



THE COUNTY LINE ROADRUNNER

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Riding the County Lion

Dave – KE3VV

The County Lion rushed into the ham shack with a worried look on his face. “Why so down in the fangs?” I inquired; worried that he had been caught out in the weekend-long monsoon of rain and occasional flecks of sleet. Nothing worse than a wet County Lion – especially a cold, early Spring wet County Lion. He just shook his mane and slouched under the desk, gnawing on an old slipper that looked a lot less appetizing than it apparently was.

“Bad news for finishing your 8th Time,” he moaned. They are eliminating the judicial districts in Alaska – your buddy at the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts says that the federal budget cuts needed to balance the FY 2015 budget and appease the Tea Party will result in a number of reductions in federal court expenses. That combined with the trouble the President has had getting judicial appointments through the Senate is causing a realignment of the federal courts. They need to consolidate all of the District Courts and spread out the judges. Alaska has less activity than most parts of the federal judiciary, so after this year, there is just gonna be one Judicial District in Alaska.

“That sounds like good news to me,” I smiled. “One Judicial District in Alaska will make it a lot easier to work Alaska – and better yet, finishing up the elusive Ran All Counties award will be a LOT easier... no more trekking into the tundra to get the Second District.”

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“Would be great if that were the case,” growled the County Lion, licking his paws after wiping off his mouth to remove the remains of what used to be a pretty comfortable slipper. “But I have heard that the next issue of CQ Magazine is going to announce that after this year they will require working all of the Alaskan boroughs, and there are 19 of them. The organized boroughs include pretty much all of the most densely populated regions of the state. Six of those boroughs are actually consolidated city-county governments - Juneau City and Borough, the City and Borough of Haines, Sitka City and Borough, Yakutat City and Borough, Wrangell City and Borough, and the Municipality of Anchorage, which is the largest city in the state.”

“**Don’t all of these boroughs** function similarly to counties in other states?” I asked, wondering where my other missing slipper had gone and concluding that it had probably been mistaken for a morsel of some sort.

“Yup! The city-boroughs are like Baltimore City and Saint Louis City, which are counties that really operate as cities,” pontificated the King of County Beasts. “Then there are those parts of Alaska that are not part of any organized borough that are called the unorganized borough. Lots of those parts of the state are just mountains and snow – probably the real home of Santa Claus,” mused the Lion.

“I doubt that. Although when the North Pole melts, it may be a good second choice for the old man,” I replied. “But what about the awards for Alaska counties? MARAC follows the CQ Magazine designations of official counties, so what is CQ Magazine gonna do?”

“The rumor is that Alaska will now require a contact with all 19 boroughs, including a contact with the unorganized borough. Is MARAC really gonna match that? That would make a lot of awards a lot tougher. I wonder if there are even hams in all of the boroughs.” The County Lion yawned and slouched off to digest the slipper, emitting one last rather foul belch that smelled faintly of an old sock or perhaps an unwashed morning foot.

So there you go, County Hunters. What should MARAC do? Keep the current lines of the four judicial districts, even though they will cease to exist? Follow the rumored CQ Magazine approach and use the Alaskan boroughs? Maybe a compromise... just use some of the boroughs or combine some of them to reduce the number and make them more workable. I would think there would be a lot of support for combining two of the organized boroughs – Northwest Arctic and North Slope – with the unorganized borough. That would be like adding the current second Judicial District with a good chunk of the Fourth District. I am sure there will be a lot of debate and discussion among the MARAC District Directors and Officers. Probably need to wait for a recommendation from the Awards Committee.

What do you think? Let your District Director know what you think MARAC should do to deal with the demise of the Alaskan Judicial Districts. Better yet – send your thoughts directly to the County Lion and the Big Green Dragon (nothing flammable please!). And have a pleasant April and rest of 2014... and try to finish up Alaska while it is still just four “counties.”



Dateline CW

Ed, KN4Y

There is no county hunter's award for taxation.

It is rumored by e-mail the following Document is effective for April 1st.

FCC TO REINSTATE MORSE CODE TEST

"It was a big mistake eliminating the Morse Code test," admits FCC official

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Washington, D.C. – April 1, 2014 - Today, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) approved Report and Order 14-987af which reinstates the Morse Code test for General Class and Amateur Extra Class licensees. "It was a big mistake eliminating the Morse Code test," admits Dotty Dasher, the FCC's director of examinations. "We now realize that being able to send and receive Morse Code is an essential skill for radio amateurs. As they say, it really does get through when other modes can't."

Not only will new applicants have to take the test, but General Class licensees who have never passed a code test will have one year to pass a 5-wpm code test. Similarly, Amateur Extra class licensees that never passed a code test will have one year to pass a 13-wpm test. Those amateurs that fail to pass the test will face revocation of their operating privileges. Materials for administering the examinations will be distributed to Volunteer Examiner Coordinators by the end of April, so that they can begin the testing on May 1, 2014.

"This isn't going to be one of those silly multiple-choice type tests," noted Dasher. "We're going to be sending five-character random code groups, just like we did in the old days. And, applicants will have to prove that they can send, too, using a poorly adjusted straight key."

Technician Class licensees will not be required to take a Morse Code test, nor will a test be required for new applicants. "We discussed it," said Dasher, "but decided that since most Techs can't even figure out how to program their HTs, requiring them to learn Morse Code seemed like cruel and unusual punishment."

When asked what other actions we might see from the FCC, Dasher hinted that in the future applicants taking the written exam may be required to draw circuit diagrams, such as Colpitts oscillators and diode ring mixers, once again. "We're beginning to think that if an applicant passes an amateur radio license exam it should mean that he or she actually knows something," she said.

For further information, contact James X. Shorts, Assistant Liaison to the Deputy Chief of Public Relations for the FCC at (202) 555-1212 or jim.shorts@fcc.gov. For more news and information about the FCC, please visit www.fcc.gov.

I had spilled my latte on my keyboard and was at the outside faucet hosing the latte off when I hear Gator's truck slide to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. I yell, "Go inside. I will be right in." Gator gives me the high sign and goes to the mail box, he yells, "Looks like you got another certificate in a white envelope." I whack the keyboard against my leg to expel the excess water and we both enter the radio shack and Gator hands me a latte, "Thanks Gator I need a fresh stimulant. I just spilled mine on the keyboard." Gator is opening the white envelope, "Look here Dude you got a certificate from ARRL for operating in the 2012 HF World Championship contest." I look at the certificate, "Better late than never." We raise our paper cups in a caffeine salute to inefficiently.

"Gator you like a challenge, take the numbers 5, 6, 7, 8 once and only once, what is the largest number that be created by 'stacking' the numbers in exponential form? For example, 6^{875} or 87^{65} . Stack the

numbers so you achieve the largest number.” Gator writes down the information, “Will get back to you later Dude, but first I want to know how you did in the Idaho and Wisconsin QSO parties.”

“I did not hear many operators on CW in the Idaho QSO party. I listened for hours and made only 19 QSO’s and only worked two mobiles, but I got five No-Star contacts and W1AW/7.” “Were any of the mobile operators a MARAC county hunter?” “Yes one, Bob, K7TM.” Gator gets two more Lattes, “How about the Wisconsin QSO party?” I hand Gator a memory stick, “Do your magic.” I check the radio to see who is running when Gator gives me the high sign, “You did better in the Wisconsin QSO party with 8 No-Star, 3 new counties on 15-meters and two 2X3 calls.” I give Gator a thumb up, “That is because I worked six mobiles moving from county to county.” “How many of the mobile operators were MARAC county hunters?” “I count four; there was Scott, NE9U, Hal, W9HB, a member of the Tri Cities Contest Club, NG9T and our old buddy Jeff, W9MSE.” I sip my latte and give Gator a thumb up.

Gator hands me a box of Girl Scout cookies, “How did you do in the Virginia QSO party?” I hand Gator another memory stick, “Here see for yourself.” I munch a cookie and he crunches the numbers. Gator gives me a thumb down, “You got one new Virginia County on 80-meters, you would be just as effective taking a nap.” “I only worked two mobiles on CW and in only one county; most of my CW contacts were fixed stations.” Gator shakes his head, “Now we know where the CW operators in Idaho went.” Gator sips his latte, “I hope you did better in the Louisiana and Oklahoma. QSO parties.”

I hand Gator another memory stick, “Here see what I accomplished.” Gator inserts the stick, “I checked the Louisiana party first and you logged 10 No-Star, 1 Natural Bingo and a new county on 80-meters. You worked 42 QSO’s the majority from the mobiles: Alan, N5NA, Pat, W5WMU and Chuck, NO5W. The highlight of the Oklahoma QSO party is you getting six new counties on 15-meters. You made 138 QSO’s thanks to the mobile activity of: Ron, AD0DX, Ron, AF5Q, Fred K0FG, Connie, K5CM, Jerry, K5YAA, :Bob, W0BH, Norm, W3DYA and Kerry, W4SIG.” “That Texan mobile tried to hide but I found him and who let Kerry out of Tennessee?”

The cool panhandle spring air vibrates with the sound of Gator’s cell phone, “Got to change locations Dude. The Division of Alcoholic beverages and tobacco agents entered the county. He is gone like a quarter in Las Vegas. I am sure I did not hear him say, “Unsweetened tea tastes better.” The printer stops and I get a printout of the stations heard during March operating on the county hunters call frequencies, I read: AB7MK, AF5Q, AI5P, AK8A, K0ARS, K3IMC, K4XI, K4YT, K5YAA, K7IM, K8MW, K8QWY, K8ZZ, KA4RRU, KB0BA, KB6UF, KB9OWD, KC7YE, KV7N. KW1DX, N0KV, N4CD, N7IV, N8KIE, N9AC, N9QS, NA8W, NM2L, W0EAR, W0GXQ, W3DYA, W4SIG, W5QP, W9MSe, WB4PYF and WD8BAH.

April is an active month for State QSO parties, a bonanza for the CW county hunter. There is the Mississippi (82 counties), Missouri (116 counties), Montana (56 counties), New Mexico (33 counties), Georgia (159 counties), Michigan (83 counties), Nebraska (93 counties), South Dakota (66 counties), North Dakota (53 counties) and eagerly awaited by the world is Florida (67 counties), a total of 808 counties up for grabs. Check your favorite contests list for the QSO party details and the 22 other CW contests. I plan to be mobile in the Georgia and Florida QSO parties. Nap time.



**Nominations
for CW and SSB
County Hunter of the Year
Last Request**

Nominations are now in order for the 2014 CW and SSB County Hunter of the Year Awards. Nominations must be received by your District Director not later than March 31ST 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

Election Coordinator no later than April 15th. Prior winners (per mode) are not eligible to receive this award a second time. Please read the requirements for County Hunter of the Year and support those members who work to make MARAC the vibrant organization that it is.

Voting will be taking place during the month of May **only**. Voting online is preferred at <http://www.marac.org/elections> I will also be accepting mail ballots postmarked during the month of May.

The voting page on the MARAC website will be available starting May 1st thru May 31st.

I want to thank the following county hunters who have volunteered to serve in the following positions. They are running unopposed so congratulations is in order:

President – Dave Splitt KE3VV

Vice President – Dave Pyle KW1DX

Secretary – Jim Grandinetti KZ2P

Treasurer – Matt Matthew W0NAC

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 your initial payment of dues and valid membership application by the Secretary of MARAC. Those individuals maintaining uninterrupted membership status are not restricted from nominating or voting in the current month.

MARAC 4th Quarter Award Voting
January - March

Voting will be open from April 1st through April 30th for the best net control, mobile and team awards. The easiest way to place your vote is at the MARAC web site <http://www.marac.org/elections> and all you will need to enter on the sign in page is your call sign and your MARAC voting key. If you have lost or do not know your voting key then enter your callsign and click on the button below to request your voting key. The key will immediately be emailed to your email address on record. 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.

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.

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 _____

It has been a very busy spring for me with very little time for the radio or making mobile trips. I have been trying to finish up the pruning of all the trees (approx. 2,000) before they start to bud out, then dormant spray needs to be applied. When things slow down I hope to be on the radio a bit more often.

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



History Happens

Gary, K4EXT

What a great month for the County Sign project. The state of Arizona is now finished thanks to Apache and Navajo county line pictures from Mary, AB7NK and Neil, K7SEN ... the state of Wyoming is now finished thanks to Albany and Laramie county line pictures from Alan, KO7X (via Bob, N4CD) ... and the state of Iowa with its 99 total counties is now finished thanks to the final 14 county line pictures from Lowell, KB0BA and Sandra, N0XYL. Awesome!

Other picture contributors for the past month included John, WA4JA in Tennessee ... Terry, WQ7A and the lovely Boni Jean in Oregon ... Silver, N9QS with new magazine poses in Illinois ... Rick, W5QP in Missouri where only 5 more are needed to complete the state ... Jerry, K5YAA speeding (literally) through Louisiana ... Paul, N7JPF and Lee, KC7QOP each in Oregon ... Ed, K8QWY in Ohio ... Percy, KA1JPR in Sunny and Warm Florida ... and Butch, WY0A with son Casey, KD0TWY in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Whew - THANKS to all!

Please feel free to check out the current collection of pictures and information by visiting the CH History/Archive website at the following Internet address:

<http://www.CHarchive.com>

I was recently looking up past CW CHOTY's and came across a picture that Norm, W3DYA had sent me. It is from the 1995 MARAC National Convention in Hamburg, New York ... and features Harry, NF0X (on the left) alongside Norm, W3DYA.

Harry earned USA-CA in 1979, endorsed All-CW ... and USA-CW (#20) ten years later. He was elected CW County Hunter of the Year (CHOTY) in 1995. The MARAC database shows 153 last counties that Harry had passed out for folks. He was the first CH'er to work all counties without relays! Harry served on the MARAC Awards Committee, played Emcee at National Conventions, and penned many CW articles for the Roadrunner. He became a Silent Key in 2006.



National

MARAC National
46th Annual National Convention 2014 Registration
July 9 – 12 Visalia, California
(Deadline for Early Registration Prize Drawing is May 1, 2014)

NAME: (First Mi, Last) _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ ST/PROV _____ POSTAL CODE _____

Convention registration fee: **\$ 45.00**

(One registration fee/family unit – Includes 1 prize ticket & 1 group photo)

NAME ON BADGE _____ CALLSIGN _____ USACA# _____

Additional Name Badges (list information below) Total # _____ @ \$5.00 each = \$ _____

Name _____ Callsign _____ USACA# _____ Relation _____

Name _____ Callsign _____ USACA# _____ Relation _____

Relation: W-Wife, H-Husband, D-Daughter, S-Son, M-Mother, F-Father, X-Friend, GD-Grand Daughter,

GS-Grand Son, for any additional badges please attach or list on back of form.

*Enter number of persons that will attend events***Wednesday 09 July – Check-In/Do It Yourself Activities****Thursday 10 July**

If enough interest a Bus will come to the hotel, free of charge and transport a group to the nearby Indian Casino, please check here if interested _____

Friday 11 July (Tour below is limited to Max of 30 People)

Sequoia National Park – Depart 8:00/9:00 AM (2 buses 15 each) #Adults _____ X \$35.00 = \$ _____

Saturday 12 July**Banquet – San Joaquin Buffet**

Mixed Field Green Salad with assorted Dressings

Pasta Salad with Bay Shrimp, Red Onions, Red and Yellow Bell Peppers

Platter of Sliced Fresh Fruit and Berries

Grilled Balsamic Vegetable Platter with Fresh Mozzarella Cheese

Braised Breast of Chicken in Red Wine Sauce with Pancetta and Pearl Onions

Charbroiled Salmon Medallions on Bed of Sautéed Spinach, Dill Herb Sauce

Rice Pilaf; Roasted Red Potatoes

#Adults _____ X \$45.00 = \$ _____

Additional Prize Tickets

Prize (Singles) _____ X \$ 1.00 = \$ _____

Prize (Book 12 tickets) _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

Cash (singles) _____ X \$ 1.00 = \$ _____

Cash (Book 12 tickets) _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

Photographs

Extra: _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

YL: _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

USA-CA: _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

CW: _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

DATA: _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____**Mail Registration Form and Check to – Robert Devine (KC6AWX) [Home Phone 1-415-883-8980]****(Make check payable to “MARAC”, 407 Alameda Del Prado, Novato, CA 94949)****Hotel Reservations – MARAC (MAR)****Guest rooms have been set aside for your special event (\$89) One King Bed Standard Rooms:**Telephone: dial **(800)holiday** ask for a room from the above group room blogLink:[MARAC](#)

Birthdays

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
K1QPV	Apr - 01
WI4K	Apr - 02
AA4QE	Apr - 02
KW4FM	Apr - 02
KC8WRP	Apr - 02
AA9JJ	Apr - 02
W6YR	Apr - 02
W1UYL	Apr - 02
WB9TKR	Apr - 02
N1LK	Apr - 03
K4YFH	Apr - 03
N9WA	Apr - 03
AA1K	Apr - 03
WB5CWI	Apr - 03
N3AHA	Apr - 03
K0DXX	Apr - 04
W9NGA	Apr - 04
W6TK	Apr - 04
KA0BUM	Apr - 05
K1BM	Apr - 05
W6HOR	Apr - 05
N9IWL	Apr - 05
AL7R	Apr - 06
W9CSX	Apr - 06
W9SUQ	Apr - 06
KS2S	Apr - 06
KD2SP	Apr - 06
W3MAX	Apr - 06
KB5VTB	Apr - 06
N2MED	Apr - 07
W7LQV	Apr - 07
AA8HH	Apr - 07
W5LJW	Apr - 07
W7PSK	Apr - 07
KA2CNG	Apr - 07
W0GOQ	Apr - 07
WM8N	Apr - 08

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
KC2P	Apr - 08
AB5LY	Apr - 09
KM5W	Apr - 09
W9WOC	Apr - 09
AA4KD	Apr - 09
N7OTR	Apr - 09
W4RKV	Apr - 10
KD8SF	Apr - 10
W8JM	Apr - 10
K4HVB	Apr - 10
N3EA	Apr - 11
N7YG	Apr - 11
K9BLX	Apr - 12
W2RSA	Apr - 12
KI7ZV	Apr - 12
KW8T	Apr - 12
WB8RJW	Apr - 12
K0PVV	Apr - 13
WD0EAM	Apr - 13
W7FEN	Apr - 13
W6TKV	Apr - 13
KB0FQC	Apr - 13
K4HBH	Apr - 13
WA0LMK	Apr - 14
KA0DDJ	Apr - 14
KA2MKQ	Apr - 14
W0GXQ	Apr - 14
N2ODU	Apr - 14
W8GEJ	Apr - 14
K4RAS	Apr - 14
K3GOO	Apr - 15
NE8V	Apr - 15
KJ4UDD	Apr - 15
W3TTY	Apr - 16
K5PRT	Apr - 16
W9OP	Apr - 16
W9PCI	Apr - 17

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
KK5QA	Apr - 17
W8WT	Apr - 17
WA0SMX	Apr - 18
WB9NUL	Apr - 18
N7DH	Apr - 18
WB0MNE	Apr - 19
W2XQ	Apr - 19
N0DPX	Apr - 19
AC7UH	Apr - 19
KD8GL	Apr - 19
W2ZI	Apr - 20
KD1ZL	Apr - 20
W7LES	Apr - 20
WA5GFO	Apr - 20
WA9LKF	Apr - 20
NS9Q	Apr - 20
K5JYD	Apr - 20
N4USG	Apr - 20
KD7OWN	Apr - 21
KT4U	Apr - 21
KJ5PQ	Apr - 21
KF5JC	Apr - 22
W8UO	Apr - 22
N7ETN	Apr - 22
K2SGA	Apr - 22
K0CN	Apr - 23
W0NAN	Apr - 23
W8DCD	Apr - 23
KA5VWD	Apr - 23
KD4FJ	Apr - 23
WA3AFS	Apr - 23
W8ILC	Apr - 24
N7AXY	Apr - 24
W3IJT	Apr - 24
KK5ZK	Apr - 24
K2HVN	Apr - 24
W0FS	Apr - 24

Roadrunner - Birthdays	
Call	Birthday Date
WA9LEY	Apr - 25
NN2Q	Apr - 25
N8TI	Apr - 26
K9CS	Apr - 26
WO1B	Apr - 26
WA5WWW	Apr - 26
WS3F	Apr - 27
N0ZDZ	Apr - 27
W4GFQ	Apr - 27
KE5TC	Apr - 27
W8SU	Apr - 27
KQ1Z	Apr - 27
N5KGY	Apr - 27
W6LMJ	Apr - 28
KS4KM	Apr - 28
W5ST	Apr - 28
W9ZJX	Apr - 28
KA1HB	Apr - 29
W0MYZ	Apr - 29
W0LFJ	Apr - 29
K0PG	Apr - 30
K8YJ	Apr - 30
NU4C	Apr - 30
N6NZ	Apr - 30
KG0SV	Apr - 30
W0ME	Apr - 30
AK8C	Apr - 30
W6TN	Apr - 30
AA2AV	Apr - 30
KA0SHC	Apr - 30



Awards**Award Manager's Report**

Due to travels, there will be no Awrds Report nor Award Manager's Report this month.

New Members**MARAC Number**

R4554

Callsign

K9MIX

Name

Brent Schaefer

**MARAC Silent Keys****Callsign**

AB8JF

KA4TYG

Silent Key Date

March 6, 2014

March 7, 2014

**Treasurer's Report (W0NAC)
February 2014***

Beginning Account Balances Feb 6, 2014 **\$35,600.04**

February Income:

Money Market Interest	\$2.38	
Awards Manager Income	\$238.50	
Membership Income	\$601.87	
Logger distribution	\$0.00	
Total Income:	<u>\$842.75</u>	

February Expenses:

Awards Manager Expenses	\$176.61	
Office Expenses (Postage)	\$0.00	
Total Expenses:	<u>\$171.61</u>	

February Net Income Less Expenses **\$666.14**

New Total Balance ALL Accounts: **\$36,266.18**

Checking Account Balance	<u>\$5,223.38</u>	
Money Market Account Balance	<u>\$31,042.80</u>	
Total:		\$36,266.18

Note:

The following monies are not included in the account balances above:

Awards Manager's Funds	\$1,500.00	
2014 National Convention Seed Monies	\$4,000.00	(Some will be expensed later)

* Includes February Transactions through 3/4/2014



Digital Happenings

DIGITAL HAPPENINGS #20**(March 2014)****By W0NAC ("Matt")**

I'm happy to report that the new antenna mount seems to be working very well. I had a machinist enlarge the trailer hitch mounting hole and other parts to 1 ¼" and a local ham friend produced a new spool shaped insulator (photo below) using his 3-D printing machine (these new 3-D printers can do miraculous things!). I have temporarily assembled the mount (photo below) and on the air reports have been good.



A little later I will be re-assembling the mount using a special epoxy potting compound (excellent insulating qualities) which I hope will prevent road salt, etc. from corroding the metal parts.

Having learned my lesson the hard way, I have also installed a Comet trunk lip mount to use with assorted "Ham Sticks" for backup purposes. Brief A/B comparison tests show that the 20M Ham Stick puts out almost as strong a signal as my primary antenna.

Incidentally, N0KV put me on to some excellent quick-disconnect hardware made by Breedlove Mounts Inc. You can locate them using this link: https://breedlovemounts.com/Home_Page.php. They make a ton of other mounting stuff which is all first class! I am using their quick disconnects for several assorted Ham Sticks and will be using one on the main mast for my primary antenna.

You can see what is pretty close to my final setup in the photo below:



Even though both antennas seem to work well when they are both mounted at the same time, they do show substantial coupling effects. For this reason the Ham Sticks will probably remain in the trunk for emergency use only.

How To Find And Work Other Digital Mobiles:

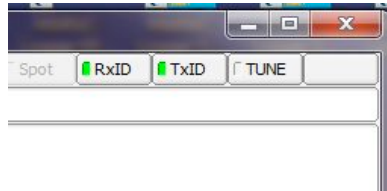
As promised last month, I will try to finish answering the question: **"How in the @!X*#! do I find and work other digital county hunters?"**.

The last two tools I will discuss this month are RSID (Reed Solomon Identification) and Video mode display. Both of these are well supported by Fldigi software so I will discuss them as implemented in Fldigi. I'm sure that other digital software programs also support these tools, but time and space limits me to just Fldigi. As an aside, I am continually being more impressed with Fldigi! This program somehow achieves the lofty goal of having a rich set of features and settings, but at the same time being simple to use if you just use the default settings. I highly recommend it to all (and it's free!). You can download the latest version (3.21.80) here: <http://www.w1hkj.com/download.html>

Reed Solomon ID:

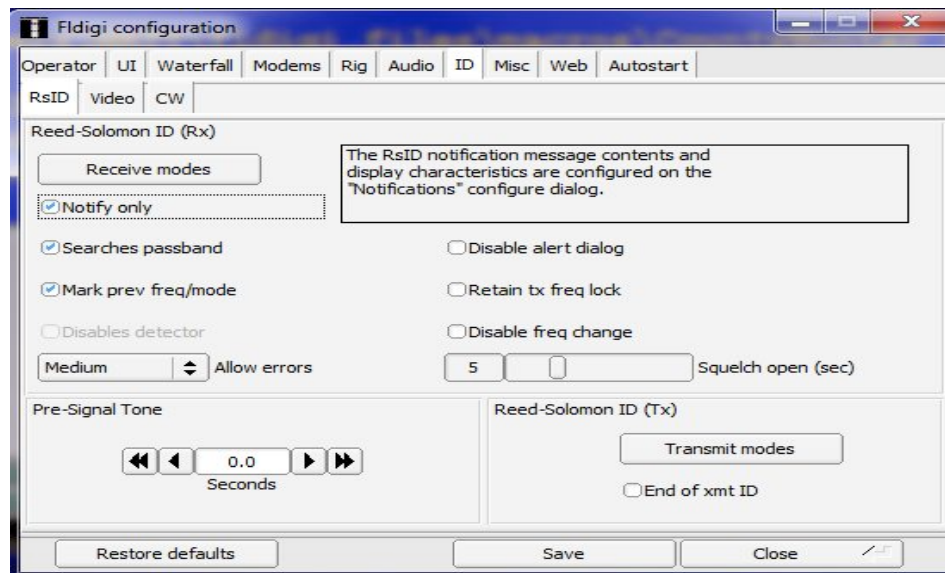
This is a special transmission (usually added at the beginning) which has a unique code for each mode/sub-mode that you are using. It was designed by Patrick Lindecker, F6CTE, for the modem program MultiPsk. It has been adapted to Fldigi and other modem programs. Fldigi has a separate RSID decoder that operates in parallel with all other modem decoders.

RSID reception and the transmission of RSID codes are toggled ON and OFF by clicking on buttons in the upper right of the Fldigi screen (see photo).



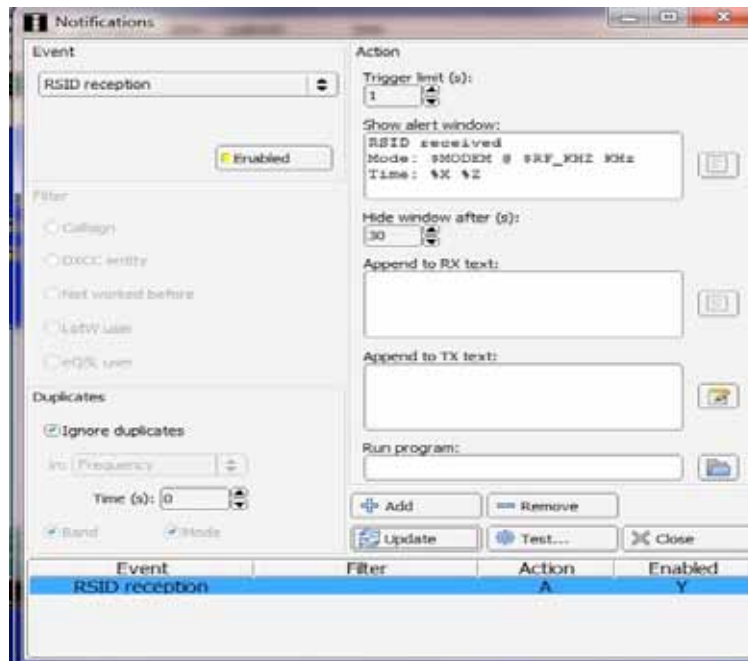
Note that in this picture, both RSID reception and RSID transmission are turned ON as indicated by the small green indicator light in each button.

There are many options available for both receiving and transmitting RSID signals. These are selected in the Configure/ID/RSID menu:

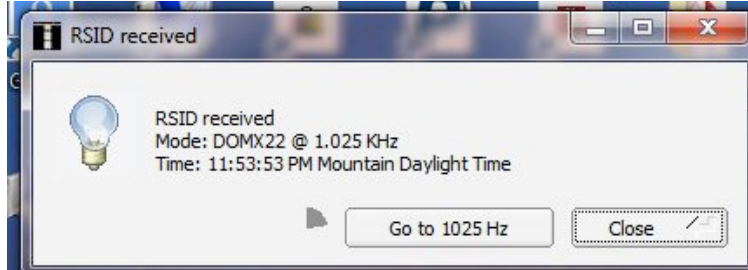


You will need to read the Fldigi manual (Heaven forbid!) to fully understand what each of these settings do, but if you just match the settings shown above things will probably work OK.

The other menu with settings for RSID is under Configure/Notification as follows:



Again, reading the Fldigi manual is recommended, but if you simply make your setup screen look exactly like this one, RSID should work OK. To be sure, click on the “Test” button and you should see a pop-up notification message similar to this:



A message (or several messages) like this is the end result of monitoring a frequency range where other people’s signals are appearing on your waterfall (If they are transmitting an RSID code). Note that the message shows the mode/sub-mode they are using and their offset frequency on your waterfall. If you click on the “Go to 1025 Hz” button, Fldigi will automatically change your frequency to match theirs and ALSO change your mode/sub-mode to match their mode/sub-mode!

My initial opinion is that RSID has limited value for county hunters (mobiles) running counties using digital modes or for fixed station county hunters trying to work the mobiles. I believe this is true because the mobile’s call, mode, and frequency are probably already known, particularly if they have been “spotted”. Also, nothing is free in this world. So it is with RSID. It takes additional time at the beginning of a transmission to transmit the RSID code before any of your message text is sent. It may be short, but when you are trying to be as fast and efficient as possible, every extra second is very noticeable. Also, right now, most county hunters won’t be set up to receive your RSID code so all they will notice is a funny set of tones at the beginning of your transmissions.

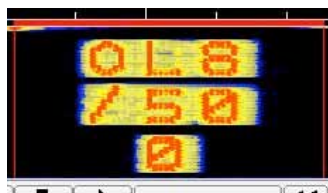
If you are just “trolling” for casual contacts hoping to log new counties or new modes, it looks like RSID could quickly solve the mystery of what mode/sub-mode they are using plus switch you over to their

frequency and mode almost instantly. This could be a real boon! The only drawback is that not every digital signal you see will be sending an RSID code. It's still a bit new for many people.

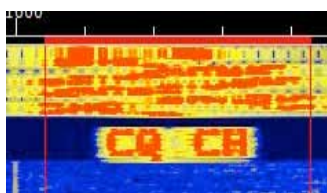
VIDEO ID & VIDEO TEXT:

Unlike RSID which just pops up a message, Video ID/Text actually displays brief mode IDs or other short text messages (or both!) at the beginning of your trace on the other person's waterfall. Here are some examples:

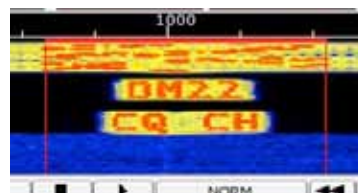
Video ID Only



Video Text Only

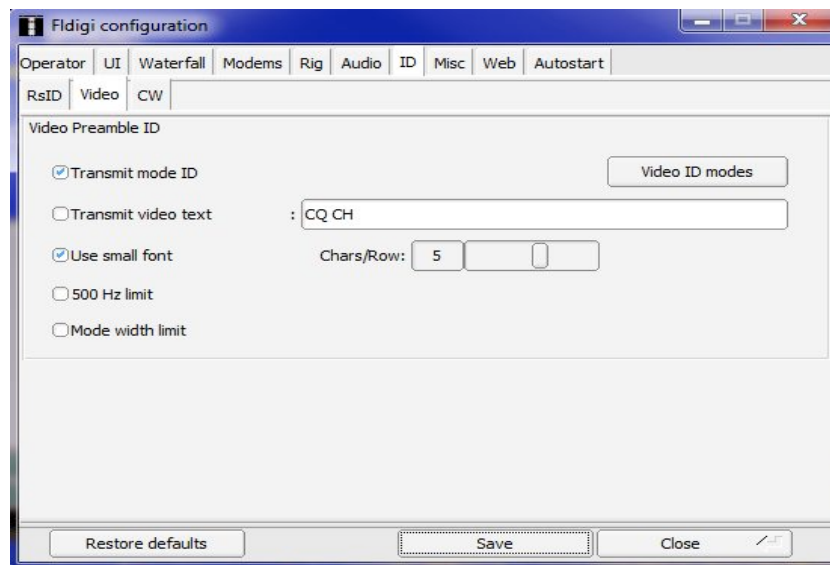


Both Video Text & ID



To save space, mode/sub-mode IDs are all abbreviated. In the first example above, the abbreviation is for "OLIVIA 8/500". In the third, the ID is for "DOMINOEX 22". In the second example the brief text message "CQ CH" is all that is displayed before the actual digital transmission (my call 3 times) is sent using DOMINOEX 22. In the third example both the text message "CQ CH" and the mode ID "DM22" are displayed before the actual digital transmission is sent. Pretty neat, huh?

Fldigi gives you complete control over video ID/Text in the Configure/ID/Video menu:

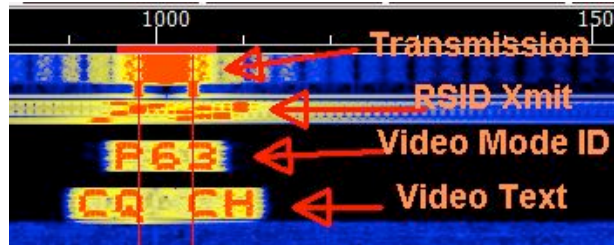


As with the other menus, you will need to read the manual to understand all of the various features, but if all you wish to do is send video Mode ID, the settings in the menu above should work.

SUMMING IT ALL UP:

RSID and Video ID/Video Text have been around for a long time, but have not yet been used much by county hunters. That is unfortunate because they can be very useful tools. Just as an example, I have come up with a scheme where a mobile (putting out digital counties) might use these tools in their initial

CQ call and in their CQ call every time they change modes. Their signal (assuming they begin by using PSK-63) would look like this:



The video text would assure other folks that this is a county hunter calling CQ. The next line (Video Mode ID) would tell people that the mobile is using PSK-63. The next line is the mobile's RSID which would pop up the notification box for watchers telling them again the mode plus the offset. If the watcher wishes, they can click on the "Go To xxxx" button and instantly be on the correct mode and tuned to the mobile's frequency ready to work them. The CQ-CH macro would control things so that the only time the IDs, etc. are transmitted would be when the mobile calls CQ. To insure that other macros will NOT transmit RSID or any Video ID/Text, you must have these features configured, but turned OFF in the Configure/ID/RSID and Configure/ID/Video menus.

If you would like to have the complete macro file containing this feature, you can get it at:
<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/26171574/Fldigi%20Macros/CountyHunter%20Mobile%20RSID%20Video.zip>

If you would like a complete set of macro files (Zipped) that I use then go here:
<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/26171574/Fldigi%20Macros/Fldigi%20Macros%2003-28-2014.zip>

You should place these macros (and any others you may be using) in the following folder:
 "C:\Users\Your name\call\fldigi.files\macros"

THE FUTURE:

I challenge other people in the digital county hunter community (fixed or mobile) to experiment with these new tools. There are bound to be better ways to use RSID and Video ID/Text to make digital county hunting more efficient and fun. I will be happy to look at and share any ideas you may have in future Digital Happenings articles.

March Activities:

Digital activities during March stayed at a high level! Digital county hunter mobiles spotted on W6RK in March and a very rough count of each's total counties/modes are:

W0NAC	4
K5YAA	6
KW1DX	12
NA8W	33
W5QP	6
WQ7A	3
NA8W/WD8BAH	12

The updated Table 3 is given below:

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 COUNTIES (3 MODES)	(4 MODES)	(5 MODES)	TOTAL	% 5-Mode Completed	LAST UPDATED
1	AA8R	Randy	F	1206	3077	3077	1320	381	31	7886	51.3%	3/18/2014
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	K0FG	Fred	F	169	3077	3006	169	11	0	6263	40.7%	1/17/2014
6	K0PVV	Rob	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
7	K0WJ	Lou	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
8	K4PBX	Jim	F	151	2889	133	19	9	8	3058	19.9%	2/26/2014
9	K5GE	Gene	F	26	1893	575	8	0	0	2476	16.1%	5/26/2013
10	K5SE	Dick	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
11	K5WAF	Bill	F	599	3044	?	?	?	?	3044	19.8%	5/2/2013
12	K7REL	Tom	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
13	K8OWY	Ed	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
14	K8ZZ	Ed	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
15	KA4RRU	Mike	M/F	975	3077	2939	944	49	1	7010	45.6%	1/10/2014
16	KA8IQP	Pamela	M/F	22	202	64	53	28	4	351	2.3%	9/12/2013
17	KC3X	Hollis	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
18	KC6AWX	Bob	F	450	3077	1592	264	59	14	5006	32.5%	5/7/2013
19	KC7YE	Jack	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
20	KD5YUK	Billv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
21	KD7KST	Bill	M/F	1792	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	9/30/2012
22	KF7PKL	Davis	F	379	879	211	48	15	1	1154	7.5%	10/9/2013
23	KG5E	Greg	F	693	3050	2107	635	258	96	6146	39.9%	3/23/2014
24	KM1C	Bill	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
25	KU4YM	Dave	F	30	2782	29	10	2	1	2824	18.4%	9/6/2013
26	KM6HB	Mark	F	714	3077	2936	694	87	1	6795	44.2%	2/3/2013
27	KV1DX	Dave	M/F	24	3077	924	26	19	14	4060	26.4%	3/6/2014
28	N0KV	Barry	M/F	500	3077	3029	2289	355	69	8819	57.3%	1/7/2014
29	N0LXJ	Sharon	M/F	1369	3077	2267	1216	490	250	7300	47.4%	3/28/2014
30	N1API	Al	F	549	3077	2098	468	251	144	6038	39.2%	3/24/2014
31	N4JT	Jim	F	736	3077	3064	743	235	150	7269	47.2%	10/21/2013
32	N5MLP	Ron	M/F	391	3077	409	54	37	9	3586	23.3%	5/19/2013
33	N6PDB	Dennis	M/F	849	3077	2884	931	580	441	7913	51.4%	3/28/2014
34	N8CIJ	Dick	F	676	3077	3014	668	303	229	7291	47.4%	9/5/2013
35	N8HAM	Jim	F	0	3077	0	0	0	0	3077	20.0%	4/2/2013
36	N9WNN	Steve	F	0	2180	0	0	0	0	2180	14.2%	2/24/2013
37	NA8W	Darl	F/M	579	3022	852	381	212	99	4566	29.7%	9/12/2013
38	NF0N	Mike	F	785	3077	3077	915	108	50	7227	47.0%	12/31/2012
39	NN9K	Pete	F	816	3077	859	78	1	0	4015	26.1%	3/23/2012
40	NT2A	Gene	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
41	NU4C	Paul	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
42	NW65	Jim	F	722	3077	3077	743	59	35	6991	45.4%	9/7/2013
43	NX4W	Lloyd	M/F	1135	3077	1274	436	290	97	5174	33.6%	7/27/2013
44	W0NAC	Matt	M/F	1835	3077	2846	2005	1113	464	9505	61.8%	3/28/2014
45	W3DLM	Don	F	359	3077	2390	298	101	55	5921	38.5%	10/12/2013
46	W3ZUH	Dick	F	5	3077	2048	11	2	0	5138	33.4%	12/4/2013
47	W4IHI	Garv	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
48	W4SIG	Kerry	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
49	W4YDY	Dave	F	909	3077	3077	1062	379	195	7790	50.6%	3/1/2014
50	W5OP	Rick	M/F	260	3077	2677	290	142	109	6295	40.9%	3/23/2014
51	W6RK	Risto	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
52	W6RLL	Joe	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
53	W7FEF	Larry	F	25	3077	2975	32	1	0	6085	39.6%	10/3/2013
54	W7ZIN	Larry	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
55	W7ZQ	Bill	M/F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
56	W9IR	Rich	F	90	3077	1674	44	0	0	4795	31.2%	10/31/2012
57	W9SIQ	Larry	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
58	WA4EEZ	Leslie	F	1086	3077	1742	699	234	31	5783	37.6%	1/6/2014
59	WA4UNS	Doug	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
60	WA6OCV	Susan	M/F	328	3077	328	320	130	10	3865	25.1%	3/28/2013
61	WA7ETH	Ed	F	173	1919	389	30	3	0	2341	15.2%	3/25/2014
62	WA7JHQ	Sterling	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
63	WB0M	Jeff	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
64	WB2ABD	Paul	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0.0%	
65	WD4OIN	Jack	F	995	3077	3070	1005	422	189	7763	50.5%	3/15/2014
66	WQ7A	Terry	F	201	3077	3028	206	132	112	6555	42.6%	8/24/2013
67	WY4D	Ben	F	281	3077	303	36	15	9	3440	22.4%	2/11/2014

Please note that WD4OIN has also joined the small group of those who have completed 50% or more of the 5 - Mode Award. Congratulations Jack!

How To Get Your 5 - Mode Statistics Updated:

Several past Digital Happenings articles have given detailed instructions on a new and easy way to update your digital statistics for Table 3 by using a small program called "Digital Report Utility". This new program will create a report for you showing your progress for both the **USA - Digital** and the **5 - Mode Awards** and email it to W0NAC. Instead of repeating these instructions every month I have included them in a Microsoft Word document that you can download by clicking on the following link:
<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/26171574/Happenings/5%20Mode%20Update.doc>

Other possible topics for future months include (in no particular order):

"Compatibility Issues When Making RTTY Contacts"

"How To Log Your Digital Contacts In Logger"

"Macros – Revisited"

"New Digital Awards?"

"Digital Software Installation – Revisited"

"Award Difficulty Index"

I hate to keep harping at you all, but I **really need** (and welcome) your suggestions on topics for future articles! Or, if you have a story or tip that you wish to contribute, I will certainly try to include it. Short stories describing your experiences/joys/frustrations/etc. in getting started in digital ops would be especially welcome. Summaries of any digital trips you make (or have made in the past) would also be good. I look forward to hearing from you. Don't be shy!

Please email me with your comments/suggestions at w0nac@comcast.net and don't forget to send your updated status for the **USA – Digital** and **5 - Mode Awards** so I can update the Active Digital County Hunters Award Status list again next month.

73's and we hope to see you on our waterfall again real soon!

Matt – W0NAC



Calendar

~ April 2014 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
ONLY START DATE SHOWN		1	2	3	4 MS QP	5 MO QP MT QP
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 NM QP GA QP
13 STRT KEY SPRINT	14	15	16	17	18	19 MI QP NE QP SD QP ND QP
20 ROOKIE SSB	21 RUN4BACON	22	23	24 MI MINI	25	26 FL QP
27	28	29	30	Notes: CLICK ON EVENT TO GO TO WEB SITE		



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Johns Island, SC 29455

“A Road Runner Is A Very Fast Bird”

Monthly Deadline for Articles is the 25th!

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