

# County Hunter News

April 1, 2016  
Volume 12, Issue 4

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in ham radio county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation.

Contributions of articles, stories, letters, and pictures to the editor are welcomed, and may be included in future issues at the editor's discretion.

The County Hunter News will provide you with interesting, thought provoking articles, articles of county hunting history, or about county hunters or events, ham radio or electronics history, general ham radio interest, and provide news of upcoming operating events.

We hope you will enjoy the County Hunter News. Feel free to forward, or provide links. Permission is given for copying or quoting in part or all provided credit is given to the CHNews and to the author of article.

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz and 14.324. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at [ch.W6RK.com](http://ch.W6RK.com)

For information on county hunting, check out the following resources:

The USACA award is sponsored by CQ Magazine. Rules and information are here:

<http://countyhunter.com/cq.htm>

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

<http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm>

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can

find information on these awards and the rules at:

[http://countyhunter.com/marac\\_information\\_package.htm](http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm)

The CW net procedure is written up at:

<http://www.wd3p.net/ch/netproc/netproc.htm>

There is a lot more information at [www.countyhunter.com](http://www.countyhunter.com) . Please check it out.

Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at [www.CHNewsonline.com](http://www.CHNewsonline.com)

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

<http://pages.suddenlink.net/w4ydy/hamlinks.html#County>

Download the file to a flash card that fits in your GPS unit, turn it on, and the county lines should appear!

De N4CD, Editor (email: [telegraphy@verizon.net](mailto:telegraphy@verizon.net) )

## Notes from the Editor

Another month has gone by and most of the country is now enjoying spring weather. The folks up north (MN) and in the Rockies are still seeing snow flurries. The excitement with the National Parks continues – and if anything is getting bigger and bigger each month with more joining in on the fun. Hundreds are going out and activating parks, monuments, recreation areas and it's going to be a wild summer with all the parks on the air. Of course, they are all in counties – and county hunters can work them for credit. Some are in relatively rare counties out west – like Gila Cliff Dwelling Monument in Catron, NM. So keep your atlas and maps handy, work some of the parks, and log the counties.

Dayton will have lots of displays and the ARRL Forum will cover parks on the air. Vendors will be pushing parks on the air equipment for the activators. Should be a lot of fun.

The price of gas is edging up. From lows near a buck fifty (lower in some places) it's crept up to near \$2 now. Still a pretty good price. This should be a good summer for mobile trips. Then it slid back to \$1.80. Who knows where it will be in six months?

**2 ) The K3IMC County Hunter website** has a new URL. You might wish to bookmark the new URL for it.

<http://www.countyhunterweb.org/index.php>

You can find the County Hunter Forum, Planned Trips and more there. New and Improved!

**3 ) Awards Chairman Away – from KC6AWX**

To All My County Hunter Friends,

You guessed it – it's time for another trip, well actually 2 trips. I will be out of the country from March 19th until April 11th and again from April 16th until May 11th.

Again, please do not send LC1 applications from 3/19/2016 thru 4/11/2016 and again from 4/16/2016 thru 5/11/2016. You can send your logs for various awards and I will process them when I return and I will date these awards the day I receive the logs – no problem. The problem with LCs is that they overload the system.

Thank you for your help and consideration.

73 – Bob KC6AWX  
MARAC Awards Manager

**4 ) N6MU, John, heads east to GA**

Just wanted to give you a heads up that I'll be joining W0BH and N4PN for the GAQP next month. I'm driving back with Bob and we'll pick up Paul. The plan is a mobile multi multi in 73 counties! W0BH will have a very detailed schedule on his QRZ page as we get closer. We'll have two stations going the whole time. Obviously getting 73 counties means the time in some will be very short, ten minutes or so. Having Bob's schedule will be all important as when and how long in each county will be posted.

**5) Michigan Mini Month!** - Last year there were over 100 in attendance. Come to the best 'mini' there is every year!

<http://michiganmini.superhosts.net/>

### **6) 30 Meter CW Frequency**

On the last trip out west, I got really annoyed by the beacon that sits on 10.1222 and is S9 most of the day. My IC-706 has a 500 Hz filter and it can't take it all the way out. I still wind up with S3 or so signal on the net frequency of 10.1225 . Combine that with the 'mailbox' station on 10128, which is 300 Hz wide, and operating on 30M is not always fun. That mailbox station comes on a couple times a day, sits there for an hour, and just makes a racket in the radio. Anyone up for a change of 30m frequency?

## **Mobile Activity This Month**

Jeff, W9MSE was putting them out in WI. Later in the month he ran in the WI QSO party.

Mary, AB7NK and Neil, K7SEN, made a few small trips and then headed east to TX in a big loop trip.

K4YT, Karl, was out and about in VA and up to NJ.

Mike, KA4RRU was quite busy putting out counties and Nation Parks and Sites. He started down in FL, headed north and even found some parks on the way north to run.

KA2LHO was out mobile again.

Ed, KN4Y, tested out the new mobile rig with a trip to GA.

Eddie, G4KHG, was spotted out in Kauai on PSK-31

Rick, AI5P, put out several parks in NM.

Jim, N9JF, was on here and there.

Kerry, W4SIG, popped up in several states and in many counties in TN.

Jerry, W0GXQ, headed on down from MN to IA – where he joined up with Mike, NF0N to put out the top two rows of IA plus more. Then he headed home after the joint trip.

VA3XOV, Jim, was on in NY and PA.

Terry, WQ7A, put out counties in WA and OR

WB5TMW was out and about in Texas.

Bob, W0BH, headed from KS to OK – ran a park unit on the way – then was busy in the OK QSO Party.

Barry, N0KV and Pat, N0DXE, made a trip in CO and put out some National Park Units.

Ron, KB6UF, headed up to KY, then down through MS back to home.

WB0PYF put out some counties in MO then headed to Texas. After a while down in south TX, he headed north again.

Ed, K8ZZ, headed to TX to put out counties – as well as many in OK.

N9AC headed from FL back to WI.

N7IV headed from ND to WI – and back.

Norm, W3DYA zipped over to LA and ran in the LA QP.

## South Carolina QSO Party

Yes, by golly, there was a very nice South Carolina QSO Party. Mobiles were out and running and propagation cooperated – at least on 40 and 20M. Dave, WN4AFP has been promoting this in state and it seems to have paid off nicely with activity levels.

From the 3830 contest reflector

**N8II fixed WV 46 cw 84 ssb qso**

Score includes 2,950 bonus points with W4CAE, N4HLH (could not hear me on 20), and WW4SF (worked x 6 band/modes and many more Q's, would guess they provided over half of total SC Q's made). Activity was fairly low, several mobiles were active but seemed to change counties slowly and routes seemed to overlap and be in some counties well covered by home stations. Thanks to the mobiles N4IQ, N4UP, W4WRL, NY4G, ND4Z, KB4KBS, N4LDL, and N4BQQ for traveling around to boost up the mult total. The last hour was particularly lonely. I assume SC stations ran out of takers on 75/80M and called it a night, only one new mult was worked in that hour, N4IQ/M in Colleton.

You really needed the mult list to figure out some of the abbreviations to log, and it appeared several ops had no idea of their 4 letters. I was able to run several on 40 phone off and on, but very few on 40 or 80 CW or 75 phone. I think I actually operated over 8 hours, time between Q's exceeded 10 minutes a few times. I only took time off for a brief lunch, brief dinner, and walking the dog.

The WW4SF Swamp Fox guys kept things going when it got slow, good effort on their part. 20 barely opened very briefly to very southern SC, only K2SX in

Georgetown was fairly loud. 40 weakened from 1730-2030Z, but could still copy most stations well and last hour closed slowly to SC. 75/80 sounded pretty good and was copying many EU stations in the UBA test, but activity was poor.

This time of year suits me better for a QP than September/Oct. But, having NCQP the next day makes for a tough decision, they have more activity. Thanks for all of the QSO's, each was particularly precious.

73, Jeff

### **N4UP mobile - 385 QSOs**

Mobile operation from Williamsburg, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Dillon, and Marlboro counties.

### **KN4Y - fixed – FL - 29 cw 13 mults**

It was either the lousy band conditions or most of the CW operator in SC retired and moved to Florida. It was difficult to stay awake. But did have a nice run on 80-meters. Heard one 1x1 call but did not hear me. Did not hear the wildcard on CW.

### **WB4AFP - fixed SC 74 cw 24 ssb**

I'd like to thank all of you for coming to the 2016 SCQP and participating in The Carolina Weekend. Activity records were broken in the 2016 event. We are currently seeking mobiles and especially CW ops to come and run SC counties. The next SCQP will be February 25, 2017! Visit [www.scqso.com](http://www.scqso.com) for more details and more. 73s Dave WN4AFP (SCQP Team Leader)

### **N2CU – fixed NY 46 cw 51 ssb 48 mults**

Score includes points for 11 band-mode QSOs with the three bonus stations. First

time entering this contest. Propagation to SC was poor on all bands early on but got better as the day wore on. Worked WW4SF late and low in the band on 160m with good signals. Too bad more stations didn't give top band a try. Altogether, not a bad turnout.

**N6MU fixed - CA - 30 cw 15 ssb 26 mults**

10 and 15 were open all day. Thanks to those who moved with me. Sure looks like most of the action during the day was on 40/80. The only mobile I could hear on 20 was N4IQ. 73...

John, N6MU

**N1CC fixed - TX 22 cw 31 ssb mults 31**

QRP. K3/100 at 5 Watts to F12 C3 at 64' or 80/40 Fan Dipole at 50' and 160 Meter Inverted L. Noise reduction by power company a week ago greatly helped the receive capability, still more work to be done towards the NW.

I entered as QRP, and that probably limited my abilities. Not able to make any 40M contacts during morning afternoon, all contacts on 80/40 made at dusk time. I could hear the SC stations but they could not hear me in the morning. The QRM from the UBA, NAQP-RTTY and NPOTA operations added to the adventure of finding stations and making completed contacts.

I will be back next year ... maybe not QRP tho...

**NY4G reported making 166 cw contacts out mobile.**

First QSO Party and First As a Rover

**WW4SF BONUS STATION - FIXED - SC**



307 cw 260 ssb Qs - W4IX operator

Interesting strategy using club calls for Bonus Stations. Overall was a fun experience. Activity was so so due to other operating events taking place this weekend. Thanks to all who called in and to the SCQP Organizers who worked extremely hard to make this QSO Party competitive. A few more mobiles and things could be much different. 73 John

## MARAC Convention

The annual MARAC convention will be held in Germantown, TN (near Memphis) August - 1 to 4<sup>th</sup>.

See <http://national.marac.org/> for details

Time to sign up!

## North Carolina QSO Party

Activity was good. Some regulars were off doing the ARRL RTTY contest, but others filled in for them. K5CM mobile was running county lines (2 way and 3 way) with a very loud signal. Many fixed stations were on and racked up hundreds and hundreds of QSOs. Mobile activity was limited and as always, much of the activity shifted early to 40 and 80m. Kyle, WA4PGM and Connie, K5CM were busy along with other mobiles in this one.

From the 3830 reflector

## **K3TD mobile**

This was a fun day. Beautiful weather, no visits from Murphy and a lot of activity with good band conditions. Tad did the hard work on SSB while Jim enjoyed the CW runs. Our target was 10 counties in 10 hours with the objective of spending an hour in each county mixed bands/modes. We were mostly on schedule but ended up back in WAK before time was up so we made a few more Q's for County 11 before a half hour Bojangles break and arriving home at 0103Z. Thanks for all the great "followers". It was like hearing old friends when we activated a new county. We had no "Clean Sweeps" but KV8Q came close with 10 missing only WIL. The "Great Ears" award for DX goes to DL3XXX who worked us in 9 out of 11 counties missing only our first ROB and last WAK which was unworkable as we were on 80/75 there after dark. Several other DX stations had more than one Q.

We made a point of changing bands and modes often to give everyone a chance to work us and for Tad and I to give each other breaks. We checked 15M from time to time but it never seemed to open. We were also amazed at the amount of line noise in the rural counties. Seemed like we'd go along for miles next to power lines emitting a continuous buzz like a power saw. We apologize to many stations we just couldn't pull through the noise and the poor rx capability of a mobile antenna.

Equipment:

Auxiliary 12V battery for voltage stability; Elecraft K3s; P3 Panadapter; Tarheel 160-10M Screwdriver; Hamstick 20M as quick change antenna (but didn't match the Tarheel for performance). Software N1MM+, all packed into a Honda Pilot SUV with one seat folded down to hold a shelf and the "weapons officer" on duty riding starboard aft position.

Thanks again and see y'all next year.

73,

Jim, K4QPL  
Tad, K3TD

**VE9AA 90 cw 27 ssb**

A good deal of fun. K5CM/M Connie had an AMAZING signal mobile. Louder than some of the home stations. Many other multiband QSO's.

TNX for the Q's from the frozen lands of VE9

**WA6KHK fixed CA 61 cw 24 ssb**

Thanks to all who were willing to help me out here on the west coast. Special shout out to Joe, K4REB, who went out of his way to get 3 of my last 6 counties in NC! Also to KM4APN who got me Tyrrell county (thanks Allen and Marc for getting Tyrrell again later!). Still a lot of guys running AND STAYING on 40 and 80 meters early. I saw N5FPW spotted early on 40 meters in Clay county and he NEVER came up to 20 meters to help out the west coast!!! That is now one of my last 2 counties in NC and 21 counties for all of the U.S.!!! Come on guys! Do some calls on 20 meters! I am sure someone will spot you on the clusters! Thanks again to those who went out of their way to help us out with emails and phone calls. You guys were great!

**AD8J fixed NC 310 cw 573 ssb**

Managed to put in the full 10 hours. Conditions seemed to be very good. 20 meter phone seemed to be the most productive for me. Nice to be able to work stations in Europe on most bands. I probably missed some counties as I didn't chase the mobiles but tried to maximize the rate.

**KN4Y - fixed FL - 68 CW QSO**

Conditions today were a lot better than yesterday, it a 40-meter activity from here with a nice 80-meter run late. I ran only CW which is not the premier mode choice of the North Carolinas.

## On the Road with N4CD I

The opportunity to be the first to 'activate' one of the more challenging sites came up. On the way back from a trip to AR in January, I stopped by the President William Jefferson Clinton Boyhood home in Hope, AR which is right off Interstate 30 on the way from Little Rock (Pulaski County) to Texarkana, TX. Just a 2 mile detour will get you there. It was freezing cold outside (around 30 deg F with strong wind). I was hoping there was a way to run this mobile. Turns out there is no way to do that.

I spoke to person at the desk about getting permission to set up on the grounds – there was no visitor parking lot – as often the case with other sites – so one would likely have to set up portable. There was sort of half a parking space from a long long abandoned driveway and I was curious if that was 'officially' part of the NP 'grounds' that they maintained. If so, it might be able to be used. Turns out the NP Service doesn't claim that or maintain it. Scratch that. And no other access by vehicle either. The Park was only 'inside' the surrounding iron fence as far as they were concerned. .

I did get a contact person to follow up with – and did.

That was January. After half a dozen emails, things got resolved. The chief ranger at the Clinton home participated in a state wide meeting, and one of the topics was 'amateur radio' helping to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Park Service. After that, things came together and I could apply for a simple Supplementary Use Permit (SUP) that set out the restrictions for this site. Each site had different requirements, obviously – some were very large, with 10,000 visitors at a time others were like this one with maybe 2 or 3 dozen visitors a day – on a good day. Most parks you don't need a 'permit' for a self contained vehicle. If you want to set up a pavilion, have 12 club members there, put up push up masts, etc, then you likely need to get official permission.

The WJC Home in Hope is a National Historic Site – consists of 3 residential lots. One has the house that Bill Clinton lived in as a boy until age 7.. The other is a visitor center/museum, and the third is garden area. There's a substantial iron fence around the three lots. Parking for visitors is on a public street. Hempstead County, AR.



The Clinton Boyhood Home

It turned out that one could run this 'portable' on the grounds of the site – with a 'freestanding antenna' (no wires connected to any park facility including a tree, fence, building, etc), battery or generator power, and not interfering with park activities as far as blocking pathways, etc. OK....I could work with that. Now N4CD had to assemble, test, and be ready to head there and 'activate' the park. To get credit as an 'activator' you need to make at least 10 contacts and upload them to Logbook of the World (LoTW).

After a bit of head scratching, and figuring that I wasn't in great shape to haul a generator the 220 miles from my house to this site, nor go big with push up masts, etc, by one person – it was time to think QRP and small antennas easily put up by one person. Enough to make a bunch of contacts, but not a KW generator, or 80 lb battery and a 100w radio. Most 'activations' last 2 or 3 hours – in that time you've worked 150 or 200 or 250 stations and there's very few left to work at the time. So you need battery power for a couple hours.

At this site, I didn't know how far I'd have to haul things – that hadn't been resolved but would when I got there. I'm not one for lugging tons of stuff around so it came back to 'small' over and over again. Small portable table, small portable folding chair, QRP radio, and simple antenna to cover at least 20 and 40m with other bands as a bonus.

I wound up with a Yaesu FT-817ND. This is a full feature teeny radio that puts out 5w when run off 12v, or puts out 2.5w from internal ni-cad pack or alkaline batteries. You can add in a cw filter. It's am/fm/ssb/cw/digi from 160m to 432 Mhz. Digital readout –

and everything except a built in antenna tuner. Has built in keyer.

For an antenna you have many choices including using a hamstick or other mobile antenna, on a mount of some kind (tripod?) with a few radials extending out. Many of the 'portable operators' for the National parks devise something along those lines they can put on a picnic table or freestanding tripod. Most sites do not like you pounding in some stakes to anchor antennas or other things – other than maybe at a 'campground' when you get a spot to camp (or operate the radio – hi hi). For wilderness sites, folks use an end fed wire up to a tree – with a tuner and 9:1 balun. Or a inverted vee.

For a battery, I got my hands on one of the Lithium Iron Phosphate batteries. A 20 Amp Hour one weighs about 2 or 3 lbs! It will run a radio like the FT-817 at 5w out all day long. (2.3a on TX, 0.6 on RX)

The permit for this park stated 'no dipole antennas' or connecting anything to trees, buildings fences, etc. Antenna had to be freestanding. I wound up with a small magnetic loop made by AlexLoop. It's a QRP only (20w max ssb/10cw) loop antenna about 4 feet in diameter that covers 7-30 MHz. It folds into a bag about 14 x 20 inches – and weighs all of about 2 lbs. Amazing antenna. Many park activators at rural sites also string up a dipole or inverted vee – but that was forbidden here.

I hooked up everything on the side deck of the house here to check it out. Worked a few folks in the NC QSO Party – so at least I knew I could work some of the 'big guns' and get heard. Hi hi.

So.....I loaded up the car with the tripod, antenna, radio, log, the LiFePO4 battery – and headed out on a Tuesday to Hope AR for the night. Wednesday weather looked good as the storm front would be through. Got to Hope – drove through some showers but otherwise OK. Ran the counties on the way up and back. Checked into very nice Super 8 Motel there in Hope AR.

Headed to the Clinton house to scope it out again on Tuesday afternoon. I was planning on a Wednesday 'activation'. Weather was good after the front cleared. Turns out I could set up and run the park this day, on Tuesday. It was warm in the afternoon. It would be 40 degrees in the morning – a bit chilly to be sending cw! Serendipity.

I had spent over a month working the process to get a SUP(Special Use Permit) to run this park. No one had done it before. Over 300 of the 480 units have been on the air now. This would be a 'first'. Things went smoothly and the paperwork could be done via email. If you set up at a small site – on their grounds, you often formal approval. If

they have a visitor parking lot, most times you simply run mobile and no permit required. Some operators stick up a bigger antenna in the parking lot – but all 'self contained' like a 30 foot vertical held up by a support under a tire or similar.

Even better, there was a picnic table right inside the main entrance way – and I could set up there. Only a short haul was required to get the radio stuff to the table and set up – but it took about six trips to the car back and forth. Kept forgetting this or that. The loop went together in five minutes. Set up took about 20 since I didn't want to screw up anything. Slowly and double check.



Visitor Center  
Note picnic table on left



N4CD portable set up

The Loop antenna is held up by a MFJ type tripod bought at a local hamfest. I made an adapter using PC pipe to fit the mast of the AlexLoop. The battery is a Lithium Iron Phosphate job rated 20 AH, weighing about 2 lbs, and capable of starting your car. My new Malibu has one in the rear – used to restart the car after the car turns off the engine at a stop light! Even better it's rated 5000 cycles vs the typical 100 to 300 for a Gel Cell battery. Not as cheap as Gel Cells, though.

Things went well and I made 170 contacts with the QRP radio in a few hours – using both cw and SSB. It's not as good as the mobile but that wasn't a choice. If you had a full size dipole it would have done better. The AlexLoop worked well. It's very narrow as far as tuning, but once you get it set on your operating frequency it does nicely. It's got a notch in the pattern off the ends of the loop but that is fairly narrow. I did rotate it every now and then to work stations that might have been in the null.

After a 'good run' and the first time ever of this park being on the air, I headed back to the Super 8 motel. Went out for dinner at the Panda Chinese Buffet – decent – then got a good nights sleep. Hit the hay early.

This Super 8 has breakfast starting at 5am. I was awake and wandered over. Great –



eggs, waffles, sausage, fruit, juice, cereal, yogurt – something for everyone! I indulged.

## **Little Rock Central High School**

I could go home, or I could go to yet another Park Unit. Headed out a bit after 6am and decided to go to Little Rock to activate another National Historic Site – the Little Rock Central School. I was feeling fine, the weather was good, and the car was happy.

It was only another 120 miles or so to Little Rock! Well, 120 there and 120 back plus the 220 miles to get home. Not a problem. I arrived in Little Rock at the visitor center for the Little Rock School about 8am. The visitor center opens at 9am. Sometimes that's the best time to run a small park unit – before they are around! Then, no one is around to say “NO”. There were only 20 or so parking spots and the location was in downtown Little Rock – the capital of Arkansas. We hams need to be mindful of interfering with normal operations of the park or hogging a parking spot.

If you remember your 'wayback' days – if you're a senior citizen now - way back – to the 1950s, you'll likely recall the first years of integration of the school systems. It was an ugly situation and it took years to get resolved.

In 1954, a landmark Supreme Court case – Brown vs Board of Education – ruled that 'separate but equal' was no longer the ruling principle of school segregation. From that moment on, there were efforts to integrate schools all over the country.

In 1957, this came to a head in Arkansas. In 1927, the city built the central high school – one of the largest if not the largest at the time school buildings in the country. It had room for over 2,400 students. They were all white. In 1957, nine African American students – known as the Little Rock Nine - enrolled in this all white school. The local police were told to protect them. The governor, a staunch segregationist, sent the National Guard to block their entry into the school. The next day, President Eisenhower ordered the 101<sup>st</sup> Battle Group to take over and integrate the school. He federalized the AR National Guard and removed them. Tensions were high – and stayed high for a year.

This event was the first test of the Brown vs Board of Education decision. The first year was rough but eventually the school was integrated. The students endured constant harassment and torment but completed the year. The next year, hundreds of black students were at the school.

Little Rock Central High was designated a National Historic Site in 1982. Today there is a visitor center across the street from the school with a nice display and history of the integration. This school is still in use. As the 'first test' and forced integration, it led the way county wide. Other school systems quickly followed – although not without strong resistance in places. Does the name George Wallace ring a bell? He was another governor who called out the National Guard to block entry of black students.



Central High School

Now it is one of the 480 or so park units – and hams are anxious to work another NPOTA site.

I arrived at a bit after 8:15 am and fired up the radio. Pulaski County.

You are allowed to run the park from the visitor center parking lot – which I did. Tried a few different areas of the parking lot but they were all about the same. Noisy!

Put over 100 QSOs in the log quickly. The noise was fairly high – the site is surrounded by power lines on all sides, it's in a downtown area – but still had success. Ran the bands. By 9am, the noise floor increased as the visitor center turned on computers and fluorescent lights. By 9:30 I was fairly well done, so I checked out the insides of the building. The parking lot was nearly full at 9:30 with visitors, and a bus came and dropped off 30 students from elsewhere for a visit. I suspect many days the lot will be full – and hams should not be sitting taking up the last spaces while operating. Did my thing, got credit for 'activation' and checked out another interesting place that I

had driven past dozens of times without stopping. Just a few miles off the interstates.

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At that point it was time to zip on home – five hours or so to get home and I took it easy, took a long lunch break, and still made it home by dinner time. Good trip!

I put out the counties as I went through them. Nothing too rare – but this was a quick two day trip. When I worked the county hunters from the parks, a valid exchange for me is a signal report AND the park unit. Many county hunters are 'too quick' on the exchange and don't get the park designator. All I need back is a signal report, but most exchange the state as well. So when N4CD is in OKLA City at the Memorial, he'll be giving signal report plus AA18. Same for Mike, KA4RRU if he is at one. Takes a bit longer but that's the rules. You send back 599 and your state.

I appreciate the county hunter contacts – sometimes eeking out enough contacts to get credit can be tough – the NPOTA folks watch for spots and if no one spots on DX Summit or the Facebook page....you don't get called – hi hi. Just like on county hunter frequencies.

These joint NPOTA/county hunting trips are a lot of fun. You get to run the counties to and from, and then get from 60 to 300 contacts from the park units itself! The fun continues to the end of 2016. What's next?

# National Parks on the Air

from Rick, AI5P

March 1st found me on the 1.5 hour drive up to Valles Caldera National Preserve north of Jemez Springs, New Mexico. About 1.25 million years ago, a spectacular volcanic eruption created the 13-mile wide circular depression now known as the Valles Caldera. This 89,000 acre is known for its huge mountain meadows, abundant wildlife, and meandering streams. The area also preserves the homeland of ancestral native peoples and embraces a rich ranching history. At 8500 feet ASL, it's a beautiful area. Conditions weren't the best but I managed to get 155 Q's in the log.

73 Rick AI5P



Rick, AI5P, Valles Caldera, NM



On the way there - AI5P

note de N4CD: It also has one of the two big elk herds in the state of NM with thousands of animals.

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Mike, KA4RRU has been busy running parks in VA and nearby MD. He took a trip to FL and hit a few more while down there.

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A week after N4CD hit the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home, N5VDQ, Fred Harris and family headed there



He set up in the back. With the ARRL SSB DX contest raging, he was barely able to squeak out 10 QSOs on SSB - just enough to get credit for activation. The family had a good time, though! He got points toward Five Star Activation with the display of the large NPOTA banner. Battery power points too.

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Ham radio got some nice feedback from the WJC folks on their web site. They posted about the N4CD operation:

“Yesterday we were happy to welcome Amateur radio to our site. Through the wonders of radio over 180 people found their park from as far away as Alaska. For more information on the ARRL - the National Association for Amateur Radio click on <http://www.arri.org/npota> #FindYourPark”

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If you want to join in the fun of working the parks, visit the NPOTA Facebook page – over 2500 others have! You'll see spots of activity there too. And lots of pictures of the parks – so you can travel vicariously.

# MARAC USA QSO Party

## 2016 (50th) MARAC USA QSO PARTY

1400z to 2400z Saturday May 14th and 1400z to 2400z Sunday May 15th

The Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club is pleased to sponsor the 50th Annual County Hunters Contest “MARAC USA QSO PARTY.” Mobile and Fixed operation from every county in the U.S. is encouraged.

### RULES

1. Mobiles must clearly identify themselves as being mobile by signing /M or /County.
2. Multipliers: Each category, Mobile, Fixed, and DX will have a separate set of 3077 Multipliers. A Multiplier can only be counted once in each category during the contest, regardless of band.
3. A Mobile on a county line can be counted for each county as a new potential multiplier and two (2) contacts (30 points). Three and four county lines are not allowed.
4. Single operator stations only. Mobile drivers are allowed.
5. Contest contacts between operators in the same vehicle or in shadowing vehicles are invalid. There are no restrictions on spotting mobile stations.
6. To be considered as “Mobile”, you must transmit from a minimum of three (3) counties.
7. Net contacts are not allowed.
8. For a contact to be valid, one station must be in a U.S. county.
9. Official list of County Codes (Multipliers) can be downloaded at: [www.w0qe.com/county\\_hunting.html](http://www.w0qe.com/county_hunting.html)

### EXCHANGE

U.S. station: Signal report, State Code and County Abbreviation.

Ex: 599 MI JKSN or MI JKSN/CHOU

All others: Signal report, “DX” (Including Mexico and Canada)

Ex: 599 DX

### SCORING

FIXED stations – 1 point

DX stations – 5 points

## MOBILE stations – 15 points

### MOBILES:

1. Calculate a STATE score for each state that you activate by:
  - a. Add up the Total # of QSO points worked while in that state.
  - b. Add up the total # of unique multipliers worked while in that state.
  - c. Total State score = (Total # QSO pts) x (Total # Multipliers)
2. Scores CAN NOT count a multiplier more than once regardless of the State, County or band that you are operating in.
3. Final Score = (Total QSO points from all states) x (Total Multipliers from all states)
4. You must submit a log and summary sheet for each state.
5. Submit a Summary Sheet for Total Mobile Category Score.

### FIXED:

1. Scores Can Not count a multiplier more than once regardless of band.
2. Final score = (Total # QSO pts) x (Total # Multipliers)
3. You must submit a log and summary sheet.

### SUGGESTED FREQUENCIES

3.550, 7.050, 14.050, 21.050, and 28050. Fixed stations should operate above the suggested frequencies and mobiles below.

## AWARDS

MARAC PLAQUES: (A station can only win one plaque)

- 1st and 2nd place MOBILE and FIXED
- 1st place DX station
- 1st place Canadian Station if enough entries warrant an award.

MARAC Contest Certificates:

- Highest scoring Mobile and Fixed stations in each State.
- Highest scoring ARRL Country and Canadian Provinces.
- MARAC Participation Certificate is awarded to all entrants with at least 100 valid contacts.

APPLICATION AND FEES: In order to be eligible for an award, an entrant must submit a log and entry information that meets all of the requirements of the contest rules. There are no contest entry fees or other fees for these awards.

### LOG Submission

Send completed logs (Cabrillo format accepted) and summary sheet by June 30, 2016 to:



w3dya@juno.com

Or mail to:

Norm Beavers, W3DYA

3320 McMillan Drive

Tyler, TX 75701-8239

Please note that the contest chairman will not score your log. Any logs not scored, or lack of a summary sheet, will be considered check logs only.

# On the Receiving End – by W0GXQ

## “On the Receiving End”

If you are not a CW mobile operator, you may have wondered what it's like out there on the road. It is surely not as easy as handling a DX stations operation. The DX station can more or less manage the situation by announcing his listening frequency range, whereas the mobile operating the county hunter nets has to contend with all stations calling on the same frequency.

If you have not experienced the blast of incoming signals on the same frequency, you cannot know what it is like. By the end of a run, your head is ringing! Even if the mobile operator is familiar with 99% of the call signs, it is very difficult to pick out a specific call. Now, add in road and wind noise, a less than optimum speaker, probable power line and atmospheric noise, you are already at a disadvantage in the receiving department.

Some mobile operators will ask for /M or DX at the start of their run because these are generally the disadvantaged as far as propagation and/or signal strength.

One sure way to get the mobiles attention is to send your call slightly (100 to 150 Hz) off frequency. I rarely miss a caller who presents a different tone in my receiver. If you have your transceiver set into memory for the net, just crank in some transmit offset. I run with open filtering, and I realize that some operators do not, so play with the offset numbers.

A mobile will always tell you to QRX if they want you to wait. So, when you hear nothing after the mobile sends QRZ, it usually means that they cannot pull out a call sign from the pileup. This is the time to throw in your call. There are only a handful of county hunters who use this “edge” to make the contact.

Even if you are using code readers, you should recognize the wait sign “AS” (di-dah-di-di-dit). The mobile operator has a reason for sending the “AS”, so please standby when you hear it.

Some years ago I learned about mobile operators taking a LIST; not sure if it was a practice of a SB or CW operator, but it can be used at times when you are trying to get the callers to “spread out the incoming calls”. The theory is that when you ask for a LIST, the callers will suddenly turn respectful and throw in their calls more less one at a time. Personally I like to take as many as I can get down on paper before I start calling them back. Believe me it is a lot less strenuous for the mobile operator. Often you will hear the incoming LIST of stations run in the opposite direction; that is, the last one heard may be answered first. After a taking a LIST a couple of times, the “din” has subsided to the point where the mobile operator can go back to the QRZ.

Using full break-in has many advantages for both the mobile and the callers. As a caller, you may hear the mobile come back to another station, so why keep transmitting. If you prefer not to use (or cannot use) full break-in, make the setting as fast as feasible.

One final note . . . if a mobile is on a county line, they seldom leave prior to working every caller, so there is NO need to be first.

Let’s make it a more pleasant experience for the mobile.

73, W0GXQ

# On the Road with N4CD II

## Oklahoma City Memorial

This was a weekend trip up into OK to run yet another NPOTA unit. I left Saturday for overnight trip to OK City which is 200 miles or so from the QTH. Authorization to run this park must be coordinated in advance through the ARRL and my day to run it was Sunday, March 6. No one had transmitted from this park on HF yet. I'd be the first. That justified a special trip, for sure!

The National Parks On the Air program runs during the calendar year to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Park Service.

First I stopped by RC05 - Chickasaw Recreation Area on the way up – 140 miles or so north from the QTH – and actually got a stamp in my Passport Book this time - found visitor center - was open. Ran some CW. RC 05 has been run and run and run. Lots of QSOs from here (3000 plus) but it was only 20 miles out of the way. So ran it again. Newcomers are joining in the fun all the time, so some needed it. Plus maybe some county hunters missed Murray County the first time. All I needed was 10 QSOs to get credit for running it again. Got 60.

Then back on the road to OK City.

Saturday I did recon on the AA18 Oklahoma City Memorial site. This one you have to coordinate with Tom, WA9AFM, OK ARRL SM assistant, per the NPOTA web page. 100% you must coordinate. Otherwise your operation won't count and you'll be disqualified – DQ'ed and those contacts will vanish out of LoTW.

Well, you can't run this mobile unless you know the 'secret' and security is watching out for unauthorized vehicles in the special area lot. There's absolutely no parking 'in the monument' – just two city blocks – like a cemetery/park.

You can run this pedestrian portable anytime - but real PP - no set up antennas and you've got to stay low profile. There are no benches to sit on so you'll be standing and walking and talking. Maybe sitting on some hard concrete steps at one end. Probably fine for six meters and up but a real challenge on HF. Still there are some guidelines to

follow. You still must 'check in' with security and are advised to check in with Tom, WA9AFM. I don't know of any pedestrian portable ops that have done HF. A few folks have made a few Qs on 2M – talkie to talkie.

This site can be run mobile - but only on weekends 8-7pm and with prior coordination. Turns out there is a small service center about 300 feet from the Memorial ( which is 3.3 acres, 1.7 hectares -two city blocks) that parking lot is also property maintained by the Memorial people. The service center has a parking lot for about 12 cars or so. You can run this one mobile right in 'downtown' Oklahoma City a few hundred feet from the site -with prior coordination and permission. It counts per the ARRL.

I passed by this site in early January and tried to put it out with the Mizuho handheld. No joy. I could hear but not be heard. I didn't have a trailing counter poise wire which would have helped a bit. A watt or two with a base loaded whip on a handheld just didn't hack it. The temp that day was in the 30s.

If you were born before 1980, you'll probably remember the news coverage of this – but now half the population in the US was born after this even in 1995. I'd bet most schools don't teach anything about this. On April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh – American terrorist, set off a 6000 lb truck bomb that destroyed the Alfred Murrah federal building. The blast destroyed or damaged 324 buildings within a 16-block radius, destroyed or burned 86 cars, and shattered glass in 258 nearby buildings causing an estimated \$652 million worth of damage. McVeigh timed his attack for the second anniversary of the Waco incident at the Branch Dravidian complex. McVeigh was put to death in 2001 and his accomplice Norton was sentenced to life in prison. 168 people died and hundreds were seriously injured.

A lot of work by the OK ARRL folks and folks at ARRL HQ went into making this operation possible. The local club turns out dozens of hams each year for a major event in OK as a public service event, and there are good vibes between the city fathers and the ham community. NPOTA folks get to use the small lot of weekends – one mobile a day max.

There were hundreds if not more visitors at a time to the Memorial on Saturday – at a time Thousands a day. The weather was good – 60s and 70s and mostly sun.

There's pay parking for hundreds of cars nearby. It was crowded with tourists. When I was here in January with 30 deg temps and windy – there wasn't a soul around! I didn't stick around outside long that day then either, but did go through the museum on site that date.

Saturday I found the lot, and more importantly found the 'secret' to checking in on Sunday morning, when everything is 'locked up tight' till 12 noon when the museum opens.... then headed back to Motel 3 miles away. You use the 'employee entrance' – push the button – and security lets you in so you can 'check in'. Otherwise, security is likely to send a tow truck to remove you from the lot.

Then it was off to the Days Inn Motel (\$54) - and a dinner at a Golden Corral – and then some ZZZZs.

Sunday morning I headed back, checked in with security - got to the lot just before 8am.....and had a nice 4 hour run. I started on 40cw – early in the morning - then to 30cw where 100 cw QSOs went in the log. By then 20M was opening up and went up to 20 and added in another 100 QSOs on cw and SSB. The ARRL DX SSB contest was raging so only a few dozen QSOs on 20M SSB were made.- tough to find a frequency and tougher to keep it more than a few minutes. Later I hit 17M cw and SSB to add in some additional contacts – winding up with 230Qs at the end. That's a typical run for a never run or seldom run place so far – and surprised me – usually most of the QSOs are on SSB – with a 10:1 ratio of SSB to CW.

I tried 20M SSB a few times but only got a few dozen before QRM wiped me out from the contest and just couldn't find a decent frequency without CQ Test and pileups calling DX.....I didn't have a high enough pain level to endure fighting for a 20m frequency. Did run some 17M SSB but skip long. Most QSOs were on cw this activation.

Thanks again for ARRL officials who made running this possible. Plus the NPOTA program. Your ARRL dues are doing great things like this event which is wildly popular! Of course, all the local guys in the ARRL sections are 'volunteers' and deserve a round of applause as well!

The weather was good but a front moved through with 30-40 mph winds on Sunday around noon time. Clouds moved in and it appeared to be time to head on out. The QSO rate dropped to just a few per 10 minutes of calling.

I checked out with Lou in security. He had a camera overlooking that lot to watch out for me – and watch me – both – during the time I sat in the lot. Hi Hi.

Afterwards I headed the 200 miles back on home with a 20 mile detour to Chickasaw Recreation area again RC05. I'd get credit for another 'activation' since it had been more than 24 hours between runs there. The log showed another 60 QSOs

Stormy weather was moving in for 2 days - back to spring tornado watch type days. OK is in tornado alley. My TX QTH was forecasting 3-5 inches of rain in 24 hours so I'd hunker down for a day or two! Or 3 or 4 days as it turned out.

Picture below is N4CD mobile in the lot with part of Memorial just behind - looking east.



N4CD/m at Oklahoma City Memorial  
Park - AA18

The memorial is an 'affiliated area'. It's run by the State of Oklahoma but is also part of the NP system. The lot is surrounded to the east by a 6 ft high chain link fence on a 2-4 foot high wall to the east. To the west is a 1 story tall garage building. To the north?



View North

Picture shows why folks to north probably didn't have much success working me. Giant wide multistory building to north! Actually no direction but SE was decent. Somehow the RF got out of this place.

Jerry, W0GXQ, talked about pileups in the article above. If you give out National Parks – the pileups are HUGE. Hit something that no one has run before and right after the spots hit (Facebook NPOTA page and DXSummit.fi ) you'll have 30 or 40 calling you. LOUD signals. Every one of them wanting to be first. Phonetics – you betcha. Often I have to resort to going by call areas – at least for the first hour or so – till the herd calling thins out a bit. On CW – it's tougher – harder to go by call areas there. Fortunately , there aren't as many on CW. I usually start on 40M CW – not as many will be calling – then 30M – where not all have 30M antennas for NPOTA – then hit 20M. By then I've cleaned out a good 1/2 of the cw stations needing a contact and the pile ups are less. If you start on 20M CW – watch out! NPOTA folks don't understand a 'list' operation – totally clueless. They'll all call on top of each other and none will call after that – hi hi. Still trying to 'train them'. Not working.

Noise level - about S6 on SSB. About S1-S2 on cw. Made it tough to copy weak ones and K index of 5 didn't help either. Still, I was surprised by the 230 Qs that went in the log. Good run. Took it off the 'needed' list for many. There's a little competition to



see who can work the most parks. Some have worked over 300 of the 480 park units and likely some of those units remaining will never be on the air – remote river recreation remote places in AK, Guam, and a few sites with no access for ham radio operators.

That trip was a LOT OF FUN and glad I was honored to be the first to activate this on HF. Now that the ice has been broken with the Memorial folks - there were smiles all around - no problems - I hope some others get there and do a bang up job on SSB.

Before you run this , should you wish to, you should take the tour through the museum. Very sobering and an excellent view of what happened that fateful day in the 1990s. Us 'older folks' likely remember it vividly, but half the population now wasn't even born by then. Then you'll get an appreciation for the Memorial and the solemnness of it.

## Kalawao County Hawaii

Bob, N8KIE, headed over to Molokai to run the county line of Kalawao and Maui counties. He's done this more than a few times over the years and it is an expensive trip (\$250 for a few hours on the island) to get there. This year – being the year of National Parks on the Air – he also stumbled into a new situation. He'd be in National Historic Site (NHS) HP18 – Kalaupapa . Like half a dozen other county hunters (AI5P, KA4RRU, W5IL...) he would have the opportunity to give out the park. Actually, he would be the first to 'activate' it. (To get credit for activation, you have to make at least 10 QSOs). Then upload them to Logbook of the World – LoTW. He had the radio, antenna and himself in Kalawao County with the bumper hanging over into Maui County. For NPOTA, the operator, rig, and antenna must in 'in the park'. To the NPOTA folks, this is 'Kalaupapa Historic Site'.

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He noted via email:

N8KIE:

The trip started very early. The only nonstop flight on a twin-engine plane leaves at 6 am. That means up at 4:30 to get to airport by about 5, and I'm not a morning person.

The previous day flights were canceled by bad weather and high winds. After a bumpy 15 minute flight we landed on Molokai. I waited about 30 minutes in line at the only rental car place and got a Chrysler minivan. At least the battery is right out in the open. Used my Icom 7100 and a quad mag on the roof with a 3 piece Outbacker. That is a neat antenna for a trip like this as it all can go into a carry-on, no checked luggage to lose.

I drove up to the overlook and set up and worked people on 14336 with the help of Bob, KC6AWX. I tried several of the MARAC net freqs but heard nothing. Then went to 17 and 15 SSB for a total of 101 contacts. Each band change required standing in the sliding door opening and removing the antenna, changing bands and re-installing it. Tried 12 and 10 but no luck and didn't hear anyone on cw. I next went into the town to get something to eat. After a little wandering around, really not much to see went back to try cw again -- no luck. Went through the SSB bands and decided to quit as my legs were really hurting from standing on the door edge changing bands. Total cost \$145 air, \$95 minivan and \$5 for gas. It was a good trip.”

Bob N8KIE

- -----

de N4CD

I know the county line comes up to the top of the ridge where county hunters run it. Now, with the internet and Google Earth, you can get a nice view of the island and the overlook parking lot where you run that county line. I was fairly sure that the NHS boundary was also the same as the boundary of Kalawao – but I had to make sure. The NPOTA folks like things to be well defined – although out in Hawaii – they are so laid back it's often hard to get an answer from most folks.



Overlook Parking Lot

As you look at the picture the northeast side of the parking lot is in Kalaawao, the bottom side in Maui.

Here's the standard map for Kalawao County



The overlook parking lot is right where the 470 is – you're on highway 470 that

terminates there.

Now, the question was – is the National Historic Park – the same boundary as the county?

I went on line to the park service site. Hmm...confusion!



Now there were green and purple areas. Most parks are the green areas. The overlook is by a purple area. Hmm..

So I took the bull by the horns, and dropped the good folks at the email address for the park a question about what was the actual park area.

Got back a nice note that resolved everything.

“Aloha Bob,

Nearly all of the land within the 10,700+ acre authorized park boundary remains in non-federal ownership, co-managed by the State of Hawaii Department of Health and by the

National Park Service through several cooperative agreements & a Lease with DHHL. Land owners include the Department of Hawaii Homelands (DHHL/purple), Department of Transportation (DOT/yellow), and Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR /green). The National Park Service owns the Moloka'i Light Station and 22 acres surrounding it (NPS/lime green). The U.S. Coast Guard maintains and operates an automated light in the structure. The park boundary is that dark green line that outlines the purple & green area and extends 1/4 mile into the ocean.

Hope this answers your question. If there's anything else, please don't hesitate to ask.

Mahalo,  
Leslie

Leslie Kanoa Naeole, Management Assistant  
Kalaupapa National Historical Park  
PO Box 2222; Kalaupapa, HI 96742  
Office: (808) 567-6802 x 1103”

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So if you should wander to Kalawao this year, you too could be activating one of the rarest of the park units. If you do put out the park, be sure to have gotten a 'certificate' for LoTW for the DX location of Hawaii before you try to upload to LoTW. Even though you're still in the United States, Hawaii is “DX' – a separate DXCC country for LoTW and DXCC. Just like AK, Guam, Virgin Islands, Guantanamo Bay, Antarctica US bases, etc. If you try to use your lower 58 certificate, you'll create a horrible mess that is hard to undo.

When you go mobile there this year, be sure that the driver, radio, and antenna are in Kalawao County – with the bumper hanging over into Maui Those NPOTA folks insist the 'radio, operator, and antenna' all have to be 'in the county' – hi hi. For county hunters, only your bumper needs to be hanging into the other county to run the line!

And if you don't want to upload to LoTW – don't run the 'park' or lots of folks who chase the parks will be upset. Hi hi.

A major expedition for a few days is headed that way in April to put out the park – same group that run in about five years ago in the HI QSO Party – Bev, AH6NF and club members from Oahu. They'll be fixed and running vertical antennas from the lower part of the county/park. So you got another chance to catch Kalawao County. If you are

curious about the lower part of Kalawao – and the previous operation – see our coverage in this issue of the County Hunter News:

<http://www.chnewsonline.com/County%20Hunter%20News%20October%202011.pdf>

Thanks Bob N8KIE for the contact – conditions not the greatest that but he put 100 plus contacts in the logbook with some help from west coast relay stations. (KC6AWX/WQ7A and others).

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## Oklahoma QSO Party

This was another good one. All the counties were on the air this year. John, N6MU managed to work them all!

from the 3830 reflector:

**K5CM mobile - assisted** - with K5CM/ driver N5KW - 1187 cw 13 SSB QSO

Conditions seemed good for this running of the OKQP.

Some of the stations worked the most:

N6MU (58)

W5CW, W0GXQ, KN4Y (31)

K5WE, (30)

KS5A, (28)

NW0M, (27)

W1DWA, KI0I, (26)

WN4AFP, N8II, K0HNC (24)

DL3GA (23)  
N2CQ, KQ3F, DK2OY (23)  
W1END, (17)  
VA3ATT, (16)  
N4RS, (14)  
KM4FO, KE5LQ, K0JPL (13)  
W7GF, KE5KS, N4JT, (12)  
SP9LJD, N8BJQ, K3SWZ, K0FG, AC0CU, (11)  
W8CAG, (9)  
WA8HSB, W4ZPR, W2CVW, UA3AGW, N4CD, N1NN, K8MR (8)  
NY9P, NU1O, KE0TT, K9NW, K5YAA (7)

RIG:K3, Tarheel 200hp for 40 and 80. Hamsticks for 20 and 15 meters.

Thanks for all the Q's.

73,

Connie and Pam

K5CM and N5KW

**K5YAA mobile** 571 CW QSO

Looks like I got in 5 1/2 each day. Conditions were fair and 40 seemed in pretty good shape. Working a YU and a UA3 in daylight on 40 from a mobile in 5 land was sorta fun.

Thanks to Connie and Pam for their work in keeping the wheels greased on the OKQP and thanks to each of you that called. N6MU is still king of asking how's about a try on 15. No 10 meter look at all.

**W0BH - mobile**

2016 Oklahoma QSO Party by Bob Harder, W0BH

Saturday

The weather was cool and foggy as we headed out from Kansas for the hour and a half trip down I-35 to Oklahoma. This year, we planned a combination OKQP/NPOTA

activation, so the route was a big circle through 34 central and western Oklahoma counties with a few counties missing in the middle. Our planning had changed several times over the past few days, and I was up until midnight rerouting us away from back dirt/sand roads because of the heavy rain which had fallen and was forecast to fall over our route on Saturday.

Our "new" '05 Astro van with IC7000 and Hustler verticals was running great as we crossed the border just as the OKQP starting gun went off. 40m was open and we quickly put contacts in the log, with N6MU, NW0M, and W0GXQ finding us first. I've said many times that my favorite ham radio operation is mobile from a three or four county line. I looked longingly at the road to the first three county line as we went by, but there was water standing on the road, and we knew how bad it got further down, so it was a good decision to stay on the paved roads.

We quickly settled into a routine, working both 40m and 20m with both bands in great shape. Since we were heading further south than usual, we kept on I-35 as much as possible and the miles flew by. Even Oklahoma City was kind to us this year. South of Oklahoma City, we saw brake lights and flashing blue and red lights ahead of us with traffic at a standstill. For once we saw the problem BEFORE we went by the exit, so we got off and took a GPS reroute with little time lost.

The first National Park on the Air (NPOTA) activation was the Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Murray county (RC05). I'd promised Lorna some bird-watching while I operated so she took the scenic route trying to find a spot. Since this site had already been activated for a solid week, I assumed it wouldn't be "rare", so I scheduled only 30 minutes in the park and added two additional counties instead. As we drove around, we saw water roaring over a road, and we had to turn around after driving in a ways. Since we were a bit behind schedule anyway, we just headed on out and left the birds for next time. I wasn't able to get a run going and only made about 20 contacts in the park. I learned later that Ron/ad0dx had an excellent run there, so perhaps I should have tried a little harder.

Two minor glitches kept things interesting. I noticed that my usually reliable 20m resonator was showing a higher than normal SWR. I decided to stop and retune it by shortening it about a quarter inch. That took care of it, but I'm puzzled why I had to do it since it's been working so well for so long. It worked fine the rest of the trip. I also had a laptop issue. The screen hinge



had been loose for awhile and I tried fixing it with some Hurricane tape. The tape kept coming loose, so I had a "floppy" computer which I sometimes had to hold up while typing. We stopped twice to try different types of tape, but it continued to be a problem the entire party for some reason, again after working fine for the past year. I was too lazy to swap in the spare computer.

I finally did get a nice three county line right at the end of the day. I put on the 80m resonator and made a number of 80m CW contacts as well as some on 40m. We ran out the pile and headed to our overnight stop in Elk City, arriving at the hotel just as time ran out. We ended the day with 1065 contacts in the log, about 150 less than last year.

Sunday

We had only sprinkles on Saturday, and the rain headed a bit north for Sunday, so we started out dry although we could see dark clouds ahead. Our first stop was the Washita Battleground National Historic Site (NS75) about a half hour away. We pulled in with two hours scheduled if needed. It was. It took about five minutes on 20m SSB to get the pile going and the pileup lasted the full two hours. Great fun! We've been trying to operate all the NPOTA sites in Kansas, and I really enjoy exploring the sites. This time Lorna went through the displays and collected the passport stamp. It would have been fun to stay longer, but we still had 7 counties to go, so back to work.

Time went really fast after that. There were storms east but we only saw the results in the ditches and on the sand roads. Heading north to Woodward county, we started out on a paved road, but at the line it turned into sand. With about 5 sand miles to go, Lorna decided not to try it, so we sat at the line instead with a good run. That cost us, though, because now we were about 20 minutes behind schedule, and everyone, including John/N6MU was waiting for us to get to Alfalfa and Woods. John reported that he had all the other counties and needed those two for the Sweep.

Lorna put her foot down (so I hear :-)) and made up a little time, but we also knew the final line was a bad road. While operating, I figured out an alternate route and I had to figure out a plan to get as many operators as possible those two counties in about 15 minutes. We left some hanging, but managed a good many, including John. Congrats on the Sweep, sir! To my loyal 40m followers, sorry I didn't get down there at the end. We just ran out of time. I did stay

and make a few contacts after the party for the county hunters who needed the counties.

When I was taking off the antennas for the drive home, I noticed that I had accidentally reversed two resonators on my CW triple. That would certainly explain why 20m CW wasn't tuning like it should. Six resonators on two triples all interact with each other and are a real challenge to tune.

Stats

We operated 17.6 hours, 1667 combined Qs (Lorna made 80 contacts), 591 unique calls, 6 dupes, 1010 total miles.

States not worked : AR SD VT

Canadian mults worked : AB BC ON SK

DX worked : 8 countries : KP4 DL HA I ON SM SP UA

Special thanks to the following ops for 5 or (way) more contacts!

96: N6MU

45: KS5A

42: N8II

34: W0GXQ

33: KN4Y

30: KK7AC

25: WN4AFP

23: K0HNC NW0M

22: W1DWA

21: W1END

20: AA8GP K8MR

18: DL3DXX DL3GA KI0I

17: N4JT VA3ATT

16: K0JPL KQ3F

15: N4RS N5PJ

14: W0ZQ

13: KC0ZVN KM4FO

12: KE0TT

11: N4CD W2CVW  
10: AC0CU K5WE K8NYG K9NW  
09: K4BAI K4XI W7GF  
08: DK2OY K0FG K3TN KB6UNC N0LY  
07: K3SWZ N2CQ WA1ZIC  
06: N9LF NO5W VA3GKO  
05: AA8R AH6AX DL8USA K4MIJ K7ZYV N3RJ VE5KS W1ATV W9DTO  
WA8HSB

#### OK Mobiles Worked

W3DYA/m (3), K5DB/m (2), K5CM/m (1), AD0DX/m (1)

#### W0BH Award Winners

----- First Place - Very Honorable Mention -----

Most overall Qs - N6MU/96 ----- KS5A/45 ----- N8II/41

Most CW Qs ----- N6MU/51 ----- KN4Y/33 ----- W0GXQ/KS5A/30

Most PH Qs ----- N6MU/45 ----- KK7AC/30----- AA8GP/20

Most counties --- N6MU/34 ----- KK7AC/30 ----- W0GXQ/KN4Y/25  
-----

#### Afterwards

Thanks to Connie/K5CM for his usual excellent job of putting this all together. I liked this weekend choice better than having to fight the DX contest. The Idaho gang was friendly, and we only overlapped Wisconsin for a few hours on Sunday (they were friendly, too :-). Some Wisconsin stations even followed me along, so it worked. Thanks to the mobiles and fixed stations who put all 77 counties out there, and congrats to John/N6MU for once again working them all (including all 34 of my counties).

I'm currently working on a multi/multi setup which I'll test out in the Missouri QSO Party with Ron/AD0DX. Then I'm off to Georgia with Lorna/K0WHY and John/N6MU to run the Georgia QSO Party with Paul/N4PN the second weekend in April.

The 2016 Kansas QSO Party is scheduled for August 27-28. With 105 counties, we need all the help we can get, so mobiles, head this way! Everyone else, thanks for the Qs in Oklahoma, and see you in the log in Missouri, Georgia, and Kansas!

73, Bob/w0bh and Lorna/k0why

**NW0M - fixed - MO 116 cw**

Fun Party! Mostly 40M party for me.

Thanks to the great mobile ops: W0BH, K5YAA, AD0DX, K5CM, W3DYA. It was fun chasing you down the road.

73, Mitch NWØM

**N6MU - fixed CA - 226 cw 132 SSB**

Managed another Sweep thanks to all the great mobiles!

The last five were HAR, ATO, MAJ, ALF and WOO. AF5Q always has his hands in my Sweeps. Thanks for HAR, Ron. W3DYA added ATO on his way home Sunday. Thanks, Norm. And, of course, W0BH finished on the three county line of MAJ/ALF/WOO. Thanks, Bob. I only worked K5ZZR six times but Russ was the only one in the Panhandle this year and provided four single counties.

Top mobile for me was W0BH with 97 Qs followed by K5CM(58), K0WHY(43), W3DYA(36), AF5Q(29), K5YAA(26), K5DB(21), AD0DX(16) and K5ZZR(6).

Sure great to hear K5YAA back out there after being under the weather lately. Can't miss that big mobile signal, Jerry!

Kudos to all the fixed stations as well for hanging in there. K5CM put on another good one! Thanks, Connie. 73...

John, N6MU

**KN4Y - 146 60 mults**

The six mobiles worked on CW ran around the Sooner State with calculated precision. However, no CW activity was heard in 17 counties , so no clean sweep. Where did I put that mike. A great QSO party, keep up this activity level and soon Oklahoma is one of the big parties.

**WN4AFP - SC 110 cw 57 mults**

That was FUN! I knew that I had some time on Saturday and limited time on Sunday, so the OKQP was my focus for this QP weekend. This was my 2nd OKQP and my goal was to break 12k. The mobiles were terrific.. Mobile contacts included: AA0DX(9),K5CM(24),K5DB(8), K5YAA(15), W0BH(25) and W3DYA(17). 20m was the daytime band for SC. I ran my IC-751 at 50w to a G5RV Jr. at 5 feet with the feedline laying on the ground. I came down so I quickly got it in the air... I was amazed to work the OK stations. The six active mobile stations kept me focused on OK! Thanks Connie for putting on a very enjoyable QP!

73s Dave  
WN4AFP

**K5ZZR mobile -**

After finally finding the correct fuse strip on my new vehicle, and taking off several panels to find it, I was able to get the auxiliary power working so I could charge up the computer and use the Flex 6300. Thank goodness I brought the car manual with me.... All this while it was hailing, flooding, thunder storming, raining and lightning. Another challenge was my screwdriver antenna dc motor only wanted to go one direction so I kept it on 20 meter the entire contest which is fine but I missed out on a lot of bonus points I'm sure. On the bright side it will make me appreciate next year's qso party.... Thanks to everyone that contacted me as I sure needed the moral support.... Hi

AF5Q – was mobile and hit two of the National Park areas in OK. No report back.

## Wisconsin QSO Party

From the 3830 contest reflector:

**K0PC mobile 681 CW QSO**

I knew 40M was providing most of the QSOs but I was surprised when I brought up the score summary and saw that it was 5 to 1 over 20M. I tried to split the time evenly between them in each county, maybe that was a mistake.

This was a down year for us. We hit almost 900 QSOs in 2013 and had over 800 the last two years so we are way behind those efforts. Our biggest hour was only 129 QSOs. We ended up with 221 unique calls in the log so participation wasn't bad.

Thanks to the WARC for sponsoring the WIQP again this year. Nice job!

73,  
Pat KØPC & John W9DND

**KN4Y - fixed FL - 95 cw 45 mults**

Got home from church and started working the many CW stations. Cannot sweep only on CW. Not the best band conditions but better than sinking in quicksand. It was a tough choice, QSO party or 80 degrees and sunny outdoors

**KE0TT- mobile/rover - 3 counties - 202 qso**

K3/10 at 4.9 watts to a 66' long inv vee up 24' at apex. Fed with ladder line and a Matchbox tuner. Thanks for your copy of my QRP. And thanks for the fun! Great weather, thanks WI. Lots of activity on 80 40 and less on 20. K8mr - 2 q's on 15. A lot of familiar call signs! C U next time. 73, Dan. ke0tt.

**NR0T - mobile 121 cw QSO**

Solo effort, only operated while stationary

**WO9B - mobile - QRP - 156 CW QSO**

First time mobile operation. First time QRP operation. The 80 meter performance was me and not the band. Need to figure out a better antenna solution. 20 meters was tough, but then calling QRP is asking for a challenge. The weather was really good until the final couple of hours. Next time I think I'll bring along a driver as it was getting pretty rough particularly in the rain. On the other hand I have never seen so many cranberry bogs before. I very much enjoyed the contest and look forward to next year. Thanks to all the participants.

**NE9U Multi OP Mobile 744 cw 54 SSB QSO**

Another fun WQP and up north adventure! This was N9BCA and my 25th year mobiling around the state.

Drove up to the cabin in Florence County Saturday afternoon. Bank Thermometer said 67 degrees! Only snow left was in the ditches. Mind you this is Wisconsin. Rather unusual weather!

Found our Saturday night Steaks (or as we described it, shoe leather) and spent

the evening shooting the bull with a lot of fun people. Saturday morning we went out for breakfast and spent a lot of time answering questions about that thing parked out in the parking lot full of antennas. No we were not tracking Wolves, Bear or Moose!

As far as contest went, everything went smooth. Had one scare at the beginning when I turned on the K3 and got an error message: "ERR PL2" and the radio was dead! A couple reboots and we were OK. Best we could figure out was the radio took a surge when we started up truck at the starting line.

See you all next year!

Scott NE9U  
Ron KK9K  
Art N9BCA

equipment:

Elecraft K3  
Homebrew Base fed Vertical

### **N0IJ mobile 734 CW QSO**

What a fun, exhausting day. In order to touch a solid block of 18 counties in the large NW area of the state which encompasses about 1/4 of the state, and reap the benefit of the bonuses, a tricky route with lots of low grade roads is necessary. We had to start about 100 miles from home (Duluth, MN), but did end up fairly near Superior in our neck of the woods. Almost threw in the towel at the beginning (note the op time--6-1/2 hours) as a variety of events came together (including a brain fade by me) and couldn't get the first contact until 23 minutes after the start. My great friend and driver, Terry, W0TVD, drove (flew) with abandon in order to make up that 23 minutes, and actually did it! Conditions improved throughout the day, so if we had to miss something, perhaps the beginning was the best. It was fun to work so much DX and kudos to DL3DXX with 7 Q's, DL3GA with 5, RV1CC with 3 and a variety of other DL's, EA's, and SM's plus my friend W0OR at HC1WDT for getting in the log. All in 23 DX calls.



Huge thanks to a number of folks who followed us through out the afternoon:  
N2CU 17, K0PC 16, N0EO (AA0AW) 15, N4PN & W9EAU (W0AIH) 14, K0TI KX0A  
NQ9A WA1UJU and WT2P all with 13--4 more with 12!

My trusty K3 and roof mounted Larry's screwdriver antenna did well.

Thanks for all the Q's and 73.

John, N0IJ op

Terry, W0TVD driver

### **W0ZF mobile 226 SSB contacts**

New configuration paid off for a part time effort.

Excellent weather combined with new rover vehicle (Ford F-150), new radio (FT-991) and some fine performance from the Tarheel 200A antenna made for enjoyable afternoon. Other than some search and pounce in the beginning, we had a steady stream of callers the rest of the contest. We had a nice dinner, in Hudson, to cap off a great day

### **KC0DMF Mobile 316 SSB QSO**

I had a blast being a mobile for this contest! We worked almost exclusively on 20-meter in 13 counties. I felt that the band was up and down (sometimes not hearing anyone anywhere on the band), but maybe it was the geography I was driving through. Sadly, I wasn't able to make any WI contacts although I did drive by a couple of other mobile operators (and I got a picture of one of you!).

My highlight was working some QRP stations back-to-back, and a number of mobile stations in other states.

Thanks to everyone behind the scenes who put this together.

Thanks also to those who worked me. It would be pretty boring without you!

/craig

KC0DMF/m

**WB9TFF Multi OP Mobile** - reported 115 SSB QSO - had no comments

## Idaho QSO Party

It looks like WW7D was 'the mobile' for this one, and he did a great job of hitting the counties. There were a handful of fixed stations I noted – otherwise, folks eeked out a few more on SSB.

From the 3830 reflector:

**W7ZRC fixed ADA ID** - noted 257 cw 300 ssb QSOs

**N8II – fixed WV** - 33 cw 26 ssb QSO

About one too many state QSO parties for one weekend. ..divided time between OK and ID QP's. I had enough by the time WI rolled around, but conditions were good on 20 to WI. There was apparently only one mobile; thank goodness for WW7D. I did give him some spots and he had some good runs on SSB after being spotted. Thanks Darryl for all of the QSO's/counties... There are numerous ID ops I hear in 7QP and SS who did not take part, unfortunately. But, I can see that doing well from ID means you have to call CQ with very few answers from about 03Z more or less until the end at 19Z Sunday. A shorter time period would probably suit the activity level better (and same can be said for OK); WI is only 7 hours and loaded with stations. I made a total of 19 QSO's with WW7D/M (1/3 of total Q's!), 7 with Rod, W7ZRC, and 6 with Don, KA7T. Conditions were good on 15 thru 80 with ZRC booming in on 80 and WW7D/M good Q5 copy there. I checked 75M a few times with nothing heard. I do not think 10 was open at least on Sunday, but 15 was in good shape for hours without much

activity. Thanks for the QSO's and the persistence of the few who made a big effort.

73, Jeff

**NA2X - fixed- NY** 36 CW 15 SSB 18 cw mults 10 phone mults

Thanks to KARS's for sponsoring the QSO party.  
Special thanks to WW7D for another great IdQP mobile trip!  
Good activity from everyone. 73!

## On the Road with N4CD III

The opportunity came up to be the FIRST to transmit from one of the national park units – Chamizal Memorial NM03 – out in west Texas. I had been by there a couple weeks before, but had no joy in getting permission to run this 'sensitive site' that day. Back then I laid the groundwork for getting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to be able to run from the mobile in the parking lot. The ARRL officials had put a 'stop' on anyone running this site until the permit process had been worked through by the good folks at Chamizal. This 55 acre park is right on the border with Mexico, and the park people kept bringing up 'issues with the border patrol'. From the south part of this park, if you've got a good arm, you can throw a baseball into Mexico. So I had to wait to see what would happen. The first time I was there, I could just look around, sit in the parking lot but not 'activate' the site. ARRL would have disqualified operation if you went ahead without permission.

Now, that's a bit strange since last year no one would have been concerned if you used your ham radio in the parking lot. You can transmit from any of the public streets around it – but – someone had asked for permission to set up portable – and that triggered the whole issue. They got a big NO for their wanting to set up a portable station. From then on it was “NO” to any ham radio operation – even from the 300 plus car parking lot in your mobile – till it got 'resolved'. It took more than a month, but

finally by email I filled out forms and got permission to be there on Tuesday 3/15 morning for a couple hours.

Now...I had to get back out the 654 miles from my house to El Paso. The N4CD mobile had just had the oil changed and tires rotated after six weeks of county hunting and park putting out. It's less than two months old. I left myself two days to get there – which means I could drop by two other places and run them again on the way out there.

The time had just changed to daylight saving. Dark in the morning for a while – but sunset delayed by an hour. No sweat. I like 'long days' and I don't have to worry about finding a motel by dark. Here sunset is now about 8 pm.

I'd also be hitting a bunch of new 3<sup>rd</sup> time transmit counties and new ones for the Double Diamond Award on the trip. Come Sunday 3/13 I headed out – stopping in Pecos, TX at the Motel 6 for the day. Still \$60 for the motel but better than the \$100 plus for most of the others in this town along the interstate.

Gas prices had been inching up. At the start of the trip it was about \$1.80 a gallon and by the time I got home in six days the price was up to just under \$2/gallon.

That night I headed over to the nearby Denny's for one of their Extreme Skillets – the salmon one. Good. Got some veggies in. The bands were 'fair'. Most days on the trip the A index would be way up there – no great days for propagation, but there were still many contacts with DL3DXX, ON4AAC, DL3IAC, DL6KVA, DL5ME – in the log with a few with SM6VR, LY5A, and of course many county hunters in the US. Terry, WQ7A and Gene, K5GE were around to help out with the Double Diamond (DD) award contacts. Several were active spotters and that is appreciated by the mobiles. You can tell when a spot hits – or doesn't.

Monday 3/14

On the second day of the trip – I zipped on down again to Fort Davis – NS19 – for another 'activation'. It's in Jeff Davis County - so I'd start on the CW county hunter frequencies to 'put it out' then shift on down to 14.041 area for the NPOTA folks. Then to 10121 or so and 7041. Fort Davis is a nicely restored US army (Cavalry) site from the 1860s. I stuck around for about 2 hours then headed over to El Paso via Presidio County, TX. Just a short detour needed to get there. I didn't get much going on SSB on the CH MARAC net frequency. There was either someone yakking on 14.325 all the time, or no one hearing me when I went there and tried to get noticed. After a few tries I just skipped SSB on 14.324 in most counties.

I then headed over to El Paso – way way out in west TX. By the time I get there from my house, I'm already half way to California. Well, I didn't leave enough time for a trip to CA....so I stopped at the Mission Socorro – which goes back to the 1680 time frame. The Church built two missions here to serve a population of Mexican folks who had fled north from instability in their home regions. This site is also on the El Camino del Tierra Aduento – National Historic Trail TR-17, one of the park units the park chasers try to work. I'd have a quick visit, put out TR-17, then head on in to the motel for the night.

The Mission is just a short distance now north of the Rio Grande River – the border with Mexico...and it is in a very urban area. The QRN on 20SSB was a solid continuous S9 – no hope for SSB from there! Ran CW - only S3 noise – got 60 plus contacts, then bugged out. You can run TR-17 up in New Mexico at many quiet spots. Starting in Mexico City, the path of the trail came up through the western part of TX, now El Paso area, in Texas then continued up along the I-25 corridor up to Santa Fe a couple hundred miles to the north. In the 1600s, it was all Mexican territory.



N4CD at TR-17/Mission Socorro  
El Paso County, TX

Not far away, I checked in at the Super 8 Airport motel - \$46 including tax – senior rate. Wow- it's a big place with over 100 rooms. Dinner was at the nearby – 200 feet away – Village Inn. Had their smothered chicken dinner. It comes with sides – one being broccoli and carrots. Told them to leave off the carrots – and the plate was full of half a pound of broccoli- great. It's good for you and almost no calories. Delicious. Slept well.

Tuesday - 3/15 – the big day

In the morning the Super 8 has breakfast with waffles and eggs, cereal, toast, muffins, OJ, coffee. Loaded up for the marathon event at Chamizal. Both food and radio wise.

I drove over to the park – a bit early but N4CD is an early bird.....checked in with the security folks and no problem starting a bit early. Fired up the rig on the CH frequencies again to give out El Paso County – then it was off to the races. In a bit over 3 hours put 316 QSOs in the log. Whew! Since this had not been on the air yet, lots of folks were waiting for the chance to 'get one more' of the 480 park units. It's NM03.



N4CD Chamizal Memorial

## El Paso County TX

This is a memorial to the peaceful settlement of a border dispute between Mexico and the USA. Seems one year back in the 1860s, the Rio Grande River flooded severely..... it was the boundary between the two countries. During that flood, the river channel moved a half mile to the SOUTH...and the US now had a couple hundred acres of new land. Unfortunately, there were a fair number of people on that land, who now were US citizens and not happy about that. So for 100 years, the two countries were verbally fighting a 'border war' with Mexico wanting the land back. No shots were ever fired.

During LBJ's Presidency, during the Cold War - it seemed that Fidel Castro's Cuba and Mexico were getting friendly. That wouldn't be a good thing - especially after the Cuban Missile Crisis not long before. So LBJ finally got around to settling the border dispute. Took 2 years with international intermediaries working the process.

The river was actually rechanneled near the previous river channel before the flood- at a cost of \$40 million or so - split between the US and Mexico. A concrete lined channel was built for miles to hold the Rio Grande as it flows through the area, preventing further shifts in the river path.

This peaceful outcome - and the return of most of the land to Mexico, is celebrated at the Chamizal Memorial. (pronounced sha'-mi-zal') The memorial sits on some of the land that was previously in Mexico. The main activities of the site are 'cultural'. It's right next to a major high school and the place is full of students. From the south side, you could literally throw a baseball over into Mexico if you have a good throwing arm.

I met Mike, KD5KC there. He's been hoping to run this 'portable' but so far no permission. Likely later in May or June for that type operation. Lives in El Paso.

Site has about S4 QRN level on 20M SSB to work through. Right in downtown El Paso.

When permission to run this came through, I hopped in the N4CD mobile and drove the 654 miles out to El Paso to put it on the air the first time! 1834 miles in six days - ran a few other things on the way out and back.

The 55 acre park today has a cultural center, museum for the history of the area, an amphitheater, parking for 300 or more cars and is right next to a major high school. The place is swarming with kids – and many of their activities are for the kids. Their main mission is 'cultural'. Folks come there to jog and enjoy the park setting.

Now that the ice has been broken – mobiles can get permission to run from the parking lot. Setting up portable is still in the 'planning process' for permission.

The outcome was good. Over 300 QSOs (a record for me) in a few hours – from AK to

Spain, South America and most of the US states. Are we having fun yet? After a couple hours the pile up ended and now it was just one or two coming by every five minutes of calling – so time to move on. Just like county hunting – if you call and call, some folks will eventually walk by the hamshack and hear you and call – hi hi. There are lots of other places to visit!

## Off to New Mexico

The next site to visit was the Gila Cliff House park in the middle of nowhere in southwest NM. It's really in the middle of nowhere. First I had to get to Silver City NM in Grant County – a few hours and 200 miles away. I'd stop overnight there and tackle the road into Gila Cliffs in the morning. A Motel 6 was waiting for me. Good price but no breakfast at Motel 6. I ran the counties – Dona Ana- Luna – then shut down for the night before running it in Grant. Didn't check the map. Gila Cliffs is actually just into Catron. Well, I'd run Grant in the morning. I didn't want to put out the park county till I got there in the park – Usually you can count on 10 county hunter contacts – and get credit for an activation even if you work no one else. Hi Hi.

That evening the desk clerk recommenced Wranglers for dinner. It's a bar and grill – but the food was GREAT. Checked it out on Trip Advisor first too. That's a good site to get opinions on where to eat and stay. Then back to the motel for the night. Slept well.

## Wednesday 3/16

Got up early in the morning. NM is on Mountain Standard Time. Really dark outside. Breakfast was at the Drifter Pancake House. N4CD gives it a 9 out of 10 rating! Excellent. Waited for the sun to rise about 7:15.

The road into Gila Cliffs Monument is - well, I'll let the sign say it all. It's a distance of 44 miles.





If you do the math, that's 22 mph average speed for the 44 mile long road. Your arms will get a workout going from left to right to left to right to left to right to left to right for most of those 44 miles. Up and down and around – over the Continental divide at 8000 plus feet.

Also you have signs for 'Watch Out for Snowplows!' and Road Plowed Monday-Friday. Not at night and not weekends! There were still a few patches of snow/ice on the north sides of hills in a few places. Temperature? Going over the mountains it was down in the low 20s outside. Brrr.

I headed out about 7:15 as some daylight showed. With DST, sunrise was a bit later. I wasn't going to drive this road in the dark! No sir! Parts of it – 15 miles are so narrow they don't even put in a centerline. No motor homes or trucks over 20 feet long on this road! (There is a longer less mountainous road –30 miles longer for larger vehicles)

If you like scenic, slow driving – this is the drive for you. I got there in a bit under 2 hours – light traffic going north – a few dozen going south – hopefully they aren't commuters heading to jobs in Silver City- what a commute. The visitor center was about to open. Around the place backpackers were heading into the parking lot waiting for a van to haul them out – must have been some kind of tour. I did the visitor center thing, got my passport book stamped, then fired up the radio for this park unit.



Gila Cliff Dwelling Monument

Catron County NM

Bands were crappy – barely pulling things out. Did my best to put contacts in the log. Others had run this. A index and K way up there. After the 2 hours in, and 2 hours back, you want to put 200 QSOs in the log. Not to be! Only 104 today. The monument is in Catron County NM – a sort of rare one usually.

After the run, it was back to the interstate I-25 – although this time going east which would add in another county – Sierra – to the trip. It took 4 hours from the park to get to I-25, then head south. I really wanted to head east – but no roads went that way – so backtracked to El Paso for the night (same Super 8 – same Village Inn for dinner).

Thursday 3/16

It was getting time to be home. There weren't any new parks but with a bit of a detour I could hit Guadalupe Mountain NP again, then up to Carlsbad Caverns – then head home on highway 180 all the way across Texas.

I stopped at Guadalupe Mountains – put a bunch of contacts in the log from Culberson County TX then zipped up to Carlsbad Caverns. Wow – it's spring break time and the place is packed. There's probably 400 parking spots and 390 of them were taken by the time I left. It's in Eddy, NM. When I got there I parked at the far end of the parking lots – it was empty for 300 feet around. Half way through a lady ranger came by – came over - said high – and asked me if I would park a bit better 'between the lines'. I

was sort of hanging over the line. She said that by noon time every parking space would be filled since this was spring break week. Even more amazing, the elevators into the caverns were out of service for maintenance, so you had to hike in (easy) then hike back out going up 750 feet in the process (75 stories)!

I planned to meet up with the photogenic 'Harris Herd' – that's Fred, N5VDQ, Jennifer – N5LRF – Tech - , and the kids (no licenses yet). . They hit the road on the previous Sunday and essentially did the N4CD trip of a few weeks ago in reverse order, starting with Alibates Flint up in Potter County – then the Lake Meridith Recreation area. They zipped over to NM and ran the same parks in NM – Capulin Volcano, Fort Union/Santa Fe Trail, Pecos, Petroglyph, Valles Caldera. Rick AI5P met up with them in Petroglyph Park, NM. For each park, they posted a half dozen pictures on the NPOTA Facebook page for each park and had quite a following. Here's a sample



The "Harris Herd"

Fred sets up on a table- either a park picnic table or a folding table. And uses a Super Antenna (short 2' mast and 100W rated adjustable coil resonator – designed for QRP type portable operation). He runs about 30w output on battery power (deep discharge type lead acid).

The kids had a blast getting their cowboy and cowgirl badges, junior ranger badges, having a snow ball fight at PV19 up at 8500 feet, sliding down the sand dunes at White Sands. This was 'kid in the park' week at most of the parks with extra activities for the kids on spring break. Everyone is smiling in every picture.

They found me – I was parked by the picnic tables – we had a nice eyeball. Worked each other for credit (he works the XYL on 2M in every park too). Takes him about 20 minutes to get the stuff out of the mini-van and set up for a run.



The Harris Herd

They plan on more trips. If you're a park chaser – or need the county – give 'em a call if you hear them or see them spotted. The park activity is spotted on the FaceBook page – NPOTA, and on Dxsummit.fi You can set up a filter on DX Summit for 'US only' spots and filter out the DX!

Maybe we can convert some of these NPOTA folks to county hunting after this year is over. They'll be a lot of 'withdrawal symptoms' come 2017!

After that, I just zipped on home through the counties, giving them out. Made it to Anson, TX by 6pm and figured it was good spot to stop. Found a motel – The Morning Star Motel – and stopped for the night. Unfortunately not many places to get a decent dinner there any longer – the steak house went under - so it was chopped chicken salad at the Subway. Then I sneaked in a small Sundae at the DQ.

Friday – 3/18 -

Up early – but there was gloom and doom outside with expected thunderstorms later in the day – and chance of severe weather. I didn't waste too much time and zipped on home to beat the weather front coming through. It came through earlier than expected. Fog, a few miles of drizzles, but mostly clear. Home by noon. That was good since the

places I had been got hit by some golf ball size hail two hours after I passed through! At 6am that morning, \$300 million in hail damage was caused to cars and houses in Tarrant County – FT Worth area! Missed that, too. Spring time in Texas!

Good trip – over 1800 miles in six days. The car is now 2 months old with 7400 miles on it. Already had the first oil change and tire rotation. 6900 QSOs have been uploaded to LoTW for contacts from the parks.

More trips planned! I'm addicted to activating National Parks at the moment! So far I've been in 33 parks, monuments and historic sites.

## Louisiana QSO Party

There were two mobiles out on cw and a half dozen fixed stations to work on cw. Didn't listen on SSB but usually there are more SSB fixed stations on for a bit.

from the 3830 reflector:

KS5A – fixed – AZ - 26 cw 2 ssb qso

Thanks to all for the Q's. Not the best of bands from AZ. Obviously, the mobiles make a QSO Party. Atta boys to Chuck, NO5W, and Norm, W3DYA. I missed them in a lot of counties as I was in and out most of the day, but I can say that with their great ears, they did most of the work!

73/Guff, KS5A

**W1END - fixed - NH 27 cw**

Without Chuck, NO5W and Norm, W3DYA running mobile this would have been a rather

dull party. Conditions seemed to be reasonable. Heard nothing on 15M other than a weak dull roar from the RUDX Contest running simultaneously. Thanks to all who showed up.

## Virginia QSO Party

This is usually centered on 40 and 80m operation where folks try to work other VA counties and mobiles. Slim pickings on cw – especially with not so great band conditions and a Russian DX contest going on making lots of QRM on the cw frequencies in VA.

from the 3830 reflector:

**N2CU - fixed NY - 111 cw 233 ssb**

Score includes points for qsos with 12 bonus stations. Conditions on Saturday were poor all around, but 40m picked up nicely on Sunday. I think this is my first real entry in this qso party... I will be back!

**K0ZR Loudon - VA - fixed 709 cw QSO**

It was bound to happen - poor conditions. I was successful in making only one 15m QSO and none on 10m compared to 186 and 87, respectively, two years ago. Again I operated only CW. There are many Virginia counties and cities that just do not venture into the CW bands so this really hurts on the multipliers. Oh well. My last somewhat serious contest until fall.

**N1CC fixed TX 23 CW 174 SSB**

Very challenging propagation. Most of the time could not hear VA stations on 40 Meters due to noise and long skip distances. 20 Meters was the only real

opportunity to make VA QSOs. After working all of the running VA stations I spent the rest of the time watching spots and running myself with directional CQs. 158 of the 166 phone contacts on 20M are the result of runs - the longest 89 QSOs in a 2 hour run.

Very low CW operation on 20 Meters, it seems most of the VA guys were sticking to 40M ... 80% of the CW on 20 was late on Sunday when everyone was looking for contacts.

I found and worked five of the 14 bonus stations and one VA mobile. From some of the VA stations big QSO numbers at the end of the contest (500 to 2400) VA did have a great party - this was fun here in Texas, however, propagation was not in our favor.

### **K1HTV - fixed - Culpepper VA - 232 cw 485 ssb**

Soapbox : The VQP started Saturday at 14Z with the K Index of 4. Conditions were terrible on all of the HF bands. During the first few hours I managed to work some not too strong Europeans on 20M and some SA, Caribbean and African stations on 15M. The NVIS antennas were of no help at all on Saturday. 40M was much poorer than normal all day Saturday. Managed to work a few Asian mults on 20M as UTC Sunday started. As evening approached 75/80M conditions improved, averaging a QSO a minute until the Saturday session ended at 02Z.

I got back on Sunday morning after church around 2 hours into the second VQP day. 40M had improved considerably with the NVIS antenna performing much better than the higher ones.

On the VHF and UHF bands, working the local fixed stations and 18 mobile stations made things interesting especially during the the poor HF conditions. Ten HF mobiles produced numerous QSOs and many new and often rare multipliers to the K1HTV log, mostly on the second day.

The QSOPARTY.COM website proved to be a great resource for learning of new multipliers on the bands. There was a steady stream of spots posted throughout the VQP.

Because of the poor first day conditions, my overall score was about 50K lower than last year's. The QSO total was down 112 from last year but the multiplier

of 193 was 2 higher, mainly because of a better focus on working more U.S. States. I had lots of fun and am looking forward to next year's VQP.

73,  
Rich - K1HTV

**WA6KHK - fixed - ca 25cw 116 ssb**

Great activity this year. Kudos to the rovers, especially N4JR1 and KJ40AP who got me 5 new counties! Only 4 counties left in Virginia and 14 in the U.S.!!! Sadly, the mob mentality still reigns supreme on 40 and 80 meters \*sigh\*. I know it wasn't the condx on 20 meters...that only leaves sub par equipment or operator malfunctions. I saw several Virginia stations racking up some impressive numbers guys so don't tell me you couldn't spend some time on 20 meters so the west coast could finally hear you! I spent most of the time 'mining' on 20 meters SSB. Lots of great folks giving me #1 and #2. Thanks to all!

**WN4AFP - FIXED - SC 53 cw 106 ssb**

Another challenging contest.. Shooting for the Mixed/QRP category again this year since I'm so close to VA and I know that my 40m band would be the ticket. Running QRP was extremely challenging, especially on Saturday...Thank goodness that this was a 2-day event. Band conditions on Saturday were very poor...even from SC to VA it was very tough. I was thrilled to work 4 mobile stations in this race including, W1ATA, KJ4OAP, KT4KA and W2RU. I also worked 9 of the bonus stations. 40m conditions greatly improved on Sunday...Can't wait until next time.

73s Dave WN4AFP

**N8II - fixed WV - 77 cw 177 ssb**

I was shut out of any chance of doing well by the terrible conditions Saturday during the day, no stations on 40 heard except a very few locals and weak backscatter; I had only 20 Q's in the log at 21Z! My QTH is only about 15 miles from the Clarke county line. But, it was still was fun and I ran up a surprising number of Q's on 75 meter phone starting at 2107Z.



I worked all of the bonus stations except for K4GAM for an extra 1300 points. Many thanks to KJ4OAP/M and KT4KA/M for multiple QSO's from some rare spots. 40 did not fully open to NOVA (northern VA) until 17Z Sunday, so even Sunday morning was a struggle on 40 especially before 16Z with a brief run around 1330Z. I QRT'ed for dinner with friends at 2030Z, so missed some mults then, but no complaints about activity on 75/40 phone. There could have been more on CW.

## County Challenge Award - TopList

The March 2016 posting of the County Challenge Top List is now available at [countyhunter.com](http://countyhunter.com) under Lists.

The \*NEW\* direct link to the Top List is [countyhunter.com/toplist.htm](http://countyhunter.com/toplist.htm) so please bookmark it if you want to refer to it again.

106 total participants are on the Top List  
62 participants have submitted contact totals within the past year  
24 participants are working towards earning the CQ Magazine USA-CA Award  
4 participants are silent keys

37 submissions were received since the previous Top List posting on 3-Feb-16 from:

AD4RE K1TKL K2MF K4PBX K4XI K5TIA K7DM K7REL K8QWY KA2LHO KC3X KK7X  
N1API  
N2JNE N2MH N4AAT N4RS N5PR N8CIJ N8HAM N8MD N9QS NØKV NFØN NX4W  
W3DLM  
W4GNS W4YDY W7FEN W7OLY WØEAR WØGXQ WA3QNT WA7JHQ WB4UHI WE7G  
WQ7A

Welcome back (from more than 1 year absent) to:

K7REL KK7X N4AAT N8HAM NX4W W4GNS

March 2016 Top List congratulations go to:

Mixed Modes

KC3X holds at #1 CCA Level V and MARAC Level 18  
WØGXQ holds at #2 CCA Level V and MARAC Level 17  
KN4Y holds at #3 CCA Level V and MARAC Level 16  
WØEAR achieves MARAC Level 15 (still at CCA Level IV)

NØKV enters at MARAC Level 14 and CCA Level IV  
N5PR enters at MARAC Level 8 and CCA Level II  
WE7G enters at MARAC Level 7 and CCA Level II  
K4PBX enters at MARAC Level 3 and CCA Level I  
N8MD enters at MARAC Level 2 and below CCA Level I  
W7OLY enters at MARAC Level 2 and below CCA Level I  
KA2LHO enters at MARAC Level 1 and below CCA Level I

#### CW Mode

KN4Y holds at #1 CCA Level V  
KC3X holds at #2 CCA Level V  
K8QWY holds at #3 CCA Level IV

K4XI enters at CCA Level III  
NØKV enters at CCA Level II  
WE7G enters at CCA Level II  
N5PR enters at CCA Level II  
W7OLY enters below CCA Level I  
KA2LHO enters below CCA Level I  
K4PBX enters below CCA Level I

#### Phone Modes

KC3X holds at #1 CCA Level III  
NM1G holds at #2 CCA Level III  
NØKV enters at #3 CCA Level II

K4XI enters at CCA Level I  
N5PR enters at CCA Level I  
K4PBX enters at CCA Level I  
N8MD enters below CCA Level I  
KA2LHO enters below CCA Level I  
W7OLY enters below CCA Level I  
WE7G enters below CCA Level I

#### Digital Modes

K8QWY holds at #1 CCA Level I  
NX4W achieves #2 below CCA Level I  
KA4RRU holds at #3 below CCA Level I

NØKV enters below CCA Level I  
K4PBX enters below CCA Level I

W7OLY enters below CCA Level I  
K4XI enters below CCA Level I  
N5PR enters below CCA Level I  
KK7X enters below CCA Level I  
N9QS enters below CCA Level I  
WE7G enters below CCA Level I

#### Combo Modes

KC3X holds at #1 CCA Level II  
K8QWY holds at #2 CCA Level II  
WØEAR holds at #3 CCA Level II

NØKV enters at CCA Level II  
K4XI enters at CCA Level I  
N5PR enters at CCA Level I  
K2MF achieves CCA Level I  
WE7G enters below CCA Level I  
K4PBX enters below CCA Level I  
W7OLY enters below CCA Level I  
N8MD enters below CCA Level I  
KA2LHO enters below CCA Level I

The CCA and MARAC Level formulas are found at the bottom of the Top List.

Submit your latest contact totals by using this template: [w6rk.com/CCAtemplate.xls](http://w6rk.com/CCAtemplate.xls)  
or use the \*NEW\* Book Summary [Export for W6RK] function in Logger update 0.999.4936.

73

Barry  
K2MF

[k2mf.bgs@gmail.com](mailto:k2mf.bgs@gmail.com)

## On the Road with N4CD IV

Another Friday/Saturday weekend – another trip! More National Parks, Monuments, Preserves and Sites to put out on the air – and run some counties, too!

The only big thing left in Texas for me to run was the Big Thicket National Preserve down near Houston. (and the Wild and Scenic River – Rio Grande – down in Big Bend you must run within 100 feet of the river). I didn't have the portable setup when I headed to Big Bend in January. Now I do. Maybe I'll get back there in Nov or Dec after winter weather closes most of the rest of the country for trips.

So it was down southeast to the Big Thicket in TX – which is more than 7 different areas over half a dozen counties just north of the Beaumont/Houston area. I'd aim for the Northwest corner – least distance to travel! Big Thicket covers over 100,000 acres.

I left on a Friday before the big CQ WPX SSB contest – which would make a mess of the SSB bands on 20 and 40m for most of the weekend. If luck held, I'd make it to the two new parks for me, plus a repeat of the Texas Trail TR-20 before the racket started on SSB. 20M SSB would be a real mess.

Since this was a Friday – and people would be jamming the highways headed into downtown Dallas for a normal workday, I had to leave early! Up at 5am and on the road (after quick juice and coffee snack) at 5:30 am. Yawn! The sun wouldn't be up till 7:30 with the daylight saving time. Fortunately the roads are well lit – and six lanes wide all the way through downtown and out the other side. Traffic but it kept moving 60 mph all the way. At 7-8am you'd average about 15 to 20mph. The distance was 260 miles down to the 'park' which would take about 4 hours. Once south of Dallas the speed limit gradually rises to 75 mph – and folks cruise 5 over. Ran the counties – a few were around at that time of the morning.

I punched in 'Livingston TX' to the GPS. The nice GPS indicated I'd be there by 9:23 without stops. OK.....as I headed south, it wanted to take me on a parallel route to the interstate – probably a few miles shorter. Had to tell the nice GPS lady no...and after a while, just make her inactive as I was going down the interstate. As it turned out, I probably drove a few miles further, but got there 3 minutes faster – and had no stop signs or lights or two and four lane roads.

The Big Thicket National Preserve can be run from at least half a dozen locations. I chose the one closest – and most NW of all the possibilities. No sense to head further south than needed. I had other plans afterwards. A short zip off the main roads gets you into the Big Sandy part of the preserve. The road goes through the preserve and you can stop along it, or, as I came back up the road, park in a nice 'trail head' parking lot – no noise – plus an outhouse if you need a break.



N4CD – NPOTA PV04 – Big Thicket

I quickly put over 100 QSOs in the log. This has been run by half a dozen other people so it wasn't 'rare'. Did run CW – not sure if the others ran CW. Of course, I ran it for the county hunters – Sabine, TX and PV04. For me to count the contacts, I've got to send the park designator. Too many CH are too anxious and immediately come back after the signal report. I had to resort to sending the park designator first, then the signal report! Hi hi. That worked most of the time.

After an hour and a half – the SSB pile died quickly after an hour – I headed out to the next destination- the Cane River Creole National Historic Site in Louisiana. Along the way, I'd be on roads that were the original trail El Camino Real de los Tejas, which connected San Antonio to Natchitoches, LA.

Stopped for a sandwich at subway.

The weather was good – near 65 and sun – and I quickly zipped along through the counties. The TR-20 trail has been run many times before – including once by N4CD at the San Antonio Missions – which are the start of the trail. It winds up to Austin, then cuts across Texas.

Once you reach San Augustine County TX, you follow the exact route of the trail for the next 60 or miles or so – part of it in TX, and 42 miles of it in LA. I tried calling on SSB on 14253 and 14257 – hollered for 15 miles and was never heard, or no one needed it, or no one would spot me. Worked all of one person on SSB. He didn't spot me. Finally I

got into coverage area for the cellphone (this is real boondocks area) and did a 'phone a friend' to get a spot. Had a decent run on CW then and just a handful on SSB. This trail was likely run and run. Most of the time you can count on the county hunters for at least the 10 contacts required to get an official confirmation.



You might have seen signs like this before – and never paid much attention to them. I did. Now – they are real interesting and you can run this 'on the go' or stop on a convenient spot on the side of the road and run it. There was a sign every mile for dozens of miles.

The tally was 53 QSOs – not many for N4CD in most parks – but – it was a repeat so I had to settle for that. Wasn't going to take the time to call CQ NPOTA for any more time. I had places to be and a deadline of when the park would close for the day. Couldn't get much started and since it was a repeat – didn't push it.

Next up was the Cane River Creole Historic Park. This is 63 acres with over 100 historic buildings and structures from the early 1800s. It includes two large mansions you can tour and is open from 8 to 4 each day. I had to hustle to get there by 3:30. You can run this from the visitor parking lot. Due to recent rains, the place was flooded out for a few days in the previous week and I had to double check to make sure the roads and park were open. Yep, I was in luck – it just reopened before I left on the trip.

I took a quick picture then got on the radio – put 118 QSOs in the log on cw and SSB by

4:30 – when everyone had left the parking lot other than the ranger. The ranger indicated it was time to go – he had to lock the gates – so it was out the door at 4:38 local time.



Cane River Creole – Entrance sign  
Natchez, LA  
Natchitoches County

No way to get my car in this pic- land very very wet – lots of swamps, er, bayous around. The roads to the park had water up to the pavement level for a few miles and of course, water everywhere on the sides. You could imagine alligators swimming in there waiting for someone to wander off the pavement.

After the runs at HP05- I headed nearby to Natchitoches, LA. Stayed at a Days Inn just off the interstate. It's a few miles to the 'historic district' there – a landmark designated downtown area with buildings going back to the late 1700s. Lots and lots of history there and it's a big tourist destination. Took a tour through the downtown area in the car – then headed to a Chinese buffet for dinner. Back to the motel early. The main drag into downtown (4 miles from the interstate) is also Trail TR-20. I could have run it some more but didn't. The trail was right outside the motel.

That night I checked if anyone still needed the Cane River Creole Park – didn't get any responses on the Facebook page for NPOTA – so planned on heading home in the morning.

Slept well. Up at 5:15 for the good breakfast at Days Inn. Eggs, biscuits and gravy, sausage, cereal, pancakes, yogurt, juice – real OJ, decaf coffee. I pigged out. Was on

the road at 6:30 for the 4 1/2 hour drive home. Zipped along with nice weather. No new or repeat parks along the way but did run all the counties on I-49 to I-20 to Dallas.

Missed getting Double Diamond contacts in a few – not many up at 6:30 am these days and not much 'short skip'. Later heard KA2LHO on CW. He's joined the CW crowd chasing counties now! Working IK0MHR proved problematic. He's got a decent signal from Italy – but doesn't copy well when you go back to him. Rest of DX was easy to work – ON4AAC, DL3IAC, DL3DXX, DL5ME. Not much happening on 17m though. We're headed down in the sunspot cycle – dang.

Otherwise, good trip of 730 miles in a day and a half trip. Had fun. Now I've been in 35 different parks, monuments, historic sites and preserves this year. There are 483 of them at the moment. Larry, K5RK, top park chaser, has worked 340 of them so far!

- - - -

No book report this month – no time for finding and reading ancient books. Maybe next month, who knows? There isn't much left in the world of 1920s radio books for teenagers of the era to be found.

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## Awards

W0EAR, Don	County Challenge Level 15	2.11.16,
Mary, AB7NK	5-Star #77 AB7NK	2.16.16,
Darl, NA8W	Bingo #369	2.24.16,
Gene, K5GE	USA Call Combo 1x2 #2	2.28.16,



# Upcoming Events for County Hunters

April 2

## **Mississippi QSO Party**

April 2 1400z to April 3 0200z

CW Ph Dig

RS(T), county or SPC

[www.arrlmiss.org](http://www.arrlmiss.org)

## **Missouri QSO Party**

2 Apr 1400 z to 3 Apr 2000z

CW Ph Dig

RS(T), county or SPC

[www.w0ma.org/mo\\_qso\\_party.htm](http://www.w0ma.org/mo_qso_party.htm)

April 9

## **New Mexico QSO Party**

Apr 9 1400z to Apr 10 0200z

CW Ph Dig

Name, county or SPC

[www.newmexicoqsoparty.org](http://www.newmexicoqsoparty.org)

## **Georgia QSO Party**

9 Apr 1800z to Apr 10 2359z

CW Ph Dig

RST, county or SPC

[www.georgiaqsoparty.org](http://www.georgiaqsoparty.org)

April 16

**Nebraska QSO Party**

16 Apr 1400z to Apr 17 2300z

CW Ph Dig

RS(T), county or SPC

[www.qcwa.org/chapter025.htm](http://www.qcwa.org/chapter025.htm)

**Michigan QSO Party**

16 Apr 1600z to Apr 17 0400z

CW Ph

Serial, county or SPC

[www.miqp.org/Rules.htm](http://www.miqp.org/Rules.htm)

**North Dakota QSO Party**

16 Apr 1800z to Apr 17 1800z

CW Ph Dig

RS(T), county or SPC

[w0nd.com/ndqso15.pdf](http://w0nd.com/ndqso15.pdf)

April 30

**Florida QSO Party**

30 Apr 1600z to May 1 2159z

Florida QSO Party

CW Ph

RS(T), county or SPC

[www.floridaqsoparty.org](http://www.floridaqsoparty.org)

Michigan Mini – see above

## MARAC National Convention –

The annual MARAC convention will be held in Germantown, TN (near Memphis) August - 1 to 4<sup>th</sup>.

See <http://national.marac.org/> for details

Time to sign up!

that's all this month! De N4CD