

County Hunter News

May 2018

Volume 14 Issue 5

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

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

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

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

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. 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://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

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

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

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

This month's issue is a bit early as N4CD hits the road to wander to MI for the MI Mini in Traverse City via the string of parks in IL, IN and MI. Already on the road are WQ7A and K5GE on long trips

The weather has been challenging for many. Winter storm after storm has pounded the north part of the country and winter never seems to end 'up north'. In the south, it's the start of spring wicked weather with 'dry lines' triggering hail, massive downpours, and

tornadoes. Still, there was lots of activity in the various QSO Parties and there were dozens and dozens of parks on the air. Not many were spotted on W6RK, but if you check www.dxsummit.com, you'll see them there – as well as checking the WWFF Facebook page where many are also spotted.

Space weather – what can you say? Days and days of no sunspots and the flux in the upper 60s. Still, counties were being run, and folks were working all sorts of DX on FT-8 digital.

So on to the May Newsletter.....

On the Road with N4CD I

After the last trip, there were things to fix on the N4CD mobile. The key paddles had gone on the fritz and the antenna wasn't working as it should. Lots of driving and some horrible gravel roads tend to rattle things apart, plus the rain eventually gets to the antenna connections.

So.....looked at key paddles once I got home. My paddles are Schurr – made in Germany and this one probably 25 years old now with half a million mobile miles on it and likely that many QSOs during that time period. It fits my ideal – no springs to pop loose. No adjustment screws that can fall out or be whacked if the key falls onto the floor. Those paddles were in every county in the US. I sort of expected it to get worn out one of these days but it just kept on going. Over 500,000 miles of operating and likely that many QSOs over the past 25 years. Turns out the adjusting nut on the spring tension had come off the end – and I could get it back on the teeny size #2 or #3 (some metric value) with a bit of care and it's back to normal! Hmm...first time that has happened. It's spring loaded and never has come off before. The only other problem with the paddles is that every now and then – maybe a few months, some dirt gets in between the contacts and you need to use a sheet of paper to clean them – stick the paper in between the contacts, close paddle, pull paper gently out – and it cleans the contacts – so you're good for another couple months.

The antenna required the usually annual disassembly and cleaning at the bottom of the

mag mount. A few minutes with the sand paper on the Lakeview mag mount (modified)) - they are no longer in business- and install a new coupling section and it seems back to normal.

Wednesday – April 4

To test things out, I headed over to the local WWFF park – Spring Creek Forest Preserve - 25 miles away – during the weekly CW Open Test to be sure things were back to normal. They were and I put 50+ QSOs in the log in 2 hours – and headed home. Things were ready for the upcoming weekend trip.

Friday April 6

The weather was great on Friday – temps headed up to 80 degrees and sun on Friday. It would be changing rather suddenly on Friday evening. I packed some cold weather gear in the suitcase.

Twice a year, there's a big swapmeet held in Bell County at the Exposition Grounds – a nice large building, large parking lots, and a decent attendance of hams seeking/selling ham radio stuff. You can haul in 20 tons of stuff if you want or just one radio. The Spring meet was scheduled for Saturday but you can 'set up' Friday and a lot of folks are there and much of the good stuff is sold that day – so you want to be there to grab the goodies. You can go inside the building at 2PM and set up your table if you are selling – drive in – unload – take the car out to the lot. The outdoor flea market gets going early in the morning – but most arrive later in the afternoon. The big crowds show up on Saturday. Inside it's \$17 for a table/admission. Outside spaces are a whole lot less, but you never know about TX weather. It can be 90F and broiling sun, or ...cold, windy, wet – or anywhere in between.

It's a few hour drive to get there - right through downtown Dallas, down I-35 toward Austin TX. I left after morning rush hour at 9am – still hit traffic but not too horrible. On the way there, you pass close to Waco Mammoth National Monument – which was real popular back in the NPOTA days of 2016. It's still a park for WWFF, so I headed there for a two hour visit with a ten mile detour.. I've been there probably 8 times before but there are always new people, county hunters starting over, etc., looking for contacts or just checking to see if their radios are working.

Had a good run – ran some SSB on 20M – did the 20/30/40 cw bands and headed out after two hours. This is were Mammoth bones were discovered not that long ago – going back thousands of years. They are excavating them now. It's real popular with

the kids – a dozen school buses drove by while I sat there hauling kids for the 'tour'.

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From the web:

“This relatively new national monument is a significant source for Ice Age fossils, with the oldest specimens dating back 65,000 to 72,000 years. What makes this site unique are its namesake Columbian mammoths. It is the only place in the world where scientists have found a “nursery herd” of these enormous mammals — the remains of a family of females with their babies. Studying the structure of this herd has given paleontologists new insights into how the animals behaved, which, it turns out, may have been remarkably similar to the habits of modern-day elephants. The small portion of the park’s land that researchers have begun excavating has also yielded fossils from a range of other animals, including an American camel, a giant tortoise and a dwarf antelope, as well as a single tooth from a young saber-toothed cat. “

source: https://www.npca.org/articles/1336-where-to-touch-a-dinosaur-and-other-incredible-national-park-fossil-sites?s_src=g_grants_ads&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI6KzK7P-q2gIVWbXACH2fxAs2EAAYASAAEgIPm_D_BwE

There are dozens of fossil sites around the country – many of them National Parks or National Monuments. Have you visited -

- Dinosaur National Monument in CO/UT?
- John Day Fossil Beds, OR?
- Hagerman Fossil Beds ID?
- Big Bend National Park ?
- Grand Canyon, AZ?
- Fossil Butte, WY?
- Florissant Fossil Beds, CO?
- Tule Springs Fossil Beds, NV?
- Guadalupe Mtns NP, TX?

Those are the National Park sites – likely a whole lot more State Parks too. If you are a fossil fan, check out the above.

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Next it was down to Temple TX. Checked into the Super 8 motel for the night, then headed to the hamfest ten miles away. I had a bunch of stuff to sell. At the last Houston Vintage Radio auction in February, I wound up with a few boxes of extra stuff. There was one book I wanted to have it and came along with a dozen others. I paid \$20 for the box, kept 3 I wanted. Another box had two or three of interest and 15 others – mostly ARRL pubs like Wire Classics I and II, Basic Antennas, Digital Ops on VHF, Solar power for the Ham, 3 books on Raspberry Pi, etc. Either had a copy of the extras or had no interest. Also wound up with a new TYT 65W output 222MHz FM mobile – part of another box of 'stuff' and it was put up for sale along with five large trays of tubes. I bought the tubes for the 10 or 15 I wanted in the five large trays, took them out, and sold the rest for what I paid for them (\$25). Probably 250 tubes in those trays but I didn't need them. Well, maybe someday I'll need a 25Z5 or 39 or 6AC7 or others but I know where I can buy them for a few dollars if it turns out I really need them. Sold part of the stuff on Friday during 'set up' - but anyone can wander in – place closes down at 6pm for the night. Sold most of the remaining stuff on Saturday.

After the Friday session, headed back to the motel around 5:30 – then over to the nearby Golden Corral for dinner. It was still nice outside, but I tuned in one of the strong Dallas AM stations – and wow – tornado and severe storm watches - major hail coming down 20 miles from my house, temps dropping like a rock, rain, wind – up to 80 mph gusts. It was still nice and warm 150 miles further south. Had the motel room door open till I went to bed.

Saturday April 7

The weather front came through late Friday evening. No more worries about sunburn in the flea market with folks running around in tee-shirts and shorts at 80 plus degrees and a nice south breeze. Now it was 40 degrees F with a strong north wind and high humidity. The weather front had come through last night. Around my home town – there were reports of golf ball size hail that had fallen within 10 miles of home – fortunately missed my area. Down in Temple, just to the west by 30 miles there were confirmed tornado touchdowns just west of Killeen and Ft Hood, TX with 1.7 inch hail on Friday evening! Ouch. That storm went just south of me there – then died out. 80 mph winds in some places.

It was total overcast and CHILLY on Saturday morning! I put on my warm flannel shirt, grabbed the ski jacket and warm hat, headed to breakfast at 6:15. By 6:45 I was on my way to the Fair Grounds - which open to the public at 7am. Got there, set up the table again, and had success selling a bit more of the surplus stuff. I wandered around the inside – maybe 100 sellers there -a bit down but still good. I suspect the weather put

the damper on the outdoor flea market. Definitely cold with wind, mist at times, and ever dropping temps.

Between Friday and Saturday, you could find the usual stuff. National and Hallicrafters receivers, some early SSB transmitters, two complete Collins S lines (75S3 vintage) up for sale but high prices. Half a dozen IC-706s, an IC7100, a half dozen Yaesu HF rigs, dozens of 2m FM gear. Did see an Atlas 180 – early SSB solid state radio. I didn't spy a single Knight Kit receiver. Heathkit 'green' was on the half dozen SB-100s, SB300s, etc, and a half dozen SB200/220 amps for sale. You could buy the early Heathkit KW linear that came with 811's. Boatanchors were up for sale and they were selling for the most part if decently priced. I didn't wander the flea market Saturday but my friends said 'not much new' and definitely nasty COLD out there. The temp was actually dropping from 40F as the day went on! It lightly drizzled at times too! Of course, that was better than ND and SD with snow, blizzards, and teens for temps.

By 9:30 I figured I had pretty much sold what was going to sell that day. Packed up one large box. No one was interested in the 829Bs I had for sale. Nice VHF power tubes back in the 1950s/60s. Brought them all home.

On Friday, I noted several books from the 1950s for sale with the editor as Art, K2BUS. He was the editor for at least half a dozen books from CQ Magazine at the time – on antennas, mobile gear, DX'ing, etc. If you recall, K2BUS, in his “senior years”, used to call the 'net control' person two or three times a day. “What's your name?” “What's your call, OM?” “This is Art in Framingham, MA”.....he often worked the mobiles, too. And he QSL'd 100% for every contact. Well, that was quite a few years ago. I've still got a dozen K2BUS QSL cards in my file. Didn't buy the books. Just chuckled when I recall those days.

I bought two things. Several books from one person – including four years of Electric Radio Magazine from the early 1990s, and one early, early electronic keyer made by the Electric Eye Equipment Company back in the 1950s. It was first offered for sale in the Feb issue of QST in 1948. Wow....this could be 70 years old now!

The Mon-Key used a pair of 12AU7 tubes plus a 35W4 rectifier. To drop the 110VAC line voltage, a resistance line cord was used. These are impossible to find these days and really shouldn't be used even if you can find a NOS (new old stock) line cord as it would be 60-70-80 years old! Those resistance line cords are safety hazards as they get quite warm when operating. There were three wires in the cord – common, the regular 110vac, and the nichrome resistance wire to drop the voltage by a specified amount. In this case, with two 12AU7, one 35W4, the total filament voltage added up was 59v, so

51 volts would have to be dropped across that line cord. The filaments take 150ma, so if you do the math, that's 7.5 watts that cord has to dissipate. Now, with the line voltage usually up in the 121VAC plus range, you'd really be overloading things.



Mon-Key Electronic Keyer – 1948

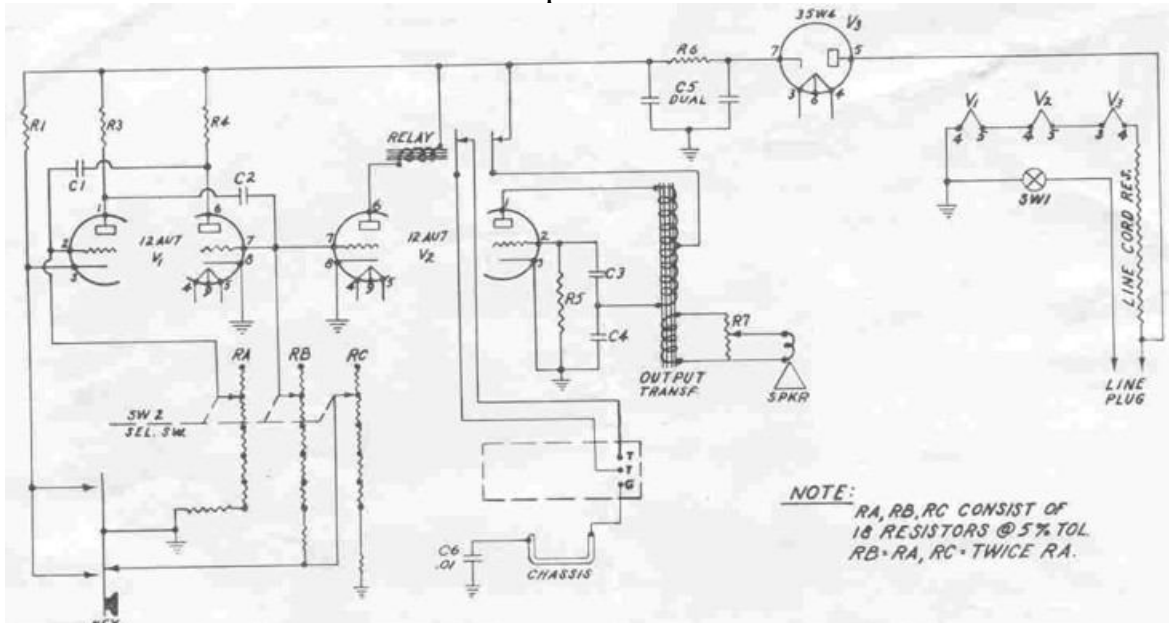
Here's a YouTube video that describes it well, shows the internals, and how it works. Worth a few if you are a cw fan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fLLvbFA6I>

Amazingly, you can find the manual with schematic on line at

<http://w1tp.com/m6000.htm>

It's a simple multi-vibrator circuit, followed by a relay amp circuit, and a side tone oscillator. There's a little speaker underneath. You've got a five position switch for 'speed control' – from slow to about 20 wpm.



That's almost as old as I am. Dang.... hi hi. Way before I got my ham license. The company apparently went out of business in the early 50s so these are fairly scarce. Back in 1948, it would cost you \$29.95 for one of them – a good chunk of change. Minimum wage back then was probably 40c/hour It was raised to 75c/hr in 1949. That would still take almost a week's pay to buy one of these. Keep in mind it had no iambic function, no dit/dah memories, no memories, barely could do 20 wpm....but it was 'state of the art' and one of the first, if not the first, keyer offered for sale.

This weekend would have several things going on on the radio – two QSO Parties for MO and MS and two State Parks on the Air events – TX and FL. I checked the TSPOTA page and no one had indicated they would activate two parks I could run on the way home. About 30 others of the 100 TX parks would be on the air – probably

mostly on SSB, many on 40/80M trying to work each other. Hey, I could have fun, be part of Texas State Parks on the Air, put them out for WWFF fans and of course county hunters.

Headed first to Mother Neff State Park in Coryell County. I had written down the TSPOTA number P022, the WWFF number KFF-3042, the Grid number EM11 – and of course, the county before hand. Lots to keep track of with so much going on. I'd be looking for other parks to work – both in and out of TX, MS and MO stations, and anything else. Weekend days were always busier than weekdays.

Mother Neff is a small park. Pulled in – been here before. It was cold, windy, dreary and the temperature was still dropping. Not a whole lot of folks were rushing into the park – it was pretty well deserted with just a few cars around from people taking a nature walk. Sat for 2 hours with the car running and heat on - plus keeping the radio happy – and put 50+ in the log. Had to keep track of the states in the log since TSPOTA requires that for logging. Never did hear another TX state park but didn't get on 40M SSB. Most skip was long – not hearing TX on 20 or 40m cw. Headed out after two hours making a bee line for the next park 2 hours away in Somervell County. Weather – cold, misty rain at times, total overcast. Just yuck!

On the way, I ran through Bosque County. Called for five minutes on 20m CW net frequency – no answer. Tried on 30M. Nope. Finally pulled over and spotted myself on 20cw. Half a dozen showed up. With the two QSO Parties going on, and some folks activating parks, the spots were flying by and folks were off chasing MS and MO mobiles and not listening on net. Guess I was doing the same for the most part, too!

After arriving at Dinosaur Valley State Park – I got to work and put 100 QSOs in the log. Even though it was 2pm, 20M SSB turned out to yield quite a few QSOs, then on to the cw bands. Caught a bunch of MO/MS mobiles to add to the totals and a few fixed stations. Somervell County – one of the smaller ones in TX. Success. Well, after a while, the pile disappears and I'm not one to sit and make one QSO every 3 or 5 minutes calling CQ – so I headed on home – 2 hours away. Home before 6pm. Temp 39F outside. I didn't see the sun all day long.

Thanks for riding along. It was an interesting weekend with so much going on, the swap meet, and the winter type cold front coming through.

Science Tidbit of the Month

Elements with atomic numbers 113, 115, 117, and 118 have been added to the periodic table.

The new elements were added after the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) reviewed scientific studies published by teams of researchers in the United States, Japan, and Russia. The committee deemed that the researchers had “met the criteria for discovery,” as the press release notes, which essentially means that the researchers were able to create them in the lab, if only fleetingly.

These elements are among the heaviest in the periodic table and aren't known to exist outside the lab. They're highly unstable—just to formulate them in the lab, the researchers had to crash lighter nuclei into one another. The new elements existed for less than a second before breaking down into other elements.

These elements, which complete the seventh row of the periodic table, are the first to be added since 2011, when flerovium (element 114) and livermorium (element 116), also superheavy metals, were added. The new elements have been temporarily named ununtrium, (Uut or element 113), ununpentium (Uup, element 115), ununseptium (Uus, element 117), and ununoctium (Uuo, element 118). In the next few months, the teams that discovered these elements will propose new names for them. That's no easy task, but hopefully they will choose names that roll off the tongue a bit better than the placeholders.

Element 113, which was discovered by Japanese researchers, will become the first element to be named in Asia, according to *The Guardian*.

Though the periodic table was created in 1869, scientists haven't yet filled it in completely, or answered many of the lingering questions surrounding these building blocks of the universe; as these superheavy elements decay, they become other elements that scientists cannot yet identify. Researchers still need a better way to measure an element's atomic number more quickly and directly, as one member of the IUPAC notes. Some researchers, including some members of the Japanese team that discovered

element 113, hope to continue their work in superheavy elements to discover those that lie beyond element 119, which has not yet been discovered.

https://www.popsci.com/four-new-elements-added-to-periodic-table?con=FbPgPostAds&loc=PSC&utm_source=00167d

County Hunter of the Year

Nominations for County Hunter of the Year – April 1 to May 15

Changes to the rules for County Hunter of the Year - SSB and CW were proposed and approved at the March 1, 2018 Board of Directors meeting. Part of the rationale for these changes is to increase the number of people who are eligible to receive the award and to encourage more nominations by the membership. Another reason was to clarify the time period that should be considered when nominating someone for the award.

Changes adopted include:

1) Limitation on number of times someone is eligible for this award:

New Wording: “A member of MARAC may receive this award multiple times for each category, however, only once every three years for the same category”.

2) Limitation on time frame to be considered when nominating or voting for this award:

New wording: “Member qualification must be based on his/her activities during the previous 12 months, ending on the first day that nominations are accepted.”

3) Limitation on officers and directors with regard to eligibility for this award:

Revised wording: “MARAC Board members are eligible for this award. However, consideration should not be based upon their fulfillment of their board duties. Their consideration must be based upon activity outside of this such as mobile activity, net assistance activity, spotting activity, service to other members, and general overall enhancement of county hunting.”

Nominations for:

• County Hunter of the Year – SSB, and • County Hunter of the Year – CW can be made between April 1st and May 15th by submitting your nominations to your MARAC District Director.

Eligibility this year: As a result of the changes noted in item (3) above, the Board of Directors members can now be considered to receive the award with the provision that the reasons must be based on activity and service other than fulfillment of their BOD duties. The only members not eligible to be nominated this year are the previous winners in the past two years, specifically:

• CHOTY – SSB: AB7NK (2016) and K0DEQ (2017) • CHOTY – CW: KB6UF (2016) and NM2L (2017)

Previous winners up through 2015 are now eligible to receive the award in each category.

The period of activity which should be used for consideration as defined in change #2 above will essentially be the months of April, 2017 through March, 2018.

Your nomination(s) can be done via email and should include the following information:

- 1) Award name for which you are submitting a nomination
- 2) Name/callsign of person being nominated for the award
- 3) Your name/callsign
- 4) Explanation of why you feel your nominee is deserving of consideration for this award based on the qualification guidelines defined in the actual award rules document for these awards.

District Directors will review the nominations pertaining to members located in their respective district and will select one person for SSB and one person for CW to be forwarded to the Awards Committee. Up to three candidates for each of the two awards

will be chosen to appear on an online ballot during the month of July. The Board of Directors and the Awards Committee would very much like to see many nominations being submitted this year so we can have a meaningful selection of the most deserving candidates by the entire membership

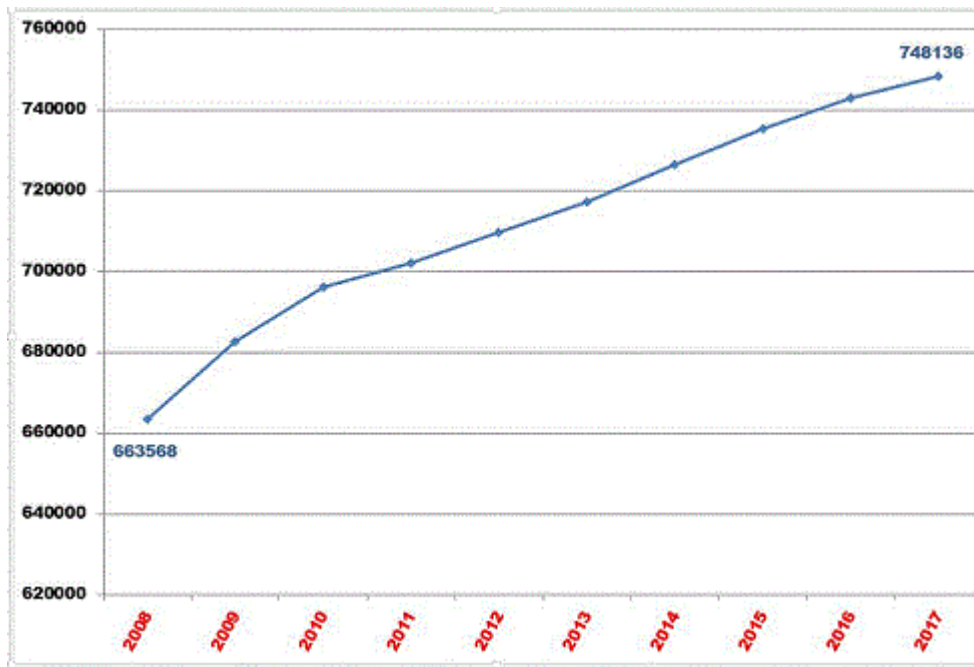
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Above information from Ron, N5MLP

Amateur License Growth

More than 30,000 New Ham Licensees and 7,000 Amateur Radio Exam Sessions in 2017

For the fourth year in a row, more than 30,000 new licensees joined the Amateur Radio ranks, and ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (VEC) conducted more than 7,000 Amateur Radio exam sessions, serving some 35,350 candidates for a new or upgraded license. At the end of December 2017, the US Amateur Radio population stood at 748,136.



At nearly 378,000, Technician licensees represented the largest segment, with General (174,206), Amateur Extra (145,034), Advanced (41,938), and Novice (9,056) trailing. Licensee numbers showed continued growth across all classes except Advanced and Novice, which the FCC no longer issues; those numbers continue to drop.

"I'm hopeful that the number of new licensees will be more than 30,000 at the end of this year," ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, said. "I would love to see this trend continue!"

New Licenses 2008 – 2017

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
28,066	30,144	27,528	24,072	27,082	28,886	33,241	32,077	32,552	32,196

Despite the optimistic influx of 32,196 newcomers last year, the net growth of 5,349 -- about 0.72% over December 2016 -- reflects some 27,000 expired or cancelled licenses in the FCC database over the past year. In making the case for changes to the entry-level license, the ARRL Board's Entry-Level License Committee referred to "the large number of Baby Boomers (roughly born 1945 - 65) [who] will soon be aging off the licensee

rolls." The committee predicted the likelihood of "a significant decline in the number of hams, unless we take steps to reverse it."

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Above courtesy ARRL Weekly Newsletter.

WAZ and LotW

LoTW Support for CQ Worked All Zones (WAZ) Award Goes Live

ARRL and CQ magazine have announced the launch of Logbook of The World (LoTW) support for CQ's Worked All Zones (WAZ) Award program, effective immediately. The goal of the project, under way since last year, has been to create the proper technical support system so that radio amateurs can submit LoTW confirmations for WAZ credit, and that has been accomplished, CQ and ARRL said in a joint statement.

LoTW -- ARRL's electronic confirmation system for Amateur Radio contacts --provides contact confirmation when both stations upload their logs to the system, and a match between the logs is confirmed. LoTW has already supported the CQ WPX Award program since 2012.

"We are very pleased that participants in CQ's WAZ award program will now be able to use their LoTW confirmations for award credit," CQ Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, said. "CQ WPX Award participants have found it very helpful, and we are sure it will be equally helpful for those pursuing WAZ and its many variations."

ARRL First Vice President Greg Widin, K0GW, concurred. "Users of LoTW have been telling us for some time that they would like to use QSLs from LoTW to apply for the WAZ award," he said. "They will now be able to select confirmations to be used for WAZ credit."

MO QSO Party

N4CD was out mobile on Saturday in TX – wow – mobiles everywhere and I could hear many of them on 40M. Good pileups when they changed counties too! Spots were flying left and right – mostly on 40m. I did hear far northeast MO on 20M cw and caught a few fixed stations there too. Lots of good counties on the air this year with half a dozen mobiles out there, and loads of 1x1 calls.

K0S mobile (N0AX opr) 869 cw qso

Very good results here at the solar minimum! Thanks to the patient driving of Ellen KDØPES, we logged 937 miles as we hit 31 counties and completed our goal of activating all of MO's 119 (I think) counties. We only stopped a few times and kept right on moving, making good time. Not sure what we do next year - start over?

I decided to concentrate on 20 and 40 and move between as many counties as possible - that turned out to be a good decision. Each county generated a flurry (no weather pun intended - we did get some on Sunday) of contacts and an occasional county line stop spiced things up a bit. We just toggled between 20 and 40, announcing our presence whenever we were within mobile phone service. Saturday, we were out in the boonies - not much mobile phone service but we did see a camel, the world's largest goose statue in Sumner, many Amish buggies and farms, and saw quite a few glacial erratics on the roadside.

N6MU was our constant companion and I think worked us in all 31 - many other familiar calls in the log over and over. From EU, we picked up DL3DXX and LY5W a number of times both days, with DL2OY and HC2AO also calling in.

Murphy did bite a bit. Despite efforts to check out the station beforehand, the boom mike just would not work and with a lot of action on CW, I just decided to make it a CW-Only weekend. (Of course, it's fine at home - might have been road noise clobbering the VOX circuit.) I hope no Phone-only stations missed the SHOW ME because of that! Then the rig interface decided to get happy feet at full power on 40 meters. Although a lunch-time stint of rearrangement in the parking lot of the Toot-Toot Family Tavern in Harrison County helped a lot, there were still some lockups so I just sent everything manually from that

point. Lessons learned (again) - take the hand mike (or use a footswitch for PTT) and do bring the box of ferrites.

Sunday afternoon is always a hoot as everybody piles in trying to get "that last one" and this year was no different. Moving from Callaway into Montgomery and then Warren generated substantial pileups that really generated a lot of QSOs. We stopped at the last rest stop and made sure to work everybody following us from Warren and then clicked over to STC and home. The final clock ticked over with just 15 minutes of driving left so we didn't waste a minute.

Thanks to all the MO stations for activating their counties and to the out-of-state ops who joined the fun and chased us around the state. Also thanks to the WØMA team who put this all together, led by Randy NØLD - great job!

Now to get the ghost code in my ears to stop...

73, Ward NØAX and Ellen KDØPES

KBØLF Rover - 78 QSO CW

Able to get to three county lines. Sorry couldn't to more. Thanks to all who called.

Fred, KBØLF

WØH (ADØDX) mobile 463 cw 180 ssb

That was fun! Thanks for all the qso's. My wife is my driver and we set off south from Kansas City for George Washington Carver National Monument in Newton County.

I worked both CW and SSB and as others have mentioned did not work many MO stations.

I had a lot of engine noise on 40 and so I spent most of my time on 20.

I did work a station in Alaska so that was fun. I had a nice qso with an

Alberta station that was booming in from Lloydminster.

On Saturday we stopped at the Osceola Cheese Factory; it's nice to be back in Missouri.

The grass is a lot greener here in Missouri, it is still brown in Colorado.

I worked DL3DXX a number of times. I missed working Laci OM2VL along with everyone else. I also worked Ecuador.



AD0DX

Somehow I managed to stay up to 11pm on Saturday. I had my 80m Hustler vertical on my truck in front of our friends house in Kansas City where we stayed for the weekend.

I had fun during the MOQP posting on Facebook during the contest. At one point I entered a new county and I posted the new county on Facebook and for the frequency I put a picture of my radio with the frequency visible in the photograph.

I did use the MOQP spotting page once or twice, but I mostly used Facebook only

because it's so easy to post to Facebook.

I use N1MM+ for logging, I have a K3 with a keyer and Hustler mag mount antennas.

Thanks to the organizers for all the hard work that goes into planning and executing the MOQP. Hopefully soon we will have enough participation in the MOQP that someone will get a sweep of all 115 MO Counties.

73's,

Ron W0H / AD0DX and XYL Cathy

ps. the birdwatching at George Washington Carver was excellent

ND9E rover 436 SSB

Preparations began about 3 weeks prior with me being undecided on whether to do another rover operation or try a fixed portable type of operation. All the driving can make for a long day especially when you are in a single operator category. Because of a work emergency I lost the vacation day I was going to use to scout out the fixed location so with 1 week to go it was determined to be another rover outing.

Route planning

Google Earth was again used to pick possible locations with many being repeat locations that I knew worked well. I have about a 50% success rate of picking good spots with Google Earth but I always try to plan alternates locations. So over the last 5 years I have a good list of locations that work meaning they are a RF low noise, low traffic and safe spot to operate. Since the Saturday portion of the contest goes to 11PM I have to consider the night time location for all the above reasons plus can I set up an antenna for 80 meters. The final plan was:

Start at the Mississippi / New Madrid county line-

Next the Pemiscot/Dunklin county line-

Then the Bollinger / Stoddard county line-

Finish at the Wayne / Butler county line and then operate on the move til the end of the contest and only be 40 minutes from home.



Execution- Saturday

I left home at 6AM with the plan to arrive at the Mississippi/New Madrid location at 8:45. Mother nature decided that the further south I drove that the temperature should drop and the rain would change to snow. I reached the Scott County area and cars were off in the median and ditches so my travel slowed down. I arrived at my first spot and a heavy wet snow was falling so I decided to just run with the truck mounted antenna. Worked the strong stations and decided to head onto the PEM/DUN spot ahead of schedule.

Once at PEM/DUN I realized that this location will not work due to high noise levels and there was a 30mph wind blowing at 35 degrees so I wimped out and worked from the truck antennas again. 40 meters was really long now so I only made about 10 contacts. Again I left this spot ahead of schedule and hoped that things would improve as I drove north to the Bollinger/Stoddard line.

Now at BOL/STD the wind died down, the sun came out and I was at a known low noise/low traffic area. I set up my 31 ft mast with 40 feet of wire spiral wound on the mast. Laid out 4 radials and I was in business with 20, 40 and 80 meters. This location is also part of the WWFF Parks on the Air program and I knew that would drive in QSO's that I could also claim for MOQP so I spotted myself on the POTA pages and worked a pile up on 20 and 40m for about 2.5 hours. This run at this location would anchor my overall score. Reluctantly I had to head to my next spot so I could set up in the remaining daylight.

It was about a 20 minute drive to my spot on the Wayne/Butler county line. I quickly setup and went to 80 meters as it was about 7PM. I made a few contacts and then I checked in with Kyle at the W0W expedition class station. He let me know that no one had been to Washington county yet so I decided to pack up and make a detour to Washington on my way home to hopefully make some multiplier hunters happy.

Now at a spot in Washington county I tried to use 80m on the screwdriver antenna I had installed a few days prior. I could receive many stations coming in at S9+10 but none of them could hear me. I knew 80m was tough from a vehicle but I did not expect this result. I could have tried a different antenna like a hamstick but I was starting the drag #@% so I headed for home. No contacts made from Washington county. Sorry folks!

Sunday

I decided on the way home on Saturday that getting up after 4 hours of sleep did not sound appealing so I went with an alternate plan to put St. Louis City (STL) on the air. So I slept in until 7AM, left the house by 8:15AM and found a place to setup by Forest Park. I was able to make 20 contacts before I headed west to the Callaway/ Audrain county line. I did have to cut this one a little short and should have spent more time on 20m.

It was a quick 10 minute drive to Montgomery county and made 39 contacts. I ended the contest there and began the 2 hour drive home.

40 vs. 80 thoughts

It seems that the herd mentality is that by 10AM you must abandon 80 meters(me included). After I still couldn't contact anyone in-state on 40 and sent a message to W0W and W0D that I was trying 80 at 2PM! We were able to make the contact and I started a short run on 80 but I picked up probably 6 to 8 multipliers in the last 30 minutes. Everyone always starts the contest on 40 and we probably should all start the contest on 80 instead of 40. Something to remember for 2018.

The numbers for ND9E

436 contacts

71 multipliers

29 MO counties

42 states

31,156 claimed score

Operated from 12 counties

Operated from KFF-0377 Mingo Wildlife Area
Operated from 5 different grid squares
Drove 752 miles
22.2MPG
It snowed

(From the MO QP FB page)

N6MU Fixed - CA - 188 cw 66 SSB

Never heard W0MA or K0H on CW. Makes it tough for the CW guys to get bonus points.

Lots of mobiles out there. Top mobile for me was W0E with 56 Qs followed by K0PC(40), K0S(31), W0H(30), N0E(9), N0AC(8) and KB0LF(4).

Very frustrating watching all the spots for the mobiles on 40 who never ventured to 20 to give us left coasters a shot at those elusive counties during the day. Hopefully next year.

Thanks to BEARS for another good one. 73...

John, N6MU

K8MR - fixed - OH - 46 CW

For most of the day too far for 40 meters, and only the north and west parts of MO coming through on 20. Good mobile activity, though most of the time they were barely above my local noise level.

This would be a good contest to trim to one day. Sunday 1400Z to 0200Z would be great. No conflicts with Mississippi, SP DX, or SSB Sprint contests. The few fixed stations on Sunday seemed to be having a pretty boring time.

K0AP - fixed - KS - 15 cw

Not too many MO stations were heard due to the wide skip. 80m was most productive.

I hope next year things get better. Thanks for Qso's and to the mobiles who spent the time, money and effort to get out there for us.

73 Dragan K0AP

N0SRN - fixed MO

Had a blast on 40 Saturday. Logged a little over 200 qsos in just over 3 hours on Ssb. Wish I had time to eat back on today no such luck. Definitely one of my favorite contests of the year.

W0E mobile (KI0I opr)

A beautiful sunset Saturday and a window full of snow today. Lucky the roads only became wet and not slick. A fun weekend , only breakdown was the PTT button on icom mic. Had a spare in the goodie box. Bands were a lil punky and seemed like less participation this year. The log reports will tell the story.



Thanks to all for the qso's and Listening to me hack up Morse code. Not easy on a paddle and ruff roads.



73 from W0E / KI0I

W0D - portable - Dent county - (WA0JCO, WB0SND, WA0IYY)

We set up field day style in a conservation area in Dent. Froze to death

DL3DXX - 103 cw qso

20m produced only weak signals during afternoon and at sunset the band seemed to close but opened again later. Finally it closed at 21:30z.

I am happy that I was able to make a few contacts on 40m with a simple vertical loop. Even 80m was open for a short time to work N0S and NI0C around 3z. Sunday was a 20m only show. Again the signals became weak after a nice start at 14 UT. Band had ups and downs but never really closed so my last contact happened with K0S/m 7 minutes before the end.

Many mobiles were active. That's why the party never became boring. Thank you for a wonderful QSO party.

73 Dietmar

N2CX Activation

N2CX POTA in PA Apr 7

This week's journey was a return visit to several easy PA sites which have been lightly activated to date. No great effort was expended since EU contesting and state POTA efforts threatened to put a damper on things.

Ralph Stover SP, K-1410 was first and the site employed was one found on the last visit that is on high ground with good cell coverage and, hopefully, adequate parking. The first two criteria proved true, but parking was surprisingly scant due to hordes of folks eager to venture out on the rocky slopes to enjoy sweeping vistas of the Tohickon River Valley. The constant flow of traffic through the area confirmed previous suspicions that GM and Chrysler trucks seem to produce the most RFI and the dreaded Priuses are noisy mobile switching power supplies! The ubiquitous PA park warnings here described the dangers of rock climbing by the unskilled and those lacking in proper gear (really?) and avoidance of inadvertent spreading of the dreaded Spotted Lanternfly.



Nockamixon, K-1391 was next. It really is a beautiful lake with a number of scenic areas, several picnic areas, plus a marina and campground in season. Alas during the current visit, there was not much opportunity for recreation or much scenery to enjoy other than the impressive lakefront area. The area picked for activation was chosen for its location above the low lake area and totally empty parking lot. Unfortunately not much to see. In fact it was so unimpressive that the ratty activation companion sought a high vantage point to forestall ennui. Using greased pole climbing skills learned watching Eagles fans circumventing authority's measures to discourage that activity (ya gotta be from the Phila area to understand that) he scampered up a pole holding a bi-level birdhouse. Of course, the "grease" on that pole was not axle grease or Vaseline, but a substance much more common in the vicinity of avian inhabitants. No warning signs were seen, but we recalled that on a previous visit there were notifications of on-going efforts to clear the area of trees infested by ash-borers and this time evidence the tree cutting and removal work was obvious. They've got lots of work in finishing that by the time seasonal park visitors descend!

There was some hope that the FL and TX POTA folks would yield a number of contacts. Unfortunately not too many were heard, and only a few contacts with the FL crew resulted. With the familiar weak ionosphere, plus RTTY and EU contests, things were difficult, necessitating frequent QSY'ing and repeats on even strong signals. Because of the EU contesting, only two EU contacts were possible, though the flutter noticed in earlier Q's with OH6RP was gone this time. On a positive note, many familiar stations responded, providing 30+ Q's at each site and a total of three P2P Q's.

Got my sights set on some new locations for next week and if anticipated Spring weather shows up, Ratso, Kevin and I may be able to commandeer a picnic table or park bench to truly make nature our shack.

2200M News

Apparent First 2200-Meter Transatlantic Contact by US Radio Amateur Reported

In late March, Paul Kelley, N1BUG, of Milo, Maine, completed what may have been the first transatlantic 2200-meter contact by a US radio amateur under Amateur Radio rules. Signals in this part of the spectrum and lower previously have spanned the Atlantic in one direction, and Canadian radio amateurs have reported transatlantic contacts on the band dating back several years.

Kelley's QSL card features one of his non-Amateur Radio pursuits.

"To the best of my knowledge this is the first transatlantic two-way QSO from the US on 2200 meters under Part 97 operation," said Kelley, who told ARRL that he gravitates toward the more challenging, "weak-signal" aspects of Amateur Radio and has been experimenting and DXing for 37 years now.

"2200 meters is my new passion, and I am having a lot of fun with it!" he said. "I had been dreaming of -- and working toward -- a transatlantic QSO on 2200 meters for some time. Recently, I asked Chris Wilson, 2E0ILY, if he

An annotated screenshot showing the DFCW signal with both stations identified.

would be interested in trying to work me on DFCW60 mode. Chris and I have heard each other on WSPR, but he does not hear me well enough yet for a JT9 or other digital QSO. Chris agreed to try DFCW60 -- dual-frequency CW, 60-second dit length."

This was not a quick contact. It took four nights to complete, using night-by-night sequencing. Kelley called that "the minimum possible time" for such a contact, which included an exchange of complete call signs, signal reports, and acknowledgements. Kelley said they used the TMOR reporting system, borrowed from the moonbounce world.

"The QSO was completed at 0020 UTC March 28, when I received 'R' from Chris," Kelley said

—

courtesy ARRL weekly Newsletter

MS QSO Party

KC4HW mobile - 114 cw

First of all, thanks to all that I worked during the MsQP!

My planning started out a couple a weeks ago. I did not have a second op/driver for the event, but thought that I since I had operated many times in the AQP FQP and GQP that I could pull it off again in Mississippi.

Brought the RV over to Camp Shelby just outside of Hattiesburg on Friday. Nice military family campground at Lake Walker. Stayed two night, rainy and cooler WX on Friday and Saturday nights made camping a bit uncomfortable, but it wasn't to bad. Came back home on Sunday. Visited the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum, outside area and enjoyed that very much. Unfortunately the inside exhibits were closed for the day. Everyone at Camp Shelby and Southern Mississippi were very pleasant and I enjoyed my time there.

By in large, I planned to operate 30 minutes and travel 30 minutes between counties. So with that in mind I planned for JONES, COVINGTON, JEFF DAVIS, LAWRENCE, LINCOLN, FRANKLIN, AMITE, PIKE, WALTHALL, MARION, LAMAR and FORREST and if I had time PERRY, which is where Camp Shelby is located. Just before the start I decided to try to save a few miles by coming down I-55 from Lincoln to Pike and slip back to Amite and Franklin counties. Not sure that it saved any real time.

Unfortunately darkness got me and my solution to have an USB LED light shining on the keyboard did not work out so good. So when I got to Marion county I really could not see very well at all, without another solution for the darkness, I gave it up which resulted in missing LAMAR, FORREST and PERRY and by the time I got back to Camp Shelby it was nearly 9PM and the event was all but

over. I probably could have done better in MARION and gotten LAMAR and FORREST counties with the better lightening. Oh well will find a better solution.

Used an FT-891 and Hustler 20, 40 and 80m resonators. I have a bit of RFI to the computer from the very beginning, in fact had to restart the computer once if was so bad. I tried re-routing cables but it did not help. I guess I have to do a bit more grounding on the mobile and some chokes on the antenna.

Just like Alabama, Georgia and Florida rural area generally have a good bit of noise! Mississippi was no exception!

The 20m resonator worked pretty good and seemed to have no problem with RFI. I acquired another mount and mast to have a more permanent installation for the 20m resonator but could not get it installed before I left.

40m antenna definitely needed some adjustment. It actually seemed that the suggested frequency of 50kHz up from the bottom was not too good on 40m, because there seemed to be a lot of RTTY activity in the early evening.

Although with only 2 QSOs on 80m, I really thought that it would have worked OK, those two signals were good, thanks to K2DSW and W4XK. The problem was I could not see the keyboard--DARKNESS!!

Worked LY5W and DL3DXX on 20m around 2030Z and 2147Z. Had repeat QSOs with K0AP, WB8WKQ, K4BAI, K4AMC, KN4Y and KI4MZC. Worked a few VEs and stations from all over the US. Thanks to all.

Will be going over to Georgia this coming weekend for a part time effort on Saturday and then again on Sunday--it is pretty easy to get to SW Georgia. Will be single op no driver again. Will post my routes on QRZ.

Congratulations to Chuck and Skip for a great 26 county effort! My effort was very meager in comparison! But I did the best I could with the environment that I was working with. Perhaps I can do better next year! Next year, I think that I will try the Eastern counties of Mississippi and see if that might work out a little better. Perhaps that will generate more interest for those counties. Be about the same miles for me and I can once again stay at Camp Shelby.

Nevertheless, thanks again for the QSOs and enjoyed the trip to Southern Mississippi.

73, Jim/KC4HW

NO5W mobile - NO5W/W5GAI opr - 714 cw QSO

At the 599DX Holiday Dinner Mississippi SCM Mal-W5XX suggested that we do the MS QP again in 2018 and requested that we include some of counties in the Delta to the route. After several iterations of a route coming out of New Orleans and including some Delta counties we arrived at a route that went about as far north in the Delta as possible while still finishing up the party at the MS-LA border near Slidell, about 50 miles from New Orleans. It amounted to a total drive of about 700 miles but with two to share the driving and operating it did not seem that long at all and we kept very close to the schedule even after being about 15 minutes late getting to the LA-MS border due to waiting out a storm that passed through the area.

K2DSW was the clear winner in the early pounce category closely followed by K0AP, WB8WKQ, and K4BAI. Issaquena, one of the Delta counties, was a disappointment. There were stations calling but they were weak and the power line noise was S9. Our apologies if you were calling in Issaquena and all you got from us was a CQ. We were concerned that Sharkey, which followed Issaquena, was going to be more of the same but it turned out to be the start of signals coming up and power line noise abating somewhat. Holmes was one of our longest counties and had good activity, possibly because it contained a grid square corner and our route touched on each of the grid squares. Coming out of Attala to I-55 began our "take it to the coast" segment with counties along that part of the route providing some of our best rate with good signals and low noise. That was probably the most operating fun of the trip.

During the party we worked a total of 231 different stations and appreciate the Qs from each, but the following core group of followers stayed with us long enough to account for more than half of our Qs and deserve a special thank you: K2DSW(36), K0AP(25), WB5JID(20), WB8WKQ(19), K5KPE(19), K4AMC(17), WN4AFP(15), KJ4IWZ(14), KQ3F(13), KE5LQ(13), NW0M(13), WB9HFK(13), W9DC(12), DL3DXX(12), KC3X(11), N2CQ(11), KN4Y(11), W5TM(10), WA8ZBT(10), K4BAI(10), K9NW(10), W9OA(9), K0HNC(9), N5NA(8), W4XK(8), K4VIG(8), W4IHI(8), KU8E(8), K1RO(7), K3SEW(7), N2JNE(7), K9UIY(7).

Thanks to Skip for riding along for a second MSQP sharing in the operating and driving. Also thanks to Norm-W3DYA for coming over from Texas to help out and to Jim-KC4HW for coming over from Alabama.

Next up for NO5W/m will be the FQP where Ted-KN5O and I will be sharing the operating and driving duties.

73

Chuck-NO5W
Skip-W5GAI

WN4AFP - fixed - SC - 43 CW

I increased my score from my last MSQP outing. Mobiles worked included NO5W, W4SIG, KC4HW and W3DYA. I didn't hear much SSB activity on the low bands. ZERO propagation from SC to MS on 20m this year.

73s Dave WN4AFP

K4BAI - fixed - GA - 34 cw 15 ssb

Thanks for all QSOs. Thanks to NO5W/M and W4SIG/M for three of the last four counties in MS I needed. Now need only Montgomery County. 73, John, K4BAI.

K0AP - fixed - KS - 68 cw

As usual, when W3DYA and NO5W get involved in mobile operations, you can count on very successful QSO party. This time in MSQP 2018 was no different. These two are outstanding CW operators and all you have to do is follow their predictable operating pattern.

My MS counties count was pretty slim before this weekend but I was rewarded with at least 35 new MS counties in this QSO party. Thank you guys! See you in MSQP 2019.

73 Dragan K0AP

KN4Y- Fixed - FL - 44 CW QSO

Over half of my CW QSO's were with the 4 mobiles, need more CW fixed stations. Did not hear the bonus station on CW. Storms moved through this area but lightning stayed North. My cat Tiger listened for awhile, got bored and left.

DL3DXX - 63 cw qso

Nice hunting for NO5W/m and W3DYA/m.

I missed a few counties I could not hear and during the usual gap between 20m closing and 40m open time.

Thank you for all the contacts

Dietmar DL3DXX

Solar Update I

The sunspot numbers have not been good, and it does not seem they'll be getting much better anytime soon. According to the April 12 "K7RA Solar Update," no sunspots were seen over the April 5 - 11 reporting week. Solar flux has been sitting in the 60s lately and is forecast to remain at that level for the next 45 days. We're not at solar minimum yet, though; better days lie ahead -- eventually.

Frank Donovan, W3LPL, during a 2017 presentation on propagation at the Fair Lawn (NJ) Amateur Radio Club.

Top contester Frank Donovan, W3LPL, asserts that solar precursors like spotless days, which correlate physical solar phenomena with future solar activity levels, are much better indicators of progress toward a solar minimum -- a broad phase of the solar cycle -- than of a specific event, such as the bottom of a broad solar minimum. Not only that, these and other solar precursors are useful in predicting the likely strength of Solar

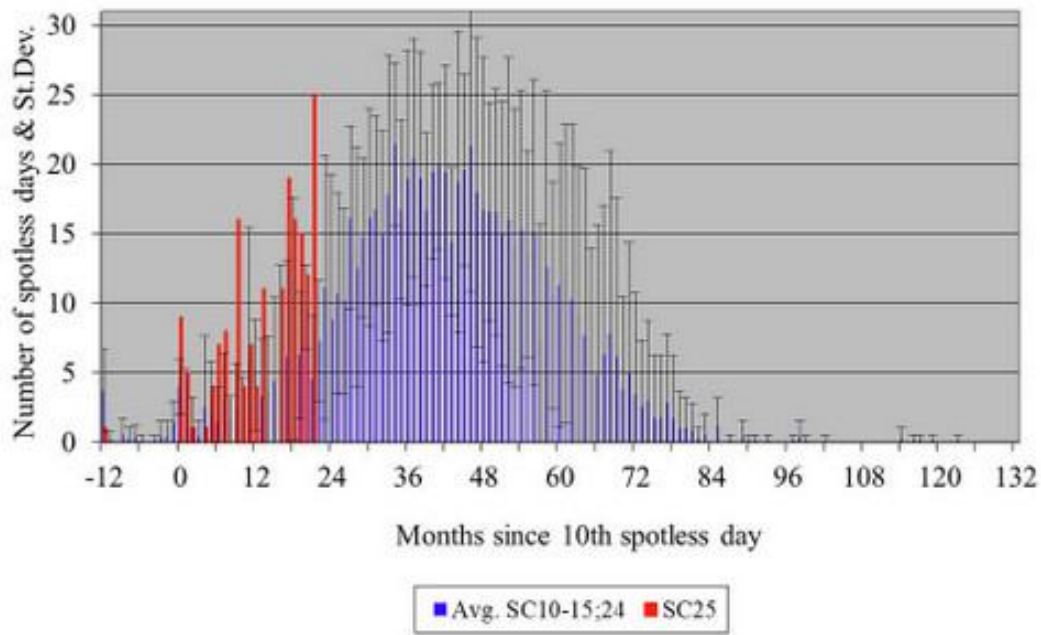
Cycle 25, although accurate predictions of the strength and timeframe of the Cycle 25 solar maximum aren't possible until the new sunspot cycle is under way.

"We entered the Cycle 24 solar minimum with the onset of 8 spotless days in June 2016," Donovan pointed out. "We had only 32 spotless days in 2016. We had 15 spotless days in a row in March 2017, followed by relatively infrequent spotless days for the next 7 months."

The frequency of spotless days accelerated in early November 2017, with 13 spotless days in a row. That was followed by many more spotless days over the next 5 months. In all, 2017 experienced 104 spotless days.

"The frequency of spotless days accelerated again last month, when we had 25 spotless days," Donovan noted. "We've already had 54 spotless days during the first quarter of 2018. This data and comparisons to frequent spotless days during the last solar minimum suggests that we may have just begun a period of very frequent spotless days for approximately the next 2 years, similar to the period of September 2007 through January 2009."

Donovan said the next solar precursor is frequent extended periods of spotless days. For example, 2016 saw 14 spotless days in a row, March 2017 had 15, November 2017 saw 13, and early March experienced 14.



This chart shows the number of spotless days -- in red -- since the 10th spotless day of the onset of solar minimum in July 2016. In blue are the average numbers of spotless days during sunspot minimums following weak sunspot cycles similar to Solar Cycle 24. "Long periods of spotless days will become even more frequent as we go deeper into solar minimum," Donovan predicted. Once extended periods of spotless days become more frequent, another solar precursor will become important, he said.

"New high-latitude, opposite-polarity Cycle 25 sunspots will then begin to appear more frequently, perhaps by late next year," Donovan said. "More frequent Cycle 25 sunspots will signal that we're approaching the bottom of the [Cycle 24] solar minimum phase." An ongoing solar precursor that could herald the future strength of Cycle 25 is the intensity of the solar polar magnetic fields prior to the Cycle 24 solar minimum, Donovan said. "The good news is that the solar polar magnetic field strength is already slightly stronger than it was prior to the last solar minimum," he said. "This suggests that Cycle 25 will be somewhat stronger than Cycle 24."

Donovan said if the long periods of spotless days end in about 1 year, that will be a precursor of a stronger Cycle 25. If they take more than 2 years to end, however, it will

portend a weaker Cycle 25

New Mexico QSO Party

N6MU 46 cw 27 ssb 25 counties worked

Very poor conditions made for a long day. Could only hear the very eastern counties on 20. K8TE and KK6MC kept it interesting when I could hear them. 73...

K8BKM - fixed MI - 31 cw 35 ssb 25 counties worked

First timer for the NMqP. Was on call today and had to stay home so I decided to play. Fortunately the forecast ice storm in MI didn't materialize.

Had a blast trying to work a few of the mobiles as they traversed the state. With three QSO parties going on at the same time, it was sometimes hard to find NM stations.

Thanks for the Q's.

73, Tom
K8BKM

Mobile Activity in April

At the beginning of the month

AL7X – spotted in Second AK – fixed

WI0WA spotted in park in IA

N5PHT, Gary, spotted in OK and MO parks this month. He operates from his mobile home while camped out.

N4UP was busy putting out GA counties for the county hunters. On many days.

KB3WAV, Kerri, and KC3RW, Ray, spotted in parks in MD

Kerry, W4SIG, spotted out in MS. Later was over in MO.

AB4WL/KF4INA were spotted running counties in AL.

Norm, W3DYA, headed over to MS for the MSQP.

There were lots of mobiles in the MO and MSQP – separate reports on all.

N9MM, Norm, spotted in parks in TX, NM, CO. He stops overnight(s) in parks and often operates for 2-3 days while there – portable.

Kraig, KA2LHO, put out FL parks and participated in Florida Parks on the Air.

Jim, N9JF, ran parks and counties in MO, IA, and NE

WJ8Y spotted out mobile in OH

Phil, AB7RW active up in WA

Ed, KN4Y, headed to GA for the QP there.

Gene, K5GE, headed up through KS on his way to MI, along with Terry, WQ7A

End date 4/18/2018

On the Road with N4CD II

The cold front came though Friday. Blizzards were raging up north in ND and MN = headed to WI and MI. Here it was in the 30s after the cold front come through. . Hail to the NW but OK at the QTH Friday night, then just cold and very windy. So come Sunday, with some nice sun, I headed out about 9am at 37 degrees to the LBJ Grasslands Area in Wise County TX – about 85 miles away. Traffic was light going – down the 121 Tollroad, to I-35E, then west on Highway 380. You can drive all the way to NM on 380 – good road – just 400-500 miles to get there! Not today – just went over to Wise County and headed north to the Trailhead park of the park. This unit is all 'Swiss Cheese'. Probably 50 different small tracts of land, not contiguous, and most unmarked – a few acres here, there, with no signs. The trailhead did have some signs when you got close.

There are two roads getting there off state highway 730 – one for 'cars with trailers no longer than 12 feet' and the other for 'cars with trailers longer than 12 feet'. I took the short road – didn't seem too bad. On the way there, had a few spare minutes when not dealing with traffic and put a few GA stations in the log on 40M. It would likely disappear soon – it's a long way to GA from TX. Zilch coming through on 20M other than one GA station. Still too early.

Arrived at 10:30 and tuned the bands. I found a few GA stations in the GA QP – mobiles hard to come by. Heard more mobiles on 40M but tough to work – lots of loud competition, and even when I could hear some of them, they couldn't hear me. 20M got better and adding in a bunch.

I spotted myself on W6RK and 7 county hunters showed up on 20M. Just a few on 30m and a few on 40m. Then spotted myself on DXsummit.fi and the FB page for WWW-KFFF and a dozen park hunters showed up. Best DX for the day was F2YT and F5MVT, K9FD Merv in HI, and EA1DR. The Europeans were just a whisper.

From Wiki:

“Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) National Grassland is a National Grassland located in the

Great Plains of the northern part of the U.S. state of Texas near Decatur and within an hour's drive from Fort Worth. It is primarily used for recreation such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, fishing and hunting. It is also used as grazing land for cattle and other livestock.



Camping and other activities are free of charge, and visitors may camp in virtually any area of the park. Both pull-through and hike-in campsites are available. Some areas require a small fee for use, but these are few and clearly marked.

It is located primarily in the northern part of Wise County, but a small portion extends northward into southern Montague County. It has a land area of 20,309 acres.”

There are a few tourist places where you can visit and actually find a LBJ Grasslands sign. Headed to the TADRA Point trailhead and the nice marked area to park there.

Georgia QSO Party

WW4LL Multi-Op GA 990 cw 1644 SSB

Operator(s): AA4CF N2WF NN9DD W9RNY W9SN WW4LL

First time running this contest but had a great time. Hope the dweebs throwing carriers did too.

We had a great team assembled and good to have W9RNY operating. Charlie, AA4CF did the bulk of the CW operating and did a great job.

We'll see you in this one again next year and thanks for the great participation this year.

73'....Fred, WW4LL

NW0M fixed MO - 161 cw

Thanks to the mobiles: W4AN, N4N, KN4Y, N4I, K4ZGB, and N4FD. It was fun chasing you around GA.

K0AP fixed KS -- 161 cw 82 counties worked

he mobiles W4AN, N4N, KN4Y, N4I, KC4HW etc... have done a great job. So much fun chasing them around in different counties. Well organized party with many participants. Thanks for many new GA counties. Looking forward to GAQP 2019.

73 Dragan K0AP

WB4EVH as N4I - mobile - GA

Drove 429 miles. Made 75 SSB and 369 CW contacts. Conditions were awful.

We were setting by the road running and all of a sudden both receivers were over loaded with hash noise. A Tesla came by. It was the source of the noise. Probably a quarter mile each way noise from it could be heard.

Dave and I want everyone to know that we run a traditional mobile. No trailers, no generators, no kilowatt amps, no radios that were never designed to be run mobile. We are self contained running multi-transmitter, multi-operator mobile like we have done for over 20 years. If I was going to run high power and base only radios I would do the contest in my 37 foot motor home. You know going from 20' to 37' spacing on antennas may have a great advantage. Look for you next year in the contest.

Sandy.

KC4HW mobile - 323 CW QSO

Thanks for all the QSOs!

I would like to thanks those that work so hard to put on the GQP each year!

Operated Single Op No Driver, FT-891 and Hustler resonators.

I covered 13 counties over the two days. Drove about 460 total miles. Actually operating about 7 hours throughout those counties. Sure is pretty country in Southwest Georgia!!

Conditions were pretty good considering where we are in the cycle! I thought that activity was excellent. Worked a lot of repeat station in different counties. W9AV(IA), N9CK(WI), K9CT(IL), WB2ABD(NY), K7TM(ID), N5NA(TX) and many other hard to remember--thanks for following me. Only worked one Alabama station (K1DC). Conditions were a lot better long than short. hi

Probably going to Florida in a couple of weeks for another PT effort. I think both days. Maybe I can get some more improvements on my mobile installation to help the signal.

If you are interested, I have a blog at <http://jimkc4hw.blogspot.com/> probably

more than you want to know.. hi

Thanks again for all that tolerated my poor CW. But this is just what it is!!

Hope to see you again.

Jim/KC4HW

W4AN mobile - K4BAI, KU8E opr - 1924 CW QSO

Hope everyone enjoyed the GQP this year. I worked really hard to drum up activity from Georgia.

Unfortunately we started 3 hours late on Sunday due to a nail in one of the tires on the car. The only place open on Sunday to have it repaired was Walmart. (Ouch!!) That's why our planned route was changed on Sunday. Hopefully someone else activated those counties we planned on doing.

Setup - Icom 756Pro2, Winkeyer, 80 40 and 20 meter Hustler mobile antennas.

K4ZGB mobile - 856 cw QSO

Thanks for all the contacts.

Thunderstorms most of Sunday made copy a little difficult.

73, Tom

K4F mobile - KB4KBS opr 248 cw 60 ssb

I decided that I was going to enter the contest this year in the MIXED category and brought along my BY2 and MFJ keyer along with my computer interface for sending keyboard macros. I was bolstered with the confidence that I could always rely on my CW Skimmer as my "water wings" to help me stay afloat.

I must insert that I was in Nashville April 2-13, so everything was put in a plastic "tote-tub" and loaded in the van on Easter Sunday. On the 13th I set up everything in the hotel parking lot before we drove from Nashville to Chattanooga where we spent the night before starting our North Georgia roving adventure in Catoosa County on Saturday.

During the drive down on Friday I discovered that I had forgotten to bring my Signalink USB sound card - I can't explain why, except I associate it with doing digital modes, something I didn't plan to do. Not to worry, I can always plug a 3.5mm M/M cable from the headphone out to the laptop mic in (or so I thought). Anyway, suffice it to say that this plan didn't work out due to RF or something, so CW Skimmer was no longer an option.

As usual for me, things started off slowly with only three 40M Qs in CATO and one in WFLD. After about forty minutes of frustration and trepidation, I decided to give it a go and started sending "CQ GQP K4F/WFLD CQ K4F". I had dialed back the sending speed on N1MM Logger+ to 15 WPM, and when K7SV came back to me, it took a couple of tries to get those four characters then "VA". A minute later I logged K9CT in IL, then KM4HI in FL, and then W8PI in MI. An hour later, I had eleven stations in my log and I was on my way. I had to stop and think several times, was that a D? G? U? W? was he sending a 2 or a 7, a 9 or a 0? I was blessed with patient operators and as I progressed along I needed fewer fills. I started a pattern of sending "(state) RR" with my paddles before sending my stock 73 message, especially for stations I worked for the first time. Eventually I crept the send speed from the keyboard to 18 WPM and only a few times did I need to send "QRS" to a 25-30 WPM speed demons. Some of them, hand-keying I'm sure, would send high-speed letters with long pauses between letters, which worked for me as well.

A strange thing happened to me as the weekend continued - I found myself WANTING to do CW over phone... My original plan was to spend 30 minutes on 20M and 30 minutes on 40M in each county, spending 15 minutes doing PH and 15 minutes doing CW. Dutifully, I would switch to the microphone as I would enter a new county, but after about 10 minutes of fruitless calling, the allure of the success using Morse Code would suck me back in and off I would go. I had an RF issue with 20M CW, that made computer keying and even manual keying impossible. I did manage to log a half-dozen 20M CW stations, but they were a rare moment of stability that quickly vanished. the 40M band was, as always, the money band.

When all was done, I had 308 contacts, 248 of which were CW. All of them were copied using only my ears. I still can't believe I did it - in a moving vehicle no less. Yeah, I know most guys can do 50 CW Qs an hour compared to my meager average of about 15 an hour, but considering this was my baptism-by-fire, I'm satisfied.

It's not going to be a plaque-worthy effort I'm sure, but I sure feel like a winner.

I of course must say thanks to all of the stations who were patient with me as I kept asking for fills and massacred their call signs. A special shout-out to K9CT who stalked me through 12 counties.

Finally, as always, my wife/chauffeur Eileen deserves special recognition for driving me across 18 counties in two day - especially on Sunday when we were in near-constant rain storms most of the day.

N4PN- fixed - GA 469 cw 1553 ssb

Great time - missed AK, MT and SK on CW....worked all on ssb.
Nice surprise to work VY1AAA on CW and SSB for NT...
2022 Q's after dupes in 19 hours surely my best rate ever..

73, Paul, N4PN

Solar News II

Giant plasma "tornadoes" raging across the surface of the sun don't actually spin like astronomers once thought, new research shows.

Massive solar tornadoes, formally known as tornado prominences, which were first observed about 100 years ago, seemed to bear a striking resemblance to tornadoes on Earth. These gigantic structures — each one several times the size of Earth — are made

of hot, flowing gas and tangled magnetic field lines, ultimately driven by nuclear reactions in the solar core.

However, using a method known as the Doppler effect, scientists have precisely measured the speed of the moving plasma, as well as its direction, temperature and density, revealing that twisters on the sun do not rotate like earthbound tornadoes do, according to a statement from the European Week of Astronomy and Space Science (EWASS) conference. [

"We found that despite how prominences and tornadoes appear in images, the magnetic field is not vertical, and the plasma mostly moves horizontally along magnetic field lines," Nicolas Labrosse, lead scientist of the study and researcher from the School of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, said in the statement.



Up until now, astronomers had relied only on two-dimensional data, such as images taken by the Atmospheric Imaging Assembly instrument on NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory. This data, however, creates a sort of optical illusion, the researchers said.

"We see tornado-like shapes in the images because of projection effects, where the line of sight information is compressed onto the plane of the sky," Labrosse said.

Instead, the new measurements using the Doppler effect add a third dimension to the data, allowing scientists to construct a more complete picture of the magnetic-field structure that supports the plasma, according to the statement.

Compared to tornadoes on Earth, which are formed from intense winds and are very mobile, solar tornadoes are composed of magnetized gas that appear to be rooted deep in the solar surface, therefore remaining in a fixed place, the researchers said.

"They are associated with the legs of solar prominences — these are beautiful concentrations of cool plasma in the very hot solar corona that can easily be seen as pink structures during total solar eclipses," Labrosse said in the statement.

"Perhaps for once, the reality is less complicated than what we see!" Brigitte Schmieder, co-author of the study and researcher from the Laboratory of Space Studies and Instrumentation in Astrophysics (LESIA) at l'Observatoire de Paris in France, added in the statement.

Their findings were presented Friday (April 6) at the European Week of Astronomy and Space Science conference in Liverpool, England.

Original article on Space.com.

North Dakota QSO Party

Wicked weather hit ND on Friday/Saturday - not a great place for mobiles. I caught a few stations while out at the park.

N7IV was active from Ward, ND

On SSB, caught WA0CSL in Traill, W7KZU (Grand Forks) and KD0CVL in Cass.

I was only on for a few hours – can't complain other than not much CW activity. Did hear some other ND working GA QP stations but not putting out their counties in the QP.

From the 3830 reflector:

KC0W - fixed - ND - 271 CW QSO

Thanks much to all who participated in the 2018 NDQP. Between work obligations, family obligations & perhaps yard work it's amazing fellow CW enthusiasts find the time to sit in front of the radio on nice weather weekends.

I recently moved back to ND so this was the first contest I put a serious effort into. The ground is still frozen here & I'm unable to put up the towers in storage. So, what to do for antennas for NDQP? I have a 20 meter HamStick & a 40 meter HamStick in storage. I used these antennas for some WSPR experiments a number of years ago. I know, let's try these "dummy loads on a stick" in the NDQP.

I ran 100' of crap coax into the driveway & connected it to a mag mount on top of the SUV. The roof of this vehicle is almost all glass due to it's enormous sunroof. I found the only 1'x 1' square area of metallic real estate on the roof & plopped the mag mount down on it. It made a sickening THUD on the brand new paint as the magnet & roof became one. This is a new Range Rover so I wasn't about to do any bonding or grounding of the Rovers hood, doors, etc.....My expectations were not very high.

As the witching hour of 1800 UTC rolled around I made the decision to "handicap" myself even further by running 50 Watts for the entire contest. What is the ERP of a 40 meter HamStick on an un-bonded vehicle while running 50 Watts? Probably less than 10 Watts.

Let's Get Ready to Rumble:

Low & behold people were hearing/working me. If K0BG could see me now. This mobile setup flies squarely in the face everything K0BG preaches about on his website. Amateurs like to know the fine details of what stations use in a contest. Here ya go:

FT-857 at 50 Watts

40 & 20 Meter HamSticks

N1MM+

100' of old coax complete with gouges/cuts in it. SWR was sky high.

By George mult after mult are now going into the log. Would I be able to work my goal of all 50 states? At the 5 hour mark it's looking like I just might. Fooling yourself by thinking you have a loud signal is half the battle, right? Who needs 1.5kW and 5 element monobanders when 50 Watts to a dummy load on a

stick seems to be doing the job.

KL7SB gives me a call. Nice, Alaska is now out of the way. A while later K9FD in Hawaii gives me the KH6 mult. Count then as they fall. Delaware, Rhode Island, Vermont. Keep on a trucking now Mr. Cow & continue to think you are loud. Canadians give me a few Providences. Thanks.

Long story short I didn't get my goal of all 50 states. Which ones were elusive?

Idaho.....You have GOT to be kidding me.

Montana.....The Montana/North Dakota state line is literally 20 miles from my door. Somehow no Montana RF made it's way into my radio.

North Dakota.....I should get a prize for somehow not working another ND station. Maybe the contest sponsor will have pity & send me a Ginsu knife set or a Chia Pet?

South Dakota.....Where was W0SD?

Wyoming.....Not surprised by this one.

So there ya have it. Maybe next year things will turn out better. On Sunday morning several Europeans went into the log on 20 meters. All of the heavy lifting was obviously done on their end.

Once again thanks to everyone for the points/mults. Long live CW & hope to see you in the next 'test.

Tom KC0W

Awards Issued

Did not see any awards announced this month

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

May 5 1300z to 6 0700z
7th Call Area QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), state/county code or SPC
ws7n.net/7QP

May 5 1500z to 6 0300
Indiana QSO Party CW Ph
RS(T), county or SPC
www.hdxcc.org/inqp

May 5 1700z to 6 2359
Delaware QSO Party CW Ph
RS(T), county or SPC
www.fsarc.org

May 5 2000z to 6 2359
New England QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), county/state or SPC
www.neqp.org

May 12 1400z to 13 0200

Arkansas QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), county or SPC
www.arkqp.com

May 26 0000z to 27 2359
CQ WW WPX Contest, CW
RST, serial
www.cqwp.com

50th National Convention

October 3 - 6, 2018 The Holiday Inn Country Club Plaza One East 45th St. Kansas City, MO. 64111 816-753-7400

Book your room online at: http://ichotelsgroup.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI&GPC=MAR&hotelCode=MKC OE&_PMID=99801505

or call the hotel directly and use code MAR Cut off date is September 3, 2018 for group rate. Rooms are \$119.00 per night (1 king or 2 queen beds) plus tax.

Hotel parking garage size restriction (6.0 x 7.0 x 12.0 ft) Oversized parking for larger vehicles and antenna's.

There will be NO organized tours. The hotel is centrally located with FREE shuttle service 7am-11pm within 3 mile radius. (more info to follow)

Forums will include, CW, SSB, KFF, & (FT8 hopefully). You won't want to miss the Special Forum consisting of 50 yrs worth of County Hunting memorabilia, articles, past convention pictures & more.

A plan to raid the MARAC Historian's arsenal, which resides at the residence of Gary, K4EXT is in the works. Surely there will be several treasures to peruse which will undoubtedly jog memories and thought of the "good ole days!"

There will be a Pool side BBQ on Thurs. evening (inclement wx indoors). Annual banquet on Sat. evening followed by award presentation and drawing for prizes.

Please bring a gift (approx \$15.00) for gift exchange.
Details should be on the MARAC website soon. (hopefully)
See you in October! Ed - K8ZZ Chairman

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that's it for this issue – will see some of you in MI – more in Dayton next month – till
then 73 de N4CD