

County Hunting for Fun and Profit

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What is County Hunting?

- An award program to challenge hams to contact other hams in as many counties as possible
- Any frequencies and any band may be used to count for a successful contact
- Contacts must be confirmed
- No time limits were implemented
- Contacts made before the start of the award were honored.
- Additionally there are no geographic constraints. Contacts can be made anywhere in the USA

In the Beginning

- On the first day CQ Magazine created the County Hunters award and it was good
- On the second day CQ realized the need to handle independent cities and it was good
- On the third day CQ realized that Alaska does not have counties and considered Judicial Districts as counties and it was good
- On the fourth day CQ realized that Hawaii does not have counties and considered the 5 major islands as counties and it was good
- On the fifth day, CQ published a booklet checklist showing all the counties and equivalents and it was good
- On the sixth day CQ published the final rules and it was good
- On the seventh day CQ rested and it was good

The Early Days

- Organized nets. Most popular were the daily nets on 14.336 MHz
- Rovers worked many counties over an extended period. For example, a rover would work every county in a state over a period of a few days
- Even at low postage rates in those days, QSLing was an expensive proposition considering there were over 3,000 counties
- County hunters developed a multiple contact QSL card

County Hunters QSL Card

- Card allows confirmation of multiple contacts on a single card
- Receiving station would fill out and send card to transmitting station
- That operator would review and if correct , sign and return the card

Confirming QSO:
FROM ARS: _____ TO ARS: WA2ONG
Mode CW ☐ SSB ☐ FM ☐ MOBILE ☐ PORTABLE ☐ FIXED ☐
MARAC # _____ USCA # _____ 2nd Time# _____ 3rd Time# _____

Date	UTC	MHz	RS(T)	State	County

Signature: _____

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Later Years

- CQ started accepting electronic verifications via eQSL
- eQSL tracked the counties confirmed
- Upon reaching an award level, a user could just submit the QSOs to CQ
- Alas, all good thing come to an end. CQ turned off the lights and locked the doors
- Many thought this was the end of county hunting.
- But wait, there's more...

Enter MARAC

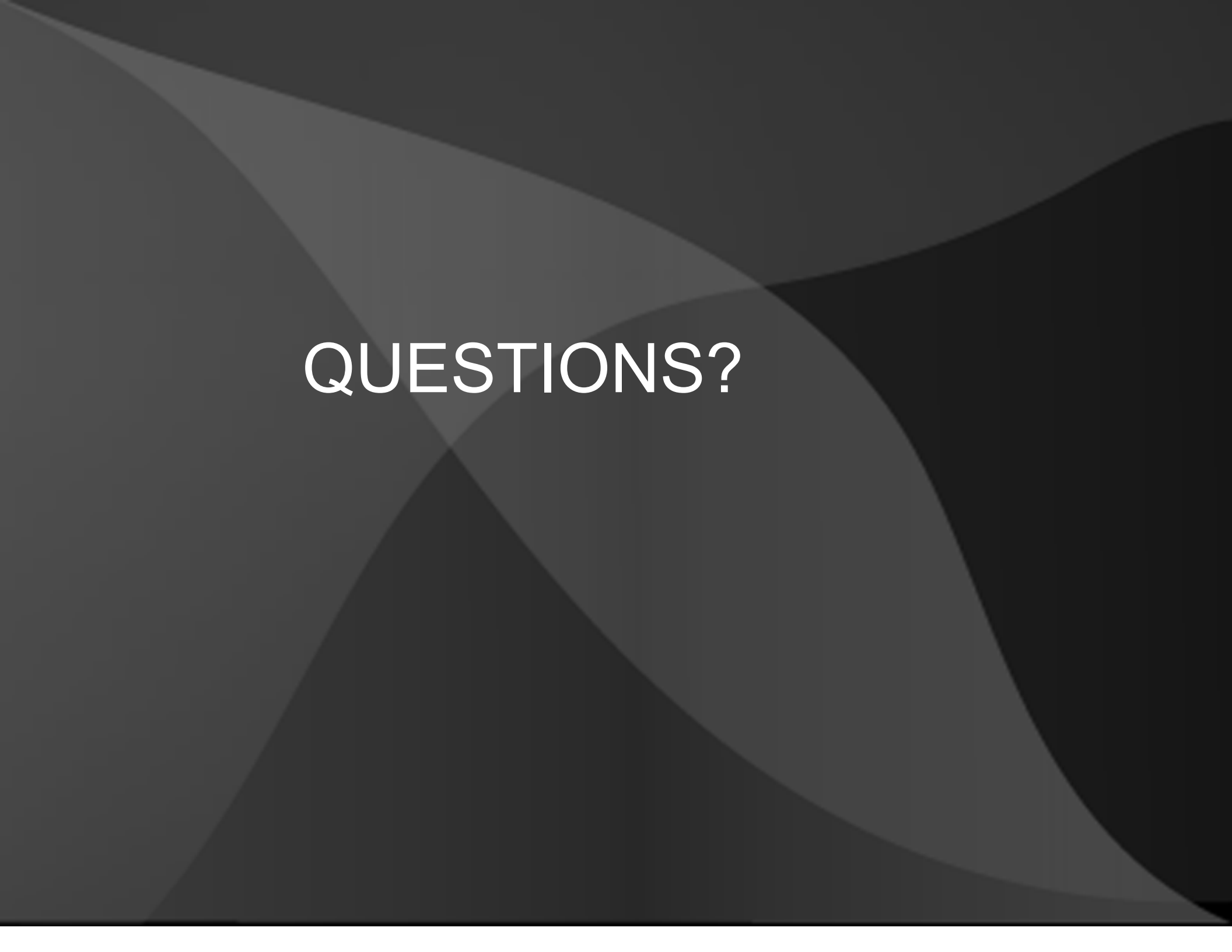
- Organized in 1970
- Originally a “second time around” organization
- Members must have worked all counties via the CQ award
- After the demise of CQ, the organization opened the county award to all comers
- Members are on the honor system. No QSLs required
- Many awards besides the Counties award

MARAC

- WWW.MARAC.ORG
- Web site offers tools to help county hunters
- Maps, links
- Logging software
- Contests
- Other goodies

CQ and MARAC Awards





QUESTIONS?