ECARS NET CONTROL STATION LOG PROGRAM

Figure 1
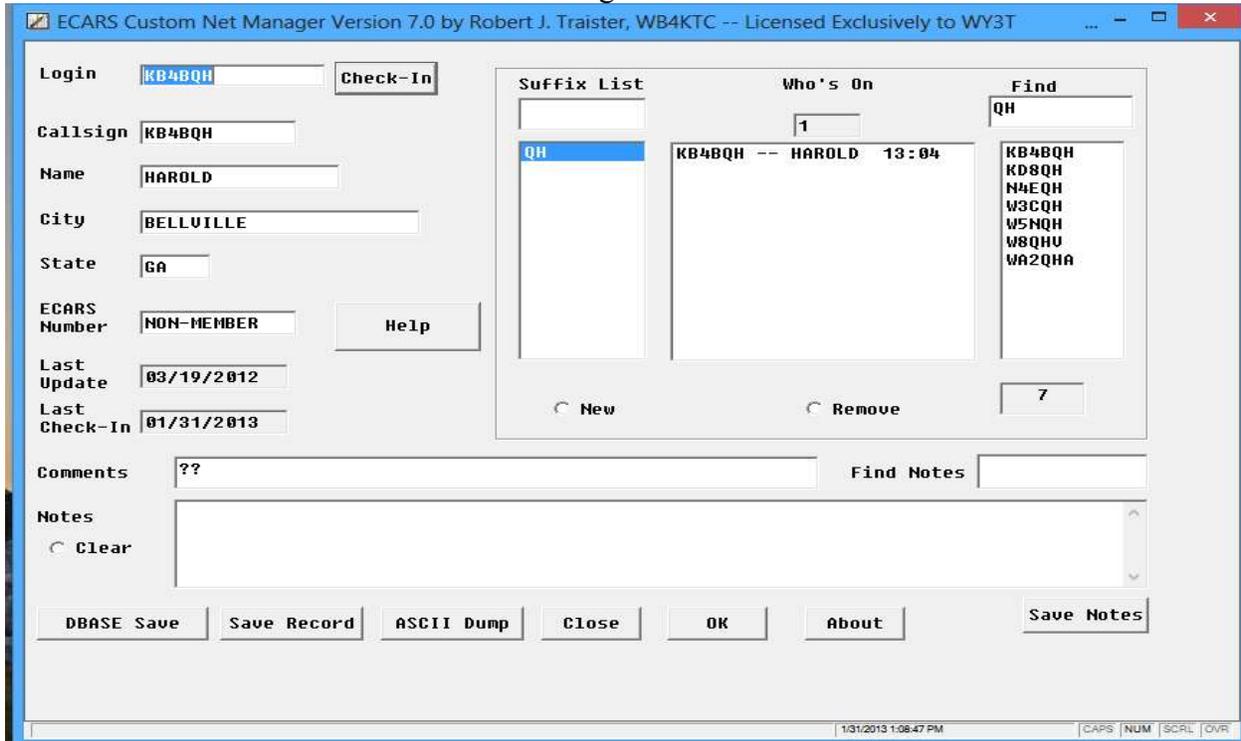
Figure 1 description: This is the program's only screen (except for popup messages) and all functions take place on this screen.

The highlighted lines are added to separate the screen into the four areas described below:
1) The upper right hand portion of the screen is the FIND / CHECK-IN area.
2) The upper left portion is the CONTACT INFORMATION area.
3) The middle portion, the GENERAL information area, containing the "Comments",
   "Find Notes" and "Notes" area is for storing extra information on a contact if desired.
4) The row of buttons on the very bottom of the screen is the CONTROL area.

I will describe the function of each of these areas separately below after a brief general program description.

GENERAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program is a database program which tracks the Callsign, Name, City, State and ECARS number, if any, along with the date their record was last updated and the date of the stations last check-in. It also stores any information in the Comments section in the actual database record. This information makes up one record in the database.
If there are no changes to a stations information then the only thing that changes in the station's record is the date and time of the current check-in. Note the time is not shown in the Contact Information area but is displayed in the "Who's On" check-in list.

This means that the database does not keep a copy of each and every check-in from a given station. If a station checks into the net a hundred times a year, there will be only one record in the database. This database keeps records for the individual Net Control Station that is using it, and there is no co-ordination of databases between NCS's.
This means that stations could check in with one NCS multiple times but not be in your database.

General Function descriptions:

The first function to become familiar with is the FIND box in the Find/Check-in area.
This box and the display window below it allow the user to find any record in the datasbase by searching for any part of a stations record. i.e. Callsign, name, city, state or Ecars number. To illustrate this type into the Find box " AL" You will get a list of all the callsigns that have AL in the Callsign, Name, City or State fields of the database. By placing the cursor on a callsign in the list and pressing the left mouse button, you will see that the information for that call displayed in the Contact Information area of the screen.

Also if you put just a "space" in the Find box and then hit the "Enter" key it will display a list of all the stations that are in the database. In the small window at the bottom is shown the total number of records in the database. You should see more than 3000 records in the database.

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO USE IT

This example will illustrate a normal ECARS net session.

Assume that a call for check-ins has been given:
Position the cursor in the Suffix List box.
1) listen to the responses
2) type the call suffix in the Suffix List Box and press the Enter key.
        For the Demo type in SE
3) Notice the suffix (SE) has moved down into the window below
   and the Suffix List box is clear. This allows for repeating this process
   with each staions call as you hear them.
4) continue this process until you have all the stations heard.
   Lets add four more calls QH, BYF, EOP, WZRand QQQ
Now that the calls are in the Suffix List, place the mouse pointer on the
first suffix in the list and click the left mouse button. Notice that that a
list of callsigns has appeared to the right in the Find window, and the
K1ESE call and information has appeared in the Contact Information area
to the left.
5) now it is neccessary to determine which call in the Find list is the actual
station checking in KA1SE in this case, and Left click on that call in Find list.
6) note the information for KA1SE is listed in the Contact Information area.
7) the Last Check-In shows the date that station last checked in.
8) assuming that no changes are needed. Left Click on the Check-In box.
9) this places the callsign, name and check-in time to the right in the Who's On

window. This is the list of current check-ins.

10) to remove the station just checked in from the suffix list, highlight it with a Left mouse click. Then press the Alt key and the D key together. This will remove that suffix. When all have been checked in and removed the suffix box is empty and ready for the next group of checkins.

The next station in the Suffix List is myself and notice that there are three stations with the QH suffix show. Again requires a selection by the NCS.
Continue trying these to get the feel of it.

QQQ NOT FOUND! This message tells us there is no record in the database for this stations callsign.
This scenario is one where there is no record in the database for the station checking in. Here is how that is handled.
1) Obtain the stations complete callsign.
2) Type it in the Callsign box in the Contact Information area.
3) Obtain Name, City, State (these are required) and ECARS number available.
4) At the bottom of the screen in the Control area is a SAVE button. Left click on the Save button. This will save that record to the database.

5) The call sign will appear in the Login box at the top of the screen.
6) Now clicking the Check-in Button will check this station in just as all others.

NOTE The save process of a new record requires the Callsign, Name, City and State fields to have some information in them. If there is a very sketchy contact and some information cannot be obtained then it is possible to enter "xxx" or"???" to place some text in the field. The record will then be saved to the database.

Figure 2

SAVE ERROR

CALL, NAME, CITY & STATE Must Be Filled In

OK