

County Hunter News

April 2020
Volume 16 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. We also cover some park chasing activities these days. 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.

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CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.124.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. 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

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://marac.org/awards.pdf>

There is a lot more information at www.countyhunter.com . Please check it out.

Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at www.CHNewsonline.com

De N4CD, Bob Voss, Editor (email: telegraphy@verizon.net)

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) Sunspots – there we go again. Sunspots of the new cycle appeared for 2 days but quickly vanished. A index stuck near 70 most of the month. Nothing new to report otherwise. Rotten conditions on upper bands continue but folks are making contacts. FT8/FT4 super busy with activity.

2) QSO Parties – we had a couple good ones and more coming up in April. Hope you are participating in the WN4AFP State QSO Party Challenge to work at least two stations in every QSO party this year – and hopefully work a whole lot more than two. Then post a score on the 3830 contest reflector.

3) The month the world changed - COVID-19 has changed the way we live in this country. Now, it's challenging to head out on trips even though gas is down to \$1.60 a gallon here. The county hunting trips are minimal. Some states (5 at least) are 'locked down' with 'stay at home' orders. Many others have closed restaurants, bars, venues, sports, movies, live entertainment shuttered so eating during trips might be 'fast food' at best depending where you are. Many county hunters are on the 'senior side' and that makes them much more vulnerable to the ill effects of COVID-19 so more caution is prudent. State parks in some states closed – CA shut down beach parks. LA shut down all state parks NC has closed the more popular ones and the first 20 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway shut down. DC is under 'lockdown' wth roads into DC blocked to keep

out tourists. At least 15 states have 'stay at home orders'.

New Parks in Texas

New Parks have been added to the Parks on the Air system all over the country – by the hundreds! N4CD will be busy getting to a bunch of these in TX, and about a dozen have already been 'activated' as they were new WWFF Parks. All in counties, of course, for the county hunters. With the current 'stay at home' edicts, it might be a few months before I'm out getting to most of these, though.

New TX Parks

K-6532 deleted and changed – was a dupe
K-6533 Alabama Creek Wildlife Management Area
K-6534 Alazan Bayou Wildlife Management Area - Nacadoches
K-6535 Angelina-Neches/Dam B Wildlife Management Area
K-6536 Atkinson Island Wildlife Management Area- Harris
K-6537 Bannister Wildlife Management Area
K-6538 Barrington Plantation State Historic Site
K-6539 Big Lake Bottom Wildlife Management Area - Anderson
K-6540 Black Gap Wildlife Management Area
K-6541 Black Kettle National Nature Reserve
K-6542 Caddo Lake Wildlife Management Area
K-6543 Caddo Mounds State Historic Site
K-6544 deleted/changed
K-6545 Candy Cain Abshier Wildlife Management Area - Chambers
K-6546 Casa Navarro State Historic Site
K-6547 Cedar Creek Islands Wildlife Management Area - Henderson /Kaufman
K-6548 Chaparral Wildlife Management Area - Dimmit
K-6549 Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site
K-6550 Cooper Wildlife Management Area
K-6551 D.R. Wintermann Wildlife Management Area - Wharton
K-6552 East Texas Conservation Center Wildlife Management Area
289 CR 098 (Fish Hatchery Rd) Jasper, TX 75951
K-6553 Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site

K-6554 Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area
K-6555 Fannin Battleground State Historic Site - down by Goliad
K-6556 deleted as dupe/changed
K-6557 Fort Griffin State Historic Site
K-6558 Fort Lancaster State Historic Site
K-6559 Fort McKavett State Historic Site
K-6560 French Legation State Historic Site
K-6561 Fulton Mansion State Historic Site
317 Fulton Beach Rd, Rockport, TX 78382 -Aransas
K-6562 Gene Howe Wildlife Management Area - Hemphill/Lipscomb
K-6563 Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area
K-6564 Gus Engeling Wildlife Management Area
K-6565 J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area
K-6566 James E. Daughtrey Wildlife Management Area - Live Oak
K-6567 Justin Hurst Wildlife Management Area
K-6568 Keechi Creek Wildlife Management Area - LaSalle
K-6569 Kerr Wildlife Management Area
K-6570 Landmark Inn State Historic
K-6571 Las Palomas , Anacua Unit Wildlife Management Area - Willacy
K-6572 Las Palomas , Lower Rio Grande Valley Units Wildlife Management Area
K-6573 Levi Jordan Plantation State Historic Site
K-6574 Lower Neches Wildlife Management Area
K-6575 M.O. Neasloney Wildlife Management Area - Gonzales
K-6576 Mad Island Wildlife Management Area
K-6577 Magoffin Home State Historic Site - El Paso TX.....
K-6578 Mason Mountain Wildlife Management Area - Mason
K-6579 Matador Wildlife Management Area
K-6580 Matagorda Island Wildlife Management Area
K-6581 McClellan Creek National Nature Reserve
K-6582 Mission Dolores State Historic Site
K-6583 deleted as dupe – now changed
K-6584 Moore Plantation Wildlife Management Area
K-6585 Muse Wildlife Management Area - Brown
K-6586 Nannie M. Stringfellow Wildlife Management Area - Brazoria
K-6587 National Museum of the Pacific War State Historic Site - Fredericksburg TX
K-6588 Nature Center Wildlife Management Area
K-6589 North Toledo Bend Wildlife Management Area - Shelby
K-6590 Old Sabine Bottom Wildlife Management Area - Smith **
K-6591 Pat Mayse Wildlife Management Area
K-6592 Playa Lakes, Armstrong Unit Wildlife Management Area - Castro

K-6593 Playa Lakes, Dimmitt Unit Wildlife Management Area - Castro
K-6594 Playa Lakes, Taylor Lakes Unit Wildlife Management Area - Donley
K-6595 Redhead Pond Wildlife Management Area - Nueces
K-6596 Richland Creek Wildlife Management Area
K-6597 Rio Grande National Wild and Scenic River
K-6598 Rita Blanca National Nature Reserve
K-6599 Sabine Pass Battleground State Historic Site
K-6600 Sam Bell Maxey House State Historic Site
K-6601 Sam Rayburn House State Historic Site
K-6602 San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site
K-6603 Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area
K-6604 Starr Family Home State Historic Site
K-6605 Tawakoni Wildlife Management Area - Hunt /Van Zandt
K-6606 Tony Houseman Wildlife Management Area - Orange
K-6607 Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic
K-6608 W.A. "Pat" Murphy Unit" Wildlife Management Area
K-6609 deleted as dupe – now changed
K-6610 Welder Flats Wildlife Management Area - Calhoun
K-6611 White Oak Creek Wildlife Management Area
K-6612 Yoakum Dunes Wildlife Management Area

A few on the list were dupes of existing parks or sites and deleted – thus the missing number. One, which was assigned K-6532 turned out to be a gravesite that was all of 12 x 21 feet – still an official 'state historic site'. It is a gravesite for the second wife of Davy Crockett and her son and wife. That's it. Also in the middle of a cemetery, too, that you have to walk through to get to it. This list wasn't screened carefully enough to begin with.

"The entire site is 12 feet (3.7 m) wide by 21 feet (6.4 m) long, or 0.006 acre (23 m²), making it Texas' smallest historic site.". That one quickly got deleted and the number assigned to a park in NY state. Lots of others on the list need to be run! I'm trying to do my part as a park activator here.

On the Road with N4CD I

New parks had just been added to the list for Texas – with some not too far from the N4CD QTH. I could be the first to 'activate' some of these so a one day trip was planned

to get to some of the new parks – mostly 'historic sites' – plus I could play a bit of tourist at the same time.

Eisenhower Birthplace Home Historic Site – Grayson County TX

First up was the Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site K-6553 which is only in the POTA system (not WWFF). The WWFF criteria now requires a significant area devoted to 'flora and fauna' and historic sites usually do not fit the bill. This site is located in 'downtown' Denison TX – Grayson County - about ten miles off US-75. Just a few acres, if that.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower was born in the house on October 14, 1890, the first United States President to be born in Texas. When he was two, his family moved to Kansas. The home was purchased by a private individual and donated to the city – which upgraded it, removed other local 1890 era homes and turned it into a visitor attraction. It eventually wound up being owned by the Texas Historical Commission.



“Ike” went on to being the Commander in Chief for the Second World War in Europe. Later, he was elected President of the US in the 1950s. If you drive the interstates, he was the one who aggressively pursued getting them done. The reason for building interstates here was the same reason as Hitler had - to build the 'autobahns' in Germany – to be able to quickly move military troops and hardware anywhere within the country quickly as needed. Thus, roads were built with 16 foot clearance so you could haul Sherman tanks (on a trailer) across the country.

The site has a nice parking area (for maybe 20 cars) and is relatively noise free. One of the problems of many 'historic sites' is that some of them are in downtown areas with only street parking (which doesn't count) for activation – you've got to be 'on the

property'. The ones I'd visit today all seemed to have off street parking as part of the site - but you never know till you get there. There can be unpleasant surprises for a mobile operator. Looks like these today would work well for those that 'set up portable', too. There's a small admission charge if you want to see the home and grounds, the antique period furnishings, etc, of the 1890s era.

Since this was a POTA park only, one only needs 10 QSOs for a 'activation'. I put 45Qs in the log (CW) and moved on to the next.

Sam Rayburn House K-6601

It is located near downtown Bonham, TX, in Fannin County

From the state site:



“Step into the warm and welcoming world of one of Texas’ best known statesmen, Sam Rayburn. One of the most powerful and influential politicians in the 20th century, Rayburn served in the U.S. Congress for 48 years, holding the position of speaker for 17 years. His 1916 home, now the Sam Rayburn House State Historic Site, preserves his real stories with original furnishings, candid photographs, and personal belongings, remaining as they were when he lived here. Visitors explore Rayburn’s personal life and political achievements and their impact on mid-20th-century history. The home is a National Historic Landmark, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Sam Rayburn’s political career began when he won a seat in the Texas House of

Representatives in 1906; he was 24 years old. In 1912, Rayburn made his first run for the U.S. House of Representatives. After winning that election, the lifetime Democrat never again faced a Republican opponent. He arrived in Washington, D.C. just in time for the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson in 1913. Wilson was the first of eight sitting presidents Rayburn would work with during his tenure in the U.S. House.

While a lifetime Democrat and party loyalist, Rayburn tended to be middle-of-the-road on most issues, and he wasn't afraid to act independently or cut across party lines when he felt strongly about a particular issue. His fairness and mastery of the political process earned him respect from both sides of the House floor.

After serving as a U.S. Congressman for several years, Rayburn saved enough money to build a home for himself and his family. In 1914, he purchased 121 acres of land two miles west of Bonham. By 1916, construction of his two-story clapboard home was complete. The surrounding farmland produced cotton, corn, and sorghum crops and provided pastureland for cattle. Rayburn's later additions to the home included several rooms and porches. He used his own money to pay the electric company to erect poles and run electric lines to his home in 1935.

After his death, his home, land, and possessions were left to the Sam Rayburn Foundation, which deeded the home to the state in 1972. The home opened as a museum administered by the Texas Historical Commission in 1975."

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There's a nice picnic table for those that want to set up portable – but don't plan on much 20M operation. I found S7 noise on CW on 20M there. Not sure if it was from the power line on the street or internal to a building (visitor center or house) but there was no getting away from it in the 15 car parking area. Strangely, there was zero noise on 30 and 40M! So, I could only work a handful on 20M CW that pounded on through the QRN, but 30 and 40M provided a bunch of contacts. As you sit in the lot, there's a large fenced in area with a donkey and a warning sign – 'donkey bites – stay back!' Hi hi. Donkey made a bunch of noise at times as I had the windows down in the 73 degree sunny weather. He was looking for attention and not getting any from me.

No QRN along the road – so something makes the RF interference here. Didn't track it down.



Time to head on to the next

Sam Bell Maxey Historic Site – Lamar County TX – K-6600

I headed on over to Paris, TX 50 miles east for the next one.

from the state site:

“Visitors to Sam Bell Maxey House are guided through the Victorian home of the Maxey and Long families, which interprets how an upper-middle-class family lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Maxey and Long families lived in the house for 99 years before it was turned into a public institution, leaving a collection that is mainly family-owned.

Today, the Sam Bell Maxey House has more than 10,000 artifacts. Visitors to the house hear stories about the families while viewing the actual objects owned, used, and created by the Maxeys and Longs. The home's newly restored interiors showcase original family furnishings, clothing, and letters.



The site is accessible by self-guided tours, which are available at any time during operating hours, and by guided house tours, which are given every hour on the hour and typically last 45 minutes to one hour. The last guided tour is given at 3 p.m.

In addition to the house tour, visitors are free to walk the grounds at their own leisure where they can view the formal Victorian garden, a rose garden planted in honor of Marilda Maxey's love of gardening and roses, and a number of crape myrtle trees. Marilda Maxey brought the first crape myrtle trees to Paris when the Maxeys moved to Texas from Kentucky."

wiki notes:

" Samuel Bell Maxey, a prominent local attorney and later two-term U.S. senator, built the large two-story house after serving as a major general in the Confederate Army. It is built in the High Victorian Italianate style. From 1868 to 1966, the house was the home of Samuel B. Maxey and his family."

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Texas was part of the Confederacy in the Civil War – you'll recall. Joined the Confederacy – most of the early settlers were from the 'south' – KY, TN, VA, etc.

There's a small (6 spaces) parking lot for visitors. Portable operators can probably set up in several spots. The site was relatively noise free even though in 'downtown' Paris, TX. Put 70 in the log (ran some 20M SSB here) and moved on to the next an hour away.

There were very few visitors to the above three sites- I spent about an hour at each and never saw a visitor come or go other than the last one!

Tawakoni Wildlife Management Area – K-6605 – Hunt County TX

from the state site:

“In 1960 the Iron Bridge Dam was completed, a project to collect water from 9,756 square miles of watershed that forms the basin in which Lake Tawakoni is formed. . Construction of the Iron Bridge Dam and Lake Tawakoni project, forming the Sabine River, was to provide a municipal and industrial water supply for the surrounding communities and the City of Dallas. Prior to construction of the reservoir in 1960, the surrounding land area had been settled by ranchers and farmers following its occupation by "prehistoric Indians" and many historic Indian tribes for whom Lake Tawakoni is named. Lake Tawakoni provides fishing, the Lake area has many parks for camping and boat access and the three units of the Tawakoni Wildlife Management Area offers public hunting opportunities.

The Tawakoni WMA, 50 miles east of Dallas, has 2335 acres which provide habitat for white-tailed deer, feral hog, waterfowl, dove, other migratory game birds, squirrel, quail, rabbits, hares, furbearers and coyotes. “

Be sure to print off a copy of the map (or have your TX 'hunt book') handy to find this. There are no signs directing you how to get to WMAs in TX – you're on your own finding and getting to them.



I used the map book, and it still took a bit of hunting to find the road that led to a small parking area – actually a 'designated parking spot' for the WMA. There are usually a few spots with 'parking' as noted on the maps – if you can find them.

Often, you won't find a sign saying 'Tawakoni WMA' but instead a display like above with map of the WMA. In the upper left corner is a sign 'designated parking spot'. Yeah, I found it. Small lot that might hold 8 cars and you can 'primitive camp' here, too.

Put some Qs in the log, then headed out to home.

Arrived home by 4:30 pm after 270 miles of driving. Whew- 4 parks and a lot of driving between them but I had fun, the weather was great, and gave out over 200Qs from 'brand new' never run parks.

South Carolina QSO Party

KV8Q - fixed OH - 23 CW 10 counties

Not very much CW activity and no mobiles to chase around. Was hoping to get a few new SC counties but not the case. Only one new one this year.

K0VBU - fixed KS - 10 CW - 6 counties

Couldn't find much participation Saturday morning.

K1RO - fixed NH - 35 cw 70 ssb

Tough conditions this year, although 40 and 80 were good in the last few hours. I operated the first couple hours and then checked back periodically for new activity. Nice turnout from the SC stations as usual. Thanks for the Qs.

N2CU - fixed NJ - 39 cw 36 SSB

Glad I ran high power in this because 20 and 40 were horrible the first few hours. I couldn't crack the pileups but heard others getting through. Thank goodness conditions improved as the day wore on. Score includes all bonus points.

WB8WKQ - fixed MI - 28 cw 56 ssb

I actually worked a few more Q's this year, but had WAY less multipliers (35 this year compared to 48 in 2018). I "feel" this was due to way less CW activity from the SC stations. I could be wrong, but it just seemed that most the activity was up on phone. My log showed a 2:1 phone to cw ratio. I got lucky with a quick 20M short skip opening, where I netted 10 Q's I didn't expect. Also very fun to work 4 stations on 160M this year. The pace seemed a little slow and I did take off some time in the afternoon. But overall, pretty fun QP. Thanks for all the Q's and special thanks to the mobiles.

North Carolina QSO Party

From the reports, at least 60 North Carolina counties were on the air out of the 100 there. Over 50 filed score reports but only a few actually had comments – come on guys, put some comments in (hint to county hunters – at least ten who were in the QP). This year there was the special challenge of working the 1x1s to spell out TARHEEL

and a few succeeded in doing that. A bunch of 1x1 calls were on the air. Lots of action on 40 and 80m later in the afternoon and evening.

From the 3830 reflector (and sadly not many filed any comments)

N4E mobile multi-op 642 QSO cw

Tad, K3TD, and I always look forward to the NCQP and a chance to roam the countryside hitting as many counties as we can with a new pileup at every county line as our friends call in to get the mults and for some, new counties towards the County Hunter awards.

We usually make it a whole weekend, but we were unable to do SCQP this year as I had too much work to get out of the way before heading to VP5 to do the ARRL DX SSB contest with the VP5M team.

We had hoped for a relaxing 9 hours but Murphy had other ideas. My laptop wouldn't play nice with the Icom 7610 drivers so we switched to the backup K3s which got us off to a slow start. We also noted no activity was shown for VANce so we detoured west before our original starting point of WARren to add that to the circuit.

After the first hour or so I noticed the battery was slowly going down in my laptop despite being plugged into a 120VAC inverter. Seems the Lenovo Thinkpad wants 170 watts and the cheap inverter would only give it 120 and then went to System Red. So a hurried visit to the auto parts store to get a bigger one, make a direct under hood battery connection and trail the AC line back through the door. But that solved the problem and we didn't have to QRT half way through.

We ran through the usual areas with S9 line noise and all we could do was ask the people to wait until we got some quiet air. Overall band conditions were good enough for western and EU DX to work us on at least one band in each county. Several nailed us on all three. We tried to hand out some SSB Q's, but that's always problematic being mobile. We also didn't want to leave the CW pileups until they were mostly dried up. Best news was that the day was 100% for fun and we made a point of using 3 bands, even when they didn't have the best rate. As a Special Event Spelling Bee bonus station we were not eligible for awards. Thanks to the hard work of the NCQP organizers for letting us put North Carolina on the map.

QSL's can go to either K3TD or myself, both good in QRZ.
See you next year!

73, Jim, K4QPL and Tad, K3TD

VE9AA - fixed - NB Canada 95 cw

Amazed to work NC stations on 40m a few hours before sunset and on 80m an hour or more before SS here. That's a long haul from NB, hi !

There was some kind of near radio blackout on 20m for an hour or more late afternoon (*before SS), so I went to 40/80m. (the big home stns vanished on 20m and even N4AF was barely ESP and Howie is usually one of the louder stations.

N4E mobile worked probably close to a dozen times.....even on 80m ! WOW.

AD8J - fixed - NC - 503 cw

This year I decided to do CW only. It worked out OK and I didn't have to make any decisions about going to SSB.

N4YDU - fixed - NC - bonus station 510 cw 895 ssb

Great job by the organizers - fun to be one of the "Tar Heel" bonus stations. Special thanks to W4MY for inviting me to be N4A.

There was a steady stream of callers on both CW and SSB throughout the event. The bands were solid today. Nice to work a fair amount of EU stations and have a small run of JAs on 20 CW around 22Z.

73,

Nate/N4YDU

On the Road with N4CD II

Another weekend was coming up – time for another road trip. There was a very small hamfest in the Dallas area and a bigger one southeast of Houston in Rosenberg, TX –

about five times the size. I opted to head south where I could run a bunch of new Parks on the Air Parks that had just been added to the POTA system. There were only repeat WWFF parks along the way. Some county hunters had needs down that way and I'd be able to get a few, too. Weather – clear or cloudy, no rain and up to 60F for the next couple of days.

Things are possibly going to get interesting. The news is full of COVID-19 stories. I even saw something from the Dayton Hamvention folks indicating they are 'monitoring things'. The really big SXSW Music Festival in Austin (30,000+ folks) just got canceled a week before it was scheduled to happen. Maybe it isn't so wise to be headed to hamfests with 3,000 or 5,000 or 30,000 folks if this thing gets worse? Well, I'm not going to panic. So far so good in TX with just a few cases – usually folks returning from elsewhere. Dang...on the way down, it seems that Houston now had 3 cases – folks who were on a group tour in mid February to Egypt. One would not want to be on a cruise ship these days – those food buffets are a great place to spread germs around. I'm monitoring it – I eat out a lot so that's an issue for us 'senior citizen types' who seem to have the worst outcomes if you are unlucky enough to wind up with it. I'd play it day by day.

On a Thursday morning - just after the Dallas rush hour hopefully ended – I packed up and headed south about 8am. Turns out that isn't late enough - 20-30 mph down US 75 all the way to downtown Dallas in heavy traffic for an hour plus – then clear sailing down I-45 to Houston for a bit. A few hours later I arrived at the first park near Mexia, TX in Limestone County.

Confederate Reunion Grounds Historic Site K-6549

You'll recall Texas fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War sending regiments to fight at battles in Tennessee and elsewhere.



From the state web site:

On the edge of the Navasota River, Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site commemorates a place where Confederate Civil War veterans and families reunited from 1889–1946. Today, it remains a gathering place for living history events and family reunions, and features an 1902 dance pavilion, Civil War-era cannon, and ruins of structures from the “Roaring ‘20s” and Mexia Oil Boom.

Historically, the area was a point of transition and crossroads for several Native American groups including the Caddo, Tonkawa, Tehuacana (Wichita) and Comanche. Bison herds roamed the grasses of the Blackland Prairie, the edge of their southern and eastern range.

Beginning in the 1880s, Civil War veterans, Union and Confederate alike, wished to celebrate the camaraderie and memory of their war experiences and sacrifices. In spite of the strife and hardships of post-war Reconstruction, a strong sense of brotherhood persisted. Small groups of Limestone County Confederate veterans met informally to socialize and reminisce, and in 1888 they began meeting annually in the spot where Jack's Creek enters the Navasota River, known then as the “Pen Campmeeting Grounds.”

— From the 1889 Constitution of Camp 94 UCV

People attending the annual reunions, held in late July or early August under a full moon, arrived by horse, buggy and special trains from Dallas and Houston. The camp financed the purchase of the reunion grounds by selling camping lots to the veterans and their families. Families built summer cottages or camped in tents or brush arbors and planted crepe myrtle and irises, some of which still bloom at the site each spring. Each day at dawn and dusk, veterans proudly fired Old Val Verde, one of two Union cannons (both of them Ordnance Rifles) captured by Confederates at the battle of Mansfield, Louisiana in 1864. These guns saw action for the Confederates in the Louisiana campaigns with the Valverde Battery. At the end of the war, Captain T.D. Nettles buried the two cannons under a buggy house in nearby Fairfield rather than surrender them to Union troops. Today, the one known as Old Val Verde is on display beneath the flagpoles at the center of the site.

During the reunions, veterans eulogized those soldiers who, in the words of General Stonewall Jackson, had “cross[ed] over the river and [now] rest under the trees.” The gatherings also included parades, brass band concerts, patriotic speeches, games and traditional southern foods. Attendees danced the nights away on the wooden floor of the pavilion, which is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its unusual architecture.

In 1892, veterans and families began purchasing lots at \$5 each to pay for the first 20 acres of land purchased by Camp 94 UCV for a sum of \$200 from the Mexía family. Each purchaser received a deed for camping privileges at the reunions. Added to the 20 acres purchased in 1892, were tracts purchased from several individuals including African American families who had worked the fields as former slaves or who had migrated to the area after Emancipation.

By the end of World War I, the gatherings continued but on a smaller scale. In 1946, the charter of Camp 94 expired and the grounds fell into disuse. In 1965, the Joseph E. Johnston Camp No. 94, C.S.A. was permanently chartered as a nonprofit corporation; and in September 1983, the corporation donated the Confederate Reunion Grounds to the state of Texas. The Confederate Reunion Grounds continues to serve as a gathering place today.

Did You Know?

As many as 7,000 people attended the annual reunions held at the Confederate Reunion Grounds.

Although no Civil War battles were fought in Central Texas, three out of every four free men in Limestone County served in the Confederate Army. One in two Confederate soldiers became casualties of the war: killed, wounded, missing or by developing chronic conditions that led to eventual death.

In November 1920, wildcatter Albert E. Humphreys struck oil in Limestone County and Mexia became a boomtown at the center of one of the largest oil fields in the world. Affectionately known as “The Colonel,” Humphreys was a devotee of Confederate history. While other Texas reunion grounds faded away with the demise of older veterans, Humphreys brought improvements and a surge of renewed activity to the Confederate Reunion Grounds, including the Pure Oil Company clubhouse and a large bathhouse on the creek.

The 1920s pump house was equipped with a 55,000 barrel standpipe, water tank and

water system that supplied water to the oil drilling rigs of the Pure Oil Company. Current equipment in the pump house includes a Cooper-Bessemer gas engine and a Goulds (or Buda) pump.”

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Due to the fortuitous Texas Oil boom, the property was preserved and donated to the State of Texas. I had a good run here – only needed 10 QSOs for a POTA activation but put 50 in the log.

On a side note- the city of Dallas just spend over \$50,000 removing a civil war statue in a city park and putting in storage..... awaiting a 'qualified buyer' not likely to show up. History is being rewritten day by day by the liberal whiners. Get over it folks. TX and the southern states fought in the Civil War. Hundreds of thousands died. A million or more were seriously injured or died after from war injuries. A lot of sacrifice went on – for 'both sides' in the Civil War. It's history.

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Nearby is **Fort Parker KFF-3010/K-3010** in the same County - Limestone



from the web:

Parker's Fort - The John Parker family established Parker's Fort in 1833. The fort was

the site of a well-known Comanche Indian raid in May 1836, in which the Comanche captured 12-year old Cynthia Ann Parker. She was the mother of the last great Comanche chief, Quanah Parker.

The Civilian Conservation Corps built a replica of the fort, now known as Old Fort Parker, as a 1936 centennial project.

The park encompasses the historic town of Springfield, established in 1838. When Limestone County was created in 1847, Springfield was its first county seat. At its peak, Springfield's population was greater than either Dallas or Houston. [A large number of men went off to fight in the Civil War and businesses shut down. Many did not return.] Springfield began to fade away in the early 1870s after the railroad bypassed the town and the courthouse burned. Springfield soon became a ghost town. Only the cemetery remains. It is the final resting place of many East Texas pioneers, including an American Revolutionary War veteran and two veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto.

Fort Parker State Park came to be in 1935. The city of Mexia and three local landowners donated about 1,500 acres of land for the park. African-American men with the Civilian Conservation Corps built the park from 1935 to 1942. They completed a dam across the Navasota River in 1939, creating Fort Parker Lake.”

- -

Had a good run and moved on – didn't quite make 44Qs here for the KFF Challenge but it was the same county and near mid-day.

- -

Texas has a dozen or more 'frontier forts' for the Indian Wars as settlers moved in and 'conflicted' with existing roaming tribes. Several more have been added as new historic sites in the POTA system so I'd have to get to them one of these days – all out west.

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It seems that **El Camino Real de Los Tejas Historic Trail K-4568** runs right along my route for two miles – it's marked on the road I'm driving on! I can do a quickie for the POTA only trail – and do- put a quick 12 in the log then keep on moving south. This is an old Spanish trail that connected missions from San Antonio to Nachodoches, LA. You can run it at many places along the former route and quite often there are signs

along the road indicating you are on the former trail. I'm not really into the 'activations' game but when something like this falls in your lap, why not? Hi hi It's a repeat.

Barrington Plantation K-6538 in Washington County, TX



from the web:

Travel back in time to 1850 and explore the original home of Dr. Anson Jones, the last President of the Republic of Texas. The Jones family lived at the farm for over a decade, building a successful cotton farm with enslaved labor after Texas joined the union. This living history farm is complete with period costumed interpreters using 19th century farming practices for planting, cultivating, harvesting, and working with livestock. Explore the sights and smells of farm life and experience the daily lives of those who came 150 years ago.

The site, three miles from Washington-on-the-Brazos in Washington County, was purchased from Moses Austin Bryan in 1844, and the construction was supervised by a J. Campbell. The home and two log cabins were paid for with 200 acres of land, \$200 cash, and \$100 in stock. The plantation grew cotton and tobacco. The Texas Centennial Commission purchased the structure in 1936 and moved it to Washington, where the building has been restored and is open to viewing by the public. The property was turned over to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 1976 for administration and continued restoration. The plantation home is part of Barrington Living History Farm, which features educational tours and farming demonstrations by interpreters in nineteenth-century costume.”

After the Civil War, the 'plantation system' without slave labor was in deep trouble. Thirty years of conflict ensued during the following years and this area faded away in prominence.

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Nearby is the **Washington on Brazos Historic Site – KFF-3572** – same county. It's the birthplace of Texas!

From the state site:

“The General Convention, which would decide the fate of Texas, met at Washington in March 1836. People revere Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site as the site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. Thereafter, despite great personal risk, the delegates continued meeting until they had drafted a constitution and established the new nation’s first lasting government.

The picturesque Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site is located on the Brazos River. The expansive park grounds along the Brazos River provide a beautiful setting for picnicking, sightseeing and bird-watching. The Star of the Republic Museum, Independence Hall and Barrington Living History Farm, offer the visitor a unique insight into the lives and times of the men who fought and won Texas' independence from Mexico”

It was late in the day and I'd been busy. Time to get to the motel but I had a quick run from here. Didn't make it to 44Q (30Q) though for the KFF-Challenge. By this time, 20M was long gone - so just had 40 and 30m to work with. I was tired and didn't stick around and headed 30 miles to the motel in Brenham, TX.

Super 8 Motel....and dinner at the restaurant right next door – Seland Seafood. Good!

Friday March 6, 2020

After breakfast at the Super 8, I headed out to the next about an hour south. Maybe I'd be able to catch the early morning peak to EU park chasers – which is usually best right at sunrise on 20M.

Stephen F Austin State Park – KFF-3058/K-3058 in Austin County, TX

“The 663.3 acres that makes up the site was deeded to the state by the San Felipe de Austin Corporation in 1940, and the park was opened to the public the same year. This was the site of the township of San Felipe, the seat of government of the Anglo-American colonies in Texas. It was here Stephen F. Austin, brought the first 297 families to colonize Texas under a contract with the Mexican Government in 1825. The town was burned on March 2, 1836 to prevent it from falling into the hands of the advancing Mexican Army during the Texas Revolution.

White-tailed deer abound in the park. Habitat is typical East Texas riparian, upland areas are mostly pecan trees, while river bottom areas are dominated by cottonwoods and hackberry. “

Stephen F. Austin is often referred to as 'the father of Texas'. Numerous things are named after him, including the state capitol of Austin, TX! [However, he did seek to bring slavery to TX despite opposition of Mexico.] Ten years after the colonization, stress on many issues eventually turned him against Mexico and he led several battles to fight for Texas Independence.

- - -

Nearby you can run the **San Felipe Historic Site – K-6602** in the POTA system. It's adjacent to the state park but run by different entity. {Your state pass won't get you in – a small charge to see it}. Put 40Qs in the log for this first time activation of the park.



The state web site notes:

“San Felipe de Austin was founded in 1824 by Stephen F. Austin as the unofficial capital of his colony. It became the first urban center in the Austin colony, which stretched northward from the Gulf of Mexico as far as the Old San Antonio Road and extended from the Lavaca River in the west to the San Jacinto River in the east. By October 1823, after briefly considering a location on the lower Colorado River, Austin decided to establish his capital on the Brazos River. The site chosen was on a high, easily defensible bluff overlooking broad, fertile bottomlands. The location offered a number of advantages, including a central location and sources of fresh water independent of the Brazos.

Although planned on the basis of the prevailing Mexican town model with a regular grid of avenues and streets dominated by four large plazas, the settlement soon began to sprawl westward from the Brazos for more than a half mile. By 1828, the community comprised a population of about 200, three general stores, two taverns, a hotel, a blacksmith shop and some forty or fifty log cabins. Ten of the inhabitants were Hispanic, and the rest were of American or European origin; males outnumbered females ten to one.

The town was the social, economic and political center of the Austin colony. Its expanding but unstable population was swelled by large numbers of immigrants and other transients.

Regular mail service in the colony was inaugurated in 1826 when Samuel May Williams was appointed postmaster in San Felipe de Austin. With seven separate postal routes converging here, the town remained the hub of the Texas postal service until the Texas Revolution in 1836. One of the earliest newspapers in Texas, the Texas Gazette, began publication in San Felipe on September 25, 1829. Gail Borden's Telegraph and Texas Register, which became the unofficial journal of the revolution, was first published in San Felipe de Austin on October 10, 1835.

Several large cotton plantations were established in the bottomlands near the town during the 1820s, and from the outset, San Felipe de Austin became a trading center for the staple.

By the eve of the Texas Revolution, San Felipe de Austin ranked second only to San Antonio as a commercial center. Its population in 1835 approached 600, and many more settlers resided nearby within the boundaries of the municipality. In view of the significance of the capital in the life of the colony, it was inevitable that San Felipe de Austin should play an important role in the events of the Texas Revolution. The conventions of 1832 and 1833 were held in the town, and as the site of the Consultation

of November 3, 1835, San Felipe de Austin served as the capital of the provisional government until the Convention of 1836 met the following March at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

After the fall of the Alamo, Gen. Sam Houston's army retreated through San Felipe de Austin. On March 30, 1836, the small garrison remaining at San Felipe to defend the Brazos crossing ordered the town evacuated and then burned it to the ground to keep it from falling into the hands of the advancing Mexican army. The terrified residents hastily gathered what few belongings they could carry before fleeing eastward during the incident known as the Runaway Scrape.

By May 1836, as news of the Texans' victory at the Battle of San Jacinto spread, residents began returning, and a semblance of community life was soon restored near the original townsite. Yet many families never returned, and the government of the republic was unable to resume operation in the town due to the lack of necessary buildings. In 1940, the town of San Felipe donated most of the original townsite property to the state.”

Today – you've got a rebuilt farm house and museum showcasing the lifestyle of 1820s living in the early stages of TX history. Skipped that and had other parks to run!

Next up – **Varner-Hogg Plantation – K-6607** - Brazoria County

I noted from the spotting site that Michael, KI5CUS, was there early this morning 'putting out the park' on SSB. He's a fairly new operator just licensed as a General for about one year. If I hustled, I might be able to meet up with him. Or not.



From the state site:

Varner-Hogg Plantation's history began in 1824 when Virginia native Martin Varner

became one of 297 grantees who received a league of land from Stephen F. Austin and established his homestead in present-day Brazoria County. The Varners received 4,428 acres and they brought at least two enslaved men to farm and raise livestock on a small scale and establish a rum distillery.

In 1834, Martin Varner sold the property to Columbus R. Patton of Kentucky. Between 40 and 60 slaves lived and worked on the plantation, known then as Patton Place. With bricks they made by hand, the slaves constructed the plantation house, smokehouse, sugar mill and their own quarters. With their labor, Columbus Patton built a successful and larger than average sugarcane enterprise complete with a two-story mill.

Looking for sources of income that required less labor than sugar production led owners to try growing cotton on Patton Place with little success. In 1876, the Texas Land Company purchased the plantation and gradually switched the site's focus to ranching. The majority of the laborers, now cowboys, were African Americans.

The plantation sustained major damage in the 1900 hurricane. Many of the original buildings, including the sugar mill, were destroyed. In 1901, former Texas Gov. James Stephen Hogg purchased the land, convinced that large amounts of oil lay beneath the surface. Large quantities of oil were never found during his lifetime. When Gov. Hogg died in 1906 his will recommended his children not sell the mineral rights for at least 15 years. Within that time period the Hogg heirs struck oil, making them all very wealthy.

In 1958, Ima, the governor's only daughter and surviving child, donated the plantation to the state of Texas.

Some historical tidbits:

Gov. James Hogg had a special outdoor bathtub built to accommodate his large size. The "tub" is a square, bricked-in hole fed by an artesian well, and still remains on site.

In 1849, Patton Place produced 275,000 pounds of sugar and 22,000 gallons of molasses!

Mexican Gen. Santa Anna was held prisoner on the plantation for a short while after the Battle of San Jacinto.

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You can get your fill of Texas history visiting the various sites around the state – from the 1800s to the 1950s.

- - - -

I met up with KI5CUS. He had worked about 25 on SSB – trying 10 and 6m without luck, though. The A index today was 69 and not great on 20M. We yakked for 20-30 minutes about parks and activating. He uses an ATAS type screwdriver on the rear rail of his pickup truck. Think his radio is a Alinco. You'll probably see him activating other POTA parks around Texas.

Had a good run and put about 40 in the log (only need 10 for a POTA only site) – all CW.

- - -

There were two other POTA only parks not too far away I could investigate. Both were known 'problems' in access but I had a bit of time before the sun set, so off the Levi Jordan Historic site I went. This is another 'plantation' that was started in the 1840s after the Texian wars and the successful fight for independence. During Reconstruction, this site was created. Unfortunately, it's in the process of repair and not open to the public and there was no way to run this at this time. Maybe some phone contact and working at it might get access....but it's locked up tight right now – with only a small concrete post type marker at roadside indicating what it is. Had to skip that one.

On the way there just before it, I saw a sign for the **Nannie Stringfellow WMA – only it the POTA system – K-6586**. It was only a few mile detour so I figured I'd check it out. This, too, was not open to the public – other than perhaps group tours for ecology/study/wildlife management issues. Luckily, this is one of the sites with 'indented gates'. That's when the WMA fence line runs along edge of the road, but there is an access road that is indented so you can pull a vehicle completely off the road then unlock the gate for access.

Here's a picture showing what I mean:



You'll note the fence line runs across, but my vehicle is completely 'on the park' property. It's not great RF wise, with you pointing whatever direction the access road is – maybe NW or W. Think this was N. In front of the car is a five foot high steel fence that swings in and you've got steel fence on both sides. However , anything is better than no access! (for some sites in TX – it's the only way to run them unless you are able to manage to arrange special access). It can also work for sites that are only open a few hours or days a week – and there is an indented gate. (fortunately no noisy power line here – that has killed a few sites ability to be run).

Made a few dozen contacts. As I was finishing up, the ranger came down to the gate in a quad – and I had to move out of the way. He was headed across the road to the other gate on the other side. This WMA is on both sides of the narrow road. (maybe 16 feet wide).



He said he'd be back in 10 minutes. He came back with another ranger and we talked a bit more. He agreed that where I parked was 'technically in the WMA'. Nice to have verification. He also noted there is another gate, which they don't use, a mile further down the road – with a large sign – and that would be a better place to 'activate it' if you are headed that way! I went down there and made one or two more Qs, then headed into Rosenberg for the evening – 30 miles away.

Super 8 Motel in Rosenberg. Dinner at the Golden Corral. (too many calories!). Good.

Saturday March 7, 2020

Today is the big ARRL SSB DX contest. The SSB bands will be a mess. On the way down, I hooked up with seldom heard these days county hunter Dave, KE3VV, who was off at PJ2 getting set for the big radio contest. He was giving out contacts enjoying himself and checking out the station for the DX contest.

It would not be a fun weekend for trying to put out parks on 20M SSB. Back east, 40M would work until late afternoon/evening when the testers took over that band, too.

The big Houston Area Hamfest flea market starts at 6am – before sunrise. Usually a fairly large crowd shows up for this – well over a thousand or two. I had a nice breakfast at the Super 8 then headed over about 7am when the sun shows up this time of year. Maybe 30 sellers were in the flea market and I didn't see anything I had to have. It was 53 degrees outside. Probably most of the DX'ers stayed home. Maybe many others elected to avoid crowds? Crowds seemed sparse.

The inside area opens at 8 am. I headed back to the car to kill a few minutes – and noted that there was a K8TE RV a few spaces down from me. Turns out Bill, K8TE, was here to promote the Albuquerque NM hamfest in September. Met him inside at his table after the 8am opening time. Did not see any other park activators or county hunters there.

At 8am, I wandered inside after paying my \$12 entry fee. I was on the hunt for 'goodies' including old regens. Not much noted. Not sure if some folks stayed home out of caution but seemed like a fairly light crowd there. Lots of sellers there but still half a dozen empty tables not used. There were a few mobile rigs – but way overpriced. Two IC-706 Mark II's at \$475 each (with mic and power cable). One IC-706 Mark II for \$575. Heck, you can buy a brand new radio for \$700 or so now – and a much better one. If you blow the finals in your early Mark II – the early transistors are 'unobtainium' and fairly fragile – easy to wipe outand it will cost you \$275 or so to get them replaced with something newer. Barely worth fixing a rig that old. ICOM still supports the Mark II but not for much longer. They don't support the original IC-706 but others will repair it. Not many other mobile rigs for sale.

As far as regens go.....not much luck. Saw an old (1930s) military BC-186 regen RX paired with a BC-187 TX – primitive stuff – that got up to a few Mhz...well, Mcps back then. Asking price \$275 for the pair. I've got a BC-186 in the collection, so no interest. That was the ONLY regen receiver there.



The receiver ran on batteries. It would take a crank generator to get the HV for the

transmitter! These were meant to be hauled in a pack on the back of mules! (along with battery box for the receiver and filaments for all the tubes, generator box for HV, antenna box, spares, etc).

Another seldom seen item showed up – a World Radio Labs Tech-Ceiver from the old old days of 6 meter AM operation. This kit was sold by World Radio Labs for \$39.95 in 1961. You needed an external power supply – another \$24.95 for a DC one to run mobile or \$19.95 for an AC supply. It had a fairly broad receiver – 20 KHz at the 6dB points. On transmit, it used 8 MHz crystals – multiplied up – with a final running 5w input and about a watt output. It was small – 5" x 9" by 6" and weighed 5 lbs.



Richard was there. After buying up everything in sight at hamfests and auctions for years, he is finally beginning to thin out his collection. He's got likely a dozen of just about every ham radio ever made – and never uses any of them – just piles them up in his barn and a dozen large trailers. He was there with 'bargains' but you'll need to likely do a lot of fixing on them. It's 'as is'.

For example:



Here's a stack of Hallicrafters HT-40 transmitters – from the 'novice days' when you had to be crystal control and under 75w input. The sign read ' \$30 – buy one – get one free. You could probably buy all 3 for \$20. He had a stack of Hallicrafters S-107 receivers – same deal only \$20 – and you get another one free. He had stacks of other receivers, too...same deal. Some complete – but likely all have been sitting in his trailers for years in the TX sun. At his home, you name the model, and he's got a stack of them – including Collins gear – National – Hammarlund – Hallicrafters – Eico - Heathkit – Johnson - etc, but he is still hoarding the 'good stuff'. A thousand or more radios. Maybe thousands of radios! Tens of tons of radios. Just recently has he started to sell 'the lower quality stuff'.

Didn't see anything I had to have. Had a breakfast taco and cup of coffee for a snack, yakked with Bill K8TE for a few minutes then headed out to some parks on the way home. Nothing new to run down in this neck of the woods so I'd wander a bit east, then straight north to I-45 and home. I guess I'll learn how attendance was at the hamfest. It wasn't crowded – that's for sure. I'd guess at least half the folks stayed home this year. It's just 30 miles SW of Houston – with ten thousand resident hams.

First park up today is **Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR – KFF-0542/K-0542** in Colorado County TX. - Home area for the endangered Prairie Chicken – and hurricanes sure don't help the restoration efforts to keep this species alive. This was a repeat but tried hard to get to 44 for the KFF-Challenge and made it with a few to spare. Headed on out to the next.



The last one for the trip was the Fanthorp Inn KFF-3500/K-3500 in Grimes County TX. A few had requested this county so here I was at this historic house in the teeny town of Anderson TX.

Managed to squeak out 45 Q's here.....



from the web:

“Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Bryan/College Station. It consists of six acres in Anderson, county seat of Grimes County. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department acquired the property by purchase in 1977 from a Fanthorp descendant, and it was opened to the public Oct. 4, 1987, to demonstrate 19th century life at an early Texas stagecoach stop and family home. Ten years were spent researching and restoring the inn to its 1850 use as both a family home and travelers' stop.

The double-pen, cedar log dogtrot house was built by an English immigrant, Henry Fanthorp, when Texas was part of Mexico. Fanthorp petitioned Stephen F. Austin in 1832 for permission to settle in this original Austin Colony. He bought 1,100 acres and built his house in 1834 on the road that crossed his land, thus bringing travelers to his door immediately. Henry Fanthorp was appointed postmaster by the provisional Texas government in 1835, and saw the advantage of offering other services and goods to his frequent visitors. Within time, Fanthorp's Inn became a well-known stopping place for both travelers and the community". Open only on weekends for tours. Skipped the tours.

Then it was north to hit I-45 and home – 204 miles from here and 3:30 hours to get to home. I zipped along I-45 (speed limit 75) keeping up with traffic at 80-82 mph for the next 150 miles. Slowed to 60mph for the last 45 miles. Whew! Arrived home at 4:30.

Actually went by the OSR along the route – Old San Antonio Road – from the 1600s - where you could, if you had the time, run the historic trail 4568 again. It's not a great road to drive on – crested and maybe 16 feet wide for much of it. Just find a spot to pull off and run it if you want. Didn't want to spend the time putting it out again so skipped it and the other repeat parks along I-45. Time to get home.

Had a fun 3 day trip down and back. Hope you caught something you needed.

Texas State Parks on the Air (TSPOTA)

Texas State Parks on the Air - April 18/19 2020

Operating times are from 1400Z on Saturday to 0200Z on Sunday and from 1400Z to 2000Z on Sunday. Stations may work the entire contest period.

Rules at: <https://www.tspota.org/rules>

Park designators at: https://393099a0-6556-4a07-bd09-1d6f8e7928f2.filesusr.com/ugd/ae6edf_43c533a2081842859e9586de3181c409.pdf

The list is similar to POTA/WWFF for the state parks. Historic sites and WMAs are not included. This is often an 80 and 40m event but a few mobiles/portables might be out and about activating parks. They have their own numbering system. The TSPOTA

activators may or may not upload logs to WWFF/POTA.

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As of 3/25 it's still on – but like many things in TX, it might get postponed or cancelled. Check the web site the days before.

Michigan Mini

MI Mini has been canceled for 2020 due to need for 'social distancing' – even more critical for 'seniors'. Hopefully this will all be over by 2021

Dayton Hamvention also canceled.

You'd be wise to cancel both reservations if you made them. Ed, K8ZZ, is working to make sure all the reservations that had the 'convention rate' do get canceled but you'd be wise to call and cancel yours anyway. (Received my refund check already for my MARAC reservation)

Oklahoma QSO Party

It looks like 74 or more of the 77 counties were on the air. One mobile had truck problems and aborted his run...missing ta few counties.

From the 3830s score page:

K5CM/N5KW mobile 1982 cw 324 ssb

As always thanks for the great mobile operators that really made the QP fun. W0BH, K0WHY, N0AC/N5C, AF5Q, K5DB/W5YO, N4CD, K5CM, N5KW, Conditions were pretty good at times, but at other times signals were weak with a lot of QSB. Were still at the bottom of the Sun Cycle so that is to be expected. In all my QSO party operating I have never had such massive pile-ups At times, on Saturday afternoon,

difficult for me to deal with.

Pam did most of the SSB operating and I did the CW. Pam also did most the driving (around 1120 miles). The score includes 2000 pts for operating in 4 counties on 80 meters. A total of 35 counties were covered.

All Q's are important but here are some of the most worked stations:

59 - 50: W5CW, K1RO, K3WJV, N8II

48 - 41: OM2VL, WN4AFP, N6MU, KV8Q, WB8WKQ

39 - 30: NS2N, N5DO, W8PI, W0ZQ

28 - 25: K5GA, KM4FO, KQ3F, DL3DXX, N8NA, N9NM, W8BZY

24 - 20: N4IJ, W0PI, K4ZGB, N7JPF, AA4TI, AC5O, N9OU, W5VS, W6OAT

19 - 15: KI6RRN, NJ4Q, W3WHK, K0AP, KJ4IWZ, NU0Q, HA8IB,
N0HJZ, W5ESE, W6RLL, W7OM

14 - 13: AD0YM, K9CW, KN4Y, N0NI, N4RKK, W5TM, WB9HFK, DL8USA,
N1SOH, VE5KS

12 - 10: NT6X, WC7Q, K4RUM, N4DPM, N7KRN, VE3AQ, KA0REN, NY9P,
W1END, W8SP

2020 Oklahoma QSO Party by Bob Harder, W0BH Mobile – 723 cw 287 SSB

In a most unusual year when almost all sporting events are canceled, radiosport is one thing we can still do! Lorna and I decided on a one-day run because I have lots to get ready for as we transition to online classes at Hesston College. I originally posted a two-day run, but QRZ.com was down when I tried to update the post, so sorry if you expected to find us on Sunday.

We got a late start but avoided most of the rain in the process. The goal was to cover 19 counties in northern and northeastern Oklahoma. Once we got on the air, it was amazing! This year was really special, with generally good band conditions and lower noise levels. I only worked 20 and 40 and often carried pileups from one county to the next. I always enjoy working county lines, but with the rain, my usual 3 and 4 county-line stops were too muddy, so we stayed on pavement.

Murphy always rides along, but this time he made himself known. 40m CW SWR and reception alternated between really good and really poor. It wasn't the antenna switch or the coax because the other two resonators on the triple worked great. I figured the resonator had gotten wet which occasionally shorted out the coil, so I swapped it out for my spare. That worked for about 15 minutes, then the same problem came back. I had installed a full multi-multi setup for last year's Texas QSO Party, so I had a third high-

power 40m resonator along. That one did the trick and suddenly I could hear again and you could hear me!

VE4QZ called me with a good signal looking for Woods county. I had a stop planned on the line, but when I got there, signals on both 40 and 20 were really down. I even sent him a message on the spotting network and got no response, so I finally had to leave. I only worked CW at that line because of the poor signals. After I left the line, signals really came up. When I went to 20 SSB, there he was, waiting. I felt really bad for not even trying SSB in Woods, so we took a detour back to Woods county at a different line and made the contact plus a bunch more Qs.

With the antenna delays and short lunch and supper breaks, we were running out of time heading towards Nowata county. Luckily others had already been through the last few counties on our schedule and more were scheduled on Sunday. It appeared we'd have about 45 seconds in Nowata before 0100Z, so I took a list on SSB and all five on the list got in the log as we crossed the line! That's cutting it close.

It turned out we wouldn't have been able to complete our route because the road was closed before what would have been our next county. It was also dark, and it was fortunate Lorna was really holding on to the steering wheel as we went through deep water over right side of the road. The detour (flooded bridge perhaps) would have been long and dirt roads were a bad option, so we headed north to southern Kansas, and arrived home safely about midnight.

Stats

Operated 8.2 hours, 1004 Qs, 290 unique calls, 10 dupes, 385 OKQP miles (727 total miles).

States not worked : AK HI RI UT

Canadian mults worked : AB BC MB ON SK

OK worked : 1 county : OKM

DX worked : 6 countries : DL EA GI HA I OM

Special thanks to my top scorers:

31: K1RO N8II

26: N6MU

25: OM2VL

24: K3WJV

18: N5DO W0ZQ
17: WN4AFP
15: KQ3F
14: DL3DXX K5GA KV8Q NS2N W0PI
12: AC5O N8NA
11 KM4FO W6OAT
10: N0HJZ N4RKK N9NM NT6X NU0Q WB8WKQ

OK Mobiles Worked
none

Thanks to Connie/K5CM (and Pam/N5KW) for getting us all organized and keeping in touch as routes and county coverage changed. This was one of the "busiest" OKQPs I can remember, and it really felt good to think about something else for a bit in these trying times. Thank you all for that as well, and for the kind words as we traveled along.

73, Bob/w0bh and Lorna/k0why

N0AC as N5C mobile - 1208 cw QSO

First and foremost is my thanks for a safe trip and my non-ham XYL for doing all the driving. Without her these mobile outing wouldn't happen.

Second thanks is to all the hams contacting the N5C mobile station. Without you this wouldn't be any fun. Thanks for your patience while the truck bounced, ducked and dived making for many keyboarding mistakes.

Third thanks to Pam and Connie for setting up and sponsoring the 2020 Oklahoma QSO Party.

Every QSO party is a learning experience and there were a few new notes in the book to remember for the next one. Saturday was frustrating but Sunday better. Our original route of 28 counties changed when we added LOV and dropped a few that were covered by fixed stations. We also lost a few counties due to Saturday issues. In the end we activated 20 counties.

Notable callers were: K3WJV (27), K1RO (27), N6MU (24), N8II (24). As usual I always smile when my ham friends back home call in: N5PHT, W0BNW, NU0Q, N0NI, KD0ZV, and WW0Z.

I'm still amazed when I work DX while operating mobile and they were: DL, F, HA, LY, OM, ON, SM, SP, and many VE's.

Thanks for all the QSO guys and gals!

Bill, N0AC aka N5C

N4CD mobile 687 cw 34 ssb

Ran two days in the OK QP putting out parks. Lots of activity. Worked only 2 mobiles – one at 20 miles, one at 100 miles for 5 counties in OK – otherwise, not much in the way of working OK multipliers. Missed HI, WY, NV, ND and most of VE land. Had fun putting out the parks on a 4 day trip – full report follows in next section.

Ran NOW, WAS, OSA, PAW, CRE, OKM, OKF, PIT, ATO, BRY in contest.

WN4AFP - fixed SC - 113 CW - 65 counties

Thank you K5CM for hosting a very enjoyable and exciting contest! I decided to really put my QP hour into Okie QP this year. Of course, with the SQP Challenge in play, I needed to do well in all three QPs.

The mobile ops were amazing and they kept be spinning the big knob. I was almost too far from OK on 40m and I was almost too close for 20m, so there were many times when I could barely hear the mobiles, but the mobiles still heard me.

I was able to work 65 of the 77 counties and I worked K5CM in 45 of the 65 counties. That's a lot of Qs with the same mobile. The pileups were full of my QP friends and all of us were doing our best to make the contact. Because I typically work K5CM during the CWT sprints running at 38-40 wpm, I thought that I'd give that a try during this contest. He heard my 39 wpm callsign in every pile. What fun it was. I want to thank N5C, W0BH, W5YO and N5XTR for running mobile. I want to especially thank Bob N4CD/m, for actually giving me a call for a contact. That was a rare experience.

The contest was great and the competition was fierce... Can't beat QPs!

73s

Dave WN4AFP

stateqsoparty.com Team Leader

KM4FO in KY reported 103 CW QSO and 65 counties worked

N9MM - fixed- south TX - 86 cw 58 counties

I had a lot of fun with this contest. There were a lot of ops on cw; on 20, 40, and 80 meters. Special thanks to all of those rovers, who drove all over the state, during bad wx and thunderstorms, so that we could get more counties. Also thanks to those ops who struggled to copy our weak signals, we so appreciate your patience. I made more contacts than any previous year, and had a great time doing it.

NJ4Q - fixed - VA 69 cw 48 counties

Enjoyed following the Mobiles, especially Bob N4CD, who used to live in Lynchburg, VA and now traveling out and around giving out counties. The OK Mobiles were excellent ops with good ears. Thanks to the Fixed stations for the Qs. Did better than last year and that's what counts. Best to all.
de NJ4Q Knight

KN4Y - fixed - FL 54 cw 34 counties

Been sick this was a sitting operation.

K1RO - fixed NH - 161 cw 44 ssb - 70 counties

That was interesting... 162 of my 205 QSOs were with mobile stations, mostly on CW. I'm not sure how many counties were active, but I know I missed a few on Saturday when I missed several hours. With many stations waiting for mobiles to change county, the pileups were fearsome, especially on Sunday when we had worked most of the fixed stations.

K3WJV - fixed PA - 148 cw 36 ssb 65 counties

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of the mobiles for making this a fantastic Qso party. 133 of my 184 Q's were with mobiles accounting for 51 of my 65 mults. Hats off to the mobiles and their support crew! Hopefully all made it home safely.

I'm kicking myself for starting 3 hours late on Saturday. The counties I missed were all on the planned routes for Saturday so there was a chance I might have been able to get a sweep. I only worked AB5J once and 3 of the counties I needed were on his schedule so maybe a sweep still wouldn't have happened but I think those 3 lost hours most likely kept me from 200 Q's. Oh well, the old shoulda coulda story.

Stats for the mobiles: Q's/Mults - K5CM 50/23, W5YO 31/8, N5C 27/10, W0BH 24/9 and AB5J 1/1 thank you all for contributing to my score. I hope you had as much fun as I did on my end. I'm looking forward to next year and hope you all will be returning.

N7JPF - fixed- OR 73 cw 5 ssb 55 counties

Great contest OK! The conditions to Eastern Oregon were fantastic the entire time except for 2 hour drop in 20meters about noon on Saturday. Thankfully it came back. I really appreciate the effort by all ops to include a lot of 20m operation for those out of range of 40. Special thanks to the great mobile ops K5CM, N0AC(N5C) N4CD, W5YO, and W0BH. I can't believe I got 55 of the 77 counties. Incredible. Thankfully conditions are ether improving, or things were just really great for us this weekend.

N6MU - fixed - CA 145 cw 74 counties

Missed JAC/JOH/PON. Top mobile for me was K5CM with 48 Qs followed by W5YO(28), W0BH(26), N5C(24), N4CD(11), K0WHY(9) and AB5J((6). Unfortunately, AB5J(AF5Q) had a truck problem early Saturday that took him out of the Party. Hope everything is okay now, Ron. A big thanks to K5CM for all his efforts to cover a LOT of counties. 73...

John, N6MU

N5DO - fixed - FL 110 cw 10 ssb - 74 counties

I kept trying 20M to see if I could work any OK stations, but couldn't hear a single one. Thanks to the mobiles for coming down to 40M periodically -- I decided to try to get a clean sweep of all the OK counties, but ended up 3 short. It made for an enjoyable weekend!

KF5VO - fixed - OK - 112 SSB QSO

Operated portable from Lake Murray State Park on the Love / Carter county line,, KC5LL also made 65Q from here.

N8II – fixed – WV 159 cw 59 ssb 68 counties

The mobiles really made the difference in keeping my interest at a decent level. It is a topsy turvy year when my Q's in OK QP exceed NC. Thanks to a long stay by K5CM, I got rare CIM/TEX before he left despite the late start. All of the mobiles provided many counties that were otherwise impossible. Many thanks to Con/Pam K5CM for the most Q's and mults. I was able to work them 4 times (40/20 both modes) on several multi-county lines. Many thanks also to Bob and Lorna W0BH/K0WHY for their 750 mile one day journey. Bill(N0AC)N5C/M and W5YO/M from the AR Razorback Club provided many QSO's and were much appreciated. Very few Q's were not S&P. The spots made it a lot easier, but I missed some or was taking time off which cost some counties. 40 was barely open from here from about 17Z-21Z; thanks for digging me out. 20 was open well most of the time, but activity died around 22-23Z Saturday. W5YO was still loud at 2354Z.

Thanks for the Q's and congrats to John N6MU for racking up all of those counties and Q's with his Hustler vertical.

73, Jeff N8II

On the Road with N4CD III

Wow – things changed fast in a week or two with COVID-19 rampant. State Parks in IL have been shut down. Restaurants in half a dozen states now closed inside – only takeout. Dallas County shutting down restaurants and bars -only takeout. Same for my hometown, Plano, TX. I was still anxious to do more parks in OK – to do some first time activations of the new POTA and WWFF parks so I'd plan a 4 day trip or so up there to the east half of OK. Hopefully, I'd find places to eat – so far no big problems there. I guess I could eat convenience store take out or pizza if it came to that! It's all likely to change quickly to 'all shut down'.

The forecast – well, it was going to rain for 4 days in TX at home – with a day or two of

severe storms possible and plummeting temps. It was 83F on Wednesday before the trip and going to be in the 40s and low 50s for a week. OK was supposed to be a bit better rain wise, but it rained every single day of the trip – and some days most of the day with drizzle. Almost no sun the entire trip after the first half day – cloudy – and temps mostly around 41F the entire time. The cold front came down Thursday. OK looked like winter was still there – no spring yet – the grass brown – the fields brown – no buds on trees – zip. Back home, spring was trying to start but not quite there yet but temps were 10-25 deg warmer in TX. Pollen season had started in TX – achoo! Super high tree-pollen.

While I was gone, there were tornadoes out in west TX. Oklahoma is right in 'tornado alley' - right where I would be. Fortunately, nothing but one night of t-storms, lots of 20-30 mph winds at times during the day – drizzle - and nothing more serious on the trip this time. Here's a recap:

So on Thursday March 12 I headed northeast again to Choctaw County OK and the new Fort Towson Historic Site in POTA only (not in WWFF) – K-6337 in their system. They have added historic sites to their list of parks in OK. Some have some wildlife but most don't specialize in that. Thus, they are not in the WWFF – World Wide Flora and Fauna system. Along the way, the car tugged at me as I passed half a dozen other parks I'd previously run – but today had no time for repeat visits as I headed to 'new ones'. The trusty Malibu LTD started with 116,446 miles on the odometer. It was chilly outside in TX – 40s.

Fort Towson Historic Site – Choctaw County OK – K-6337



From the state site:

“Fort Towson was established in 1824 to quell conflicts between lawless elements, American Indian peoples, and settlers claiming the area as part of Arkansas Territory. The fort also served as an outpost on the border between the United States and Texas, which at that time was part of Mexico. Connected to the East by road, Fort Towson served as a gateway for settlers bound for Texas during the 1830s. Those passing through the area included Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, and Stephen F. Austin. When the Choctaw and Chickasaw were displaced from their lands in the southeastern United States, the fort served as a point of dispersal upon their arrival in the West. The fort was also an important staging area for US forces during the Mexican War of 1846.

Fort Towson was abandoned in 1856 when the frontier moved West. During the Civil War, however, it served for a time as headquarters for Confederate forces operating in Indian Territory. In 1865 General Stand Watie surrendered his command near the fort and became the last Confederate general to lay down arms. “

It also happens to be on the **Cherokee Trail of Tears – K-3791** so it's a two-fer for them! I'd be the first to activate the “OK” part of this trail. It was a terminus point for those forced west. Put 25Q in the log and moved on headed north – no reason to spend a lot of time there – it will get run and run and run by others. Stopped at a local convenience store for a second breakfast – usually get some sort of egg biscuit – but had a 'bacon stuffed waffle'. It's a small waffle (3x5 inches) filled with egg and bacon. Yum – good. Never heard of them before!

Next up was **Pushmataha WMA in – Pushmataha County OK – KFF-4823/K-6370**



from the state site:

“Pushmataha WMA covers 19,247 acres of northern Pushmataha County in the southeastern part of Oklahoma. Located approximately five miles south of Clayton, Pushmataha WMA is on the western fringe of the Ouachita mountain range and is comprised of a mixture of oak/pine forest and oak/pine savannahs with steep slopes, shallow soils and rocky terrain.

In areas where the canopy has been released, all four major prairie grasses exist with numerous forbs and native legumes. There have been over 650 varieties of native plants identified on the area. Some of the native tree species you will encounter are shortleaf pine, post oak, red oak, black oak, hickory, elm, blackgum, sweetgum, rusty blackhaw, flowering dogwood, and hawthorne. You will also encounter high bush huckleberry, low bush huckleberry, different varieties of sumac, coralberry, poison ivy, green brier, blackberry and many others. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 52 inches. “

I found the WMA – good signs to get you there – and headed 'up' the ridge to a nice shooting range right off the road – both target and skeet shooting area. You're way up with a great shot going east – and great for working EU. However, not all WMAs are so easy to find. This had good signs right off the main highway to get you there. You have a couple mile good gravel/dirt road in. 73F and cloudy/hazy but great view before the cold front hit later this day.



Pushmataha shooting range

View to Northeast

I had a good run there and put 44+Qs in the log. Caught some EU DX. I'd be aiming for 44+ at the parks that were in WWFF. Mark, KM6HB, needed this county and missed me last trip this way. We connected! Ran with the car windows wide open! Nice! 71Qs in the log.

Robbers Cave WMA K-6373 KFF-4830 – Latimer County

from the state site:

“Robbers Cave WMA covers 6,180 acres of Latimer County in Southeast Oklahoma. The area is located on Highway 2 north of Wilburton. The area is adjacent to the Robbers Cave State Park.

The area consists mostly of hills covered with pine timber, with scattered oaks and hickory and very few openings. “

Relatively easy to find. Sign off highway.



Supposedly you can get to the next WMA via 'Iron Gate Road' which runs to the west through this WMA maybe five miles from the main highway into James Collin WMA. Never found it! Never found anything on the west side of the road to run or have access into that looked like it went anywhere. Maybe I missed it. So it was around this one after the run on a 20 mile detour to get to the next.

The web instructions will get you right into this next WMA – no sweat – signs off the

main highway make it easy to find.

Had to skip Robbers Cave State Park nearby – no time to run it. Dang. Well, had run that before.

James Collins WMA – KFF – 4811 and K-6354 - Pittsburg County OK



from the web:

“James Collins WMA covers 21,353 acres of northern Pittsburg and Latimer Counties in southeast Oklahoma. The area is located south of Highway 31, about 20 miles northeast of McAlester and 8 miles west of Quinton.

The area provides a wide variety of upland habitats, starting with pine covered ridges in the east and changing to Oak/Hickory forests, with many openings as you go west across the area. Native grasslands are interspersed throughout much of the area, with the bulk of the openings on the northern and western portions of the property. “

There's a primitive campground right as you enter – good spot to run from! I checked my county locator – was in Pittsburg County – so ran that. It's nice when they locate parks equally distributed in the counties! (many of these WMAs span multiple counties)

Put 80Qs in the log from here – then headed to the motel in Eufala, OK about 20 miles away. No Wnydham property there – maybe a former one. Stopped to get gas and asked the attendant about motels in town. He asked 'do you want the one with bed bugs, the one with crack whores, or the one you can relax and enjoy?'.....I'd seen a few motels listed on the web but until you see them close up, you have no clue – web ads can be very deceiving. I said 'the one you can relax at' and he directed me to a Best Western. Checked prices on line and it seemed reasonable. \$71 listed for the folks like hotels.com, booking.com, etc. Drove over there and got their rate – but with taxes, it's still up to \$85. Nice hotel. It had been a busy day with 300 miles of driving and four parks put out. Dinner at a 'diner' nearby.

Friday March 13 2020

The day started out with 53F temp (and falling) and steady drizzle. First up was a POTA only park – **K-6336 – Honey Springs Battlefield HS in McIntosh County, OK.**



from the OK state site:

The Engagement at Honey Springs was the largest of more than 107 documented hostile encounters in Indian Territory. The engagement took place on a rainy Friday, July 17, 1863, between the First Division Army of the Frontier, commanded by Major General James G. Blunt, and the Confederate Indian Brigade led by Brigadier General Douglas

H. Cooper. Cherokee and Creek regiments fought on both sides. There were approximately 9,000 men involved including American Indians, veteran Texas regiments, and the First Kansas Colored Volunteers, which was the first African American regiment in the Union army.

The Battle of Honey Springs, the climatic engagement of the Civil War in Indian Territory, had been in the making since the beginning of the war.

More than two years earlier the United States government had withdrawn its small peace-keeping forces from the forts of Indian Territory for what it considered more urgent military needs in the East. Soon afterward, authorities of the Confederate States signed treaties of alliance with the Five Tribes, and for a year Confederate control of Indian Territory remained unchallenged. Then, as part of an overall plan for conquering the Confederacy, Federal forces invaded Indian Territory.

After a year of unsuccessful efforts to reestablish Federal authority, Colonel William A. Phillips of Kansas occupied Fort Gibson in April of 1863, and Confederate authority in Indian Territory was successfully challenged for the first time.

At once the Confederates made plans to drive the Federals from Fort Gibson. While Colonel Phillips struggled to keep his supply line open to Fort Scott, Kansas, 175 miles to the north, the Confederates assembled twenty miles southwest of Fort Gibson at Honey Springs. From this location Confederate cavalry detachments harassed the Federals at Fort Gibson and attacked supply trains en route from Fort Scott.

The Confederate installation at Honey Springs consisted of a frame commissary building, a log hospital, several arbors, and numerous tents. Several springs supplied ample water for soldiers and livestock.

Through the encampment ran the Texas Road, the main pre-war transportation route connecting Indian Territory with Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas. Honey Springs had served for some years as a stage stop, provision point, and watering place on the Texas Road. Early in the Civil War it became an important depot for the Confederates. It took on increased significance as the Confederates planned to drive all Federal forces from Indian Territory during the mid-summer of 1863. For this purpose about 6,000 soldiers were collected. Supplies were brought from Fort Smith, Arkansas, as well as from Boggy Depot, Fort Cobb, Fort Arbuckle, and Fort Washita, all located in Indian Territory.

The Confederates at Honey Springs were ready to march on Fort Gibson and awaited the

arrival of approximately 3,000 reinforcements and additional artillery from Fort Smith on July 17 under the command of Brigadier General William L. Cabell, a West Point graduate distinguished for bravery in combat. In command of the Confederate forces at Honey Springs was Brigadier General Douglas H. Cooper, a former United States Choctaw-Chickasaw Indian Agent and an officer veteran of the Mexican War. He was highly respected by the Indians he faithfully served in both civil and military life.

Confederate deserters and Federal spies had kept Colonel Phillips informed of the impending attack on Fort Gibson. Supplies and troops were rushed from Fort Scott. On July 1 and 2 at Cabin Creek, Confederate forces attempted to intercept a large military supply train of 200 wagons en route to Fort Gibson. They did not succeed and the Federals were able to hold Fort Gibson and prepare for an offensive against the Confederate forces at Honey Springs. The supply train had barely reached its destination when Major General James G. Blunt arrived from Kansas with additional troops and artillery. Altogether only about 3,000 Federals were then at Fort Gibson and available for field operations. Information soon reached Blunt that Cabell planned to bring 3,000 men to join Cooper's 6,000 Confederate troops for the planned attack on Fort Gibson.

The Union force consisted of about 3,000 men equipped with late-model Springfield rifles and twelve pieces of artillery, including several efficient Napoleon guns.

On the other side, the Confederate units, with 5,700 men present for duty in the battle, were arranged in battle formation as Brigadier General Cooper had directed three days before the engagement. About one-quarter of them were without serviceable firearms, and they were supported by only four pieces of light artillery. Several units of Texans were serving with the Indian forces.

By 2 p.m, the battle was over—four hours after it began. The Confederates moved east from the battlefield and at about 4 p.m. joined Brigadier General Cabell's 3,000-man force en route with four mountain howitzers from Fort Smith, about fifty miles distant. Blunt decided not to pursue the Confederates because his men and horses were fatigued and his ammunition was almost exhausted. Still suffering from an intense fever that forced him to go to bed, he ordered his forces to bivouac for the night on the battlefield, treat the wounded, and bury the dead, including the Confederates. Late on the day following the battle, Blunt directed his forces to return to Fort Gibson.

Cooper reported his losses as 134 killed and wounded, with 47 taken prisoner. He maintained the Federal killed and wounded exceeded two hundred. Blunt reported his losses as seventeen killed and sixty wounded. He said he buried 150 Confederates, wounded 400 of their men, and took 77 prisoners. The exact numbers will never be

known. Cooper afterwards sent a letter of appreciation to Blunt for his burial of the Confederate dead. Their unmarked graves may still be in the Honey Springs area. The bodies of the Federal dead were later reinterred in the Fort Gibson National Cemetery.

The Battle of Honey Springs was in both size and importance the Gettysburg of the Civil War in Indian Territory, for it marked the climax of massed Confederate military resistance and opened the way for the capture of Fort Smith and much of Arkansas. Perhaps, in terms of results, Honey Springs was the Gettysburg of the Trans-Mississippi West. It is significant also because it was one of the earliest engagements of the Civil War in which blacks proved their qualities as fighting men.

The Honey Springs settlement completely disappeared with the construction of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad soon after the Civil War. The Texas Road was closed with the coming of US Highway 69 in the 1920s. Today the Honey Springs battle site of nearly 3,000 acres is still wooded and rural, much as it was at the time of the engagement between the North and the South.”

Had a short run (only 10 needed for this POTA only park) then moved on to **Fort Gibson – another POTA only State Historic Site. K-6338 McIntosh, OK.**



As you already know from the above site, this was a major fort in the Civil War in the “Indian Territories”. From the state web:

“Visitors to the site can see a reconstruction of the early log fort and the stockade, as well as original buildings from the 1840–70s. Exhibits detailing the history of the fort are located in the Commissary Visitor Center on Garrison Hill. The site also hosts a number of special living history events and programs throughout the year. Fort Gibson is a National Historic Landmark.

The site features a log stockade that was reconstructed under the Works Progress Administration 1937. The structure underwent extensive restoration beginning in 2013, and reopened to the public in 2016.

Fort Gibson served a pivotal role in the political, social, and economic upheaval that marked the westward expansion of the United States.

Built at the critical crossroads of the Three Forks where the Arkansas, Verdigris, and Grand Rivers converge south of the Ozark Plateau, Fort Gibson was key to river navigation. It also served as an outpost on the Texas Road connecting settled Missouri with the new country of Mexico after independence from Spain in 1820.

Fort Gibson was established in 1824 to keep the peace between the Osages and Cherokees. It figured prominently in the Indian removals and was home to many of our nation's leaders during the 1840s and 1850s. Fort Gibson served as a starting point for several military expeditions that explored the West. It was occupied through most of the Indian removal period, but then abandoned in 1857. The post was reactivated during the Civil War. It was renamed Fort Blunt and served as the Union headquarters in Indian Territory. The army stayed through the Reconstruction and Indian Wars periods, combating the problem of outlaws and squatters.

Abandoned in 1890, the fort was later the headquarters of the Dawes Commission for their work enrolling members of the Five Tribes. “

Easy to run site. Had a quick run – no need to work at 44Q and moved on. Worked mainly POTA folks as it was the same county as previous park.

Cherokee WMA KFF-4800 K-6344 in Cherokee County OK

Put 79Qs in the log from this WMA. Easy to run. Signs off main road to get you there!



From the state site:

“Cherokee WMA consists of approximately 31,360 acres in southwestern Cherokee County and is located two miles south of Hwy. 62 at Zeb, Oklahoma.

The WMA is a mixture of uplands with scattered fields and small stream riparian areas. Numerous ponds dot the landscape. Oak-hickory timber on rolling hills predominate the area. Fields and meadows with native bunch grasses and brushy thickets are found throughout with several seasonal small streams bisecting the area. The main drainage is Greenleaf Creek, which runs east to west, and contains typical bottom land over-story such as: sycamore, elm, ash, hackberry, mulberry and pecan. The average annual precipitation is about 41 inches.”

Next up – **Camp Gruber WMA – KFF-4798 and K-4798 in Muscogee OK**

This is an active military base – and most of it is restricted. If you want to go into the permit only parts of this WMA, you first need to take their 1-2 hour course in 'safety'. There 'might be' unexploded ordinance of all types. There is still active fire drills here. The course teaches you how to recognize the different devices that may be present and yet to be found and how to report them. I've seen this requirement at two or three other facilities around the country as well.

Missed the sign on the way in – couldn't stop – truck on my tail and no place to pull over – but got it on the way out.



I checked the map real closely. There seemed to be one small section – that was in the WMA area #4 that had a road called Machine Shop road. I headed there and yes, there was no gate and you could drive in. No very serious 'no trespassing signs either' (threatening jail and big fines) as by the other gates into the other areas including most of Area #4. Found a spot along the road to run it. Otherwise, your chances of getting in are near zero to the other areas – limited access. Maybe if you are a nearby hunter and play the hunting permit game – but only a few get a permit each year to get in – and then you better be hunting for most of the time.

From the state web site:

“ In 1949, slightly less than half of the acquired acreage was deeded to the State of Oklahoma. Since that time the property has been used as a wildlife management area. The Oklahoma Wildlife Department and the Oklahoma National Guard have held joint licenses on the 32,000 acres in eastern Muskogee County.

Camp Gruber hosts Government agencies, Law Enforcement, and Joint Service forces in a variety of challenging training environments ranging from European-styled MOUT facilities, collapsed structure situations to new life-fire ranges. Camp Gruber's diverse training areas feature low-lying swamps and lake shores along Greenleaf Lake, open prairie, steep hills and an adequate road network for theater of operations training. The terrain, very similar to Western Europe, provides maneuver areas for infantry, engineer,

medical, transportation, aviation and other units. “

Had a good run then headed up to the next.

- - -

I ran through a corner of Adair County and put it out mostly on one band – didn't have time to do much more – just a short bit of highway in the top corner.

Next park – **Spavinaw WMA KFF-4833 K-6376 in Delaware County OK**



From the state web site:

“Spavinaw WMA covers 14,316 acres in western Delaware and eastern Mayes counties in northeast Oklahoma and is located south of Hwy. 20 (southwest of the town of Jay).

Spavinaw WMA is a part of the Ozark Plateau with rugged flint hills, bottom lands and some prairie on the west side. Oak and hickory trees predominate the flint hills, which are interspersed with Eastern Shortleaf Pine, dogwoods and other understory plants. Bottom lands consist of Sycamore, walnut and elm trees with some cleared fields present. The prairie area is comprised primarily of native prairie grasses (Big and Little bluestem/Switchgrass/Indian Grass), native forbs and legumes. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 44 inches.”

If you read the sign, you should have your OK Wildlife Permit before entering. I do.....

Had a good run of 66Q from here. Headed to the next.

Cabin Creek Battlefield HS – Mayes County OK K-6335 POTA only



This is the entrance to the park -



Dirt road going in – a bit bumpy but take it slow! Very sharp drop and rise across a creek bed.

From the state site:

“The Cabin Creek Battlefield is the site of two important engagements between Union and Confederate forces in Indian Territory during the Civil War. The site is located along the Texas Road, a historic trail from Kansas to Texas, near the ford that crosses the creek. The road was used by Indians, white explorers, US Army, pioneer immigrants, trail herds, and traders. Joseph Martin, a mixed-blood Cherokee, built a ranch west of the crossing around which a small community grew before the Civil War.

The Texas Trail was the conduit for military supplies moving south from Fort Scott, Kansas, to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, during the war. Several minor skirmishes occurred at the Cabin Creek crossing area. The first was a skirmish on May 8, 1863, near Martin’s house, Cabin Creek, of which very little is known. The first of the two important engagements occurred July 1–2, 1863, known as the First Battle of Cabin Creek, and was an attempt by Confederate forces under Colonel Stand Watie to capture a Federal supply wagon train. The Federal troops were commanded by Colonel James Williams whose force consisted of the Third Indian Home Guard and the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry and units from Colorado, Kansas, and Wisconsin. Watie’s troops contested the ford but were driven off by artillery fire followed by infantry and cavalry charges. On July 5, 1863, a skirmish occurred involving the Kansas 2nd Battery, Light Artillery. Later, on July 20, the First Indian Home Guard skirmished with Confederates.

The Second Battle of Cabin Creek on September 19, 1864, was another attempt to capture Federal supplies en route to Fort Gibson. Brigadier Generals Richard Gano and Stand Watie made a night attack on the Federal encampment that routed Union defenders. The supplies and 130 wagons were captured. This was the last major engagement in Indian Territory during the Civil War.

Preservation efforts began in 1961 when the Vinita Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy purchased a ten-acre parcel in the core battlefield area. Later that year, the acreage was donated to the Oklahoma Historical Society, which has administered the site. A circle drive loop within the ten acres provides access to monuments and signage telling the story of the site. ”

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After the run, I headed on in to Big Cabin, OK – off the I-44 turnpike – to the Super 8 there. Been there before. Dinner at the only sit down restaurant in the area – the Cherokee Restaurant at the truck stop across the street. Good 'roast beef' dinner (open face sandwich with two sides) and salad bar and cake for desert for \$11. Decent. Slept well.

Saturday Morning 3 14 2020

The OK QSO Party would start at 9am central time (1400z). I planned to run a bunch of parks today in the various counties – for county hunters, park chasers, and OK QP folks. There would be several other mobiles out including K5DB, K5CM, AF5Q as AB5J, N0AC as N5C, and others. Sadly, super mobile K5YAA, who used to run with a trailer, a generator, and an SB-200 amp to get 300-400+ watts out – became SK recently. His last travels were a couple years ago and usually he clobbered the competition with his trailer holding antennas, generators and a Heathkit SB-200 amp running a couple hundred watts out. Maybe Troy, K5OH would be on the air from home. Not many other county hunters there in OK these days. Norm, W3DYA, used to run the southeast corner but has become inactive as a mobile in this and others.

Well, I'd do what I could and not focus on urgently getting from county to county as this was a parks on the air trip. I'm up at 6am. Usually the motels have breakfast at 6am too...but these days, the sun isn't up till 7:30 or later. So I drag my feet and hit the road a bit after 7:30 now. It's overcast and drizzling. Lots of rain the previous night – with giant puddles on the sides of many roads – and fields flooded in places.

I headed out to **Oogalah WMA in Nowata County – KFF-4821/K-6364** and it took a while to get there. Route 60 heading west was closed – bridge out – with a 20 mile detour to get around it – and back on route 60 to get to Oogalah WMA. There are no signs off the main route – make sure you write down how to get to these WMAs. There are no signs until you arrive via some back roads to the WMA.

From the web:

“Oologah WMA covers 12,941 acres in Nowata and Rogers counties in northeastern Oklahoma Located just east of Hwy. 169, southeast of the town of Nowata, Oak, pecan and willow are the predominant tree species present in the river bottoms. Locust, button bush, willow, hackberry and elm are present around the lake with some old fields and native grass interspersed throughout. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 39 inches. “



I ran 40m then 30M until the contest started. Then hit 20M for the QP and ended with 86Q from here.

Next up is **Copan WMA KFF-4803 / K6347 in Washington County.**

From the state website:

“Copan WMA covers 7,532 acres of Washington County in Northeast Oklahoma and is located north of Bartlesville.

Copan WMA is a mixture of cross-timbers, tall grass prairie and river bottom habitat. Bottomland habitats occur along Little Caney River and Cotton Creek drainages. Upland sites are a mixture of tall grass prairie, crop land and post oak/blackjack oak ridges. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 40 inches.”

Had a good run of 86Q here with the OKQP folks added to the mix. Whew, so fierce pileups on 20M CW!

This is near the KS border – not the optimum route for the QSO Party – had to backtrack a lot for the next.

Osage WMA KFF-4822 K-6365 in Osage County OK

Osage WMA covers 9,512 acres of Osage county in northeast Oklahoma. The area is made up of two units, the Western Wall unit (5,950 acres) and the Rock Creek unit (3,722 acres) located north of Pawhuska, Okla.



From the state site:

“Osage WMA is a mixture of cross-timbers, tall grass prairie and river bottom habitats.

Bottom land habitats occur along the Rock Creek, Pond Creek, and Mud Creek drainages. Upland sites are a mixture of tall grass prairie and post oak-blackjack ridges. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 40 inches. “

There are two units – you can run either for credit. Pulled in and had a good run there in Osage County. 86Q including half from OKQP folks.

Still lots more time today. Drizzled all day. No fun for the tourists.

Skiatook WMA KFF-4832 K-6365 in Osage County – same county!

From the state website:

“Skiatook WMA covers 5,085 acres of Osage County in north central Oklahoma. Skiatook WMA is located on the upper ends of Skiatook Lake near the towns of Hominy and Skiatook.

Hominy Creek is the major drainage that supplies the lake. Most of the WMA is

comprised of post oak-blackjack timber with openings in tall grass prairie species. While most of the bottomland hardwood timber was destroyed during reservoir construction, sizeable fragments still remain on the far upper ends of the major drainages. Water portions of the lake comprise approximately 1,800 acres of the WMA. Due to the rugged terrain and limited access points, much of the WMA is best accessed by boat. “



This one is right off the main road – but you better have great eye sight. Sign off to the side of the road where difficult to see – in to a primitive camping area – about the only place in the WMA to run it. Drove by it 3 times before finally spying the sign 200 feet off the side of the road and the gravel/dirt one lane road in.

Since this was the same county – started on 20m SSB to try to get to 44+ QSOs. Most of the QSO folks already had this county on CW. 85Qs go in the log for this park. (Some cw dupes for Osage county – that combined log for Osage county will be a mess to straighten out!) Finished with 85Qs here.

Still time for more today!

Next – **Keystone WMA – KFF-4813/K-6354 in Pawnee County OK**

from the state site:

“Keystone WMA covers 22,393 acres of Creek, Osage, and Pawnee Counties in north

central Oklahoma. Located near the towns of Cleveland, Mannford, and Oilton, Keystone WMA is comprised of the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers and adjacent flood plains and bottom lands.

The Arkansas and Cimarron Rivers are wide shallow major drainages in the state and with their sandbars they comprise about 20% of the WMA acreage. Adjacent to the rivers are forests dominated by willow and cottonwood. As the elevation rises from the rivers, the WMA transitions to a mixture of bottomland hardwood trees, cropland fields, old fallow farm fields, and smaller areas of upland habitat. There are numerous sloughs, natural and man-made wetlands, and mudflats where the rivers deposit silt into the lake. Much of the water on the WMA is too shallow for boat traffic unless the lake elevation is high. “

Ran Creek County on the way today – had a bit of time at the end. Worked a few ID stations in the ID QP including county hunter KV7N. A couple mobiles were out in the ID QP.

Checked around and no Wyndham properties within 40 miles to the south - so stayed nearby in Cleveland, OK at the Victorian Inn – an older property but decent - \$57 for the night.



Victorian Inn – Cleveland OK

Motel fairly busy – lots of cars in lot.

Restaurant next door – Shiloh's. Good – had the grilled chicken breast and two sides plus a big 'roll'. Still drizzle and gloom and low 40s. Gas prices around \$1.70/gal now.

Sunday March 15 2020

Temp – low 40s. Total overcast and sort of dark when I left town after a breakfast at the Shiloh restaurant. Had to spin wheels waiting for them to open at 7am. On the road by 7:40am to the next park.

Deep Fork WMA – KFF-4805 K-6349



You can easily run this at half a dozen places. Had a good run of 92Qs from here. Headed out early – did run 30M before the QSO Party started at 1400z. That helps reach 44+ Qs. Most of the day I would not run 30M since those didn't count for the QP. Once the QP started, I stuck to 20 and 40M.

Next up – **Okmulgee WMA KFF-4820 K-6363** in Okmulgee County OK from the state website:

“Okmulgee Wildlife Management Area covers 10,900 acres of west-central Okmulgee County. Located 5 miles west of the city of Okmulgee, the area is heavily wooded in post oak-blackjack timber and bisected by seven miles of the Deep Fork of the Canadian River. The Okmulgee Wildlife Management Area contains one of the largest known tracts of old growth Post oak/Blackjack oak "Crosstimbers" found anywhere. Many of the area's post oaks are likely over 350 years old, making them some of the oldest trees

found East of the Rocky Mountains in North America. Crosstimber, although not highly productive, is unique in that it provides habitat for both classic "Western" species like the Greater Roadrunners and Easter species like the Indigo Bunting and is rich in biological diversity.

The area is approximately 95% wooded, with elevations ranging from about 600 ft. near the river to over 950 ft. on wooded ridges. Post oaks, blackjack oaks, and hickories dominate the poor, rocky upland soils, with burr oaks, pin oaks, red oaks and sycamores dominating the riparian bottomland. The average annual rainfall is 42 inches.”



I ran it at a shooting range just off the highway with a small parking lot. When I started, I was there by myself. Toward the end of the run, someone else showed up, got set to do high power rifle shooting and started shooting just as I finished up. Looked like an AR-15 type rifle. Cold, chilly, dreary day – not much fun being outside.

Eufala WMA – KFF-4806 K-6350 in McIntosh County OK

from the state website:

“Eufaula WMA covers 48,614 acres in Latimer, McIntosh, Pittsburg and Okmulgee counties in east-central Oklahoma. Eufaula WMA is comprised mainly of flood plain and river bottoms with some upland components. The majority of the area is located on the upper reaches of river and creek arms of Eufaula lake. Mixed upland hardwood

timber and openings of grass, brush and old fields dominate the upland sites. Bottom lands range from bottom land hardwood species, such as pin oaks, to dense river bottoms of willow and cottonwood. The WMA is host to a number of natural wetland areas and sloughs as well as about 780 acres of wetland units. Located on lands adjacent to Eufaula lake, 3 major rivers flow through portions of the area. These include the Deep Fork river, North Canadian river and South Canadian river. The average annual precipitation for the area is about 42 inches.”

No signs off the main road but the web instructions will get you there easily.

Headed home now...tired of the drizzle – and 4-5 hours to home. Ran through Pittsburg and made a few contacts from there. Didn't stop long.

Stopped at **Atoka WMA KFF-4794 K-6339 in Atoka County** on the way home. Ran this 3 months ago, but it was a new county for me in the QP, so why not stop and make a quick run. Some might have missed me here in December, too. It's just a quarter mile off US-69 at the prison complex 10 miles north of the town of Atoka. No signs off highway but easy to get to and run. You see the sign 300 feet in on the road as you cross the railroad tracks.

Ran Bryan County for another very quick run in the OK QP – and left the state right as the OK QP ended at 4pm local time. I was worn out..... Arrived home 90 minutes later. Over 700 Qs in the QP.

The world had changed over the weekend. The stores had been stripped of **toilet paper**, hand sanitizer, wipes, bread, beef, cleaning supplies, frozen foods, canned meat. Restaurants/bars were being shut down across the country. Some state parks were being shut down. Most live venues – weren't. Most meetings canceled or went on line. Dayton Hamvention and Visalia DX Convention canceled. MI mini would be canceled two days later. Hamfests canceled left and right. International borders restricted and no visitors from outside the US permitted to enter. It was time to hunker on down. Town gym and libraries shut in my home town along with all sit down restaurants/bars. Schools and colleges going on line. All restaurants and bars in Dallas County shut down other than take out. Las Vegas essentially shut down and Disneyland/Disneyworld shut down as were most theme parks. Cruise ships looking for a place to dock and offload. Airplanes flying nearly empty in many cases. Wow.....

My sister was on a multi-week bus tour trip in Costa Rico. It got 'ended early' and she flew home via Panama City back to MD. US travelers around the world got stranded as borders shut.

1,100 miles of driving in 4 days. 90% of the time it was drizzling or about to drizzle and for the last 3 days the temps were in the low 40s. Rose up to 50 deg as I entered Texas – and weather forecast was now for 4 days of rain in TX, possible storms, and gloom. Yuck.

Well, I'm pretty much hunkered down at home – and may get to some local parks to give them out. Travel might be a problem as most restaurants shutting down so it's take out food at the convenience stores, pizza delivery, bring your own meals, etc if you wander around.. I've got to go miles and miles to get to new parks!

Thanks for riding along. Life on the road is going to be a lot different for the next few months – or longer.

K8HQ Activations

Here's a recap of my activation's of K-0350, 6779, 6693 (3-fer), & K-6686. It was a beautiful sunny 52 degree day here in southern lower Michigan. I activated 2 individual sites (3 ATNO's) in a 2.5 hr span of time, for a grand total of 183 contacts plus 1 park to park contact!



A super huge thank you to all of the hunters who were a part of my journey. I appreciate each and every single contact.

73 Chris K8HQ.

Wisconsin QSO Party

Excellent activity this year as usual. Lots of mobiles running lots of counties plus lots of fixed stations. Many disappeared to 80M early (by early afternoon) leaving further away stations out of range. 20M worked from OK for only a few northern counties – for a short time. Lots of folks raked up 50+ counties

NE9U multi-op mobile 653 cw 6 ssb QSO

My mobile partner from recent years decided not to go this year. And since he was in possession of our top secret home brew have to kill you if we told you what it is antenna, I dug into my old stash of Hustler mobile whips and jury rigged a last second mobile installation together. Seemed to work ok, but at least on 80 it was more of a dummy load than antenna.

N9ISN and I headed north to my Florence County cabin Saturday afternoon and elbowed our way past couple hundred people to get a good steak Saturday night! (not concerned about any Corona but beer in the north woods!)

Had a good breakfast Sunday Morning and hit the Road.

Everything worked OK.

Everything was LONG as expected. 80 seemed good to Wisconsin Counties from the start, but no one was there. Wish guys would learn to go to 80 early at this stage of the sunspot cycle. Amazing to have OM2VL call into my dummy load 80 meter whip 3 times and 6 times on 40 meters. Thanks Laci!

Thanks to N9ISN for driving and to WARAC for sponsoring the contest. I've lost count but this was close to our 30th year going mobile...

73

Scott NE9U

K9TIT - multi-op mobile 275 SSB QSO

KC9FSH KC9IZF WE9U opr

Worked 12 or more contacts from ten counties, bonus points of 5000 added to total score. Overall a great year and 80m was awesome this year.

W0ZQ mobile 578 cw 19 ssb

It was a nice day to be out and about in beautiful WI. Sunshine and 38 degrees, and most of the snow was gone which made it a bit easier to find a spot to park and to operate from. I activated 7 counties on CW while parked and did a little SSB while driving. 20m was fairly good at the start but went long quickly with just FL, CA, and WA workable. As expected 40m was the money band with 80m right behind it. I did run 80m CW from each stop throughout the day. The 80m pile-up from PIE and STC at the end of the day melted down the front end of my rig, thanks for all the patience given to me to work down through that. As the pile up gets bigger it seems your fingers get fatter. I'll upload to LoTW later this week for those county hunting. Thanks for all the Q's and for West Allis Radio Amateur Club to sponsor this fun event. 73, Jon

WI9WI - mobile - 261 cw

My major goal this year was to complete my very long term goal of operating the WIQP solo mobile (no driver) from all 72 Wisconsin counties. This was a project that actually started in the 1980s when I mostly operated from home in Madison or from our cabin in Sawyer County. On a couple of occasions I left the cabin early and made a few mobile QSOs on the way home, mainly in RUS, CHI and EAU. In 1994 I decided to do something different and started running a few northern counties. A few years later I got tired of doing the same counties over and over and decided to go for them all. So this year I finally completed what amounted to an over 30 year project. The WIQP is only 7 hours long and I discovered early on that I didn't feel safe operating and driving at the same time. So a lot of my time has been spent moving between counties without making QSOs. This year I left home about 0900 local and drove up to MRN. Over the next 7 hours I ran MRN, OCO, MEN (quite rare), OUT and WIN to finish them all off. Total actual operating time was 03:24, with the remaining 03:26 spent driving and fixing problems. I got home at 2220 local, so of the 13 plus hours on the road, only a bit over 3 hours was spent actually operating.

Almost every year I've done this there have been problems of some sort or another, some minor, and some major. They have varied from battery failure, to rig failure, to RF in the computer, to antenna problems, to you name it. This year the main ones were RF into the computer causing lockups and high receive noise. I spent much of the first hour in MRN trying to fix them. My first QSO was with Laci OM2VL. The bands were long. I only worked one Wisconsin station on 20 and 40. I made a whopping 13 QSOs the first hour and spent most of that time bonding various rig/keyer/computer components, adding ferrite, changing USB and RF cables, and fixing the receive noise by turning off the heater fan of the car and ditching the computer's power supply and only charging its battery while moving. I apologize for being very deaf that first hour. After that things went a whole lot better. The atmospheric noise dropped as the day went on, and I finally made 100 QSOs, all on 80, during the last hour of operation from OUT and WIN. I think I'm going to try to find a quieter computer and one that is not as susceptible to RF. I also need to go to 80 sooner if the sunspots continue to hide.

Now that I'm finally done with my project, next year if the weather is good I'll run some of the rarer counties up near our cabin. If it's not I'll run some near home in Madison.

Thanks to everyone for all the QSOs this weekend and over the years. I know there are many whom I have worked regularly dating back 30 and 40 years.

73 Jim

WI9WI in MRN, OCO, MEN, OUT and WIN

KB9S mobile - 530 cw QSO

My first time operating mobile in the Wisconsin Qso party.

Thanks to my wife Kitty K9KTT for driving and the West Allis Radio Amateur Club for sponsoring the WI QSO Party.

See you next year.

Mark KB9S

K0PC mobile - 712 cw qso

This run turned out much better than the MN QSO Party in Feb when I had equipment problems that were totally operator error. I still had some issues in Wisconsin but I was able to work around them. It's always something.

Rates were good all day and especially the last hour mainly on 80M when it hit 141 QSOs. I operated 40M & 20M early from each county until 21Z when I replaced 20M with 80M.

I ran a KX3 with KXPA100 amp and it worked well until I got to 80M. The amp was causing a thermal fault after 10 minutes or so at 100W. I had to disable the amp until it cooled down enough and ran 15W at those times. Then I started running 50W on 80M and 100W on 40M and that worked for a while but the last hour the amp overheated even at 50W. On Monday I did a lot of testing on the antenna to make sure it was OK and everything looks good (SWR about 1.3:1). It has a sharp resonant point but that is expected on a 80M mobile antenna. I need to do some more testing to figure it out but I have ordered a fan for the amp.

Many stations followed along all day and the top ten list contains many of the usual suspects.

20 - K1RO

16 - OM2VL

15 - AF8A

13 - N2CU

12 - WØBV
11 - K9OM
10 - WØBH
9 - DL3DXX, KØAP, NS2N, W6OAT

Thanks to everybody that tolerated my mobile fist all day.

73, Pat KØPC

K1RO - fixed - NH - 142 cw 70 ssb 58 counties

As always, a fun contest with a good mix of home stations and mobiles. This year it seemed like a lot of activity was on 80 meters, which is too far for me except the last couple of hours. I decided to forego the 1.5x Low Power multiplier to be able to work the weak stations on 80 and 20 when the bands were not open well for me.

K8TE - fixed - NM 35 cw 13 ssb 22 counties

While just a part-time effort, I enjoyed working the WI stations. Too bad more ops didn't use 20m for those of way out west. It was fun chasing mobiles and I worked two more needed WI counties. Thanks for the QSO's

73, Bill, K8TE

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI 96 cw 49 ssb - 52 counties

Last year, I got taught a lesson that in contests that CW points are worth twice as much as phone Q's, it is prudent to concentrate on CW. Last year I had a perfect 50/50% split CW to phone. This year, I was nearly 2:1 biased in favor of CW. Hence, even with 15 less Q's and 4 less multipliers, I considerably beat last year's score. After a full Saturday of QSO parties (OK and ID) and these continuing into Sunday, I was a bit burnt on contesting. But once things started going, I "sucked it up" and started to play. But, since I was still "playing" in Sunday's "overtime" on the other two QP's, I wasn't fully devoting all my time to the WIQP. Plus, things on 40M must have been too long for me here in Michigan. I was thinking I wasn't going to do very well. I even went to 80M early and was struggling there too. At this point, I thought maybe going low power was a mistake. But, suddenly the tide turned and propagation to WI on 80M was

excellent, and even barefoot, I was busting the pileups on the mobiles. I even had a nice run on Phone calling CQ, and probably should have stayed there, but my traffic handling duties took precedence. Still, all in all, I beat last year's score by a good margin, which I never would have imagined, especially at the start of the contest. Many thanks to all the mobiles, who as usual, make things much more interesting

KN4Y - fixed FL - 42 cw 31 counties

Just out of the hospital, so good activity.

N4CD – mobile in OK – 22Q CW- 22 counties

While doing the OK QP and parks, caught a few WI stations (mostly fixed) at parks and in between parks. Worked W0ZQ and NE9U mobile. Most vanished to 80m just as 40m propagation got good from southern OK.

On the Trail of Regens

A seldom seen kit showed up on Ebay this month. This was a two-transistor radio that was made by Revell and offered for sale in 1962. Apparently few were bought, and almost none saved as, according to Herman Cone, N4CH, who owned one and still has one in his vast collection, it was a crappy radio that barely worked, and had intermittent controls and frequency selector.

It covered the broadcast band and shortwave bands with a regenerative circuit.



Sold for \$12 on Ebay – and on the way to the N4CD QTH.

Idaho QSO Party

There was a fair amount of activity this year with maybe 15 counties on the air. Caught half a dozen of them while out mobiling. Had trouble getting through to NI7DX in half his counties but caught him in a few. ID stations were in early on Sunday morning on 40M into OK.

K0AP - fixed - KS 14 cw 10 counties

Thanks for the QSO's especially to NI7DX for two new ID counties (CLE and SHO).

NI7DX - rover - 242 cw 65 ssb

NI7DX is the club call of the Idaho DX Association. N7ZUF and K7TQ operated mobile in eight ID counties. Thanks to all who worked us and also to those who tried. Full story and pictures at

<https://sites.google.com/site/randyk7tq/home/2020-idaho-qso-party>



NI7DX/rover

On March 14 and 15, 2020, Jay, N7ZUF, and I activated eight counties in the Idaho QSO Party using the Idaho DX Association club call of NI7DX. With Jay operating SSB and me operating CW, we made 310 QSOs for a claimed score of 93,795. I think mobiles accumulate mults on a per county basis. Regardless of the score we made 310 Qs.



NI7DX route

It snowed Friday night and early Saturday morning so our drive from my house in Moscow to the starting point in Idaho County had some snow in the air but the major roads were clear. Later on Saturday we had a few periods of snow, rain, or sleet plus a constant wind. Sunday was unseasonably cool with temperatures well below freezing but no snow.

Our best county was Nez Perce on Saturday. We operated from the top of the Lewiston Grade which has a 2,100 foot drop from the top to the Clearwater River below. All that elevation change really enhances signals to the east and south. We made 49 CW and 48 SSB contacts in our hour and half operating time.

Sunday's operations were away from the rolling wheat fields into the mountains and forests. Clearwater County produced 41 CW Qs and no SSB ones. Shoshone county yielded 23 CW Qs and 5 SSB ones. Our operating plan puts us there in prime time for European stations, and as has happened in previous years, European stations caught our attention. This year it was DL, OM, F, and S5 ones.

We had five folks, K0AP, N8II, K1RO, W0PI, and WB8WKQ, find us in six of our eight counties. It is quite pleasing to have regular customers. OM2VL found us in four counties and DL3DXX in two.

Thanks to all who worked us and also to those who tried.

WB8WKQ - fixed - 20 cw 30 ssb 11 cw counties 16 ssb counties

I was very pleasantly surprised with this contest. I figured, from the last few year's results, that maybe I'd see 15-20 Q's max. Hence, I figured I'd do this contest in the background, with the OK QP being my main focus. But, to my surprise, there was a lot of activity going on with the Idaho stations. In fact, there was even a mobile, NI7DX, who made things very interesting. Hence, I was switching between the two contests very often. Hats off to the ID QP organizers and all the ID participants. Signals were very good into Michigan. This was a very fun contest and I'll be back next year (hopefully). Thanks again for a lot of fun.

K1RO - fixed NH - 19 cw 26 ssb 11 cw mults 13 ssb mults

It was wonderful to here so much activity from Idaho. Nice to work NI7DX/M so often despite the marginal conditions.

K0BAK Rove Report 3 /20

Having just retrieved my radio van from its winter garage, I activated on March 19 for the first time since Dec. 1, which was also a successful test of my installation of the replacement Tarheel 200 antenna damaged in Quebec. In between, the van was expensively repaired in Quebec after it broke down, I had two consecutive long-running bouts of flu with raging dry cough (hmmm), and a multi-week recovery from hand surgery.

At this point in the year I was hoping to start a two-year quest to activate every remaining park in my home state of Pennsylvania, but ... you know what happened. Not wanting to get out of tow range nor use hotels now, my usual penchant for epic long-distance roves has to be suppressed in an age of social isolation. So instead I drove my first rove of the year to local parks yesterday (3/20), calling it a corona-rove.

The first park I tried was Hopewell Furnace NHS, but there was a closed gate at the entrance and a sign with the usual corona-platitudes Note that nearby Valley Forge NHP

grounds remain open, so it would be nice if NPS would keep park grounds and lots open everywhere. Two more parks are close by, so it wasn't too disappointing.

I found quite a few people enjoying the pleasant day at the boat launch area of French Creek SP (K-1355), where I parked in my usual spot and got good results on both 20m and 40m. A pileup on 40 helped net a good overall rate of 81Qs/hr.

An old fire tower marks a small outpost of William Penn SF (K-5481) surrounded by French Creek, where I and my local club have operated quite a few times. While 20m found only 4 contacts, 40m had an even bigger pileup than at the lake, resulting in an excellent overall rate of 98 Qs/hr.

Forty-five minutes away, the next stop was Evansburg SP (K-1351), quite close to my home and from which I'll be activating often now to try for my second Kilo Award. Starting with a surprising 21 Qs on 20m, overall I got a similar number of contacts and rate here. After an embarrassing confusion about daylight savings time, I was still feeling OK so I decided to get some fuel and a short break, then return for a Late Shift.

Returning almost exactly at 0000z (8pm EDT), the park was fully dark except for one underwhelming light on the parking lot, but the gate was still open. I didn't know if anyone shut this gate or if the lot was patrolled on schedule, so this was a bit of an experiment about activating the site at night. Starting on 40m, after a few minutes I got an impressively deep pileup requiring a couple of scolds and judicious use of RF Gain. 71 Qs in 34 minutes is pretty fast! I figured if 40 was working so well after dark, probably 80 would too. Unfortunately, I could find no gaps wide enough in the General portion (the blessing and curse of a sensitive SDR), so I went down to Extra and got an additional 10 Qs. Overall rate was very good at 93 Qs/hr.

255 QSOs total

73 de Peter, K0BAK

On the Road with N4CD IV

The world had changed almost overnight. The stock indexes plummeted by 30%. Here in TX, all gatherings of 10 or more – canceled. Movie theaters, gyms, health clubs, venues, bars, and indoor seating for restaurants shut down. University of TX 'closed' –

students in dorms sent home. Only 'on-line' classes. For the high schoolers, they were on spring break and it's been extended. Their classes, too, will now be on line. In many states – CA, NJ, NY, IL, WA – it's total lockdown – businesses shut from barber shops to hair salons to all restaurants other than food stores and pharmacies and folks told to 'shelter in place' only going out for food and medical attention. My home county-Collin – just went 'shelter in place' after this trip.

Well, I was getting cabin fever so I figured I could go out on a one day trip around to five TX parks without seeing anyone close up or needing food. Ate breakfast at home, made a peanut butter, jelly and banana sandwich for lunch, refilled the water bottle, and it was off to already run parks – nothing new within 350 miles.

First up was Sam Rayburn House in Bonham TX – Fannin County. Only in the POTA system as K-6601. You head on up the Sam Rayburn Tollway – to US 75 to US 121 to Bonham where you get on the Sam Rayburn Highway to his former residence. Lots of things in TX named after him. He was big wig TX politician who went to DC and later became Speaker of the House. Radio conditions were like the last time here – horrible QRM – which started right at 8:15. Only had a few minutes before it kicked it as they must have fired up the computers in the visitor center for opening at 9am. S9 noise on 20m CW. Worse on SSB which was useless. If you set up portable further from the building it might be OK. Only needed 10 for an activation and did that on 30 and 40M – but still very noisy. No one came or went while I was there – which was a bit early.

Headed over to Bonham State Park 2997 nearby. A fair number of people there. The Gov of TX told folks to take a walk, enjoy the State Parks – but keep at 'social distance' to not spread the bug. As of March 21, there were 75 cases of 'home isolation' in my home town of 300,000 and 55+ confirmed cases in the county of 1 million. 186 cases confirmed in 'north TX'. One death so far and that was a 20 year old. I didn't plan on seeing many folks at less than 20 feet other than as we passed on the roads. Over in Italy, where it got out of hand, nearly 700 died today. Same yesterday and likely the same tomorrow in a country 1/4th the size of the US.

Had a good run of 44+. Fairly quiet here.

Next up was the Eisenhower Birthplace Historic Site in Dennison, TX – Grayson County for a repeat at this POTA only park – K-6553. Fairly quiet. Only needed 10 but put a whole bunch in the log. No one came or went while I was there. Not a big attraction and folks are staying home and not heading to places like this. I'm not sure many come at any time other than some high school kids on a tour.

On to the next – Eisenhower State Park – 3005. Whoa! At the main gate – the nice lady won't let me in to the main part of the park! Only reserved campers allowed in. The lower parts with the picnic areas and beach have been flooded in the past and we just got another five inches of rain – so I guess that was it. Dang...well, I had to circle around the HQ building – which is in the park....and there were a half dozen parking spots behind it unoccupied so I sat in one. You had a choice of near the park HQ building with S9 crud from their computers – or sitting under the power line a bit further away. I chose the latter and it was OK on cw. Put 25 in the log including a few VA stations in the VA QSO party.

One more today – about 30 minutes away you can get to Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge 0548. Drove over there – it's never shut for the most part of it except when really flooded – which it has been on previous. Water high today but main 'auto tour' route open. The lake and swampy area were encroaching on the road but still a spot or two to park. Ranger came by and asked what I was doing. Gave a thumbs up when I said 'making ham radio contacts from the NWR'. Had a good run of 44+ then headed home an hour away.

Home by 3 pm. Filled up gas tank using paper towel on gas hose handle to avoid direct contact. Same for pushing buttons on the gas pump. Gas now at \$1.61/gal in north TX. 177 miles driven.

Grabbed a snack when I got home – then later had dinner at home – a chicken salad with lots of chicken. I usually eat out 5 nights a week for dinner. That's come to a crashing halt. It's frozen dinners and pre-cooked chicken and easy to prepare stuff for a while. The microwave oven is getting a work out. Folks are still hoarding stuff at the grocery stores it seems here. No toilet paper, almost no paper towels, sanity wipes, can food gone, not much beef but lots of chicken. Probably in a week or two all that non-sense will end.

Virginia QSO Party

Several mobiles were scheduled to be out including N4CW, W4GO, and KM4OZH. Fair amount of fixed activity with 70 plus counties available. As usual, much of the activity was 40m and 80m – SSB with VA stations trying to work each other.

N4CW mobile 250 CW QSO

In a word: FRUSTRATION! Murphy sat next to me throughout the contest. First, couldn't prepare the car the previous day due to "to-do's". Then, it took forever to get started -- I had to set the taps on the Texas Bugcatcher, and readings would keep changing for the same tap (probably caused by the problem I experienced later). I brought along my trusty Outback Outreach and spare cables, including a pigtail to attach to the trailer hitch mobile mount. Finally got the car packed, the rig set up, and had to use an old Windows 7 laptop because the xyl needed the Windows 10 laptop to do some picture editing!

Contest started at 10 AM; I left home in Raleigh at 10:30 AM, headed for Clarksville, VA. Got there on VA Rte 58 and parked at the county line sign (HAL/MEC), just off the road! It was around 12:30 by then. Trouble with the first CQ...SWR would suddenly jump up, but somebody heard me and worked me anyway...after the fifth contact I decided to find the problem. No test equipment, so I trouble-shot by substitution! No luck. I even substituted the Outreach for the Bug Catcher...no luck. Then, because it was raining (intermittently), I thought maybe some water got into the pigtail, or the coax fittings outside, so I changed the position of the pigtail and the SWR got decent.

Five minutes later it crapped out again! I drove down the road and found a spot off the road where I could work on the antenna some more. I decided to change the pigtail...that took a while, then I went back to my county line location and got on the air. About 1:30 PM by then. I made a bunch of contacts and decided to move to my next planned county line (CHA/PRW)...that took an hour, just driving. Once I got started at the new location, I had trouble with the logger...r.f. must have crept in and although the logger was sending the county line information (two counties at a time), it was only logging one! Re-initializing the application, I had no more trouble until after I got to the next county line! Happened every time...I gave up at 7:15 PM while there was still daylight. It took me 1h 45m to get home! Phew!!!

KG3V mobile reported 272 CW and 98 SSB QSOs – had no comments
Made only 5 contacts on 20M.

W4PM - fixed - Hannover - VA 560 CW QSO

Too bad RTTY contest this weekend and CW suggested QRG was 50 kHz up right in

RTTY on 40. The RDXC is on this weekend also but gave a break from slow VAQP times. I made 200 Q's in that test at those times.
Thanks for the contact.

73 & CU in VAQP next year,
Puck W4PM

K4HQB - fixed - Alexandria VA 230 CW 108 SSB

Activity was quite good, possibly higher than last year. By operating CW and SSB I was able to switch back and forth when one mode ran dry. Most of the time that helped, but not always. At times activity was down at both ends of the bands, primarily in the middle hours of the day. Both days activity picked up late afternoon.

Propagation was good Saturday but on Sunday, 40m was plagued by QSB and long, long skip (not to mention tremendous BARTG RTTY QRM in the CW band). On both days 20m was virtually useless to me because I heard virtually no VAQP action. My only 20m QSO was with our friend, N3JT. And so I worked no farther west in the whole contest than Nebraska. The most consistently useful band was 80/75m, even in mid-afternoon--steady signals and no QRN.

73, John K4HQB - Alexandria (That's ALX to you), VA

KA4RRU - fixed - VA 212 CW 423 SSB

Station not really set up for single op ... but had fun. First time ever in VAQP as KA4RRU. Had a couple other things going on at the house this weekend. Station not really set up for single op ... but had fun. First time ever in VAQP as KA4RRU. Had a couple other things going on at the house this weekend.

AC0W - fixed - 83 cw 56 ssb

Had more fun doing my taxes than this. Very frustrating to see all the VA spots on 75 SSB all day long working each other and none of them would move to 40 or 20 for the rest of the country to work them.

W9QL - fixed - 36 cw 61 ssb

Pretty noisy conditions on 40, but still did better than last year. Thanks, as always, to the mobiles who covered a lot of ground and really helped with multipliers.

Dave W9QL

N4CD mobile in TX - 6 cw 3 SSB

Caught a few VA stations while giving out park contacts in TX. Didn't hear the mobiles who likely stayed on 40 and 80m most of the time and seldom if ever went to 20M. This is a 40 and 80m contest where VA folks try to work each other and it's hard for stations 1000 miles away to get much activity - especially when operating mobile! About the time 40m gets good at 800-1000 miles, the activity goes to 80m. Did hear some weak mobiles on 40M with 30 station loud pileups and no hope of getting through. I participated.

Awards Issued

KB6UF, Ron, Roadrunner 1575 counties #2

W4SIG, Kerry, Roadrunner 600 counties #31

K2MF, Barry, County Challenge Level 11,000 #3

Upcoming Events

April 4 1300z to Apr 5 0100

Nebraska QSO Party CW Ph Dig

County or SPC (grid square on FT8)

www.arrl.org/sections/view/nebraska

April 4 1400z to Apr 5 0200
Louisiana QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), Parish or SPC
laqp.louisianacontestclub.org

April 4 1400 to Apr 5 0200
Mississippi QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), county or SPC
www.arrlmiss.org

April 4 1400z to Apr 5 2000z
Missouri QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), county or SPC
w0ma.org/index.php/missouri-qso-party

April 4 1400z to Apr 5 2200
Florida State Parks on the Air
CANCELED.....due to COVID-19 closing all the state parks.

April 11 1400z to Apr 12 0200z
New Mexico QSO Party CW Ph Dig
Name, county or SPC
www.newmexicoqsoparty.org

April 11 1800z to Apr 12 2359z
1.8-50Georgia QSO Party CW Ph
RST, county or SPC
www.georgiaqsoparty.org

Apr 18 1400z to Apr 19 2000z
Texas State Parks on the Air CW Ph Dig
RS(T), park or SPC
www.tspota.org/rules

April 18 1600z to Apr 19 0400z

Michigan QSO Party CW Ph
Serial, county or SPC
www.miqp.org/Rules.htm

April 11 1800z to Apr 12 1800z
North Dakota QSO Party CW Ph
RS(T), county or SPC
ndarrlsec.com

Apr 18 1800z to Apr 19 1800z
Ontario QSO Party CW Ph
RS(T), ON county or SPC
va3cco.com/oqp/rules.htm

April 25 1600z to 26 2159z
Florida QSO Party
CW PhRS(T), county or SPC
floridagsoparty.org/rules

Dayton Hamvention – Canceled

MI Mini - Canceled