) in this form appears in an instruction sheet immediately below the form. The following is an excerpt from that instruction sheet pertaining to boxes 20 – 23:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Box 20 - Back | In this box: Select LC-1 if it is your 'Last In A State' Select LC-2 for the 'Last For The Whole of Wax' |
| Box 21 - Back | When someone gives your last, most CH'ers will order a plaque for that person The Plaque (and Certificate) costs \$20 The Email notification is free The cost is the same for both MARAC members and non-members |
| Box 22 - Back | When you give a LC-2 plaque to the person who gave you the 3077th County It is Customary to add you personal note on the plaque Most say: 'TNX For The Number 3077 For 2nd Time' (or whatever) However, you might say: 'TNX Frank For Going The Extra Mile' Note: 40 Characters is the Limit! |
| Box 23 - Back | If you want to sent a note to the Awards Manager - do it here Note: 50 Characters is the Limit! |

If a plaque is ordered for yourself and/or the person who gave you a LC-2 contact, the cost of the plaques must be sent to the Awards Secretary (if you do not already have available funds on deposit with the Awards Secretary necessary to cover the cost). **Do not send cash!** Please send a check made out to:

“Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club” to Phil at the mailing address:

13208 NE 5th Avenue
Vancouver, WA
98685-2679

If you have any questions about submission of awards, you may contact Phil via email or phone at:

Phone: [360-574-1152](tel:360-574-1152)
marac.awards@gmail.com

MARAC Awards Committee



N5MLP – Ron Clift, Marac Awards Manager

**Treasurer's Report (W7OLY)
December 2017***

Beginning Account Balances November 13, 2017 **\$18,808.89**

Income:

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Money Market Interest | \$0.42 | |
| Awards Secretary Income | \$0.00 | |
| Misc. Income (1) | \$6,049.51 | |
| Membership Income | \$342.94 | |
| Logger Distribution | <u>\$37.94</u> | |
| Total Income: | | \$6,430.81 |

Other Expenses:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Awards Secretary Expenses | \$00.00 | |
| Misc. Expenses (2) | \$356.06 | |
| Office Expenses (Postage, Etc.) | <u>\$0.00</u> | |

Total Expenses: \$356.06

Net Income Less Expenses **\$6,074.75**

New Total Cash Balance ALL Accounts: **\$24,883.64**

Checking Account Balance \$ 9,760.96

Money Market Account Balance \$15,122.68

Total Cash All Accounts: **\$24,883.64**

* Includes Transactions posted through 1/16/2018

* The \$1,500.00 Awards Secretary Funds are not included in the above balance.

Notes:

- (1) Transfer 2017 National Convention seed money +\$49.51 profit back to MARAC.
- (2) Reimburse NOKV for Annual UberConference Expenses
- (3) The Awards Secretary bank account was opened in January 2018 and will appear in the next report.



From a balance sheet perspective, MARAC Total Funds at the end of August should be discounted by **\$6,290.15**. This amount is a Deferred Liability of award fees pre-paid by members. After discounting, our true (spendable) Cash Assets are **\$12,518.74**.

MARAC 2017 National Convention

Income:

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------|
| MARAC Advance for Convention | \$ 4,000.00 | |
| MARAC Advance Prize Monies | \$ 2,000.00 | |
| Registration fees (includes Badges, Snacks, Non-Alcoholic Beverages, Tours, Banquet | \$ 7,945.00 | |
| Money to open convention account | \$ 5.00 | |
| Extra ticket sales as banquet | \$ 285.00 | |
| Total | | \$14235 |

Expenses:

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------|
| Registration Refunds as a result of cancelations | \$ 925.00 | |
| Tour | \$ 224.00 | |
| Bus Fee | \$ 675.00 | |
| Prizes | \$ 2,939.60 | |
| Hotel (Banquet & AV Services) | \$ 3,113.73 | |
| Hotel (Bar set up for banquet) | \$ 75.00 | |
| Badge/Supply Materials | \$ 46.81 | |
| Snacks/Beverages | \$ 179.35 | |
| Repay money used to open account | \$ 5.00 | |
| VISA card dues (Dec only) | \$ 2.00 | |
| Advance fees returned to MARAC | \$ 6,000.00 | |
| Extra monies to MARAC | \$ 49.51 | |
| | | \$14235 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| Extra Income | \$ 49.51 | |
| Cost to MARAC | - 0 - | |
| Total returned to MARAC | \$6049.51 | |

Events

2/3 MN QP
2/3 VT QP
2/3 10-10 SSB CONTEST
2/4 NA CW SPRINT
2/10 CQ WW RTTY
2/12 CQC QP
2/19 RUN4BACON
2/24 SC QP
2/24 NA RTTY QP
2/25 NC QP
10/3/18 50TH NATIONAL (NO LINK)
4/26/18 MI MINI

ONLY START DATE SHOWN

CLICK ON EVENT TO GO TO THAT WEB SITE



Awards Committee

These MARAC members are serving on the Awards Committee:

Awards Manager - Ron Clift (N5MLP)

Robert Woody - N8KIE

Tony Mazzocco -WA9DLB

Robert Hallock - K7TM

Bob Voss - N4CD

Jack Jacobs - WD4OIN

The County Line Roadrunner
MARAC Secretary
PO Box 500
Yelm, WA 98597

“A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird”

Monthly Deadline for Articles is the 25th!

Board of Directors

President: Mike Fatchett, W0MU, PO Box 3500, Parker, CO 80134, 303-548-7222, w0mu@w0mu.com

Vice-President: Ed Eklin, K8ZZ, 1426 SW Summit Woods Dr Apt 3, Topeka, KS 66615, 231-649-4747, ed.eklin@gmail.com

Secretary: Terry Dummler, WQ7A, PO Box 500, Yelm, WA 98597, 360-894-3715, wq7a@comcast.net

Dues with an Electronic copy of the Newsletter copy are \$10.00 per year, check or money order. Dues are also available via PayPal to WQ7A@ARRL.NET

Treasurer: Aubrey Mansfield, W7OLY, 7717 Forest Park Dr, Olympia, WA 98502, 703-286-9987, w7oly@comcast.net

Great Lakes Director: Scott Petty, KA3QLF, 2063 N Turnpike Rd, Dalton, PA 18414, 570-687-6173, ka3qlf@comcast.net

North Central Director: Mike Nickolaus, NF0N, 316 East 32nd St, South Sioux City, NE 68776, 402-494-6070, nf0n@arrl.net

Northeast Director: Al Kaiser, N1API, 194 Glen Hills Rd, Meriden CT 06451, n1api@cox.net

South Central Director: Barry Mitchell, N0KV, 12200 Boothill Dr, Parker, CO 80138, 303-841-6510, n0kv@earthlink.net

Pacific Director: Paul Nelson, N7JPF, 3013 W. 10th St, The Dalles, OR 97058, 509-698-6227, n7jpf-paul@charter.net

Southeast Director: Kerry Long, W4SIG, 1854 Newton Nook, Collierville, TN 38017, 901-331-1881, kerrylong@comcast.net

Immediate Past President: Randy Hatt, AA8R, PO Box 427, Grant MI 49327, 517-812-9468, aa8r@aol.com

Appointees

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Webmaster: Mike Fatchett, W0MU, PO Box 3500, Parker, CO 80134, 303-548-7222, w0mu@w0mu.com

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

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MARAC General Counsel: Bill Morgan, K0DEQ, 12012 County Rd 3000, Rolla, MO 65401, 573-465-5405, k0deq@arrl.net

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