Thoughts from the VP

By Kraig, KA2LHO

It is great to have *Roadrunner* showing up again in our email! Thank you to Kerry and everyone who contributes. Hopefully we will share our mobile and home shacks as Kerry requested in the last issue and contribute informative items to benefit the group.

Florida had their two days of winter when temps here in the northern portion of the state got below freezing overnight. But they warm up into the cozy fifties quickly when the sun comes out. My blood has still not thinned out so 40's and 50's are short sleeve weather for me! Longtime Floridians tend to not leave their homes when the temps are in the 50's unless they have to.

Nice to see/hear some mobiles out and about over the past few weeks. Got a few new counties and some contacts just to give the mobiles some log entries. Hopefully, we'll get more mobiles out as the weather gets more friendly over the next few months—me included.

MARAC has several projects in progress. Soon you should see updates in the Awards Rules to reflect the adoption of the Mobile Assist Award. N5MLP is working on that. A task group is working on ways to make the MARAC experience more welcoming to newcomers and also ways to get MARAC and County Hunting out to more people in this hobby.

BE SURE TO READ the information in this issue about the Logger II project. Logger is a complicated project and good things take time. Check out the article. *Until next time, hope to get you in the log!!*
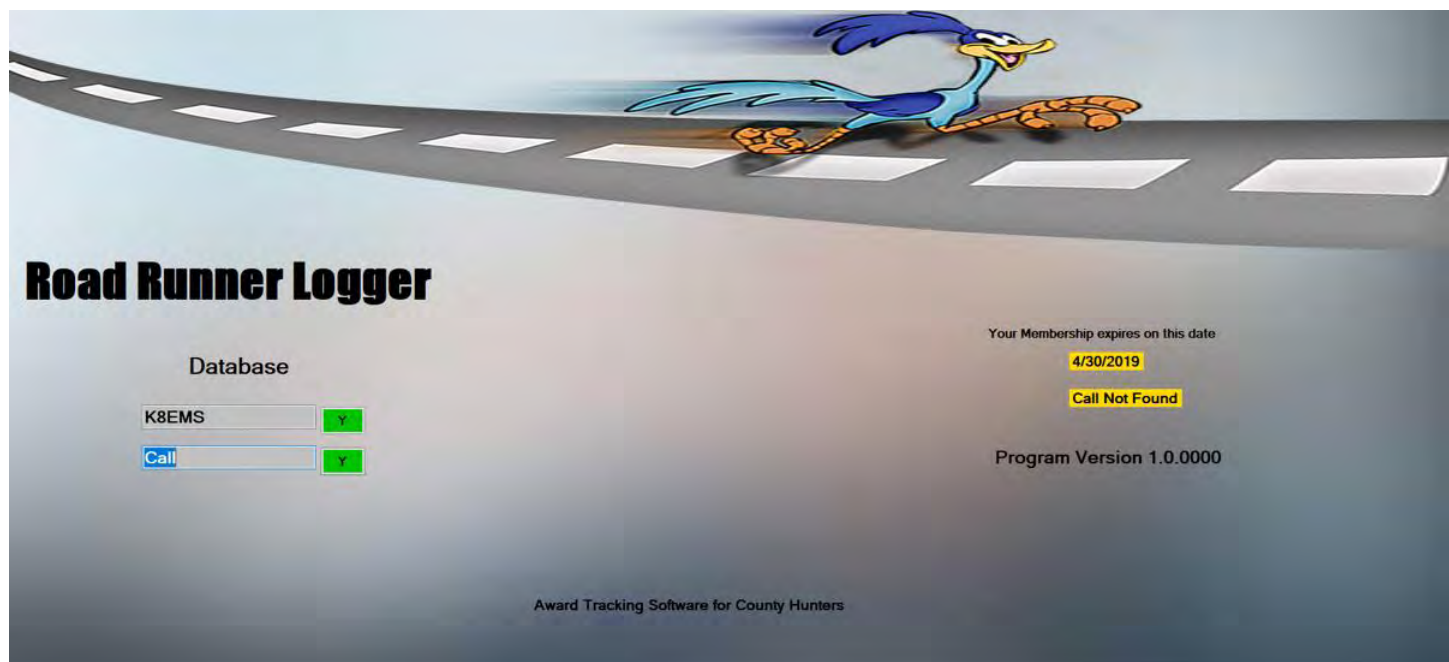
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Kraig, KA2LHO

Logger II News!

By Mike, K8EMS

We are looking for programmers to help with the new Logger. Don, K3IMC, and I are working on it but could use more help to speed up the process. We are writing this in Visual Basic. That doesn't mean the language used is written in stone. Any person with programming experience would be welcome! The base of the program is pretty well tested, but it is still early enough in the process to make changes for the better. There is built in W6RK spotting ability right on the logging page, that has pick boxes for the counties so there is no worry about correct spelling. We are currently working on getting the program to work with MARAC Awards so that you can keep track of them like the current Logger does. The base program keeps track of USACA only. We are going to need some Alpha testers to help with the development stage, before getting it out to a broader beta test. **If you are interested in lending a hand please contact the IT team Board point-of-contact, Mike NF0N, at** nf0n@arrl.net

A tease of the new home page of Logger II

MARAC National Convention

October 25-26-27, 2020

Portland, OR

By Donna, AG6V

SAVE THE DATES!

Update on the National Convention in October, 2020 in Portland Oregon at the Red Lion Inn at Jantzen Beach. Website: http://ag6v.com/MARAC/index.html

Registrations have been coming in, and we are about half way to filling the Early Bird Registration – first 20 licensed operators to register and pay will be entered to a special prize drawing. Also, all non-licensed people who register along with these first 20 hams will be in a special separate drawing. So don't wait to register. (See who is registered at http://ag6v.com/MARAC/register.html)

The **GRAND PRIZE** has been purchased: an **Elecraft KX3 Pack**, assembled. (Thank you Elecraft for the discount.) Other prizes and swag are being accumulated.
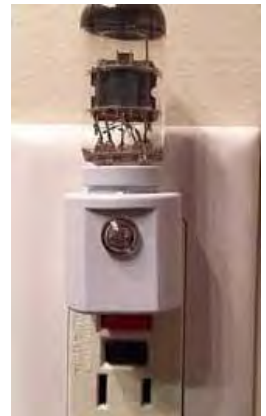Including this: a nightlight made from a radio tube ➔

During the convention, there will be self-guided tours as well as presentations of interest. Confirmed speakers include "Know Your Mobile" by Jerry Mertz W0GXQ and "Space Communications" by Capt. Wendy Laurence, USN (ret), astronaut. Other speakers are being solicited.

Tours include:

- Powell's Bookstore (a whole city block, multiple stories, of books!)
- Ham Radio Outlet in Portland (no further description needed!)
- Bob's Red Mill store and restaurant
- A yarn crawl of Portland's great craft locations

The Red Lion Inn at Jantzen Beach sits right on the Columbia River, and has a full service restaurant as well as a bar under one roof with all the hotel rooms and the meeting room.

Portland bridge over the Columbia River, which is one side of the property of the Red Lion Inn.
You can see this bridge from some rooms in the hotel!

Room reservations must be made no later than Friday October 2nd, 2020 to get the MARAC discounted rate. Phone (503) 283-4466 or reserve a room via the link on the website at http://ag6v.com/MARAC/hotel.html

This event is being organized by Donna Hinshaw, AG6V, Pacific Region Director. Please direct all questions to her at ag6v@arrl.net   But first, check out the website.

WEBSITE: with lots of information on the schedule, prizes, travel details, photos and registration, updated as more details are finalized:

See You THERE !

Donna, AG6V

Michigan Mini Convention

By Dorie, N8WTQ

I'm delighted to be hosting the Michigan Mini this year - with much help from others.

Dates: **April 23, 24, & 25, 2020**

Where: West Bay Beach Resort

615 E Front St

Traverse City, MI 49686

Phone 231-947-3700

The cutoff date for the special room rate is March 23, 2020.

Visit marac.org and click on the corresponding link for details and to register.

Time has a way of slipping away. Don't put it off. Register now.

See you in April.

Prizes

We will also have a prize table. Each person attending should bring a door prize which can range from something you make (several beautiful afghans have been given away at conventions in the past!) to something you purchase. It need not be ham radio related. Some big hits in the past have been: Bottles of liquor/wine, gift certificates/cards, atomic clocks, coax, atlases, log books, tools, gas cards, etc. Remember we have many female friends attending so keep them in mind also.

An **Apple iPad Mini with 16GB** will be given away in a drawing for all registered attendee's after the banquet.

Raffle will be held for a really nice prize and the drawing will be after the banquet on Saturday.

Dorie, N8WTQ

Courtesy QST Magazine, April 1930

US County Fun-Facts

By Jack, WD4OIN

Kalawao County is a county in the U.S. state of Hawaii. It is the smallest county in the 50 states both by population and land area.

Loving County is a county in the U.S. state of Texas. With a population of 134 as of a 2017 estimate by the United States Census Bureau, Loving County is the second-least populous county in the United States. It is reasonable to believe that there are more cows than humans living in Loving County Texas!

COUNTY CHALLENGE AWARD TOP LISTS

14th YEAR

By Barry, K2MF

This past August in 2019, the County Challenge Award Top Lists quietly became 13 years old and they are now in their 14th year of existence. If you are a county hunter (and since you are reading this we presume that you are), do you already participate in the CCA Top Lists? If you don't, do you know what the CCA Top Lists are or have you ever heard of them? Well in case you aren't sure what any of this is about, the current month's CCA Top Lists may always be viewed at this link:

http://countyhunter.com/Toplist/CCAtoplist.htm

Very simply described, the CCA Top Lists are a changing ranking of county hunters in different emission categories that is based solely on the total number of county slots that are worked on the 10 <u>non-channelized</u> amateur HF bands (160m through 6m). There are 5 ranked mode groups: Mixed Modes (which count CW -or- Phone -or- Digital band slots in each county), CW Mode, Phone (multiple sub-) Modes, Digital (multiple sub-) Modes and Combo Modes (which count CW -and- Phone -and- Digital band slots in each county).

The objective is to make valid contacts with other stations in as many counties, on as many bands and in as many mode groups as possible. In the "traditional" ranked modes lists, the total number of county slots worked on all bands is determined by the combined total number of county slots worked on each band. The CCA Top Lists encourage county hunters to work and activate counties on as many bands and in as many mode groups as possible as well as to work fixed stations on bands and in mode groups that are not often or usually activated by mobiles. It also offers an opportunity to have one score per mode group to measure your progress in county hunting with a possibility to always improving it and reaching the next challenge level which is a level that **-you-** set for yourself.

It will likely surprise you how easy it is to participate in the CCA Top Lists and we'll explore that later on but first, let's start with a little history about how we got from there to here.

<u>The "Traditional" Top List from 2006 to 2015</u>

The very first CCA Top List got its start with 14 participants on August 10, 2006 and can be viewed at this link: http://countyhunter.com/Toplist/CCAtoplist-20060810.htm. Risto W6RK provided the original development and web hosting space for the Top List. He also wrote the original CCA Rules document which has since been updated and edited many times with new information as it changes. It is still a "living" document and the latest version of it can always be viewed at this link: http://countyhunter.com/Toplist/CCArules.htm. It explains in detail all about the operation of the current Top Lists.

Three personnel changes occurred during these first 10 years. In 2008, Jim ND9M took over the custodial monthly maintenance of the Traditional Top List which means he became the "go to" person who received all the county slot total submissions and pasted them into the ranked modes lists while manually adjusting the ranks each month along the way. A labor of love to be sure!

Then at some point earlier in the previous decade, Dennis KK7X took over web hosting of the Traditional Top List and to the present day he consistently and reliably makes the Top Lists available for all of us to view each month at his http://countyhunter.com web site under the **[Top Lists]** button. He continues to be very involved with web hosting in the mobile and county hunting communities and provides services that make the job of posting the Top Lists generally easier and much more convenient to manage than it formerly was.

As the 10 years between 2008 and 2015 rolled by, Jim skillfully managed the Traditional Top List and perfected both its presentation as well as the template form for participants to submit their county slot totals. And then in late 2015, he took a job on a commercial ship in the Pacific Ocean that was to start in January 2016 and would keep him out of internet contact for much of the time he would be at sea, so he announced in the County Hunter Web Forum (maintained and sponsored by Don K3IMC at http://countyhunterweb.org/DisplayForum.php) that he needed to find a successor to take over the monthly maintenance of the Top List. Being the spreadsheet enthusiast that I am, I was very interested in how the Top List actually worked so I initially contacted Jim to ask some questions about it and the next thing I knew, I had the job! (Isn't that normally how these volunteer things work? Just ask Kerry W4SIG, our new MARAC Roadrunner newsletter editor!)

Working alongside Jim in December 2015 to learn the Traditional Top List custodial ropes was both educational and fun. I was very excited to assume these responsibilities and I am still looking forward to serving the county hunting community in this fashion for several years to come.

The Top Lists from 2016 to 2019

As I launched into my new role as the CCA Top List custodian in January 2016, I attempted to interest more county hunters to participate in the Traditional Top List and also to re-kindle interest in it by some county hunters who hadn't submitted their county slot totals in some time to start doing that again. I also expanded the Traditional Top List and included some new items of interest which are now regularly tracked and displayed. I gave it some more color, larger fonts and some conditional formatting to highlight new achievements and milestones. As time went on, I developed yet more efficient and reliable ways to display the Traditional Top List and automatically keep rank errors in check, and then, as if by magic, I discovered "array functions".

Very simply put, spreadsheet array functions can be utilized to auto-magically build ranked lists from a fixed data set, and this not only made the creation of the Traditional Top List each month even less difficult and time-consuming, but it also allowed me to easily create two additional Top Lists in each mode group with some interesting statistics: The Highest Band Slots Top Lists and the Single Band 3077 Top Lists, both of which immediately follow the Traditional Top Lists in each mode group. I'll have more information about these two additional Top Lists later.

Now I am starting my 5th year as the Top Lists custodian and up to now, I have done quite a bit of development with the functions in both the Top Lists themselves and the template form for participants to submit their county slot totals. And while of course we will always accept your county slot totals in **-any-** format you can provide, the most recent template form for Excel 97-2003 or later can always be obtained from this link (which you should use to download it to your computer): http://countyhunter.com/Toplist/CCAtemplate.xls.

Occasionally this template form changes slightly to adjust to changing requirements so check the link often. The algorithms for the functions that are now embedded in this template form help us all catch errors with our county slot totals before they ever get submitted for posting. And if you do not have Excel 97-2003 or later, I also have Open Office, Excel 5.0/95 and MS Works compatible template forms available, so if you need to use any of these, please contact me via email (see below) and I will gladly send the latest template form to you in the format of your choice, or send a URL (web link) to you so you can get it yourself.

Actually submitting your county slot totals to the Top Lists has **never been easier**! Most county hunters generally submit their county slot totals for the next month's posting of the Top Lists toward the end of the current month and **most preferably before (or PRIOR to) the 1st of the next (or posting) month**.

There are two easy ways to submit your county slot totals to the Top Lists. Either use your logging program to display your current county slot totals by band and mode and then copy (and paste) them to the template form to which I referred above, **-OR-**, for those of you who use the MARAC Logger program there is a really convenient way to do this without all the copying (and pasting), thanks to Terry WQ7A and Gene KD9ZP who worked very closely together in early 2016 to make this happen. This capability in Logger allows you to quickly export your county slot totals to a CSV (comma separated values) file that you can submit in place and instead of using the manually populated template form. Here is the procedure:

In Logger, select the View/Edit menu and then Book Summary. On the View Book Summary page there is a radio button on the upper right hand side of the screen that is labeled **[Export for Top List]**. When you press this button, it writes a file named **<yourcall> Top List <logger_version> <yyyy-mm-dd>.csv** (e.g. 'K2MF Top List 5154 2019-12-20.csv') to the folder in which you keep your Logger data (normally C:\Logger Data).

The last step is to attach either the template form that you manually populated with your county slot totals **-OR-**, the resulting CSV file from Logger to an email addressed to toplist@countyhunter.com. It's really all as simple as that! The method of doing it through the Logger export probably takes all of about 3 minutes to complete.

The Highest Band Slots and Single Band 3077 Slots Top Lists

These two additional Top Lists are derived entirely from the Traditional Top List in each mode group and are auto-magically generated by variations of those array functions I talked about above. They immediately follow the Traditional Top List in each mode group for easy viewing.

There is a very interesting statistic about the Highest Band Slots Top Lists: A participant who has one of the highest 3 band slot totals on any band in any mode group also occupies one of the highest 3 ranks for that mode group in a Traditional Top List only about half, or 50% (±7%) of the time. Conversely, this also means that a participant who does not occupy one of the highest 3 ranks for any given mode group in a Traditional Top List can very easily have one of the highest 3 band slot totals on any band in that mode group. This makes for some

very interesting and additional statistics in each mode group and it offers an additional way for other participants to see their call signs listed up there with the "big guns" in the Traditional Top Lists.

In the Single Band 3077 Slots Top Lists, there is a separate rank that is assigned which tracks in an identical fashion with the ranks of these participants in the Traditional Top List for each mode group.

The County Challenge Awards

In June 2017, I started sending County Challenge Award certificates in PDF (portable document format) files to Top List participants, which as far as I can determine, had never been done prior to that. I chose a certificate design that was relatively simple and I standardized on it for issuing a Top List Level Achievement to participants who reach a new CCA Level in each mode group, and a Top List Single Band Achievement to participants who finish working all 3077 county slots on a Single Band in a single mode group. Every participant who has reached a CCA Level I in any mode group has received such a certificate attached to an email and many participants have received several certificates for reaching multiple Levels and finishing 3077 county band slots on Single Bands.

I detect when a participant reaches a new CCA Level or Single Band achievement and then automatically issue a County Challenge Award certificate to document it. For convenience, I attach these certificates to my personal email acknowledging that a county slot totals submission has been received and processed into the Top Lists. These certificates are not serialized and those who have received them know that they are not very fancy, but I would like for everyone to regard them as a personal expression of thanks from me for participating in the Top Lists.

Stacking Up

Amazingly, the number of participants in the CCA Top Lists has grown from 14 to 131 in only 13+ relatively short years and during that time a Mixed modes grand total of over **1.1 million** and a Combo modes grand total of over **1.5 million** county band slots have been submitted! Sadly, 9 participants are silent keys (including Bill Inkrote K2NJ who is a past president of MARAC and for whom the MARAC County Challenge Mixed Modes Awards are dedicated), and one participant for whom there is no other information has an expired amateur radio license that has not been renewed. Of the remaining 121 participants, 90 have earned the highly sought after USA-CA award from CQ Magazine and 31 are working towards earning it.

No discussion of the Top Lists would be complete without recognizing some of the incredibly good operators who have consistently been in the highest ranks of specific mode groups and/or are getting close to completing all 3077 county slots on some bands in some modes. All information reported below is a snapshot taken from the January 2020 posting of the Top Lists.

In the Traditional Top Lists, 8 county hunters consistently occupy the highest 3 ranks by mode:

KC3X - #1 in the Mixed (Level VI), CW (Level VI) and Combo (Level III) modes; #2 in the Phone (Level III) modes

K5GE - #1 in the Phone (Level IV) modes, #2 in the Mixed (Level VI) modes; #3 in the Combo (Level III) modes

K8QWY - #1 in the Digital (Level III) modes; #2 in the Combo (Level III) modes

WØGXQ - #3 in the Mixed (Level VI) and CW (Level V) modes

KN4Y - #2 in the CW (Level V) mode

N6PDB - #2 in the Digital (Level II) modes

K4YT - #3 in the Phone (Level III) modes

WD4OIN - #3 in the Digital (Level II) modes

and all 8 of them occupy between 2 and 9 bands in single mode groups of the highest 3 county slot totals in the Highest Band Slots Top Lists:

K8QWY: 9 in the Digital modes; 5 in the Combo modes; 1 in the Mixed and CW modes

KC3X: 7 in the CW mode; 6 in the Mixed modes; 5 in the Phone and Combo modes

K5GE: 5 in the Mixed and Phone modes; 4 in the Combo modes; 1 in the CW mode

KN4Y: 5 in the CW mode; 2 in the Mixed and Combo modes

WD4OIN: 4 in the Digital modes; 2 in the Mixed and Combo modes; 1 in the CW mode

WØGXQ: 4 in the CW mode; 2 in the Mixed modes

N6PDB: 4 in the Digital modes; 1 in the Combo modes

K4YT: 2 in the Phone modes

Also, **KC3X**, **K8QWY** and **K5GE** each have over **31,000** county slots (Level III) in the Combo modes and their numbers are still climbing (**an extraordinary milestone!**).

Interestingly, if you like real horse races then you might be interested in the Digital modes where rankings frequently change each month. This is primarily because there is considerably more upward movement amongst a greater number of county hunters due to the high levels of interest and activity in some of the newer Digital modes which have become very popular, particularly during this period of very low solar activity. For more information about the Digital modes, see **N1API**'s excellent article about FT4 (and FT8) on pages 11 and 12 in the January 2020 issue of the MARAC RoadRunner and **WØNAC**'s Digital Award Status web page (http://w0nac.com).

Who will become the first county hunter to achieve 3077 county slots on a single band (most likely on 20m) in the Digital modes? Stay tuned!

In the Single Band 3077 (9231 or 3077 x 3 in the Combo modes) Slots Top Lists, 7 county hunters have achieved working 3077 county slots on more than one band in a single mode group:

K5GE - 4 bands on 40m, 30m, 20m and 17m in the Mixed modes (**extraordinary!**)

N4AAT (sk) - 2 bands on 40m and 20m in the Mixed, CW and Phone modes (**also an extraordinary lifetime achievement!**)

(continued)

KC3X - 2 bands on 30m and 20m in the Mixed and CW modes

N4RS - 2 bands on 30m and 20m in the Mixed and CW modes

N4CD - 2 bands on 30m and 20m in the Mixed modes

WØGXQ - 2 bands on 30m and 20m in the Mixed modes

WØQE - 2 bands on 30m and 20m in the Mixed modes

and 11 county hunters have only 3 or fewer county slots remaining to finish working all 3077 county slots on single bands:

KC3X - 2 county slots remaining to finish 17m in the Mixed modes, and may achieve the second 3-band 3077 slots title in the Mixed modes behind **K5GE**

N4RS - 1 county slot remaining to finish 40m in the Mixed and CW modes, may achieve the second 3-band 3077 slots title in the Mixed modes behind **K5GE**, may achieve the third 40m band slots title in the Mixed modes behind *N4AAT (sk)* and **K5GE**, and may achieve the second 40m band slots title in the CW mode behind *N4AAT (sk)*

KW4V - 1 county slot remaining to finish 20m in the CW mode

N4XML - 1 county slot remaining to finish 20m in the Mixed modes and 2 county slots remaining to finish 20m in the Phone modes

WB4KZW and **W7FEN** - 1 county slot remaining to finish 20m in the Phone modes

WD4OIN, **KW4V**, **KK7X** and **W9DC** - 2 county slots remaining to finish 20m in the Phone modes

N8KIE - 3 county slots remaining to finish 20m in the Phone modes

There are several other county hunters who are getting close to the magic number of 3

remaining to finish working all 3077 county slots on different bands in different modes. Look around the Traditional Top Lists to find them!

In the Highest Band Slots Top Lists (the highest 3 county slot totals on each band in each mode), there are 25 county hunters who have not already been listed above in the Traditional or Single Band 3077 Top Lists and who occupy some of these positions:

N1API - Digital modes #1 on 20m and #2 on 12m; Mixed and Phone modes #3 on 10m; Combo modes #1 on 20m and #2 on 10m

NM1G - Mixed and Phone modes #1 on 80m; Combo modes #3 on 80m

KD2KHJ - Mixed and Phone modes #2 on 6m; Combo modes #3 on 6m

N2MH - Mixed, Phone and Combo modes #1 on 6m

NS2N - Combo modes #3 on 30m

(continued)

K2NJ (sk) - Mixed, Phone and Combo modes #1 on 10m; Phone modes #3 on 6m

OM2VL - Phone modes #2 on 15m

WA4EEZ - Digital modes #2 on 10m

WB4KZW - Mixed modes #3 on 17m and 15m

KG5RJ - Digital modes #2 on 40m

KA4RRU - CW mode #3 on 160m; Digital modes #3 on 80m

WQ7A - Digital modes #2 on 17m and 15m and #3 on 30m and 20m; Phone modes #3 on 17m; Combo modes #3 on 20m and 17m

KV7N - Phone modes #1 on 15m and #2 on 10m

AB7RW - CW mode #3 on 20m, 15m, 12m and 10m

N8CIJ - Digital modes #3 on 40m

K8MW - Digital modes #2 on 160m

K8OOK - Mixed modes #3 on 6m

AA8R - Combo modes #2 on 40m

NA8W - Digital modes #1 on 6m

K8ZZ - CW mode #2 on 160m

N9JF - Mixed, CW and Combo modes #1 on 160m; Digital modes #3 on 160m

W9JL - Phone modes #3 on 40m

W9OO - Mixed modes #3 on 80m

N9QS (sk) - Phone modes #2 on 40m and #3 on 80m

KØPFV - Phone modes #2 on 12m

I offer many congratulations to each and every one of these very good operators listed above!

Looking Ahead

I welcome the participation of all county hunters in the CCA Top Lists. Whether you are a monthly or occasional submitter, brand new to the Top Lists or somebody who has not participated in them for some time, I always look forward to receiving your county slot totals whenever you can submit them, which on average, currently run about 20-30 submissions per month. The more county hunters who regularly participate in the Top Lists, the more accurately they will reflect the comparative levels of our standings and the more interesting they become to watch and follow. You can submit county slot totals for as many or few mode groups as you like. The choice is completely up to you.

(continued)

The CQ Magazine USA-CA and MARAC awards programs, prevailing mobile activity and the CCA Top Lists give us all so much to work on that the sport of county hunting never seems to get old or boring and is, in the opinion of this writer, one of the most fascinating and entertaining activities in amateur radio. There is always some new goal to achieve and somebody who is willing to help!

If you have questions about the CCA Top Lists for which you are not able to otherwise find answers, please contact me via email (see below). See you all down the log!

Barry Siegfried K2MF
k2mf.bgs@gmail.com

Barry, K2MF

CW Stats

(as of Dec 31, 2019)

By Dennis, KK7X

CALL	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
AA8R				2936 #2	2728 #2
AB7RW	2473 #4		819 #4	3069 #3	3051 #3
AC0B			1127		1127
AE3Z					3077
DL3IAC			2715	2685	2603
DL6KVA	3074		3073	3073	3071
K0DEQ			2534 #2	2321 #2	1762 #2
K1TKL				3043 #2	3007 #2
K2MF	2942 #2	2806#2	2479 #2	1411 #2	664 #2
K4XI	3039 #3				
K5GE	2634 #3	2480 #3	2390 #3	2044 #3	580 #3
K7DM			3030	2983	2950
K7REL					2850 #5
K8IW	3036	3035	3032	3032	3028
K8OOK	2803	1798	2786	2769	2752
K8TE		2910			
K8ZZ	3077 #2				2711 #2
KA4RRU	3046		3040	3036	
KA9JAC	1822 #2	1677 #2	1549 #2	1197 #2	591 #2
KB0BA			313		
KC3X		2766 #5	2138 #5	3071 #4	3028 #4
KC7YE	2581	3576	2574	2507	2454
KK7X	2268	2258	2258	2250	2218
KM6HB				1311 #2	3077
KN4Y	2073 #5		3073 #5		
N1QY		3058			
N1API				2955	2899
N2JNE			3005	2957	2873 - no relays
N4CD	2701 #10	2687 #6	2565 #6	2239 #6	2210 #6
N4RS	3073 #5	3050 #5		2802 #5	2285 #5
N4XI				2920	
N5PR			2484 #2	1959 #2	3077
N5XG					2752 #2
N6PDB				3073	
N7JPF	1170 #2	1063 #2	429 #2	3014	1916
N8CIJ	3075				3065
N8KIE					2939

N9JF	3075	3068	3067	3052	3030
N9QS				3037 #3	2974 #3
NA8W					715
NF0N	3071 #2	3056 #2	3033 #2	2977 #2	2843 #2
NM1G				3077	
NU0Q		872 #3	3075 #2	3037 #2	3013 #2
NX0X		2601	2601		2567
NX5G					2752
SM6VR		2995 #2		2922 #2	2714 #2
W0GXQ	2187 #8	1005 #8	3077 #7	2954 #7	2261 #7
W0MU			2803	2628	
W3DLM	2982	2958	2945	2911	2854
W3DYA			3068 #3		3036 #3
W4SIG	3063 #3		2761 #3	1640 #3	631 #3
W4YDY	3073 #2	3070 #2	3069 #2	3056 #2	3040 #2
W6TPC		1164		1093	1036
W7FEN			2999	2996	2982
W8OP	2858				
W9MSE		3074 #6	3071 #6	3063 #6	3052 #6
WA1ZIC	2828				
WA3QNT		617 #2	3075	3065	3046
WA4UNS		3077	3074	3069	3057
WB4KZW					3077 32
WC5D			2731 #2	2711 #2	2664 #2
WD4OIN		2379 #2	2234 #2		
WE7G				1128 #2	3077
WQ7A	2963 #2		2825 #2	2621 #2	1757 #2
WU3H					2338 #4

Idaho QSO Party Announcement

By Kent, KV7N

The Idaho QSO Party will be held this year on the weekend of March 14 & 15.

The IDQP is sponsored by the Magic Valley Amateur Radio Club in Twin Falls. For information and rules regarding the IDQP, please go to K7MVA dot ORG. There should be lots of Idaho counties up for grabs!

A Blast from the Past

Courtesy *QST* Magazine, February 1958

Home and Mobile Shacks

This month featuring Kraig, KA2LHO

My home shack is KW ready via an Icom 7100 paired with a Yaesu FL-7000 1500-watt solid state amplifier when necessary. My HF antenna is a Hustler 6BTV ground with a tilt down ground level mount. There are 15 radials of varying length buried around the circumference of the base. I use an LDG AT-1000ProII auto tuner powered and triggered by the 7100. The huge meter is the MFJ Giant SWR/Power meter. Like the twin LED clocks in the background I wanted to be able to see any info with a quick glance.

For SSB, I have a boom mounted mic and a headset configuration using an MFJ Control Center allowing me to easily change between the two as well as triggering a foot pedal for PTT.

For CW, I use exclusively N3ZN keys and paddles at home and also in my mobile configuration. The base shack includes (from center to right in the photo) a single lever key, a straight key and iambic paddles (above the trackball). I have them into a switch that allows me to quickly change the hardware. The 7100 setup is easily accessed to go between the keys and paddles.

N3ZN keys (and paddles are designed and built in Pittsburgh, PA. While expensive, they are easy to operate and quality equipment. I tried several other brands but after using N3ZN at Hamcation 2019, my decision was made.

I access and operate the 7100 remotely anywhere that I have my laptop and an internet connection (Wi-Fi or cellular) and from my phone via remote desktop. This includes powering the radio on and off. Computer operations are handled completely by a Surface Pro 3 tablet computer.

For VHF/UHF I use an Icom 5100 with a Diamond dual band antenna up about 12 feet. My altitude above sea level is 80 feet and I am in a high area. Antenna height is generally not an issue in the less crowded areas of Florida.

My mobile setup is in our 2017 Ford Explorer (aka *The Bus*) I use a Yaesu FT-857D with the remotely mounted head (shown in the pic) running into a Yaesu ATAS 120a antenna on a front fender mount. The body of the radio is under the passenger seat. The equipment is accessible from either seat in *The Bus*. Normally, when mobile, my wife loves to drive so I can "play radio!"

I use a Surface GO tablet while mobile for radio control, logging via N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log and spotting via MoSpot (we have Wi-Fi in *The Bus*). I took an old lap desk, added a ruggedized tablet mount, hub and power access to control everything. The lap desk includes a magnet to hold the mic at easy reach location and a plate for placement of my magnet mount N3ZN paddles.

Tony (N3ZN) has recently designed a "lite" model of paddles weighing less than 4 ounces (https://www.n3znkeys.com/p/654/zn-lite). He has also added a magnet mount option which, based upon our conversations, was the result of what I did with my paddles in *The Bus*. These lite paddles look ideal for mobile or portable operations.

I have been operating since the early 1980's (R-1433) chasing and running counties while going through each licensing step of Novice, Technician, General and now Advanced. My current setup was the result of a complete removal of my old equipment and rebuilding my systems from scratch. I spent four months in the Spring of 2019 researching, measuring, reading reviews and ordering the exact equipment that I wanted for my shacks. I am the happiest that I have ever been with any of my base and mobile shacks over all those decades. For me, it was worth the effort and expense.

I look forward to learning from others as you share home/mobile shacks here in *Roadrunner.*

Would you like to have your shack featured here?

By Kerry, W4SIG

Now that Kraig has kicked this off, would any of you like to be the next featured county hunter? This is a great way to get to know the stations and personalities behind all the "two-two"s and "5NN" transmissions. We are soliciting input from all MARAC members. A simple article on your station setup and what you enjoy about ham radio will do, or if you just have a fun picture or two of your antennas or station that is welcome too. Send them directly to me at kerrylong@comcast.net Thanks!

RESULTS FOR 2ⁿᵈ QUARTER VOTING

By Mary, AB7NK, MARAC Election Coordinator
Period of October 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

- Calls listed in no particular order

- The following individuals have been recognized by their peers for the categories listed below. Congratulations to all.

- Only those receiving a minimum of 3 points are listed. 2 points are given for first place and 1 point for second place.

SSB – Mobile of the Year – KC6AWX, W5UDG, W4SIG, N8OYY, WY0A, AB7NK, KB6UF, N4CD, K8ZZ, K7SEN, K5GE, NF0N

CW – Mobile of the Year – KB6UF, AB7NK, W4SIG, N4CD, N9JF, NU0Q, K8ZZ, NF0N

TEAM – Team of the Year – AB7NK/K7SEN, KB0BA/N0XYL

SSB – Mobile Assist of the Year – KZ2P, WY0A, K0DEQ, KC3X, WY8I, NF0N

CW – Mobile Assist of the Year – KA1JPR, K0DEQ, W4SIG, KC3X, W0GXQ, NU0Q

Voting for 3rd quarter, January 1 thru March 31 will be held in April 2020.

MARAC 2020 CHOTY ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

COUNTY HUNTER OF THE YEAR - NOMINATIONS for 2020 CW and SSB County Hunter of the Year Awards are now open. Nominations must be received by your District Director no later than March 15, 2020 and should contain a brief list of reasons for the nomination. Your District Director will select one nominee (one for CW and one for SSB) from those received and forward that selection, with the reasons for the selection, to the Awards Manager no later than April 15th. Prior winners (per mode) for 2018 & 2019 are not eligible to receive this award until it has been 3 years since originally receiving It, unless it is for a different mode. Please read the criteria for County Hunter of the Year on page 15 of the award rules. **Showing support to the members of YOUR club helps keep it the vibrant organization that it is.**

Mary, AB7NK

USA-CA Statistics

By Barry, K2MF

- There have been 1268 USA-CA awards issued by CQ Magazine between 15-Aug-1965 and 27-Jul-2019, representing a span of 54 years (or 648 months).
- On a smoothed average, the number of USA-CA awards that were issued during this period of time is 23.48/year (or 1.96/month).
- The list of 1268 USA-CA awards issued can be further divided up as 1179 US, 50 DX, 34 VE and 5 SWL.
- There are a total of 526 silent keys and another 140 who have expired licenses without any other explanation (total 666), divided up as 636 US, 15 DX, 14 VE and 1 SWL.
- This leaves 543 US, 35 DX, 20 VE and 4 SWL USA-CA holders remaining not reported as being silent keys or having expired licenses.
- Of the very first 119 awards issued during the first 9½ years of the USA-CA program (Aug-1965 through Feb-1975), only the following 13 award holders still have current amateur radio licenses, **three** of whom are still active mobile operators and county hunters:
- K1QZV (#7), K4JP (#13), K5DRF (#18), **K5KDG (#45)**, W5VD (#49), **NFØN (#53)**, K7NN (#54), WAØJRZ (#61), NA5AR (#73), W6TCD (#76), K5FBS (#87), **K5VYT (#112)** and KØARS (#119).

Peanuts
Courtesy Al, N1API

Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club Treasurer's Report

By Bill, K0DEQ

Beginning Account Balance $21,796.11

Income:

Savings Account Interest	$
Awards Income	
Misc Income	
Membership Income	147.08
Logger Distribution Income	
Total Income	$147.08

Expenses:

Awards Expenses	$ 9.60
Misc. Expenses NOTE 1	240.00
Office Expenses (Postage, etc.)	
Total expenses	$249.60

Net Income Less Expenses	($102.52)
Cash Balance	$21,693.59

Checking Account Balance	$ 4764.44	
Savings Account Balance	_16929.15	
Total all accounts		$21693.59

Note 1 $240 annual payment to Uber Conference

From a balance sheet perspective, MARAC cash balance shown above should be discounted by $6124.00, which is the amount of award fees pre-paid by members. After subtracting this amount, the true (spendable) Cash Balance is $15569.59

Bill, K0DEQ

AWARDS COMMITTEE

County Hunter of the Year (CHOTY) Nominations for 2020

Nominations will open soon for CHOTY in two separate categories – SSB operation and CW operation. Details of the schedule will appear in the Election Coordinators article. Please be aware that the winners in each category for the last two years are <u>ineligible</u> to be nominated for the current year. For reference, the winners in the last two years were:

Year	SSB Winner	CW Winner
2018	N5MLP	N4CD
2019	AB7NK	AB7RW

Nominations can be submitted by any member to their respective MARAC District Director. The District Directors will select one nominee from each category to forward on to the Awards Manager. Those submissions will be considered by the Awards Committee and up to three individuals will be chosen to appear on an electronic ballot for voting by the entire membership at a later date. A written summary of the reasons for making the nomination should accompany the nomination. Please review the criteria specified for nominees in the CHOTY award rules. Activity considered should be limited to the nominees' activity during the specified 12 month period immediately prior to the first day nominations are open.

Tips from the Awards Secretary – AB7RW

1) How to verify whether your Last County in a State award submission (LC-1) or Last County in the USA award submission (LC-2) for someone has been processed.

   If you do not receive an email from the awards processing system after you enter an LC-1 or LC-2 submission, don't enter a duplicate entry for the submission. Wait a few days (7 or more) to allow for the item to be actually processed and posted to the database. Then, do the following:

   - Go to the MARAC website (http://www.marac.org), and click on the "County Hunter DB" tab at the top of the page
   - Go to the "Last County Lookup" field at the far right side of the screen and enter the callsign of the person to whom you were sending the LC award
   - Click the "Go" button below that field.

   The screen should change to display a list of all the LC-1 and LC-2 awards credited to that callsign in reverse numeric sequence order (most recent items at the top of the list). You can look down the "From Call" column (second from the left side) to see if there is an entry from your own callsign with the credit you expect for a particular award you received credit for as your last county (in the right most column). If you see that credit listed, then the proper credit has been posted for the person to whom you submitted the credit. If you do <u>not</u> see credit for your submission in this list after 7 days, then send an email to the Awards Secretary at pyasson@pacifier.com detailing the contents of the award you submitted and he can search the system and advise whether it was found or if it needs to be resubmitted.

2) How to verify whether: a) an expected last county award to you from another operator, or b) an application you submitted for an award you have earned has been processed and posted.

If you wish to view all of the last county awards issued to you by other operators, follow the same instructions in the paragraph above but put your own callsign in the "Last County Lookup" field and click the "Go" button below the field to see all LC awards assigned to you. For every 25 such awards that you receive, the system will automatically generate a RoadRunner award for you and post it to your personal profile page in the CH Database and result in your receipt of plaque and/or plate to be adhered to an existing plaque for recognition of your achievement.

If you wish to determine if an award you applied for such as "Worked All Counties – 3rd Time" has been processed, you must view your personal profile page, which shows your address, phone number, and all awards you have achieved to date. To view that page, do the following:

- Go to http://www.marac.org , then click the "County Hunter DB" tab
- Go to the "Call Lookup" field on the left side of the page and enter your own call sign
- Click the "Go" button below that field.

Scroll down on this page to see all of the awards you have received below the personal data such as address and phone fields at the top of the page. If you do not see a new award you applied for more than 7 days ago, click the refresh button on your browser window to force the system to load the latest data. If that doesn't cause the award to appear, send an email to the Awards Secretary at the address shown above in item (1) describing what award application is missing and he will research it on the system.

Awards Issued Between 12/26/19 and 1/25/20

Awards Issued:				Roadrunner Awards Issued:			
Call	Date of Last Contact	Award	Number	Call	Date of Last Contact	Last County Count:	Number
K0FG	3/10/2019	WAC** - 3rd Time	259	N8HAM	3/1/2019	125	198
K5GE	3/24/2019	USA Single Band - 30m	6	K4YT	12/28/2019	325	69
K5GE	7/29/2019	USA Single Band - 40m	4				
K8ZZ	10/25/2019	RAS* - MS - 1st Time	26				
W4SIG	12/19/2019	RAS* - LA - 1st Time	28				
AB7RW	12/30/2019	Bingo II	106				
W0GXQ	1/8/2020	RAS* - CO - 1st Time	31				
K7REL	1/12/2020	WAC** - 9th Time	12				
* Ran All State							
** Worked All USA Counties							

Congratulations to all who received the awards listed above!

MARAC Awards Committee

Ron, N5MLP

DATELINE CW

By Ed, KN4Y

God made the Counties & Parishes; Man surveyed and named them; county hunter's broadcast them.

I am sitting in the radio shack amazed how fast the first month of this new year blew by. I flip on the radio and tune to the CW county hunters net on 20-meters, it is quiet. I flip the page on the calendar to the month of February and I notice this is a leap year with the 29th day being a Saturday. I wonder if there are any February 29th contests. I must know so I bring up the ARRL contest corral and lo-and-behold there are several events on that day, the Russian WW Multimode contest, the UBA DX CW Contest, the RTTY North American QSO party, the RTTY NA Collegiate Championship and the South Carolina QSO party. What a surprise. A lot of planned activity for a day that is a four-year occurrence.

My concentration is broken when I hear Gator downshift his 4X4 and slide to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. Gator slides out of the cab carrying a white cardboard container and a brown paper sack. He stops at the mailbox, grabs the mail, slips the mail under his armpit and enters the radio shack. "Greetings Dude, he tosses the mail onto the desk, I have a surprise for your taste buds. This entrepreneur woman has opened the Hungarian Pastry Shoppe, I stopped in and got some old country poppy seed rolls." Gator reaches into the brown paper bag and hands me a poppy seed roll. I lean back, memories of when my Grandmother and Mother made this pastry. I take a bite and I am momentarily suspended in a previous time.

Gator shoves a latte into my hand, "Here Dude enjoy the ultimate moment." I take a sip of the latte, "Thanks Gator that was great. Now will you check out my RAC Canada Winter Contests results." Gator loads the module, "I notice Dude you worked only Canadian stations, logged 185 contacts and you missed a lot of provinces and territories.: I smile, "Yes Gator this is a Canada contest so I work only Canada stations." We munch our poppy seed roll and wash it down with a sip of hot latte.

Gator goes over to the desk and grabs a large white envelope from the pile of mail, "Dude I saw this envelope when I brought in the mail and thought it might be a certificate." Gator takes out his redneck illegal ivory handled switchblade knife and slices the envelope open. "Wow Dude, this certificate is for First Place Florida, Single Operator, Low Power in the 2019 Minnesota QSO Party." Gator hands me the certificate. I sip my latte, I set the certificate on the desktop for all to see. Gator check out my North American QSO party log, I had some problems during the contest, which I do want to discuss.

Gator loads the North American QSO party module. "Wow Dude this not your operational procedure especially when you are member of a Florida Contest Group team You only made 118 QSO's with a score of 6254 points. What was the problem?" I sip my latter, Well Dude I did not feel like calling, so I worked stations as I moved across the band. I continued along for four hours when I got weak and tired. I stopped and laid down for a few hours and later just shut down the radio and went to bed." Gator sips his latte, "How you feeling now Dude? You look okay no bloodshot eyes," I shake my head, "Yes Gator I feel a lot better I am just going to have to admit I am getting older. Gator laughs," never too old to learn."

(continued)

"Dude I am reading the 2020 MARAC National Convention will be October 25-27th in Portland, OR. Any plans for attending this convention?" I finish off my latte, "You know Gator I am not getting any younger I will check with my QSO party driver and see if he would like to drive to Portland. I will let you know" Gator laughs, "Wish I could leave the plant for that many days I would love to drive you and also visit Portland." I reach into the white container box and get another latte.

"Gator I almost forgot, check out my Hungarian DX contest which you know I operate in memory of my Grandmother who came from Hungary to Ellis Island where my Mother was born an American citizen." Gator also gets another latte, "Well Dude you made 33 QSO in the contest, I remember you only work Hungarian stations, but I notice a couple others DX stations." I laugh, "That was due to several super senior moments." We laugh as we sip our latte.

Gator is sipping his latte as he looks at the computer screen and gets a sad look. "Dude I remember you mention Elwood, KA3MMM, many times, he is a Silent Key." I look at Gator, "That is sad news, Elwood and I worked mobile to mobile from 1991 to 2015. We would shoot the bull at the 3M mini and MARAC NE conventions." Gator points his finger at me, "Dude did you Know Gary, K4EXT, he is also a Silent Key. I shake my head yes, "Gator, Gary started the historian section in MARAC, I worked with Gary for months getting all the known MARAC Newsletters accumulated and now available to MARAC members. It is not going to be easy finding a replacement for the MARAC historian." We turn the volume down on the radio, dim the lights and bow our heads as Gator slowly recites The Shepherd's Psalm.

Gator ask, 'What is this list of numbers? "That Gator is a list I compiled of the number of county hunter's mobiles that operated on a county hunters CW net frequency during each month of 2019. Gator reads the list: January 13, February 9, March 14, April 20, May 26, June 16, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 19, November 10 and December 10." Gator is not impressed.

Gator cellphone emits CQ, CQ, CQ, Gator answers the phone, got to run, one of the corn haulers CEO is being impeached. He is gone like a beer burp. I hear him yell; I will miss you Valerie Harper.

The printer starts and soon stops, I extract the printout containing the call of the mobile county hunters that checked into the county hunter's CW call frequencies during the month of January

I read: KB6UF, AI5P, K0FG, K3IMC, KA4RRU, KN4Y, N4CD, N9JF, NU0O, W0GXQ, W4SIG and W8OP.

This month of February re-starts the flow of State QSO parties with a total of 147 counties up for logging, Starting off is the Minnesota QSO party (87 counties), the Vermont QSO party (14 counties), and on the day not usually there is the South Carolina QSO party(46 counties),

State QSO parties not your bag, then try the British Columbia QSO party, or the North American Sprint, maybe the Dutch PACC Contest, or the Balkan HF contest and the largest participation event for this month is the ARRL International CW DX contest.

The County Line ROADRUNNER

"A Roadrunner Is A Very Fast Bird"

Monthly Deadline for Articles is the 25th!

Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club Leadership Team

Board of Directors

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Dues with an Electronic copy of the Newsletter copy are $10.00 per year, check or money order.
Dues may also be paid via Pay-Pal and directed to billmorgan1@centurylink.net

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Immediate Past President:Vacant

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