

County Hunter News

November 1, 2012

Volume 8, Issue 11

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' 7188/7185 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

1) Remote Base Stations - Two months ago, we had some articles about 'remote base stations' and perhaps the need for MARAC to re-examine their rules on remote base stations. This month, in the CA QSO party – we had the 'opposite half' of the situation arise. See report for W6R – really remote base station operation by W1NN in OH.

As you recall, the current MARAC rule for remote base stations as of 8/29/2012 is:

“Contacts made through “repeater” devices, remote control of a “distant station” (including use of the internet or other indirect operation), or any other power relay methods (other than satellites) are not valid for MARAC Awards. For purposes of this rule

and specifically to allow locally remote controlled or wireless operation of the station receiving and transmitting equipment, a “distant station” is one that is located more than fifty (50) miles from the location of the person using remote control to operate that station.”

Now, unless you read the soapbox comments for W6R, in which he stated he was operating a station in California via the internet from 1900 miles away, how would you know? How many other stations that you work during contests are 'remote' base stations exceeding the 50 mile limit? That's a question that likely will never be answered!

It could be dozens, and as the technology improves – it could be hundreds! You might work a rare Nevada multiplier, with the operator sitting in Washington DC in a nice 10 story condo building with no outside antennas allowed. Or maybe even a Northwest Territories station for a 'sweep' by an operator in Toronto.

How is the average county hunter, seeing a spot for W6R, going to have any clue that it was a 'really remote' base station and cannot count for MARAC credit for any award. It does, however, count for USACA as CQ allows remote base stations anywhere in the same country.

So, while MARAC can 'control' one half of a QSO (that of the county hunter), it cannot control or even hope to control those stations which are giving out contacts in things like the CA QSO party, sweepstakes, other QSO Parties or contests, etc. You aren't going to be able to ask the other contest stations, 'hey' are you a remote base station?' during a 5 second contact.

Looks like it is time for the MARAC rules committee to dig into this further. There is no way to know. And the 50 mile limit seems like something pulled out of a hat. In New England, that could be two states away. In TX, it's barely out of the county in many cases.

2) Fall is here!

The snow is falling up north – Donner Pass had 2 feet of snow, and snow has fallen in MT and WY, ID and along the Sierras above 2500 feet. The summer 'travel season' is over for much of the country as cooler weather settles in. In mid-October, trees were already changing in AR, and back east it is almost past prime viewing seasons at higher altitudes. Soon it will be raking leaves, and getting the last of the firewood stashed, putting the snow tires on the car (and chains if you need them), and getting set for some typical winter weather.

So far there have been many nice days – in Dallas, other than a few 'cool days' it's been nice with temps in the 80s, but that is all about to change. The State Fair is over and that usually brings on the cooler fall weather down here. Sadly, “Big Tex” – the giant 40 foot high cowboy who greeting everyone coming into the State Fair, had an electrical short and burned to the ground. It will have to be rebuilt next year for the State Fair which opens in Sept.

With the cooler weather, it's now prime contest season with CQ WW DX contests (one weekend SSB, one CW), ARRL Sweepstakes, the annual 10 meter contest, the 160 meter contests plus a bunch more smaller ones, plus the foreign sponsored country/regional ones. Ten meters has often been filled with DX stations in contests. There will be opportunities to work the various AK DISTRICTS and HI counties in the contests – look for them and spot them as you find them. It's a good way to fill in Hawaii, Honolulu, Kauai, Maui plus 3rd and 4th AK. I've seldom seen 2nd AK or 1st AK spotted but they might be in there.

3) Time to Vote

The election is coming up. If you haven't already voted or can't until Nov 6, don't forget to vote. Romney/Ryan needs you vote. Enough of this community organizer extorting companies, the fossil fuel industry, and every city out of hundreds of billions for 'social justice' Marxist 'redistribution'. His idea of 'fair share' is taking a big chunk of what you have, taxing the rest, and creating a giant dependent class of welfare weenies and queenies. His EPA goons are nothing short of Chicago style thugs. Well, you choose.

--- - - - -

Mobile Activity and Trip Reports (9-25-2012 to end of October)

Larry, **W7FEN**, was in KY on his multi-week trip headed to New England, busy on SSB and CW. Then back around to home.

Jack, **N7IV** was out on trips to WI from his home.

K6JN/W6XJN Cliff and Nelda, were headed west - and later in October would head back east again.

K5ZG spotted in CO

Terry, **WQ7A**, was trekking east on a multi-week trip to South Carolina and back. He wrote: "Home from a great trip. 8100 miles putting out about 275 counties "

Barry, **N0KV**, and Pat, **N0DXE**, took a few trips around CO during the month.

Jerry, **W0GXQ**, headed north from southern MO back to MN.

Steve, **K5KDG**, has the new mobile installation running and ran in AR and MS.

Jim, **N8HAM**, was down in KY and headed back to home.

N2OO, Bob, was in VA and headed home

Gene, **K5GE**, started a long trip through many counties in KY, PA, NY arriving finally at the 3M Reunion 10 days later.

Rufus, **KD4HXM**, headed to TN and back.

Kerry, **W4SIG**, is once again traveling for business, and zipping all over AR and MS.

Joyce, **N9STL**, wandered down through many counties in IN and KY and TN to the 3M and more on the way home.

W3ZUH Dick, continued his trip cross country from west to east.

Ed, **N3HOO**, began a long western trip out through MT and more, circled round and then headed back home via many counties.

Bill, **WG9A**, headed to the 3M, then down to NC for a vacation/visit.

AA9JJ/N9QPQ Frank and Kay began a cross country trek to South Carolina – and back.

Gene, **N4ANV**, headed to the 3M in TN and back.

W8GEJ, Al, was spotted over in WV putting them out. Later in the month ran with **W8FNW/W4FNW** for more WV counties.

Steve, **AK8A** headed to the 3M in TN.

KB0BA/N0XYL headed down to MS. Then over to TN to put them out.

Skip, **AD0H**, was putting them out in IL. Ran on CW in a few counties, too!

Bob, **N8KIE**, ran down to NJ to put them out. Also had a big trip to/from South Carolina.

Ed, **KN4Y**, put out some in FL. Headed up into GA later in the month and over to some panhandle counties in FL.

NT7R Mike put out some MT counties.

Dave, **KW1DX**, headed down to South Carolina and back.

So did **KM9X/KB9MGI**

Dave, **KE3VV**, mobiled on down to SC and back. So did Tony, **WA9DLB**.

Jim, **N4JT** headed down to SC and back.

Ed, **KN4Y**, ran a few counties headed north from FL to SC and back.

AF3X Jeffrey, was busy down in GA and AL putting them out.

Don, **N5XG**, headed to west TX.

Barry, **N0KV** and Pat, **N0DXE** showed up in HI. Ran all the counties on SSB and CW 20-17 and 15m. Mary, **AB7NK** and Mark, **KM6HB** did nice job on relays on 17 and 15m SSB.

Bob, **KC1NA**, spotted in ME mobile again!

N9AC spotted both on SSB and CW. - Big Rig

- - - - -

NT7R posted the follow the following video on YouTube of his operating in Golden Valley, MT

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvfQcD_VF0g&feature=youtu.be&hd=1

- - -

Larry **W7FEN** wrote about his trip:

Thanks to all that made our 5763 mile trip as pleasant as it was. What a great time to be out running mobile while ones were going to and from Murphreesboro and then ones heading and and going to the SEMINI. I raked up a lot of new counties and also put out several new transmits for me..

Steve, **K5KDG**, sent in the following picture of his mobile – at Alcorn, MS



K5KDG Mobile Alcorn, MS

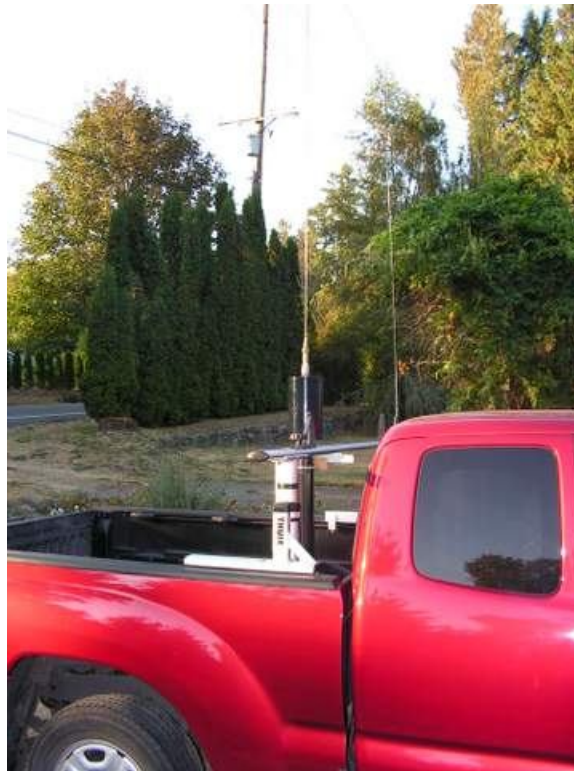
Kirby, W8DCD, had a run in with a deer



W8DCD: “I had the leave the ts-480 in the car. Never got to run Bayfield County, part of the reason for the trip. Damn Deer! 200lb - huge doe. We are ok, but it was fatal for Bambi. I will be QRT for about 30 days and have to make a 6 hour trip to get my car when its fixed. If you are going to crash, do it near home. W8dcd “ - from Facebook CH page

- - - - -

Late picture from the Salmon Run folks. We reported on N7WA's 1000 mile mobile trip last month. He sent in a picture of his rig and his driver Jim, , K7AD, , and friend Steve, K7AWB where he crashed overnight during the two day run.



N7WA mobile



Steve K7AWB, Jim, K7AD and Mike, N7WA

Joyce, **N9STL**, took several trips to work on her 500 Mobile Diamond transmits. She's closing in on the magic 500 number. One to IN, two over to MO.

Leo, **WY7LL**, and Chris, **WY7LL**, were out on a nice trip to the east.

Jim, **N9JF**, now has radio installed in new vehicle and is QRV on 20 and 30m.

K6PJ spotted out in UT and ID. And NV

W5QP Rick, is now QRV in the mobile and was out in AR putting them out on CW.

N2JNE was spotted many times and many days on SSB.

K0PFV was noted in NE

Jeffrey, **AF3X** was spotted in AL. Gave a LC to K4EXT.

Silver, **N9QS** took a trip to FL , up to SC and back.

N9AC spotted on SSB along the east coast and up into '8' land.

Lowell and Sandra, **KB0BA/N0XYL**, spotted in IL, IN and KY.

- - - - -

Dan KM9X and Judy, KM9MGI, had an adventure on their last trip. He posted on the K3IMC forum

“day from hell. except for WA9OUE -- WBOW today

We found out later after planning a trip to Hancock, WV for W3CR that Barry would be in Kalawao HI. Chuck got it, so we were originally going for the 2nd to last but now were on the way to get his WBOW for Master Platinum.

I was contacted by WA9OUE that Clinton OH that we were to run Sat morning was his WBOW -working on it since 1969. The day started off a bummer, the antenna for 17m wouldn't load, (just took it off last Sun night after a week plus of running to SC) had to replace antenna, put the old 20m on. The 40 was working as well as 20m then. We lost an hour there screwing with 17m.

Then breakfast in Ohio, and on to Clinton. WB9OUE got his WBOW. Then it went down hill. traffic backed up in I71 for construction and we at for an hour. Finally done with that and the WBOW, ran a couple counties and all was well.. hit a hole from hell on I71, bought put our heads in the ceiling and both antennas broke (again).

We knew what happened because this happened in the middle of a run in New Orleans over a year ago, hit a hole on I10, hit China, and bounced back on the road. broke both antennas. By luck my son at home found in a city east of Gulfport, there was an electronics store that happened to have the antenna masts, and we were back in business in Mississippi.)

Since we broke both antennas up near Columbus Ohio, and wasted another 45 min trying to fix or tune its way out of it, we decided to go back to R and L Electronics in Hamilton, OH. They were open till 3pm we found from someone that looked it up for us. We go back the 100 miles to Hamilton OH and bought masts. 20 started working immediately but 40 needed the mast tuned and we were in the parking lot, raining of course, and its already 3:30.

We came home. I finally got the 40m working great and talked to Chuck W3CR on 40m and told him its a NO GO today for his WBOW for Master Platinum today. We called the hotel in N Lima Ohio and found they wouldn't cancel the room at 3pm day of, so I got nailed for \$68 bucks there, tank of gas.. \$60 bucks, \$48 for antenna masts..

So we fill up again Sunday and we are NOT going up I71 as we hit two more traffic jams and lost another hour trying to get to R and L and then home. Going uo to I70 in Indiana and pray we can get to West-by-god Virginia tomorrow! Chuck said.. "it's the life of a county hunter"! he isn't too upset yet.

So Judy got a WBOW today. I guess I'll work the NY and IA qso parties and go from there tonight. Sorry to all those waiting on a county. The 2nd day of the posted trip is canceled, we have to go and come straight back now. Probably be a late run night.

Dan KM9X

- - -

continuing

Just wanted to say THANKS to all those that followed us Sunday on Chucks WBOW trip. I am extremely happy as I got to count EVERY county for the Mobile Diamond transmits. This is the first time that has happened. It usually goes 50-70 %, as I don't get 3 people on two bands, or miss a MD contact. 960 miles in two day counting the aborted attempt when the antenna masts broke Sat. May they seemed to be working fine Sunday. Sorry to those we couldn't hear in Hancock and Brooke WV but it's horrendous noise there, power plants and steel mills and nasty power lines. Thanks to all. I got about 15 new Diamonds and 24 transmits. Judy got about 7 for 2nd time and finished HI..wild day. 118 MD transmits to go.

- - -

Ron, **N5MLP** headed out on a 3 day trip around TX and south OK.

Ray, **AB4YZ**, headed out from VA to MI and back.

Rick, **W5QP**, put out 32 counties in ARK in a trip around much of the state.

Where Have All the Leaders Gone?

The man who rescued Chrysler – decades ago...from his new book:

Lee Iaccoca Says:

'Am I the only guy in this country who's fed up with what's happening? Where the hell is our outrage with this so called president? We should be screaming bloody murder! We've got a gang of tax cheating clueless leftists trying to steer our ship of state right over a cliff, we've got corporate gangsters stealing us blind, and we can't even run a ridiculous cash-for-clunkers program without losing \$26 billion of the taxpayers' money, much less build a hybrid car. But instead of getting mad, everyone sits around and nods their heads when the politicians say, 'trust me the economy is getting better...'

Better? You've got to be kidding. This is America , not the damned, 'Titanic'. I'll give you a sound bite: 'Throw all the Democrats out along with Obama!'

You might think I'm getting senile, that I've gone off my rocker, and maybe I have. But someone has to speak up. I hardly recognize this country anymore...

The most famous business leaders are not the innovators but the guys in handcuffs... While we're fiddling in Afghanistan , Iran is completing their nuclear bombs and missiles and nobody seems to know what to do. And the liberal press is waving 'pom-poms' instead of asking hard questions. That's not the promise of the 'America ' my parents and yours traveled across the ocean for... I've had enough. How about you?

I'll go a step further. You can't call yourself a patriot if you're not outraged. This is a fight I'm ready and willing to have. The Biggest 'C' is Crisis! (Iacocca elaborates on nine C's of leadership, with crisis being the first.)

Leaders are made, not born. Leadership is forged in times of crisis. It's easy to sit there with thumb up your butt and talk theory. Or send someone else's kids off to war when you've never seen a battlefield yourself. It's another thing to lead when your world comes tumbling down.

On September 11, 2001, we needed a strong leader more than any other time in our history. We needed a steady hand to guide us out of the ashes. A hell of a mess, so here's where we stand.

We're immersed in a bloody war now with no plan for winning and no plan for leaving. But our soldiers are dying daily.

We're running the biggest deficit in the history of the world, and it's getting worse every day!

We've lost the manufacturing edge to Asia , while our once-great companies are getting slaughtered by health care costs.

Gas prices are going to skyrocket again, and nobody in power has a lucid plan to open drilling to solve the problem. This country has the largest oil reserves in the WORLD, and we cannot drill for it because the politicians have been bought by the flea-hugging environmentalists.

Our schools are in a complete disaster because of the teachers union.

Our borders are like sieves and they want to give all illegals amnesty and free healthcare.

The middle class is being squeezed to death every day.

These are times that cry out for leadership.

But when you look around, you've got to ask: 'Where have all the leaders gone?' Where are the curious, creative communicators? Where are the people of character, courage, conviction, omnipotence, and common sense? I may be a sucker for alliteration, but I think you get the point.

Name me a leader who has a better idea for homeland security than making us take off our shoes in airports and throw away our shampoo?

We've spent billions of dollars building a huge new bureaucracy, and all we know how to do is react to things that have already happened.

Everyone's hunkering down, fingers crossed, hoping the government will make it better for them. Now, that's just crazy... Deal with life. Name me an industry leader who is thinking creatively about how we can restore our competitive edge in manufacturing. Who would have believed that there could ever be a time when 'The Big Three' referred to Japanese car companies? How did this happen, and more important, look what Obama did about it! Name me a government leader who can articulate a plan for paying down the debit, or solving the energy crisis, or managing the health care problem. The silence is deafening. But these are the crises that are eating away at our country and milking the middle class dry.

I have news for the Chicago gangsters in Congress. We didn't elect you to turn this country into a losing European Socialist state. What is everybody so afraid of? That some bonehead on NBC or CNN news will call them a name? Give me a break. Why don't you guys show some spine for a change?

Had Enough? Hey, I'm not trying to be the voice of gloom and doom here. I'm trying to light a fire. I'm speaking out because I have hope - I believe in America. In my lifetime, I've had the privilege of living through some of America's greatest moments. I've also experienced some of our worst crises: The 'Great Depression,' 'World War II,' the 'Korean War,' the 'Kennedy Assassination,' the 'Vietnam War,' the 1970's oil crisis, and the struggles of recent years since 9/11.

It's our country, folks, and it's our future. Our future is at stake!!

Ron, KA3DRO - the 3M Story

It was September 2011 and KM4W and I sat down for a dinner together at O'Charleys in Manchester, TN. along with my Fiancee (now my wife!) and his wife.... and Bill brought up the subject of holding a repeat of the "Old Timers" meeting we held about 4 years earlier. We agreed to see if there was sufficient interest and proceed from there.... and with that, the interest was immediate and sufficient.... We set up a meeting with Stephanie Morris, the Manager of the Clarion, which was the old Holidome, in Murfreesboro and plans were set in short order. Bill reserved 40 rooms with a very special price of just \$70.00 per night including a very nice hot breakfast buffet each morning.... and the redux of the Old Timers Reunion was set!

At O'Dark Thirty on Sept 26th of this year, my wife of 3 months and I threw the 2 dogs into the truck and put the pointy end north.... arriving at the hotel about dark that evening and thinking we were the first to arrive as it was just Wednesday and the party did not start till the next day. In short order we bumped into Don, K7DM and his cohort in crime, W4RKV, Mitch who were the first to arrive.... even tho Don had the longest trip from Washington State!. Within a few hours it was evident that several others had also jumped the gun to see folks they had missed for many years. All thru the next day, arrivals congregated at the tables in the huge atrium and on the deck overlooking the pool area. Before too long, we had over 40 County Hunters eagerly greeting each other and welcoming each other.

Not in any order, but counting present included W0DFK, W4CCT, W5XFM, N4ANV, KC4TBS, N4UGH, KD5KDG (USACA #46), WG9A, AK8A, N8EMV, NQ9S, N4CD, K5JK, W4OWY, KM4W, W9GBH, KA3DRO, N4AAT, W9GUY, K7DM, W4RKV, N9STL, N8BGF, KC8WRQ, KM8U, WB0CQO, KD4HXM, N8HAM, N8CIJ, K5GE, W4UB, AB4SL, K0GEN (and Gail... forgive me but I forgot your call!) Along with a bunch of wives and companions who were just pleased as punch to see so many old friends again after so many years absence.

As you can imagine, the rag-chewing was fast and furious and continued non-stop for 3 great days. I seem to recall however that in the "old days", there was conversation till early in the AM.... I guess it was age related, but seems like nowadays, the yakking kinda quieted down about midnight! The GAME OF THE DAY was "Remember Who and Remember When" and it sometimes took several of us together to recall the person and the activity in question.... but in the end, it was all recorded as remembered! Special mention was often noted of those all to many who are no longer among us but who have left so many fond memories... the SK's. as well as those who are now too ill or physically capable of attending. Several called while we were there and phones were passed among the attendees to send our 73 their way.

On Friday, the ritual of a Mary Bo-Bo's trip was launched thanks to the able assistance of W9GBH.... and a big bunch headed for Lynchburg to partake of the usual overabundance of a

real southern dining experience.... and as usual, Mary did not disappoint! Several later took the tour of Jack Daniels and found out that recent legislative action now allows them to retail bottles of their product at the plant! The lawyers, always eager to please, have cleverly come up with phrasing that permits the distillery to sell “ The glass bottles” as collector items.... and there is “ no charge” for the attendant contents! For those who prefer, a “tasting tour” is also available.... but at extra charge over the non-alcoholic free tour. As to local eateries, the Cracker Barrel next door did a great job taking care of all those who ambled over and I know that Red Lobster and Outback were also made happy as well. And talking about tours, the ladies made it out for their usual shopping spree making a few local stores happy as clams as they visited their usual craft haunts and a few retail spots as well.

All the while, several talented musicians were noted to spend many hours on the promenade deck entertaining those around, as well as themselves as they unlimbered their guitars and a few other stringed instruments and ramped up the mini-amps. I must confess that it was foot stomping time all 3 days! Hard to believe these old guys can play as well as they did without practice! And N4AAT can really belt out the vocals as well! I am sure that N4CD will include a photo of this group! The golf tournament never materialized..... the rag-chews interfered as did the Ryder Cup Golf and I guess at these ages, we have become a group that prefers to watch good golf than to play bad golf... so we did! Also was able to catch a few good college football games as well! Of course, Paula, N8EMV blessed us with a bottle of her special Kahlua and that helped me as well as several others to sleep well every night! Thanks again Paula! More than a few remembered the boxes of Candy brought by others many years ago.... how many remember who brought it and what kind of candy it was?

I gotta admit, the 3 days came and went so fast but know many have expressed a desire to meet again in the near future. It was suggested that we set aside the last weekend of September 2015 for the next get-together and Bill, KM4W, (who was just 92 this year) has volunteered to be the genial host again..... but several have contacted me to express a desire to hold another sooner.... with many suggesting even next year... same place and same time..... so I will ask the question.... who is interested? We had several who were unable to attend due to family plans set up that interfered this year who really want to join us..... let me know your feelings and if enough of you are serious about next year, we can arrange another! In the meantime, Bill, Herb, and I send our sincere THANK YOU to all who attended It was so good to see you all again.... !

Ron, KA3DRO

— — — —

On the way home, Ron gave Jeff, W9MSE, the LC WBOW for his USACW V



Ron, KA3DRO – Jackson KY - LC WBOW for W9MSE
A genuine “Percy Pic’

On the Road with N4CD I

There was a reunion of the 3M in Murphreesboro - the best 'convention' every year in the east half of the US. Ron, KA3DRO, Bill, KM4W, Herb, Mitch, W4RKV, W9GBH worked together to put on a one time 're union' of the gang that met at the 3M locations for 25 years. It started in Manchester, TN. After a number of years, it outgrew the facility there and it moved to the Holiday Inn in Murphreesboro that could handle the 250 folks that showed up at the peak attendance years.

The name '3M' came from the term – the **M**anchester **M**ini in **M**urphreesboro – 3M's.

This would be held in the same hotel as the last 20 or so– but it had changed names – and was now a Clarion Hotel and 'upgraded'. It still had the second floor mezzanine area where folks could meet and yak for hours, and now it included a nice hot breakfast as well for \$70/night.

I decided to go, and signed up for it, and also for the trek to Mary Bo Bos – the 'chowdown' with “Great Big Herb” (W9GBH). He had arranged all the previous trips. It's just one of those things that many people do while at the 3M. Some would go to 'supper' down in Lynchburg, TN, while others would go out running counties. I recall Ralph, WA4HXG, and

others going out on 3 and 4 car trips, following each other, and working each other on five bands as they zipped through the counties they could reach in a one day trip out and back. Others just stayed at the hotel and yakked for 3 days. At night, the second floor mezzanine would be jammed and the yakking went on for hours and hours and the refreshments 'flowed'.



Houston, TN – LC for K2MF

So, it was off to TN – at 5:40am in the morning - up the same boring interstate I-30 to Little Rock (Pulaski County) then over to Nashville on I-40, and then down to the meet in Murphreesboro. This time I took a little detour to get Houston, TN – a LC for K2MF who is slowly closing in on USACA, and to get to Montgomery, TN – needed by a few including N4CD for next to last in TN. Somehow I'd manage to miss running that for Mobile Diamond even though it is right on the interstate. Guess I didn't travel that interstate getting to all the others!

I missed the easy way to get there – too busy working mobiles on 40M SSB - the net was humming away with mobiles on their way there from SC, GA, IN, IL, MI, IA, TN, NJ, and lots of other states – 25 mobiles headed my way with about half of them on the air. Drove right past the exit. On to plan B. N9STL, K5GE were out on big trips. Steve, AK8A, was on cw and Kerry, W4SIG, who had to cancel at the last moment, but was busy running counties for his new job travel. CW and 40M SSB were going full gun. So it was on to some back roads. Oh well. Had to get to Houston. Folks were waiting for it.

In the old days, we kept the net frequency of 7238 real busy, and had alternate nets on 7243 and even another frequency as there were 30-40-50 mobiles on at the same time headed to the 3M! The number of active county hunters is down, but when there is something going on, it can be real busy! Now we also have 17M and of course, 30M, to allow more mobiles to be running

at the same time. Plus, of course, the CW frequencies were busy.

Well, it wasn't too long (well, 11 hours) until I got to Montgomery County and I found a Super 8 motel for the night (\$50) and headed over to a local Chinese Buffet for dinner. It had been a full day. Gene, K5GE, had added Pendleton, WV, to his planned trip. I checked his route before hand, and he was going to carefully drive around all the ones I needed back east. Well, serendipitously, he added in the one county in WV I needed for Mobile Diamond – which I had not run on the last trip there. And serendipitously, I tuned over to SSB to see what was going on about the time he started his run! Talk about 'luck'. I seldom check 20M SSB since I'm only counting CW for my 'next time around' but I'll take 'em any way I can get them for Mobile Diamond. Between checking 20cw, 30 cw, 40cw, 40m SSB....and driving...you keep busy.

Thursday I stopped about the time it was getting dark. I'm not a fan of driving in strange places at night. The next day I'd start later to kill some time in the morning.

The American Pickers have a new store in Nashville that looked interesting. It's a bit bit bigger in size than the store in IA (small) so it would be worth a visit. They open at 10am during the week, and there was a crowd of 50 people waiting to get in at 9:45. Lots of folks watch the show (American Pickers) on the History Channel on Monday nights. I admit it – I'm hooked on the show and also Pawn Stars.

<http://antiquearchaeology.com/>

Each episode, the Pickers go off and scrounge for rare items – like Indian motorcycles, 1900s vintage bicycles, visible gas pumps, and the like. Things have to be 50-60-70 years old to attract their attention. I guess it is good that they aren't into old radio stuff or they would have cleaned everyone out of good stuff! You can see a half dozen early motorcycle motors, a few motorcycles and accessories at the store along with some signs, gas pumps, and lots of misc at the store.

Every now and then, you get a glimpse of radios stacked up at some of the places they visit. It sure would be nice to know where those old radios are hidden away!

After about 30 minutes looking around – and some of the items were things they picked on the show– some were just on 'display' and not for sale – it was time to head to Murphreesboro.

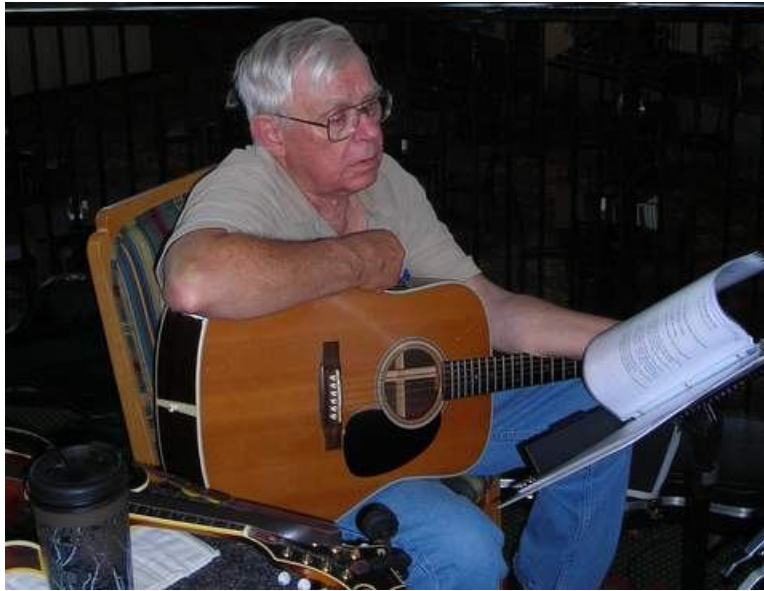
K5GE, N4AAT, and N4CD all arrived within 2 minutes of each other around noon – so we headed up to our rooms up on the 4th floor. Luckily we didn't have to wait for a room. Wow.....they've got the new style beds that are almost 3 feet high. Anyone under 6 foot has to jump up a bit to get on the bed. There were six pillows on my bed, and with two beds in the room (both queen giant high beds) you had enough pillows to start a small pillow war. The rooms were good but the air conditioning rattled a bit. Everything worked in the hotel and it was good for the price.

I took a break and, with a friend , had a lunch at Chef Wang's – a good Chinese Buffet there in town a few miles away.

The afternoon was filled with lots of folks arriving and lots of yakking and tale telling about the good old days. Quite a few had arrived already and more were on the way. The County Hunter Bluegrass/Country Music band started up with Scottie, N4AAT, Joe, WB0CQO, Gene, K5GE and Mitch, W4RKV. There was hours of music on Thursday and Friday.



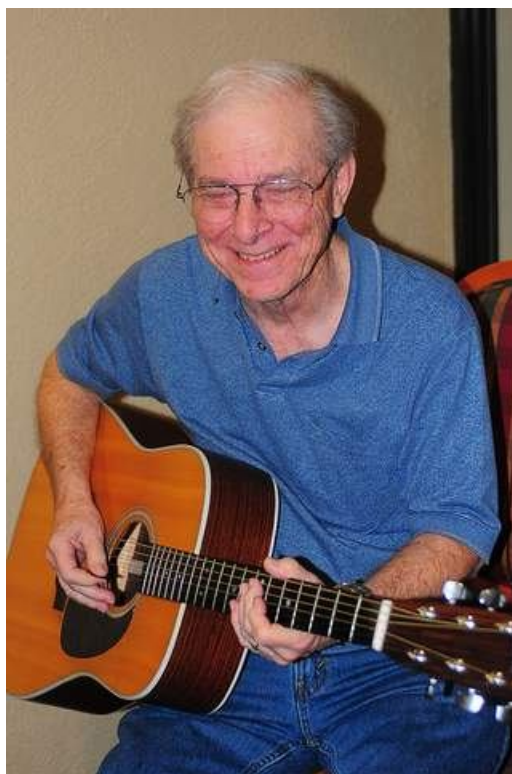
W4RKV – Mitch



WB0CQO Joe



Scottie, N4AAT



Gene, K5GE

That evening, about 14 headed over in a group to the nearby Cracker Barrel (500 foot walk), while another group headed over to the Red Lobster. Others went off in twos and fours to other restaurants which abound in the area.



W0DFK, Bob,

WG9A, Bill,

N8HAM, Jim

In the morning, we all enjoyed a sumptuous breakfast buffet with waffles, cereal, fruit, rolls and biscuits, good coffee and ice tea, hot tea, juice, scrambled eggs and sausage, biscuits and gravy. Whew! It was included in the room rate.

At 9am, a group of about 25 headed down to the 11 am “Supper” at Mary BoBo's in Lynchburg, TN in Moore, County. It's about an hour drive to get there. I rode with Ron, KA3DRO and his new wife, Janice and there was a parade of about 10 cars or so hauling folks down there.



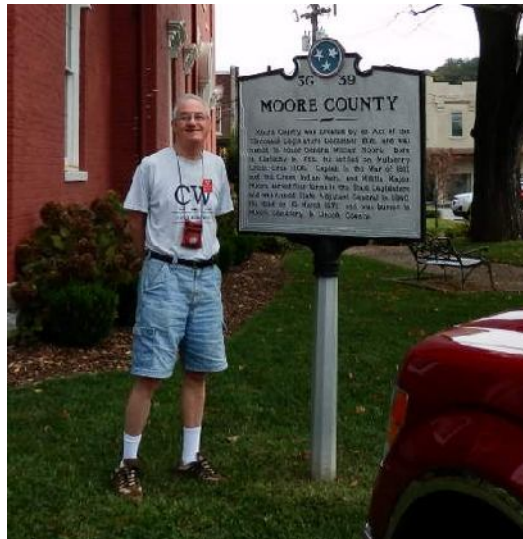
Janice and Ron, KA3DRO



Mary BoBos – Lynchburg, TN

Joyce, N9STL, needed some of the counties on the way down, so she ran on 40m and got her 3 plus contacts there. Half a dozen mobiles were listening on 7188 on the way there. Then we checked on 14.336 and no one was running. Way down in the noise was some one asking over and over for a number one mobile - we think. Really weak – in the noise. Well, with no one running, we just went ahead and made 4 or 5 contacts on 20M SSB on .336 so she got the Mobile Diamond transmit credit. Heh heh. Might as well use a non-busy frequency.

We arrived with plenty of time to spare, so the folks wandered around the town square with the antique stores and tourist traps for a while till it was time to be seated for dinner.



N4CD – Town Square – Lynchburg, TN
Moore County
A genuine “Percy Pic”

Many tourists stop by for 'supper' and then visit the Jack Daniels distillery there. Mary Bobo's been a 'boarding house' for over 100 years and the house is built upon a basement from a house from the 1700s. They serve 'southern style' with big helpings of fried chicken, ham, baked apples, corn, green beans, rolls, and other things to fill your plate as many times as you want. Then desert, coffee or more iced tea. You should not leave there hungry, and your hostess will fill you in on all the history of the building and people who owned it while you are enjoying your 'supper'. They have two servings a day at 11am and 1pm. The food is good, but if you don't enjoy the 'dining experience' you can do better at the Golden Corral. The visit is just something that the County Hunters have done time and time again. You can't argue with tradition. No one left hungry. It's also a reason to go down to Moore County and put it out!



Gene N4ANV , Patsy, KC4TBS Janice (XYL of KA3DRO)
at Mary BoBo's



Most of the gang eating at Mary Bobos



Bill, KM4W and Jimmie



Lloyd, K0GEN



Pat, N4UGH

After lunch I joined Joyce, N9STL, to go run counties for the rest of the day. She needed to run a bunch just to the east and up north along the border – some of the hilly road counties. Why not? She could use a navigator, and we'd be a 'YL/OM Team', too! We'd have 15 stars in the car (my 8 and her 7) to fill in lots of stars for those working on the Star XX award (20 stars needed). We zipped up through Cannon County headed north. After the run on 40m SSB, we'd head to 14.339 and make another half dozen to dozen contacts there. Her truck is not equipped for easy cw operation – she uses a hand key and has to stop to make cw contacts so we stayed on SSB. It was a long day and we only got lost once when her GPS seemed to take us the wrong way to get where we wanted. We got there eventually but Joyce got to drive on a real windy twisty TN road you really would rather skip.



Joyce, N9STL and the Dodge Ram

Eventually we wound our way up to Allen, KY then headed back to the hotel by 7pm.



Allen KY County Line - N9STL/N4CD Team Trip

It rained the last two hours to boot, too. We had a blast giving out all the stars and we hit a few counties for the Natural Bingo award (with N4CD for Cannon, N9STL in Trousdale, etc).

Joyce had an ambitious plan after the convention to run a few dozen more counties on the way home along the top border of TN, and then into KY. She's working on those 500 mobile diamond transmit county requirements. After her trip, she added another 60 to the list of transmitted counties. You can also fill in your own needs by running a county.

Friday night it was more meet and greet and yak and yak. Whew! It was fun seeing a lot of the group from 'way back when'. We missed a lot of folks who were not up to be able to travel to the 3M – time catches up with many. If everyone who wanted to come could have come, we'd have had over 100 there. Maybe 200. Hopefully they'll see a few of the pictures of those who did make it and it will bring back the memories.



Steve, K5KDG



W4OWY, Bob and wife



Joan, KC8WRP, N8BGF John, Herb, W9GBH, and wife

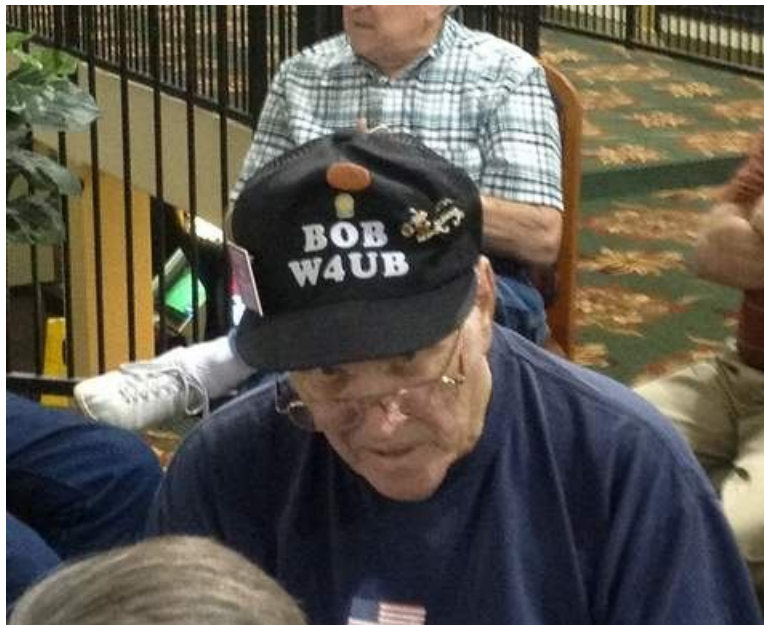


Faith W5XFM

Rich, W4CCT



Silver, N9QS



W4UB “Uncle Bob”



Steve, AK8A

Scott, K4SL, came along with W4UB.

Lloyd, K0GEN and Gayle, KI4WHK wee there too.

Soon it would be time to head on home.

- - - - -

Thanks to Gene, N4ANV , Joyce, N9STL, and Ron, KA3DRO for some of the above pics to share with the folks.

The Obama 'Storm Tax'

Behold the Obama Administration's new public works plan. Sue cities for polluting waterways and then as part of a settlement require them to spend, er, "invest" billions in extraneous sewer improvements. The White House doesn't even need legislation to pour this money down the drain.

The Justice Department and Environmental Protection Agency have taken enforcement actions against 25 cities over the last four years for allegedly violating the Clean Water Act, and there are another 772 on their list. In addition to imposing millions of dollars in penalties, the feds have forced these cities into consent decrees that will cost their local taxpayers \$21 billion. The decrees spell out in detail what capital upgrades they must undertake—everything down to the size of their pipes.

The EPA says this extraordinary intrusion on local sovereignty is justified because cities are discharging waste into waterways during heavy rains. . The EPA has ordered cities to limit such wet weather overflows to four per year, regardless of how much rain they receive or how little muck they discharge.

Many cities have already taken concrete steps to reduce such overflows by developing "green infrastructure" (i.e., permeable pavements, rain gardens, catch-basins) that soaks up and diverts stormwater. Such solutions are easier and less expensive to implement than reconstructing their underground systems as the EPA wants them to do.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors says the EPA's heavy-handed management can't be justified by the supposed environmental or economic benefits. George Hawkins, the general manager for Washington D.C.'s Water and Sewer Authority, told Congress in July about "the growing cost of additional regulatory requirements in order to achieve ever-decreasing water quality gains" and that "communities are being forced to invest more but are increasingly getting less return

on these investments." Fossil fuel CEOs couldn't have said it better.

Cities are spending twice as much on water treatment as they did in 1995 and have reduced the contaminants they discharge into waterways during dry weather by 85%. Even so, the EPA says they need to spend at least \$300 billion more on maintenance and upgrades to meet the agency's ever-stricter standards.

Since cities don't have that much spare change, they've been making improvements incrementally. But the EPA is demanding that they accelerate their work, which means they'll have to issue bonds as well as raise residents' water and sewer rates. David Berger, the Democratic mayor of Lima, Ohio—which has a median household income of \$26,000—told Congress this summer that the EPA's consent decree could raise the average resident's \$333 annual sewer bill by \$539. Call the surcharge the Obama storm tax.

. The EPA, he wrote in "The Environmental Forum" journal this month, is "treating cities as it might have treated Standard Oil early last century." The agency is "**imposing billions of dollars of unfunded mandates** without a clear scientific and public health basis for doing so."

Perhaps by targeting cities the EPA is merely trying to show that it's an equal opportunity harassing regulator. To adapt one of the President's favorite phrases, everyone deserves a fair shakedown.

Source: Wall Street Journal

- - -

The Obama Administration and EPA are 'out of control'. Of course, if you can't create jobs in the private sector, force taxpayers (that's you) to spend hundreds of billions on barely useful projects, forcing your tax rates to 'skyrocket' just to keep his union buddy construction workers busy doing things with very little actual environmental improvement!

Your 'community organizer' extortion expert at work !

Wet County Lines

The question of 'wet lines' comes up from time to time. Those starting out naturally have questions when folks discuss 'wet lines' and what you can and can't do. For many years, the official MARAC position was 'you can't run wet lines', but of course, determining what is a wet line is not 'cut and dry'. (oh, a pun).

There are really 'wet lines' and 'not so wet lines' and 'not even wet lines any longer'. And there

are some strange ones, too. Confusing?

The definition of a 'wet line' is a county line where the boundary is a river, lake, bay, ocean, or other body of water where the official county line runs down the river. Usually, but not always, the county line runs down the center of the river. Same for many state lines such as between Arkansas and Missouri – right down the river. If you go across I -40, the sign 'entering TN' is right in the middle of the bridge on the interstate. But there are lots of 'exceptions' as well.

So what do you do if you are driving along, let's say in County A, and come up to a sign for a new county – which happens to be just before the bridge over the river into the next county. Maybe Owyhee ID – where the sign is before the bridge at the Snake River. Wheeler OR is the same on the western border.

If you were to pull up that 'county line' on Mapquest, it would show the county line running down the center of the river along the boundary between the counties. If you were driving along on one of the highways, say in Kenton County headed east, you might see a sign for Campbell County at the bridge. Should you stop and run the county line at the sign? After all, most other county lines are defined by the sign. Are you 'in the county'? Is part of your car, the 'requirement' in both counties? Not according to Mapquest – you have to go half way over the bridge. But that is just one 'wet line' on that road.

Some states put the county sign before the bridge. I think CA has the signs after the bridge when you are actually in the county. Same in TX. It varies from state to state.

(there's one county line in MT that is wet – but there is a section of old road and old bridge next to the new one - and you can park on that bridge – the main interstate traffic is on the new bridge - there's just one or two houses on the old access road and they have to keep the road open for that for a small segment)

Can you 'run' such a county line parked by the sign at the bridge? No – because you really aren't part way in the county, unless you can park **on the bridge**, have a boat and sit in the middle of the river....or in some rare cases, be on an island that the county line bisects. There are a few of those strange cases around.

Is that always the case? Nope – Texas will throw you lots of curve balls. The border between OK and TX is defined as 'the vegetation line on the south side of the Red River' for several hundred miles. Could you park there? Yes, and run a county in TX and one in OK.....you might get stuck in sand or soft dirt...but you can! You are looking across the river but on 'dry land' – and on the state/county line.

There are many 'wet lines' in Texas that have moved! The river shifted its position – but the county line stayed the same. You're on dry land in at least 40 or 50 counties in east TX if you find the right place to run the former wet line. Sometimes is 100 feet – sometimes it's a half

mile. You need the big Texas map book or a computer program like Mapquest or others to find them. Sometimes the 'new' line is on a flood plain and you can stop along the road shoulder at the sign.

Often the best indicator of a county line is having BOTH signs on opposite sides of the road where you are going to run that line. It usually does not occur at bridges – where one sign is on one end of the bridge and the other sign on the other end.

Can you run a 'wet line' that Logger flags? Well, you need to be real careful and not make the mistake of a county sign before the bridge into the next county. That's almost always a valid 'red flag' of a real wet line with the river being a boundary. If you can park on the bridge or crossing – OK – and there are cases of a wide wide bridge with parking lane, or sometimes there is even a pull off on the bridge where you can park safely by the sign, or other means.

It's not always 'cut and dry' when it comes to determining a 'valid' county line.

W3CR, Chuck, Master Platinum #20

Chuck, W3CR, has earned the Master Platinum Award #20. He was one of the first to start work on this after the start date, putting out hundreds of counties. Unfortunately after getting most of the way done, he was sidelined with medical problems for a year or two, but recently has been back on the air. He had to wait for someone with Masters Gold to head to HI (and Kalawao) where he could work them.

After getting those two done, Dan, KM9X took a quick (and exciting) trip to Hancock WV to get him the Last County Whole Ball of Wax – LC WBOW.

The award is dated 10/21/2012.

Texas QSO Party

Ah, another good one. I got to have some fun and also mess up a lot of folks scoring, too!. This was going on the same weekend as the 3M. I had headed over to Murphreesboro for the 3M reunion before the TQP. After a couple days of yakking and reminiscing, it was time to head home. I left early Saturday morning at o'dark thirty (well, 6:40 am to be exact) and headed back home after a sumptuous breakfast at the hotel. No one new was scheduled to show up on Saturday so I decided to skip the day and head home early.

This QSO party is a two day event – 9am to 9pm TX time on Saturday and 9am to 3pm Texas time. That gives you time to sleep, head off to early church if that's your thing, and still have a nice family Sunday dinner.

The TQP started at 9am on Saturday and I was still in TN, but working the TX mobiles and stations to get their counties. I needed 238 counties out of the 254 in the state!....just about everything was 'new'! Then I moved into AR to confuse a few people. By late afternoon, I got to TX and now I was a TX mobile putting out the counties along I-30 starting with Bowie and all the way back home to Collin, TX. I'm not sure if the log programs can handle N4CD in TN, N4CD in AR, and then N4CD mobile in TX. When I arrived home at 7:30 pm, there was still over an hour to work from home as fixed in TX. Wonder how many actually logged them all right! Hi hi

This was the year where it rained just about everywhere in TX for the entire day. Drizzles and gloomy weather, but the mobiles were out and running.

I did fill in a bunch, but of course, most of the way I was 'too close' for 20M, and not always 'close enough' for 40M as I drove home. It was still very good for me with lots in the log. There were giant pile ups when mobiles changed counties. At home, 20M was useless other than for a few 'local' contacts, and 40m did a good job most of the day. Still, it's hard with a mobile signal to break the pile ups with the loud fixed stations blasting away.

Several of the mobiles never seemed to run on 40M. One would come to 40 looking for multipliers, work a few stations who were running, then disappear without putting out his county, right Norm? Hmmm....20 and 15m were really busy, so I don't blame the mobiles 'too much' but I sure could have used those counties.

from the 3830 contest reflector:

N5NA mobile and driver

I thought I was going to have to sign /MM with all the rain we received in WTX the last couple of days. Saturday morning and most of the afternoon we were driving in the rain. About a third of the way through Concho county there was a low water crossing that had high water and was closed so we had to find an alternate route to Runnels. We backtracked and tried a county road in Tom Green but it was blocked as well. We finally went back to San Angelo in Tom Green and took US67 to Runnels. That detour cost us some time but I guess there was enough fluff in the route that I was still able to get to my last county, Martin, before 0200 Saturday night.

This is the first TQP in a long time that 15m has yielded significant QSO's. I like to work some 40m in every county to work the TX stations but I was so busy on 15m in some counties I didn't have time to move to 40m. 15m provided quite a bit of DX as well. DX worked included DL, ES, F, G, HB, IK, JA, LA, OE, OH, OK, ON, PA, SP, VK, and YV.

The QSO total is a record for me. However, my score was higher in 2010 due to more multipliers. Thanks to everyone who called and kept calling as I tried to work the pileups. The callers who were a little off zero beat or delayed calling sure helped me out!

Equipment used was a K3/100, Scorpion SA-680 antenna, Dell Latitude D630, Chevy C2500, and CQ/X logging software.

Again, thanks to everyone who called!

N5TM Multi-Op Mobile (N5TM, NO5W)

Wow..... I rained all day Saturday. When I got home about 11pm, the XYL asked where did you go??? I said I don't know it was dark, it was raining, and there were lots of pine trees...

A very special thanks to a really great cw operator, Chuck, NO5W. We took

turns operating and driving and only had a few down times.

Also a very very great thank you to all the ops who followed us from county to county and were patient when pileups were deep or we were having technical problems.

Both 20 and 15 were open to EU and JA station.

WB0TEV mobile SSB

Wow what a ride! Drove 750 miles across 35 counties in NE Texas.

So would this be the year that WB0TEV finally finishes "in the money" and gets a plaque for the shack wall, or will he get edged out yet again? Stayed tuned!

If you just can't bring yourself to slog thru the entirety of this ponderous tome, then at least skip to the end and check out my recipe for "Broiled Ham - Texas Roadkill Style"!

In years past I've teamed with with Mark, KK5MR. Typically I drive and operate SSB while Mark makes the pencil lead fly doing the logging on paper. Last year I decided to get fancy. I'd sit in the passenger seat doing operating and logging (using N1MM on a laptop computer instead of pencil and paper) and would even do a bit of CW, even though my telegraphy skills leave something to be desired, while Mark would do all the driving.

I did have Mark make 1 QSO last year as I intended to enter as multi-op mobile. As it turned out, if I had thrown away all the CW contacts and that 1 QSO made by KK5MR and entered as TX Mobile Single OP SSB Only, my score in 2011 would have been tops in that category. As it was, we ended up 3rd in the TX Mobile Multi-op category instead. Lesson learned: play to your strengths (my loud mouth for SSB) rather than your weaknesses and choose your category wisely.

For 2012 I had put together a 35 county plan with 24 on Saturday and 11 more Sunday. As usual my route would take me past my old Alma Mater of LeTourneau University in Longview where my two harmonics are now students. I planned for a 90 minute stop there to visit my son and daughter (a recently minted ham herself - N5AGP) and deliver care packages from the XYL. Unlike the previous year where I made a loop to the south after supper and stayed the night at a Longview motel, I opted to swing back to my home in Hunt county and spend the

night in my own bed, ready to launch out again Sunday AM.

I decided that this year I would enter the TX Mobile SO Phone Only category. This was further enforced when I learned that due to other commitments, KK5MR would be sitting out the road trip this year. That left me in quandary. Without my trusty logger, I'd be reduced to operating only while stopped and there would be no way to cover all those counties in the time allotted. The QSO count would doubtless suffer as well.

However, I'd heard of other mobile SSB ops using a tape recorder in such a situation, so they could operate on the move and transcribe the logs later.

A few Christmas's ago, my XYL (the now completely inactive N5XVN) had given me a neat little digital media player toy called a Sansa Clip.

(<http://www.sandisk.com/products/music-video-players/clip-plus/>).

I recalled that it had a digital voice recording capability so I decided to try it out and see if it would fit the bill. It's a tiny thing with a clip on the back, sort of like an over-sized tie tack. I found that it records .wav files in mono at 24 kbps and had 4 GB of memory. Some quick math revealed that it should be able to record a full day's worth of activity and then some. A test confirmed that when fully charged up its battery would last in excess of 13 hours. Some experimentation showed that if I wore it clipped to my shirt it was too close to my loud mouth and the audio from me ended up clipped (The Clip when clipped, clipped!) while the audio from the rig speaker came out fine. In the end I tied an old sock around the inside rear view mirror and clipped the Sansa clip to it with its microphone hole pointed downward towards the speaker on the FT-757 that sits atop the transmission hump in "the olde grey lady".

The "olde grey lady" is my 1986 Pontiac Parisienne with a Hustler fold-over vertical bolted onto its right rear fender. The vertical has one of those triangular adapters so one can mount 3 separate resonators and stingers (which I do for 20m, 15m and 10m) and then I hold the whole shebang down with a 40m resonator and its stinger. I pack an 80m resonator and stinger in the trunk, but didn't use it at all this year.

Saturday AM rolled around and I awoke before dawn to the light rain that the weather man said would be around all weekend and he was right. I had about an hour's drive up to my start point which is a 3 county intersection on a narrow county road. Dawn had broken (as much as it could given the fully overcast skies and light rain) and the olde grey lady and I headed north with a cooler of snacks and with the sounds of The Who's "Going Mobile"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxoO5yrabfc> and the Doobie Brothers "Rockin' Down the Highway" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yN9SSAuN7jY> running through my head to get in the mood.

I got to the start point in plenty of time, a spot just around the curve of a narrow county road and parked it. As I was tuning around the bands to get a feel for propagation (and finding to my delight that 10m was open to Europe) what should come bounding around the curve seemingly headed straight for my front bumper but this HUMONGOUS semi-tractor trailer for a moving company. It was obvious that he needed and intended to take his half of the road in the middle! He blew on past me but this was no ordinary 18-wheeler. It was a tandem with a 2nd trailer in tow behind the first one (30-wheeler?) and as this train of diesel powered steel came roaring past the olde grey lady I could see the gap between the side of the 2nd trailer and my driver's side rear view mirror shrinking fast! The driver of the semi apparently saw that he was about to slice me off even further into the ditch and I heard the screech of the air brakes as I fired up the old grey lady, put her in gear and shot forward and into the parking lot of the little country Baptist church at that corner.

The semi motored on down the road and disappeared as quickly as it had appeared and I got back on the county lines ready for the starting bell.

I figured I'd start out on 40m and give out those 3 counties (GRSN/COLN/FANN) to my fellow Texas brethren whom I figured would be looking for early mults. After a fair bit of CQ'ing yielded a fairly meager response (maybe I should have started on 20m instead), I went to search and pounce. I didn't stay long so as to be able to keep up with the fairly aggressive time table I had, so by 1411 I was rolling across Fannin county which I would pass thru 3 times as I rolled east to catch Hunt, Lamar and Delta. While sliding through the northern edge of home county of Hunt I had my one and only QSO with Bob W0BH as he was rolling through Hansford county. Bob does a great job with the Kansas QSO party, of which I have also become a fan the last couple of years and he's become a fixture in the TxQP running counties up the in panhandle.

Heading east across the "2nd row" of the northern tier of counties I worked my way across the NE part of the state, with brief incursions into the top row of counties just long enough and far enough to put them on the air for 10-15 minutes (e.g. Red River) before dropping back down and continuing east. As usual the rule was 20 meters for rate and 40m for Texas mults. I aimed to get on 40m from each county I was in at least for a little while and fulfilled that goal. I was pleased to see that 40m was in MUCH better shape than in 2011 and the Texas counties started coming in at a much better rate than the year

before.

Despite concerns that I might have to cut corners and drop a county or two to keep up with the scheduled time line, after the first few hours on the road while rolling through the oil fields of northern Titus county (replete with pump jacks and the unmistakable funk of hydrogen sulfide from that East Texas sour crude) I realized that I was actually comfortably ahead of schedule. Thus, for the first time since becoming a TxQP regular a few years ago, I had time to catch the corner of Bowie county and run it. While in Bowie I was lucky enough to run across WK5DX doing a 3-county intersection and so that helped the mult count early.

Along the way I worked a number of voices familiar to the contesting community. Of course there was the smooth southern drawl of Paul Newberry (Novembuh Fow-A Papa Novembuh) and the clear crisp voice of Bruce Meier N1LN with his S9+40 signal from North Carolina.

The county hunter types were also out in force enjoying the synergy that a state QSO party the size of Texas offers with its 254 counties. Many thanks to those who helped fill my log. I'm always happy to give them a "new one" and judging from the number of QSL requests and MARAC forms that have already hit my mailbox it sounds like I did okay by them too.

During my eastward trek it had rained off and on (mostly on) the whole time; never a huge down pour, but always varying in intensity enough to keep me fiddling with the wiper delay control. After Bowie it was time for a mostly southward trek down the NE side of the state weaving through the labyrinth of counties laid out by various rivers and the whims of the politicians over the decades. Morris, Camp, Upshur, Marion and Cass all went by in rapid succession before the relatively long 45 minute run down through Harrison county.

As I was about to exit Harrison and enter Panola county I worked a weak WE5PT in Gregg county on 40m. I didn't know it at the time but it was the freshly minted callsign of for the recently resurrected ham club at my alma mater, LeTourneau University in Longview where I would be making my supper stop. I worked them again after I crossed into Panola. Clipping the NE corner of Panola I had a pretty good run before turning NE heading through Rusk and into Gregg arriving on the LeTourneau campus just before 2200Z as I worked N5DO/m in Upton for another new county.

My daughter April (N5AGP) caught sight of me a few minutes later in the parking lot of the college cafeteria as I was checking the oil level in the "olde grey lady" as various students looked on in amusement at this old antenna festooned

vehicle. I also downloaded the first big audio file from the Sansa Clip to a laptop I'd brought along expressly for the purpose of data backup. Just to be on the safe side I also plugged the Sansa Clip into a cigarette lighter charger to top off its battery while I topped off my tummy.

Supper with with son and daughter and their classmates ensued, coupled with the delivery of care packages from home (including cookies of course). Had a great visit with the harmonics, then son David headed off with some of his buddies to a computer building party and April showed off her Electric Circuits homework. She's taking EE from the same prof who taught me 35 years ago, but I digress....

The 90 minutes I'd allotted for supper and socializing was too soon gone and it was time to hit the road again on the northwestward trek back towards Hunt county and home for the night. I was back on the air again at 2332 Z on 20m with a search and pounce QSO with K5KG in Florida who was another frequent caller throughout the weekend.

I had but 4 more new counties to activate (Smith, Wood, Van Zandt and Rains) a roughly 100 mile drive before the closing bell at 0200 Z, which worked out well given the lower QSO rates which would surely come as night fell. Just before leaving Gregg and crossing into Smith I worked one of the other mobiles, KK5W in Kimble county on 40m before finding CR5BWW in Portugal calling for Texas on 14289 kHz. After working him I wondered to myself what abbreviation to use in the log for it since CT would also map to Connecticut. (CT1 maybe?) I'd ponder the same question after working ON7TQ on 10m the next day and how to disambiguate it (now there's a verb!) with ONtario.

Darkness fell while rolling down I-20 in Smith county and the rain picked up to an intensity not seen during the daylight hours. One of the windshield wipers that had simply been going slap, slap, slap, had now developed an annoying squeak, adding to the QRM/QRN/QSB cacophony emanating from the radio.

My spirits were raised just after 0000Z when I was pleasantly surprised to hear my friend, former LeTourneau college room mate, and usual TxQP logger Mark KK5MR pop out of the aether and work me on 40 meters giving me Hunt county in the process. Though I couldn't talk him into riding with me this year, he did get on a bit from home late Saturday and some Sunday to help put Hunt county on SSB while another friend of mine, Jon, WB5KSD helped put Hunt county on the air in CW.

Smith county gave way to Wood (with a refueling stop in Mineola) , followed by a 1mile (and 1 QSO) stretch of Smith county again before US80 took me into Van

Zandt at the beginning of the final hour Saturday night. The QSO rate the last hour dropped as expected (only 35 Qs that last hour) and the bulk of the available action shifted even more in favor of 40m. With 35 minutes to go I entered the last new county of the day, most appropriate named RAINs county since it had pretty much rained all day along my route with a crescendo of precipitation pouring down on the olde gray lady as she and I trucked on towards Hunt county and home. I worked N9NLP back to back on 20m as I crossed from Rains to Hunt with about 13 minutes left. 0200 rolled around and by 0215 I was in the driveway at home. I fed the olde grey lady a night cap of a quart of 10W30, downloaded the 2nd of the days audio files, then unwound and assumed horizontal polarization for the night.

Sunday I was off a little before 1300 Z to head for my starting point in Rockwall county just east of the Dallas county line. I parked in a big graveled area off the service road that I assume is used as a turn round spot for big rigs. At least here if another semi showed up with intentions of violating the structural integrity of the olde grey lady I'd have plenty of time to maneuver.

I fired up the Sansa clip, tuned in to WWV to get a time hack and started a good 20m run when the opening bell sounded at 1400 Z. I then switched to a 40m for some search and pounce.

I'd just signed with WD5DDH in Ellis county (who I would work from several counties) when I looked up to see a Rockwall county sheriff's officer standing by my window. While on a traffic stop someone had called to his attention this grey Pontiac with a person slumped over it in (I had had my head bowed down close to the speaker at times) and thought I should be looked in on.

The officer realized immediately that I was just a ham playing with his radio (the WBÃ?TEV license plates and antennas are a pretty good clue). I told about the Texas QSO Party and after taking my license back to his squad car to run me through the system to make sure I wasn't some loose nut I got back on the radio and answered a CQ from K5MV in Liberty county and told him what happened. I think he just about fell out of his chair laughing! The sheriff's deputy was back in no time, wished me safe journeys and I was on my way.

Whilst motoring down I-30, I-635 and I-45 through Dallas county, I got my 4th QSO with my main competition KK5LO/m from Atascosa county and swung up to 10m to work ON7TQ in Belgium and CX5CBA in Montevideo who answered my CQ.

Ellis county soon followed along with visits from repeat customers NX5M who would end up working me in 21 counties , K5LLA who was in my log 9 times and

the seemingly omnipresent KC0VFO who would go on to work me 16 times from Colorado. Later in the day he would joke that he and I had worked each other so much, he was afraid someone would accuse him of having me as his "captive rover". Jeff, N8II from WV also chimed in during the pass thru Ellis, one of the 8 counties we QSO'ed in. W5NAC in Nacogdoches also showed up for the 9th time. In the end he'd work me from 13 counties and his generosity would prove key later in the contest.

Ellis gave way to Navarro, the county I thought I'd never get out of. My route took me through long stretches of Navarro both on my initial southbound trek Sunday AM and then again on the way back north in the afternoon. That did however, give me a chance to try out some other bands and get some good runs going.

After zipping across Hill county I parked on the Hill/McLennan county line and had a fairly good run on 20m giving out "2-fers" before sliding down the east edge of McLennan county and inching my way down a little gravel county road that was more ruts than road to get into Falls county for a stop and operate mission. While slowly bouncing down the road I flipped over to 10 meters and put E73M, a couple DL's and S52NR into the log for a 2nd time. (I had worked him the day before on 10m when I was in Franklin county).

A brief but good run on 20m ensued from Falls followed by an appearance on 40m. On the way back out I stopped at the Falls/McLennan county line briefly where I picked up Cooke county thanks to KF5HHL and worked K5MV in Liberty again. After the escape from "washboard drive" it was just a quick right turn into Limestone county and not just better roads, but also, I noticed, better weather. While a fairly stout wind had picked up, I suddenly realized it had stopped raining (at least for a while) and the sky was flirting with letting a bit of sun poke through.

While the route through Limestone was fairly long (almost 45 minutes), my route across the NW corner of Freestone county was only 4 miles long, so I stopped for a while at the Freestone/Limestone line for a few minutes before cruising through Freestone and then another pass thru Navarro.

During this 2nd pass thru Navarro I decided to give 15m some attention. I managed to get a brief run going there working stuff on the far east and west coasts along with a DL and NP2X from the Virgin Islands for another DX mult.

After that 2nd pass thru Navarro, I had but 2 more counties to do, Henderson and Kaufman. My route caught just the extreme NW corner of Henderson, so I stayed on the NAVA/HEND line for a few minutes then rolled thru Henderson to

the Kaufman county line. My plan had been to then just motor on up thru Kaufmann since it would take me an hour to traverse the county from south to north before getting back to Hunt county and home, and there was 1 hour left in the contest.

But it dawned on me that since these were the last counties and I really hadn't been in Henderson that long that I perhaps should just park there and do a county line run for most of the last hour even if it meant getting home later. It would prove to be a most fortunate decision.

After working N5DO from a 5th county on 40m I QSY'ed to 20 and after some S&P found a relatively clear spot and got a run going with 51 minutes left in the contest. After not quite 15 minutes I felt the need to try and pick up some more Texas counties and also give out Henderson and Kaufman to others in the state so at 1924Z I dropped down to 40 again. W5NAC was CQing and after working me for the 12th and 13th time, another station called in asking to work me and the op at W5NAC (the Nacogdoches Amateur Radio Club Station) graciously agreed, and then agreed again for another caller, and another, and yet another.

I asked how long I could occupy his run freq and then in true ham spirit he said "Hey, not a problem, mobiles come first, you go ahead". Bless you sir! And with 30 minutes left in the contest 7231 kHz was mine and it was off to the races!

In those closing minutes the QSOs came fast and furious with a number of new Texas counties coming in. About 40 QSOs piled up in the space of 20 minutes. With about 15 minutes to go before the end, the pileup petered out and I decided to roll off the county line and start reducing the time and mileage between me and home. I went back to 20 but only scared up one QSO there before going back to 40. The last QSO made, fittingly enough, was a 5th county QSO with what I believe to be my main competitor for this years Mobile Single OP Phone Only title, Walter, KK5LO at 1955 Z. I couldn't scare up anything in the last 5 minutes and was tired and a bit fried at that point anyway. The olde grey lady and I headed up TX 34 towards home and the daunting task of replaying 16.5 hours of audio to transcribe a log.

The week after the contest just about every spare moment was spent playing back the audio files and composing the log. So would I come out on top?

I figured my main competition would come from Walter Hock, KK5LO. I've not had the pleasure of meeting him, but he's one of the pillars of the modern Texas QSO Party. As a member of the Northwest Amateur Radio Society TxQP committee, the sponsoring organization behind the Texas QSO Party, he's been the acknowledged rules guru for some time. He posted his score on 3830 the following Monday and

I knew immediately there was serious competition. While I thought I had a shot at exceeding his 795 Q's I figured coming up with something higher than his 119 multipliers was a long shot. I'd put a few more counties on the air, but this was some stiff competition.

By Friday night Oct 5, I'd managed to get all of Saturday's run transcribed. A shade over 600 Qs had taken shape in the log but with the amount of mults I guesstimated I'd wind up with I figured I'd need close to 1000 total QSOs if not more, to make up the scoring deficit. Saturday, Oct 6 rolled around and I multiplexed between working a bit of the California QSO Party and transcribing Sunday's data. The further along I went the more optimistic things began to look. Late Saturday afternoon as I closed in on transcribing the final couple of hours from Sunday's excursion the picture became clearer. Unless I fared very poorly in the log checking process, or some other dark horse came out of the blue, all the planning, scheming, driving, time and effort had paid off. Not only did I come close to the 1000 QSO mark but the number of multipliers came to 123.

The last hour of the contest was a key one, as it turns out. In that last hour I had the highest number of QSOs in any hour (85) and added 8 new Texas counties.

The numbers:

960 QSOs, exclusive of 8 dupes.

67 Texas Counties, 42 States, 4 VE Provinces, 10 DX for a total of 123

35 counties activated at 1000 points each.

Worked both N5DO and KK5LO in 5 of their counties for 500 points x 2

16.5 hours of operating time.

739 miles on the odometer.

A big thanks to NARS and especially to NO5W who works tirelessly throughout the year to promote the TxQP and administer a truly Texas sized effort. Was concerned that for a while it looked like he might not even be able to participate this year for lack of a driver, but Dan, N5TM teamed up with Chuck at the last minute and they turned in a great score as usual.

And now as promised, WB0TEV's recipe for Broiled Ham - Texas Roadkill Style :-)

Recipe for Broiled Ham - Texas RoadKill Style

Ingredients:

One 1958 model amateur radio operator with 1976 vintage ham license
One 1986 model Pontiac Parisienne automobile (the olde grey lady)
One 1985 model Yaesu FT-757
One 2008 model Sansa Clip Digital Media device used as a digital sound recorder
One Hustler fold-over vertical with coils for 40/20/15/10m
40 gallons 87 octane gasoline (regrettably containing up to 10% ethanol)
One quart each of 10W30 motor oil and Dexron III transmission fluid (the olde grey lady is getting a tad incontinent in her old age).

Note: This recipe can only be properly prepared during the Texas QSO Party on the last full weekend of September.

Install radio over transmission hump in front seat next to driver. Pad bottom with foam and secure with seat belt run thru radio's bottom bail. Attach antenna with all coils to right rear fender. Tie an old sock to the inside rear view mirror arm and clip Digital Voice Recorder to it with microphone hole pointing down towards radio speaker.

Fill gas tank. Insert ham operator in drivers seat at 1245Z Saturday AM and drive to 3 county intersection start point. Activate DVR prior to 1400Z. Beginning at 1400 Z commence RF transmissions. Over the next 12 hours drive into, out of, over and through 24 counties in NE Texas whilst making QSOs on various amateur bands with emphasis on 40 and 20m. For optimum results allow ham operator to stop and drain excess fluid no more than twice during this period, which may be combined with a gasoline refueling if desired.

Tenderize ham's ears by continuously basting them with a solution comprised of more or less equal parts QRM, QRN, & QSB. Garnish with raindrops, squeaky windshield wipers, road noise and occasional doses of slightly off-frequency SSB.

Plan route so as to arrive at ham's home QTH shortly after 0200Z. Upon arrival at home remove ham from oven (er, uh, automobile) and allow to rest over night. This helps improve tenderness and flavor. By now the rump portion of the ham should have started to become tender with the brain somewhat, but not yet completely, mushed.

The next morning check and replenish marinades (oil and transmission fluid) as necessary and drive to Sunday AM start point arriving no later than 1345Z. Repeat Saturday's cooking scheme except cook for only 6 hours while traversing 11 additional counties. Allow no more than one "whizzle stop" to ensure ham does not dry out. For a final flourish, finish most of the last hour on a

county line over an hour away from home. Upon arrival at ham's home QTH Sunday afternoon, remove ham from oven (uh, I mean automobile) and download >2 GB of audio data to archival storage.

Serve the now thoroughly broiled ham with refreshing libations. Excess fluids may now be drained without limit. When properly prepared per this recipe the ham's rump will be tender while the brain which was merely a soft mush Saturday night should be thoroughly fried by late Sunday afternoon.

Replays of the recordings collecting with the Sansa Clip to generate the log will provide enough leftovers to last through the first week of October (not unlike the post Thanksgiving turkey sandwiches which one comes to loathe by early December) although these leftovers need to be consumed by Halloween as they officially spoil after Oct 31, the log submission deadline for the Texas QSO Party.

-From the recipe box of Victor Paul - WB0TEV

and don't say you don't get your money's worth reading WB0TEV's writeups!

N5DO Mobile

Thanks to James, K5FD, for once again driving around far west Texas (955 miles). We had two unplanned stops for a little over 30 minutes each. First in Reeves County we stopped in Pecos to look for another set of headphones, with no luck. My Heil Pro-Set Plus had an intermittent problem in the molded headphone jack so that the left side kept cutting out. My backup Heil BM-10 headset does not cover the whole ear and the road noise was pretty bad. Not finding anything better I bought a pair of hearing protector ear muffs to put over the BM-10 headset. That worked, but after about 20 - 30 minutes my ears were so smashed down that I had to take the protectors off for awhile.

The other break came in Zavala County. In the middle of a great pileup the computer crashed. Something seemed to go wrong with the hard drive (maybe too much banging onto the temporary wooden table being used as an operating position?). After 30 minutes of working on that to no avail I switched to the old fashioned way -- copying on paper and pencil and sending with a paddle -- at least it was better than a straight key.

All in all it worked out well and was very enjoyable. The rain (and one never complains about rain in west Texas) had come through Alpine on Friday (about 2.5 inches!). We started out Saturday morning under cloudy skies and headed West. We quickly were out in the sunshine again, but as we turned back to the East we caught up to the rain. In Reagan County we drove through some hard rain, but from Crane County to Uvalde County we saw lots of standing water. Fortunately all the roads were open.

Once again it was a great weekend, full of fun and adventure! Thanks to everyone for following us from county to county.

W5MJ Multi OP (W5MJ, K5PI)

I've always wanted to go mobiling in TQP, but my schedule has never worked out. Thanks to W5MJ for providing the great setup -- a TS-480HX and Tarheel antenna. We had a few technical issues -- the automatic controller for the Tarheel wasn't working so we set it for 40 CW and put a 20M hamstick on the hood (no metal roof on the Jeep). We had RFI that prevented the laptop from talking to the rig, and periodically interrupted the GPS interface, but we had a great time nonetheless. We were delayed an hour at the start, but got in the groove once we were on the road.

Madison and I are both partial to CW, but we thought SSB deserved some significant attention. Maybe we didn't go there enough to establish a presence, but we could never get the runs going like we could on CW. And we had some huge CW pileups, especially when we hit Archer county Saturday afternoon. Wow!

Thanks to all the "return customers", and very special thanks to NO5W for helping me plan a route and load it into his great CQ/X software.

W0BH with AD0DX mobile

We operated mobile in the Texas panhandle. This was my 3rd mobile contest with Bob and it was a lot of fun. Slowly but surely I'm getting better at picking calls out of the pileups and learning how to squeeze more out of the software that Bob uses.

I had to go to Calif on business for Monday, so I took the bus from Kansas City

on Fri afternoon and Bob picked me up in Wichita at 5:30 and we drove to Liberal KS in west Kansas. The contest ended at 3pm on Sunday, and I had an 8pm flight out of Wichita and it's about a 4 hour drive from our ending point so everything worked out perfect for me to take part in the TQP and still go on my business trip.

Sat qso's were steady all day. We had a different route from last year and with the recent rains in Texas we almost got stuck once going down a dirt road. This ended up costing us 1/2 hour from our schedule because we refused to just turn around and head back to town on the highway and get back on course. But it was a beautiful day in the panhandle and we enjoyed being mobile in the TQP.

At one point in a pile up I was operating cw and I heard a JO prefix on 10 mtrs. I thought to myself that I must have heard that call wrong and ignored it. The next time it was still there so I turned to Bob and asked 'did you hear a JO?'. He had so I sent JO? and sure enough he came back from Japan with a very nice signal. That was the first time I had ever worked Japan while mobile.

It was a lot of fun working dx while mobile. We worked DL3DXX, DL3GA and YV5OIE quite a few times. It was fun to also work YV5OIE on phone too.

On Sat night we stayed in Paducah Texas in a family owned motel that used to be a mortuary. Nice clean rooms and friendly service.

Thanks again to Bob for teaching me about mobile contesting and sharing his wealth of knowledge. Near the end of the party we were starting to 'stack' calls. With Bob driving and me operating cw, if Bob heard a call different from the one that I answered, then I was starting to work the first station, send 'R BK' and then work the second station that Bob had heard.

Thanks to everyone that worked us and that called us consistently. With so many calls in those pileups, offsetting your frequency is usually a good idea. If everyone calls on exactly the same frequency, it's hard to pick out one callsign. Often I would be able to get a callsign because they were slightly offset from most of the pileup.

Thanks to the organizers of the Texas QSO Party, this was a great weekend.

W0BH with AD0DX (the other half of the team report)

The forecast was for rain and cooler temps, so we were able to take my favorite but non-air-conditioned 91 Astro van with the same equipment as last year. Both the equipment and the van ran great, but as is usual with 18 hours of QSO party, interesting things happen.

The weekend forecast showed that most of the rain would be over in the Texas Panhandle by TQP kickoff, but obviously that was not the case for the rest of the state. As we headed out from our motel in Liberal KS, it was really foggy. The fog lifted as we drove across the Oklahoma panhandle and closed in on Texas. Because of our tight schedule, we planned to start about 15 miles into Texas in Ochiltree county and we did. Sometimes it takes a few counties to start the pileups, but this year they started right away .. a good sign. A couple of counties in, we came around a corner and found the road full of hay bales. Luckily, most of them were on the other side of the road or our party might have stopped right there. The truck that dumped them was nowhere to be seen.

Radio conditions were good and just kept getting better all weekend. We started out on 40m, then found 20m wide open and even put some 15m contacts in the log already the first hour. 15m just kept getting better and better. Texas stations get mults from both Texas counties and DX, so it was a scramble to try to rotate through all the bands looking for mults while working our faithful followers. We were the only mobile on CW in all our counties so CW was our first priority, but we tried to put out SSB as well from any solo counties.

I ran the first three counties, then Ron took over the rig and sent his first CQ. Ron had terrific practice during the Kansas QSO Party, so he was as ready as one can be for the pileups. We both had keys, so I could answer comments directed to me or help him out while he relearned the NA logging software keystrokes. With two sets of ears picking out calls, we got better at "on-deck" operations as the weekend went along. Once, one of our keys stuck and started sending continuous dits until we switched the rig to SSB. It turned out that Ron's key had fallen to the floor while he was using the computer to send and had turned on it's side.

Our luck with the weather held until Oldham county on the western side of the panhandle when the sky cut loose for about half an hour. At one point, Ron was getting dripped on as water found its way through the door seal .. something that has never before happened in my van. We slowed way down and visibility was really poor at times, but the signals kept pounding in. We drove out of it as we headed eastbound on I-40 through Amarillo. The run at the Carson/Armstrong county line made it all worthwhile!

Mid-afternoon found us in Parmer county on the western side of the panhandle. My GPS software suggested a planned shortcut to detour around a town, but we couldn't find the road because of a divided highway. I suggested an alternate route which turned out to be wrong. The GPS quickly showed us how to get back on course via some back roads, the first of which was muddy but passable, the second which rapidly narrowed and looked like it could get seriously bad. As Ron tried to turn around, we almost spent the rest of our QSO party right there with the wheels spinning. They finally inched us backward just enough to complete the turn and we escaped minus about thirty minutes.

I had a few timing stops built into our schedule which could be skipped if necessary, so we used them up. We also made use of the great paved Texas highway system and fast speed limits to get back some time, but that caused another problem. Some starling sized birds flew up from the ditch and I heard a bang as one of them hit one of my Hustler antennas while we were going full speed. Since the SWR remained good on both the CW and SSB arrays, I didn't worry about it at the time, but later when we tried 80m CW for the first time I couldn't get the coil to tune. A quick stop showed the problem .. the bird had taken off the stinger and broken the part with the set screws where the stinger attached. I had lots of spare antenna coils and stingers, but not a second 80m CW coil, so we were out of luck.

As Saturday turned dark, I was once again worried about getting stuck on a sandy / dirt road in Motley county. We made only seven contacts before bailing out and heading back into King county and pavement. By then, getting closer to our overnight stop in Paducah was a great idea. I had found a hotel called the Hunter's Lodge which looked interesting. The building was obviously repurposed. when we asked about it, the girl at the front desk asked if we were superstitious. We said no, so she informed us that the building used to be a mortuary which her family had converted into a 12 room hotel. It was actually really nice with a cafe right next door, and I would stay there again! We ended the day with 1433 Qs in the log.

Sunday

Sunday dawned clear and blue .. a great day for a mobile to be out and about. This time we stayed on schedule and the pace picked up from Saturday. Ron did so well on CW, that he operated the entire time we were moving. I just worked a two-county line stop, the four-county line stop, and SSB if we had time. Last year we were at the same four-county line and were immediately visited by the farmer who owned the land. This time his son appeared before I even got started. They really kept a close eye on it or else we were the only excitement that happened since last year! Ron explained what we were up to and they knew

all about ham operators, so all was well. It was a great run.

A big surprise was to have DL3DXX call and suggest 10m. We tried and it worked, so I went back there from time to time and picked up some more DX mults. Even the coyotes celebrated by running in front of us .. two of them in about a quarter of a mile.

The only traffic problem we had was a rollover accident blocking traffic in our second to last county. I had planned to exit Texas about 15 minutes early as a safety buffer in getting Ron to the airport, but we were stopped for about 15 minutes while Ron continued to work CW. Traffic finally started moving again and we crossed into Oklahoma one minute after the end of the TQP. And yes, Ron made his flight on time!

W3DYA mobile

Except for the extremely heavy rain most all day Saturday, everything else seemed to be pretty good.

I did give the "flying saucer" resonators a good rain test - the auto-tuner handled the SWR changes pretty good. Large vehicles passing while I was parked seemed to alter the SWR, but the tuner recovered OK. Sorry for the tuning breaks during a run - but they were usually infrequent and short. I will probably "retire" my Hustler resonators... but keep them dry!

Thanks to all those who waited for me between counties. I probably operated about 50% of the time and drove the rest of the time.

N5OE (Palo Pinto Portable)

Operated from our RV site in Palo Pinto County rather than from the home QTH in Parker county for this years run. Rig was a TS590 @ 50w, and I strung up a G5RV at 25' for this event. I operated about 8 hours on Saturday, and only had a couple of hours to be able to get on for Sunday. Thanks for all the Q's

K5CM mobile

I had other commitments Saturday morning so did not get to the Texas border until about 3PM. This was my first QSO party with out a driver, and I must say, my hats of to W3DYA who does it that way all the time.

I know we need rain but I think East Texas caught up this week-end. I had to keep both hands on the wheel all the time. No driving with my knee hi hi. I thought one of the counties I went through Sunday was named and abbreviated very appropriately - RAINS.

Thanks to all who followed me around.

K5IID (Hill, TX)

Down considerably from last year, but fun none the less. It seemed that the mobiles stayed up on the higher bands more and who could blame them for that. Conditions seemed really pretty good. Hope it holds for the rest of the contest season. Next year comes none to soon.

N8XX (QRP in MI)

Interesting QSO Party. Not many different stations on CW, and I figured that QRP on phone would not be very fruitful, so I plugged along. Thanks to a few mobiles who popped up every so often in a new county, and those who stayed at a three or four county intersection for long enough for the pileups to recede so a QRP station could be heard amongst the cacophony of QRO QRM! 50 different counties. Almost all that I heard! Only a few couldn't hear my pipsqueak signal!

I was about to quit, when I noticed I had 69 q's and 49 multipliers. I snooped around, heard W5FIT a bit weak, up and down with QSB on 20. It took several minutes to hit a "peak" in the QSB along with lack of other stations for him to hear me! A nice "round" figure of 70 Q's and 50 multipliers - hope only a few NIL's!

KK5LO - SSB Mobile

Deral, K5WNO, kept me on the road and drove another 1005 miles for this year's TQP.

N4GG (GA)

his was a lot of fun - congrats to the folks who put the rules together, this is a well run QSO party. The bonus points scheme makes it extra interesting and the all-band format is good thinking. I like the unrestricted use of packet and single classes, this is a 21st century set of rules.

Also, congrats to rovers W5MJ, K5JX, N5DO, N5NA, W0BH, WD5IYT, N5TM and W3DYA for really covering the miles and making it enjoyable to sit at the radio....

I hope to put in more time next year..

WD5IYT mobile

This TQP was a personal best for me. Single-op, CW, solo operation. I did the driving and operating.

FT-857D with "Little" Tarheel screwdriver antenna. Band conditions were very good, even 40m was quiet and I could actually hear people!

The rain made driving a bit difficult, especially Saturday night.

23 counties activated, 1312 contacts. I beat my previous best score by more than 100,000. I'm very happy!

Thanks to everyone who stuck with me for the whole thing.

Jim WD5IYT

K5KG (FL)

A big tnx to all the Texas ops for putting on a great performance. My hats off to the TxQP organizers, all the fixed stations that covered the many bands, and to the mobiles who provided the rabbits for us to chase.

Lets first talk about condx. First the wx. The mobiles are to be commended for persisting in the face of the torrential rain. K5CM related that he was driving and operating, and how difficult it was doing both with all the rain and terrible driving condx. Next the bands. 10m was crawling with dx, but we did manage to work two stations, N5JB and NX5M. 15m was also crawling with dx, but skip shorted up in the late afternoon making TX stations workable. Unfortunately, it seemed as though many TXx stations started beaming west, thereby making them hard to work from back east. 20m was the money band, as was 40m later in the evening. I saved 80 cw to the end and managed to nail K5K, K5LH, K5OT, K6JSS, NX5M, W5CT, W5FIT and W5FR. Did not even try 75 SSB.

The challenge being mixed mode was trying to decide on the trade off between stopping to run on a freq vs. chasing the mobile pack. On Saturday, I spent a great deal of time running in both modes. At the end of day one, I had 153 counties, so I realized that chasing the mobiles was going to be the tactic for Sunday to reach a goal of 200 counties. I finally did manage to get to 200 by collecting PECO (N5DO), LEE (N5TM), and CALD (W5MJ) in the last 17 minutes.

Now for the mobiles...what a great bunch of ops and terrific signals. Here is my count of the top mobiles: N5NA & W0BH (31), W5MJ (27), N5TM & WD5IYT (26), N5DO (24), K5CM (20), WC5D (16), K5JX (14), and W3DYA (13). There are two concerns that I will mention. For several hours on each of the two mornings, many of the mobiles stayed on 40 cw working other TX stations. From FL their mobile signals faded into the noise to where they were difficult to copy, and nearly impossible to break into over the locals in TX that they were working. This, no doubt, cost many of us far away from TX a bunch of juicy mults. The other concern is about the mobiles that did not sign their calls frequently enough. It was very frustrating having to wait through several Qsos until they finally signed. The better practice, IMO, is for the mobiles to sign after every Q, and most did...but some did not.

All in all, it was a great contest. I am looking forward to next year already.

73, George, K5KG

N4PN (GA)

Lots of counties and lots of quality mobiles plus great fixed

stations....lots of great friends there in Texas...

Bob, W0BH, led the way with the most contacts...he gave me

LIPScomb near the end on Sunday for county #200...

He was followed closely by N5NA with 35 Q's. N5TM with 27.

Others were W5MJ (25); WD5IYT (21); W3DYA (14); WB0TEV (13);

K5JX (12); K5CM (11); N5DO (10); KK5LO (8); K5EJL (6); WB5KIA (5);

WC5D (5); KK5W (5); WK5DX (3); WB5JC (3); N5HR (3); W5ETJ (2);

N4CD (2); K5ITO (2)....and several with (1) county...tks to all..

N6MU (California)

Still one of my favorite Parties. Score includes 19000 mobile bonus points.

Chasing at least ten active mobiles really keeps you hopping. Top mobile for me was W0BH with 48 Qs followed by N5NA(42), W3DYA(36), N5TM(32), WD5IYT(29), W5MJ(28), N5DO(21) and K5CM/K5JX/WC5D(14). Sure nice to have 15 so wide open but never heard a thing on 10. A big TNX to all the TX stations for another good one. 73...

NX5M Multi Op in TX

Operator(s): NX5M, KU5B, N5XJ, KJ5T, AB5K, K5WA

871 cw QSO and 2373 SSB QSOs – these folks were BUSY!

W4UCZ – GA

As usual, another Texas-sized fun weekend. I really enjoyed having the 15 meter side-show open this time. At various points the mobiles were registering 40 over and at times their runs sounded more like a DX contest than a state party. Bet the ops had a blast hand-over-fisting the Euros.

My score contains the mobile-group bonuses from :

W0BH (32), N5NA (26), WD5IYT (21), N5TM (19), W5MJ (17), W3DYA (14), K5CM (12), N5DO (11) and K5JX (9). Hats off to you all. I hear it was wet enough for some of you to be running maritime mobile at times.

NR5M – TX

Wow! 10 meters was open worldwide all day Sunday.(1400-2000z) Best I've heard since I returned to radio in 2007. Should have spent more time on 40 and 80 chasing Texas counties (46) but had plenty of DXCC (68)and plenty of 100+ hours on ten running EU.

NT2A – NY

It was extra class organized TEXAS QSO PARTY. There were lots of mobile stations, perfect conditions on the first day and not bad on second. 28 MHz has been opened completely on the second day (just after WC5D finished 10M CQ with four multipliers there, which was not heard by me HI-HI).

I was just looking how the Europeans were working with Texas through the head on 10M. In the last 2-3 hours of the QP some stations from Texas came with the signal plus 40-60 DB over 9. There was a lot of Europeans, South Americans on ten meters. When I did direct call to TX, few stations from Italy called me despite the fact that my Yagi was in side back direction to EU. Probably WW RTTY contest overheated air and improved conditions on 10M. TX activity on 10M was weak.

Finally worked at 80M -5 QSO, 40M 48 , 20M -235, 15M -113, 10M -10 QSO. 40M band was open only for 3 hours during the first day, and nothing next day. Some TX/m stations kept working on 40M with changing locations. This is especially noticeable on the second day. At the same time on 80M I heard no more than 2-3 fixed stations. 20M mobile stations were going well, but on the second day after noon and in the first hour TX went with signals the 2-4 S and European stations easily kept interrupting my calls. 15M was opened almost the entire test, but not all of the TX /M used this band. I didn't check digital modes, just forgot about it. CW kept me busy all time.

Mobile stations worked: W0BH -55 QSO, N5NA-48, N5TM-37, WD5IYT-29, W5MJ-27, N5DO-24, W3DYA-19, K5CM-16, WC5D-12, K5JX-14, N4CD-4, and N5BE-3.

Filling in Some County Signs

Gary, K4EXT, noted on the K3IMC forum that he was 'collecting' county line signs in the MARAC County Hunter archives.

I went through the files here and sent him off a few pictures of county line signs. Well, a few hundred. He's up to 321 now up on the web out of 3077 as of 10/22/2012, so he could use pictures of the remaining counties. Check it out and see if you can help fill in the rest. It's amazing how many times I've taken pics of the same county lines as I've traveled around TX – often on the same circuit. Way back when I took pictures of 'last counties' or other significant ones – or far off ones. I'd get two prints made and mail them out with MRC requests – which seemed to be a lot higher way back when – when you had to confirm the second time as well.

With the new digital cameras you can snap away every line you go by if you want – unless you can't stop like on the interstate.

<http://www.charchive.com/cntys.asp>

You can also see pics of many of the county hunters (some from the way—back machine) at the same site.

On the Road with N4CD II

I was on the road again early Saturday morning after the 3M with one scheduled detour to get 3 counties for N9STL (Crockett, Lauderdale, and Tipton), and the LC Mobile Diamond for TN for Scottie, N4AAT in Lauderdale. They are north of I-40 at the west edge of TN.

Scottie, N4AAT was headed through Unicoi, TN – my last MD for the state, and I was headed to his last for the state. It would be a double hitter for LC's.

I zipped on down the interstate I-40 to the town of Jackson, and got off on route 412. In a few

miles you are in Crockett and can put that out. A few more miles and you find Alt 70 to Brownsville in Haywood County to the west. I looked for the shortest way with the least miles out of the way to get to Lauderdale and found route 87 to Henning. It's a good thing I had the GPS otherwise I'd have never found the road out of Brownsville. There's a sign at the start of the road that says "No Trucks". OK...they don't like trucks or there's a bridge that doesn't hold much weight, I thought.

You get to Lauderdale County in about 10-15 miles and can start running the county. No sweat. Then the road comes into Henning. You see a strange sign that says 7' 6" Clearance ahead. There's a 20 mph speed limit and you take three or four right angle turns in the teeny town of 30 houses. Then....you see the tunnel under the railroad tracks. The tracks are up about 12 feet above the surrounding ground.



Oops....8 foot high tunnel

Prominently on both sides of the SMALL tunnel are LARGE signs – 8 FOOT tunnel. It's an old, old, old, tunnel that is maybe 8 feet wide and less than 8 feet high. Let's see. My back antenna with the six foot mast and five resonators needs 9'6" of clearance – at least. The hamstick for 40m sticks up almost 11 feet and the 20M SSB antenna is up at 10 feet or so. The N4CD mobile isn't going to fit through that.

Well, when plan A doesn't work...you look for a plan B. Sometimes there's a nearby way around the tunnel. So I take a street to the south. It goes 1/2 a mile and stops. No way to cross the tracks. Plan B didn't work. So I try for plan C, a road to the north. I take that and it goes 1/2 mile and ends in a tee at another road. I turn back to the west, and there's another tunnel – 8 foot clearance! The GPS shows no other roads and I can't find one. It was time for plan D.

The hamstick came off and was stuffed it in the car. I 'folded over' the 20M SSB antenna 90 degrees, laying the mag mount on the side, and I opened the trunk lid. With the antenna tilted forward, the mast leaning against the car, I hoped I would make it under the top of the tunnel. I crept through the tunnel at 3 mph and one of the resonator tips did hit the tunnel roof with a

'twang' or two, but I made it through. I stopped, closed the trunk, put the 40M hamstick back on, tilted the 20M mag mount back up vertical, and hoped I wouldn't find another tunnel like that for another 500,000 miles or so! So county hunter beware – the road to Henning is for cars with quick disconnects or no antennas at all, and of course, no motor homes. If you had a motor home, you'd backtrack 20 miles all the way back to Brownsville. If you had a tricked out pickup with big tires, you might not have made it either!

After that, I ran Tipton for N9STL and the rest of the gang – then disappeared for a bit chasing TX counties as I drove through ARK, but also checking the cw freqs and 40M SSB for runs by N9STL and Scottie, N4AAT.

As I approached TX, it started to drizzle....and it drizzled for the next 4 hours as I headed home. This was the weekend of rain all over the state of TX, with the eastern 2/3rds getting rain on both Saturday and Sunday – sometimes heavy at times. Nearly all the mobiles in the TX QSO party ran in the rain. I made it home after a long day of driving at 7pm. It was a good trip and I had lots of fun and it was great meeting all the folks at the 3M.

Hope I hit something you needed!

CA QSO Party

Once again the CQP rolled around, and I had the ability to spend a lot of time chasing stations. There were lots of loud contest type stations on in many of the counties, but it seemed a few of the 'regulars' took the year off and no big gun operation from Del Norte or some of the others as in the past. Maybe 5 of the total counties were not spotted, including Del Norte, Siskiyou on CW (was on SSB), Tuolumne (SSB only). Some were run at 0400 and 0500Z (midnight in TX), too – that K6AQL was a busy mobile! Maybe the only mobile out there?

It looks like AG6IV was on in Del Norte – but never spotted.

Due to refinery problems and, of course, the 'super greenie fuel requirements' in CA, gasoline was selling for \$5/gal over much of California for the weekend of the CQP. Wonder if that discouraged any County Expeditions (driving and fuel for the generators) and mobile activity? Ouch – five bucks a gallon – or more.

From the 3830 reflector:

N6M Modoc County Expedition – K7XU

Thanks to the NCCC for providing both good propagation and beautiful weather. We operated Field Day style from a NFS fire lookout in the Modoc National Forest about 200 miles from our homes in Bend, OR.

K6MM County Expedition – Merced (K6MM, N6DE, W6OAT, ND2T_

We had a blast putting Merced County on the air this year. Very likely an all-time high score for that County. Missed ND and NT for the sweep. 10M was a little disappointing, but picked up somewhat on Sunday morning. Strong signals from Europe on both 15M and 20M. Felt like another exciting turnout from around the country. Operated at 900 ft. from a beautiful State Park -- and of course there's always an interesting back story to tell. Thanks for all the Qs. 73, from the CQP 2012 Merced Team.

W6R - Really Really Remote Base Operation (WINN – OH) – Los Angeles, CA

I operated from the station of Dan, WA6URY in Bellflower (LANG) using a remote hookup from my home in Ohio. So the radio and antennas were in California while I was 1,900 miles away controlling things over the Internet. It was certainly one of the more interesting radio experiences I have had.

Dan has a great setup and I would like to thank him for making the station available to me and helping me set things up over the two weeks prior to the contest. There was a lot to do to get ready for this.

Dan has been doing remote for a couple of years now, and has been mentoring me since I got involved about a year ago. I am still at the basic level in which I have figured out how to control a single radio with simple antennas and no other bells and whistles not even CAT control (except that I have managed to set up Win-Test to key the radio). Dan has a much more sophisticated station with CAT as well as remotely controlled antenna rotators, antenna switches, amplifiers, and other devices. We are both using TS-480 radios (the ones with detachable front panels) and the remote equipment and software supplied by Remote Rig (www.remoterig.com). In order to operate the CQP using his station, I would have to learn how to use all of these devices of his

(except for the amps).

In getting ready for the contest, I had three problems. First, Win-Test, my regular contesting software, does not support the CQP, so I would have to use N1MM, which I do not know well. Second, I do not have an Internet connection in the shack, and I would need two connections to do this contest (one for the radio interface and one for the antenna rotator/switch interface), so I would have to set up and operate in my office where my Internet connection and router are. Finally, 99% of my contesting is CW only, but there is no CW-only category in the CQP, so I had to set things up for phone operation. This was my biggest headache. Despite many hours of trying, the only microphone I could get to work with Remote Rig was the handheld mic that came with the TS-480. Worse, I couldn't get the wav files in N1MM to key the radio through Remote Rig. So I ended up making all of my phone contacts with my own voice while holding the hand mic in my left hand and typing with my right hand. That got old very fast and I couldn't stand operating phone for very long at one time.

Things worked remarkably well in the contest. About a dozen times the Internet connection faltered for a few seconds, causing my sudden disappearance from the frequency for 10-15 seconds, but I only lost the connection and had to reboot one time. There may have been a slight delay in my coming back to people but I doubt that most people had any idea that I was not in California.

Conditions were pretty good on all bands (although 10 and 15 were long most of the weekend) and activity was excellent. I did not have an antenna for 160 or 75, but I don't think this cost me much. Strategy-wise, I was doing pretty well on 20 SSB Saturday after dark (in Ohio, that is) so I didn't QSY to 40 until 0130Z. I probably should have been there an hour or two earlier. I took my off time in one block from 2 AM to 8 AM Ohio time. I'm not sure if this was the best strategy or not.

This was my second time doing the CQP from CA. The first time was in 1992 when, as K8HVT, my friend Larry N2AZS and I traveled from NY to LAX, rented an RV and operated mobile from five southern CA counties. We had a blast and I've been looking for an opportunity to return. I never thought it would be 20 years before I was able to do so, and I never expected that my next trip would be a 'virtual' one.

Thanks again to WA6URY, the CQP sponsors, and all of the participants for a great time.

73, Hal W1NN

NI6T – Multi OP Tehama County Expedition

NI6T N3ZZ K6MI W6GJB WB6HYD K9YC

This team has operated from this location for at least five years, so we know what to expect. We had three stations -- 3 K3s, 2 KPA500s, 1 Hercules II, two tribanders, a 10M Yagi, and wires for 40 and 80. Activity on 40 and 80 seemed to be down quite a bit from prior years, and died a couple of hours earlier than usual. 10M SSB activity seemed to have been hurt a lot by competition from a 1010 contest, and we had very little interest from Asia. One minor change from prior years -- we had the relative luxury of N6RNO's big RV, using it as a kitchen, operating position, sleeping quarters, and sanitary facilities. Rhino wasn't available this year, so we scaled down to a tent and a rental porta-potty. Not as elegant, but it worked fine.

All that aside, everything worked fine, except for a few computer problems that were quickly solved.

We had a beta unit of the new Elecraft high power antenna tuner, the KAT500, on one of the stations and it performed flawlessly. We "trained" the tuner for each band and mode before the contest (simply selecting the antenna for the band and letting the tuner tune for it), so during the contest the tuner simply read the TX frequency, switched to the right antenna, and recalled its settings. As a result, band-switching was virtually instantaneous, and the operator didn't even have to think about it. This is a real sweet tuner -- I've been using it at home with my Titan at 1.5kW (1 kW RTTY). I suspect they're going to sell a lot of them.

W6ML – County Expedition – Mono County

This was my 21th consecutive county expedition to Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. I was hopeful that I could improve on my personal best score from last year. I made my most CW QSOs to date (988), but fewer SSB QSOs vs last year so I came up a few hundred points short.

W6T County Expedition – Trinity County

K6YL N6DQ K6WX AA6XV N6NU K6RHO

By Joanna K6YL -- This was our third year operating from beautiful Trinity County, and we successfully improved our score almost 100K pts over 2011. Thanks to Rick N6DQ for his months of hard work and preparation for this expedition. Luckily we did manage a sweep - Now Murphy did make a presence . We lost an amplifier during testing Friday night; we tripped a circuit breaker in the tiny cabin 2 hours into the contest and were down for 20 minutes (glad the computers were on a UPS!); we blew a stub; and the wind decided 165 degrees was a better direction for one of the main antennas. This is a fun contest and I think the work that fellow expeditions put into this event to put rare counties on the air is truly amazing. Cheers also to K6AQL as we enjoyed tracking your mobile route!

Added by Kristen K6WX -- CQP Trinity was a fun time again this year. Sadly we lost an amplifier early on, but we worked around it. The 40m nighttime CONDX were not bad. N6DQ and I were the up through the dead of the night. Daytime on the upper bands was only fair, but there were a few DX stations to work on both phone and CW. Had fun chatting with K6MI before the contest on 2m as we met on the freeway on the way to our expedition sites.

Rigs: All Icom

K6JS County Expedition- Plumas

We ran a low power M/M County expedition from Plumas County. We had a F12 C3 at 50' on a military mast and a windom at 70' in the trees for the CW station. SSB station has a Moseley 33 at 20' with a low dipole. We had 57 mults by 5 pm Saturday, missing only MS. We eventually worked 2 MS stations on 40M SSB in the wee hours of Sunday. Condx's were good for the most part, with many EU stations in the log on 15M. We had S9 noise level from our generator on 40/80, which made it rough to copy the weaker stations. We swapped out generators when we refueled and the noise floor dropped allowing us to work through the night, but we missed some prime time 40M action. Another CQP is in the log and we're looking forward to next year!

K6VO – SBER – Multi OP

K6NR, NR7E, AF6GL, K6RBS, NJ6N

For the 10th straight year, the K6VO CQP group participated in CQP from my

desert station near Victorville. We had a slightly smaller group this time, but had fun nonetheless. Conditions seemed good but our runs didn't last as long as in other years. The graveyard shift was particularly lonely. Still have bad QRN, apologies to the stations we could not pull out of the muck.

K1TN - WI

Thanks to K6AQL for mobiling, the only mobile I worked that I know of. Not strong but good ears, OM. Conditions for me were way down from last year, on all bands. My only 10 Meter QSOs were in the first hour, on Saturday. On all bands the first tier stations were there with decent signals but there was a big lack of second tier signals. Maybe just a bad weekend for the Black Hole.

I wish this contest recognized CW-only entrants in some way. It might encourage CW activity and we sure need it. Maybe it's time to give even more extra points for CW contacts to encourage the SSB people to work some CW.

K5WAF – TX

“Another good CaQP -- sure wish I could have heard or seen a spot for Del Norte county.”

N5DO – TX

“Never heard Del Norte. It is interesting how each State QSO Party seems to take on its own personality. It has been five years since I was last in the CQP and I was immediately struck by the absence of mobiles. Many other QSO Parties (i.e. FL, KS, TX to name a few) have hordes of mobiles that roam from county to county. A participant waits for a mobile to get to a new county and then pounces on them. The ensuing pileup is fun for all. I suspect part of the reason that California has few mobiles is that it is one state that is able to get a significant number of home stations on in each county, plus the tradition of county expeditions to those counties that would be otherwise underrepresented.”

NM6E Portable San Francisco

Murhpy.... Murhpy.. Murphy.. Did I say Murphy?!

Next time bring more Ferrites when operating from a City lot!!!

Limited to going off air with the Giants game on and then the 49ers game on Sunday plus 5 hours trying to recover from other station issues/murphy..

Turned to be a super casual operation when I could get on without complaints.

On the Trail of Regens



National SW-5 Regen Receiver

We've shown the 'little brother' of this rig – the SW-3 in previous issues. This is the big brother – the SW-5 which came out first.

The National Co. started in business manufacturing toys and parts in 1914 (as the National Toy

Co. _ By the mid-twenties, National Co., Inc. had long ago dropped the "toy" from their name and was supplying parts for the Browning-Drake BC receiver kit and also started producing radio parts. Mechanical Engineer James Millen joined the company as General Manager and Chief Engineer in 1928. Millen was a Stevens Institute graduate and an enthusiastic ham so it was natural that he guided National into the ham/shortwave receiver market. This move happened to coincide with the new and developing shortwave broadcasting which was becoming popular with a new audience, the "shortwave listeners" or SWLs. National introduced the SW-5 "Thrill Box" in 1930.

The name "Thrill Box" implied how exciting it was for the SWLs to receive foreign broadcasts direct from around the world. Though primarily designed for the SWL, the SW-5 could also be found in many ham shacks in the early 1930s. It was an expensive receiver with selling prices usually over \$100 with the power supply. Robert Kruse, of the Pilot Wasp and Super Wasp fame, was involved in some of the design work in developing the SW-5 through his laboratory in Hartford, Connecticut

The circuit was a five tube receiver using a regenerative detector (24-A) with TRF stage (24-A,) audio driver (27) and P-P audio output (2-27.) The coil sets initially covered 1.5 to 30MC in five sets but eventually several other coil sets were added along with bandspread coil sets. The first coil sets were color coded for identification.

The receiver was powered by a separate power supply that provided the 2.5vac filament voltage and approximately 180vdc B+. The tuning dial was illuminated and projected onto a frosted viewing screen. The left hand control is the regeneration and the right hand control is an antenna trimmer adjustment. There was a battery version SW-5 available and some early SW-5 receivers were sold as kits.

Info courtesy <http://www.radioblvd.com/Pre-WWII%20Ham%20Gear.htm>

Here's a nice article of the times with schematic of the unit

<http://www.w1ujr.net/PDF%20Files/swr1930.pdf>

More pic/info here

http://www.w1ujr.net/national_sw-5.htm

Modern Radio Labs Transistor Regen?

Here's yet another regen 'discovered' on Ebay

This is apparently a kit furnished by Modern Radio Labs (MRL) with a one transistor regen design using a 2N324 transistor in a single device circuit. It had plug in coils and ran off a 9v battery. Either that, or someone took a MRL xtal set and added a few goodies to it! Comes with 3 coils – Broadcast band low, broadcast band high and 40m. Or maybe MRL in one of their newsletters had a 'modification'. New to me!



MRL One Transistor Regen

MRL supplied kit radios for many years via mail order from ads in magazines.

One of the kits made by Borden Radio in Houston, TX, , now sold for about \$60 from various sources on the web, showed up on Ebay. Someone bought it, built it, played with it for a few

hours, then put it up for sale including a pair of headphones. Good price so I added it to the collection.



'Armstrong One Tube Regen Set – BC band'

Peebles Retro 50s AC-100 kit

Another kit, that is offered for sale for \$70, is a re-make of a kit that was popular back in the 50s. It's sold by Peebles Kits. They sell a bunch of crystal radio kits and accessories for them, and three regen kits – a one tube, a two tube, and this 'retro kit'.



Peebles VC-100 Retro 1 tuber

This used a 3Q4 like many of the radios sold in the Boy Scout era of radios on a plain wood chassis. It's a clone of the original AC-100 set.

Here's their web page on it

<http://www.peeblesoriginals.com/catalog/images/po-ac100-big.jpg>

and you can download the whole manual from their site, too.

<http://www.peeblesoriginals.com/catalog/45.php>

Kalawao

Interesting article on Kalawao in the Daily Mail UK

Kalaupapa, the world's first leper colony, had a population of 1,200 patients at its height and has treated more than 8,000 sufferers since it opened in 1866.

Now it caters for just 17 and the future of the place they fondly call home is uncertain. They have chosen to speak out to coincide with the impending canonization later this month of Mother Marianne Cope, one of the many Catholic nuns who have ministered the settlement. The colony opened a year after Hawaii's King Kamehameha V brought in the Act to Prevent the Spread of Leprosy to enforce the exile of sufferers.

By 1873, when Father Damien, the only other Roman Catholic from the island to be made a saint, began working on Kalaupapa, about 600 patients had been shipped there. The population later reached a high of 1,200 in 1890 after Mother Marianne was overseeing her ministry.

But since the introduction of new medication in the 1940s, few patients were sent there and the quarantine was eventually lifted in 1969.

Patients were free to leave, but many didn't want to.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2214602/Inside-worlds-leper-colony-patients-dont-want-leave.html>

Peak Oil Update

It is with trepidation that independent petroleum geologist Jeffrey Brown has watched global oil exports decline since 2006. With all the controversy in the past several years over whether worldwide oil production can rise to quench the world's growing thirst for petroleum, almost no one thought to ask what was happening to the level of oil exports. And yet, each year a dwindling global pool of exports has been generating ever greater competition among importing nations and has become a largely unheralded force behind record high oil prices.

Even though the trend in oil exports has been evident in the data for some time, the analyst community was caught by surprise when a Citigroup report released earlier this month forecast an end to oil exports in 2030 from Saudi Arabia, currently the world's largest oil exporter.

Brown, as you might expect, wasn't surprised at all. His own forecasting model, which he calls the Export Land Model, has been predicting more or less the same thing for some time. He

doesn't think the Saudis will actually let exports to go all the way to zero because they'll probably want at least some revenue from exports. But "one to two million barrels per day of exports [from Saudi Arabia] between 2030 and 2040 will not be a big deal in the world," said Brown, who runs a joint venture exploration program based in Ft. Worth.

Brown estimates that worldwide net exports of petroleum liquids--a number that includes both crude oil and refined products such as gasoline and diesel--declined from 45.6 million barrels per day (mbpd) in 2006 to 43.7 mbpd in 2011. He uses the net exports number because importers such as the United States export some of the crude they import back into world markets in the form of refined products such as gasoline and diesel. Even so, the United States remains the world's largest net importer of petroleum products.

The decline in global net exports may seem small for now. But it is persistent and comes in the face of growing demand among the rapidly expanding economies of Asia, particularly China and India. And the trendlines, if they were to continue, would mean that China and India alone would consume all the world's available petroleum exports by around 2030. Something's bound to give before then, but it's not clear what.

Brown focuses on a key number which he calls cumulative net exports (CNE). It's the total expected volume of exports from oil-exporting countries over the entire period from now until global exports are presumed to drop to zero around 2060 based on the trajectory established in data from 2005 through 2011. Though the timetable is likely to change, when he looks at CNE alongside the current rate of decline for exports, it's clear that the world's remaining exports are "front-loaded." The largest portion will be delivered in the years immediately following the export peak.

"A rough, but fairly consistent rule of thumb is that half of post-peak CNE tend to be shipped about one-third of the way into the net export decline period, which suggests that post-2005 global CNE would be about half gone around the year 2024," he explained. It's why "we've experienced something close to business as usual" since the apparent export peak in 2006, he added. That tells him that the economic pain associated with the loss of global exports is likely to become very acute in the not-too-distant future.

If this happens, the world will be forced to adjust. But that adjustment is likely to be rather wrenching for some. Already, consumers in the United States, for instance, have actually partly accommodated rising demand in Asia by reducing U.S. consumption of oil products from 20.8 mbpd in 2005 to 18.8 mbpd in 2011. But the cutback has been largely a matter of necessity for those who have lost jobs or experienced wage cuts and for businesses which are struggling in a weak economy.

As Brown began to think about the export issue back in 2006, he made two observations which seem obvious once you hear them: First, if the economy of an oil-exporting country grows, that country typically will use more oil to support that growth. Second, once total production peaks

and starts to decline in an oil-exporting country, exports almost always decline much faster than total production. This is because exports are typically being squeezed from two sides. Production is falling making less oil available for exports, and consumption is rising with the same effect. (Declining net exports can also occur if domestic consumption is rising faster than production which is what happened in the United States, causing the country to become a net importer for the first time way back in 1948.)

The two observations above led Brown to develop what he dubbed the Export Land Model. It was a simple model that seemed to explain a lot. Here's how he set up his first case: Brown assumed that a hypothetical oil exporter--which he designated as Export Land--had reached its peak in oil production. He assumed that domestic users in Export Land consumed half of all the oil the country produced. He then assumed a 5 percent annual decline in the rate of oil production and a 2.5 percent annual increase in domestic consumption. The results astonished and troubled him. In just nine years oil exports from Export Land went to zero.

He then tried the model out on two real world examples, the United Kingdom and Indonesia. Both countries were consuming about 50 to 60 percent of their own oil production at the time their production peaked, close to Brown's hypothetical case. But the U.K. had a higher production decline rate, -7.8 percent per year and a very modest 0.2 percent annual growth in oil consumption. Indonesia had a lower production decline rate than the hypothetical case, -3.9 percent, but a higher yearly increase in domestic oil consumption, 4.1 percent. Despite these differences, the results were quite similar to the hypothetical case. From its 1997 peak in oil production, Indonesia's net exports took only seven years to fall to zero. From the U.K.'s oil production peak in 2000, it took only six years for net exports to approach zero.

After modelling these two real world examples, Brown and his colleague Sam Foucher began tracking petroleum exporting nations with more than 100,000 barrels per day of exports (based on 2005 data). These 33 countries represented 99 percent of the globe's net exports at the time. Strangely, no official energy agency calculates global net exports. So, Brown and Foucher have had to compile data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the statistical arm of the U.S. Department of Energy, and the BP Statistical Review of World Energy, a widely cited annual survey produced by oil giant BP. By the end of last year, six of the original 33 countries--the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Egypt, Vietnam, Malaysia and Argentina--had dropped off the list. Of those only Egypt had any exports at all, about 26,000 barrels per day. The rest of the countries had become net importers.

"We're losing one major exporter per year," Brown said. He expects that rate of loss to continue. He added that as a group, oil production in the 33 countries he tracks has hit a plateau, bouncing between 61 and 63 million barrels per day since 2005. If total production from exporting nations starts to fall, look for an acceleration in the decline of net exports. (Total worldwide oil production also appears to have been on a bumpy plateau since 2005.)

Brown said importers around the world are already being forced to respond to an ongoing decline in net exports. "We are on our way to energy independence," he joked. "Just not in the way that we expected." The United States and other developed countries are now being outbid by the developing world for oil and ending up with a declining share of a declining supply of exports. "While the recent rise in U.S. production will help, it will not save us," he added. That's because the rise is too modest to put much of a dent in imports which have declined primarily because Americans have simply cut back their consumption of gasoline and other petroleum products.

Source: Oil Drum

Even more Late KS reports

More late reports

NU0Q Mobile

Karen and I arranged our vacation to end in Kansas so we could be mobile in the KSQP. We usually try to add some sightseeing along the route, but since we had just seen the world's largest ball of twine in Cawker City and the new public toilet at Bowl Plaza in Lucas (Google it!) the day before, we were more focused on trying to stick to our schedule. We actually made it to a few bonus counties that we didn't have on our schedule. Our trip during the QSO party took us to a wind farm under construction, a wildlife preserve known for migrating birds (but not in August!), the "post rock country" (nothing to do with music), and the hills (a relative term in Kansas) of the northeast corner of the state. After the contest, we stopped to see the Davis monument in the cemetery in Brown County before heading north, crossing the old bridge at Rulo, Nebraska. We made it home to Iowa that night, ending our two week vacation.

About three hours into the contest, we stopped for lunch in Pratt. We planned to stop at the Subway for lunch, but couldn't find it because it was in the NAPA auto parts store! So we found another fast food place and I left the computer running in the car. Unfortunately, it went into sleep mode, and I couldn't get the computer to talk to the CW keyer after that. We wasted over

an hour trying to fix it, but ended up using paddles and the memory keyer for the remainder of the contest. Otherwise, no rig or car problems.

I had hoped to be able to spell KANSAS or SUNFLOWER, but just missed on both counts. I figured I would need to be on SSB some to do it, and I thought I should try to be on SSB more anyway for the folks that don't like to do CW. But the pileups were so good on CW, especially on Sunday, that I rarely got a chance to go to SSB. I want to thank the fixed 1x1 stations that found me on CW. There were other 1x1 stations, both SSB and CW, that I could hear really well, but couldn't manage to work. Next time, I should either stick with CW only or plan to spend more time in each county.

I don't think we will be able to go mobile every year in the KQP, but I hope to be able to do it all again soon. I hope people got some new counties.

Peak Oil Update II

From ASPO – News Release

Neither Presidential Candidate Shows Grasp of America's Oil Predicament

The Association for the Study of Peak Oil & Gas USA (ASPO-USA) expressed concern that neither candidate for the U.S. presidency demonstrates a clear understanding of the realities and risks facing U.S. oil supply. In the first presidential debate on Wednesday night, President Obama and Governor Romney fed the misconception that America can drill its way to energy independence, when such a scenario is both unlikely and unwise, according to ASPO-USA.

U.S. Oil Consumption Is Three Times Domestic Production

In 2011, the U.S. economy used nearly 19 million barrels of oil per day (mbd) while U.S. oil production reached approximately six (6) mbd, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA). “Recent increases in U.S. oil production—reversing a downward trend from peak production in 1970 of roughly 10 mbd—may mitigate risks slightly, but at current levels of consumption, domestic drilling is unlikely to meet America’s needs anytime soon,” said ASPO-USA executive director Jan Lars Mueller.

America Remains Dependent on Imported Oil and Vulnerable to an Oil Crisis

“Unless we dramatically reduce our oil use, the United States will continue to rely on imported oil,” Mueller added, “but we are increasingly competing for oil exports with emerging countries like China and India.” According to analysis by independent geologist and ASPO-USA vice-president Jeffrey Brown, China and India alone would consume all available net exports within the span of two decades, if current trends continue. These trends raise serious concerns about the immediate risks of a global oil supply crisis.

Since President Nixon, U.S. presidents and presidential candidates have decried America’s dependence on imported oil. In that time the United States has only become more dependent on foreign oil, with periodic pauses in a downward trend for U.S. production. Failure to address the issue at a scale that is meaningful is, perhaps, due to a fundamental misunderstanding of the problem. “Government and industry simply tell us ‘don’t worry, technology will save the day’,” said Jim Baldauf, ASPO-USA President and Co-founder

MARAC Awards

Doug, WA4UNS, posted on the K3IMC forum regarding paperless LC awards:

“We recently lost that ability due to decisions at MARAC. We've also just recently lost the tradition of PAPER awards for our brag books (that's my three ring binders holder these awards that show MY accomplishments when folks visit MY shack). I can understand and appreciate the work load on the Awards Manager... but it's that little thing that MARAC seems intent, for whatever reason, to start taking away from the members.

One last note on our recent "loss of paper". Is it too much to ask that a .PDF copy of the award be sent to the recipient that HE/SHE can print out??

- - - - -

In case you didn't notice, MARAC no longer issues paper certificates (and those seals) for Last Counties. You won't be getting an envelop at the end of the month listing your newly received last counties given by others.

Now, if you go to the County Hunter Database, off the MARAC home page, you will see a new column for 'Last Counties'. If you type in your call, you can see any new LC's issued to you

and from whom.

AS of 10/6/2012, if you were to type in N9STL and hit go, you would see the last LC she received was number 120 from W8TZA for Benton IN. If you type in N4AAT, you'll see the last one issued to him , #989, was from N4CD for Unicoi TN for Mobile Diamond.

I don't know how the folks who aren't on the computer are ever going to know what they got in terms of LC's. I suspect MARAC still sends out paper copies of the RoadRunner to folks since they aren't on the web. And if you give a LC to a non-county hunter, you need to remember to check the \$3 box for a paper LC. Or someone who isn't on the web. Then again, I don't have a clue as to who does not have a computer at home. So if a county hunter goes mobile, gets you a LC, if he/she has no computer, he/she will never know?

Now, since they save money on postage.....they have dropped the cost of an LC by 50c to \$1.50. But for a paper one, it is now 3 bucks.

Here's what KE3VV wrote in the September RoadRunner in case you missed it. I don't recall seeing it mailed out and getting here, but maybe my inbox was filled with other things or I was off traveling. I checked – it never came. Same for October issue. I'm sure it never came in the mail.

KE3VV:

“The big change is converting the LC-1 “Last County in a State” award to paperless... well not totally paperless because you can still order a paper certificate for \$3.00 if you want to send one. That will be nice for the first one for a new county hunter or a non-county hunter who gives you an LC. The last counties reported to the Awards Manager will be posted on the MARAC website in the database and the recipient will be notified by email. The fee for the paperless award has been reduced to \$1.50. We may consider reducing this fee a bit more (at least for MARAC members) in the future. I am a bit sad to see the end of those happy little blue-red-gold stickers. It was fun seeing if I could get them stuck on the certificate without covering up some of the wording. Ah, Progress!”

You still will get a 'car' for 25 last counties to put on your wall, and for 50. Bigger multiples get you a plaque with 'bars' for each additional 25 counties. At 1000, you get a giant MARAC trophy award. (and Scottie is 11 away from that level! Go Scottie go!)....

On the Road with N4CD III

The Bell County Hamfest comes up twice a year. It's really just a big swap meet with nothing else going on. From my QTH, it's about 160 miles of driving to get there. Friday afternoon was balmy – 80 degrees in Collin County and it was shorts and tee-shirt weather all day. The route is all the same 'boring interstate counties' headed down, but I put them out for the folks. Jeff, W9MSE is starting over and needs everything along with W8TZA, and some are now chasing stars for Star XX award. The bands were in decent shape.

Larry, W7FEN was trekking toward the west and Bill, K2HVN was in NE and KS. The SSB on 40 and 20m was full of mobiles seeming going to a spot in SC for a get together. I stayed on cw and not as much activity there. No waiting time, either.

The swap meet starts outside whenever folks get there, which is early on Friday. There was some real junk and some real 'stuff' for sale. A few folks took about two tons of stuff from the storage locker at Houston Amateur Radio - it was at least 200 radio carcasses – as best as I could describe it. There were FT-101 Es and Kenwoods of all sorts and Yaesus.....the radio chassis stripped of some parts, but 95% there. This was a graveyard of dead radios, without cabinets. They had been used as 'donor radios' to fix others. A whole 20 foot long open trailer full of them, thrown in all together. Wow. If you needed spare parts from front panels complete, meters, knobs, boards, filters, it was the place to be. I didn't need anything and let the others scrounge and scrounge they did. I didn't see any mobile radio type units like TS-50s, IC 706s in there – but maybe they had been 'claimed' already.

I wandered around for a few hours in the 90 degree, humid weather with a good strong south breeze and lots of sun. Shorts and tee-shirt weather for sure. Probably got a bit sunburned. The weather was going to change. The only 'county hunter' I ran into there was K5AX, who sometimes shows up on the CW CH nets and was in the Texas QSO party. He's been busy and not on too much lately. Don't know where any County Hunters were – not hamfest type people for the most part other than Dayton, and Orlando FL and maybe Hamcom in Plano, TX.

I headed back to the Motel 6 (\$35 including tax) after a quick dinner and was worn out from 3 hours of wandering around, digging through junk boxes. I did buy a nice 4 position Alpha Delta antenna switch, 'never used' for \$20. A steal. Oh, and found a solid state replacement for a 5U4/5Y3 type rectifier tube for a few bucks. That was about it on Friday. It was still 85 deg at 9pm, and I had the a/c on in the motel room.

On Saturday morning the weather front had moved through. It was 60 degrees out there with a north wind and long sleeves and long pants weather. No sun, either but that didn't stop the outside flea market. Heck, I got there at 6:30 am and folks were wandering around an hour

before sunrise - with flashlights in hand. I found a few \$1 items to buy, wandered around the inside again when it opened at 7 am, , spend another \$2, went back outside and found a nice 1920s one tube homemade Broadcast set for \$20. It tugged at my heart – good for parts if nothing else.....but probably would work. It followed me home. (Regen of course, like the first sets were for the most part). By 9 am I had seen everything twice. Lots of good stuff for sale was including Heathkits, Gonsets, some nice Collins at high prices, National, old 2m radios of all types, antennas, parts and pieces, new radios, wire of all sorts, connectors. Maybe there were 70 tables inside and 50 cars outside.

There was one unusual item you don't see. Do you recognize it?



Emtron DX-2sp

It's an Emtron DX-2sp 1.5KW output amplifier made in Australia. It was brought back by an airline pilot (now SK) who was friends with the owner of the company that made these. It was part of his estate and up for sale. Used a Russian tube similar to a 4CX2500. \$2500 but it had one minor issue with the cooling fan assembly. (Over \$5000 new).

As I headed north after the hamfest , it dropped 1 degree every 15 miles until it was 51 degrees in Collin County with no sun and a real dreary 'November' type day. Should be back to normal by Friday, but Mother Nature is letting us know that winter is around the country as it snows in CO, WY and MN and the middle of the country drops to the 30s and 40s. Going to be chilly tonight here with low of 40....time to see if the heat is going to work! That darn global warming – Saturday set a record for all time 'low daily high temperature'. Broke the record by a degree. Brrr. I'm not ready for winter yet.

On the way back I ran the counties on 20/30 and 40m cw. The CQP started at 1600Z and I was home just after that time to try to fill in the missing counties in my log book.

Not much else to report. Gas \$3.49/gal here at the moment.

PA QSO Party

There were mobiles to chase around and a good number of fixed stations to work. You could fill in a lot of the state. As usual with east coast QSO parties, a lot of the contacts were on 40 and 80m and if you weren't within range, you missed out. Some stations never made it up to 20M the whole contest.

from the 3830 reflector

N2CU mobile

I activated 7 counties this year on a Sunday only operation. Very disappointed with conditions as 20m seemed dead most every time I checked. Worked only one DX, DL3GA. The new homebrew center loaded vertical on the roof did a great job but changing bands was tedious as it is manually tuned with a slider on the coil. I'll fix that before next weekend in the NYQP.

Two hours before contest end I was asked (again) by Keith, WA3HAE, when I was going to be in Warren. I said later and when I checked my GPS it said it will take two hours to get there. I was in Jefferson at the time so I skipped my next two counties and hightailed it to Warren. Made it in time to get 45 minutes in. And I did work WA3HAE.

About 400 miles driving, not enough operating but plenty of fun.

K8MR mobile

I've done the PaQP every year since 2000 as a mobile, either as K8MR/M or W3USA/M. This year, however, I helped my daughter moved into her new home in Montclair, NJ, so I wasn't able to recruit a driver or otherwise spend the weekend playing radio. However, I did arrange to do the drive home on Sunday,

and play around in the PaQP on the way.

Since I do not want to operate while I drive, a Rover operation was the choice. To be able to quickly put up an antenna at my stops, I came up with the "33 Foot HamStick" on 40 meters. Simply, this is a 33 foot piece of wire, attached to the magmount that I normally use for mobile antennas. I used the 20 meter HamStick to hold the 40 meter wire, so I had a two band antenna available.

I had hoped to also have 15 meters available, but ran into problems on Saturday. I decided to test things on 40 from NJ, and had several easy CW qsos when while working N3KR, he asked for a repeat, I noticed a very high SWR, and signals were there but weaker. I never completed the qso, but discovered that the ground connection in the mobile mount had given up the ghost from corrosion. In addition the center conductor path was showing about 15 ohms of resistance. The mount was not field repairable, so I swapped the other mount to use for 40/20.

The 40 meter wire worked great. I could generate pileups and hold frequencies, not something one does on 40 with a mobile antenna. It took maybe five minutes to put up, and a couple minutes to take down. I had 40 meter SSB Last-10 qso rates above 250/hour in several counties, and over 200 on CW for a while from CRN.

I believe I worked 61 counties, missing ARM, CRN, GRE, UNI, WAR, and WYO. Out of state activity/conditions were down, only 38 sections in including EPA/WPA.

I operated from rest areas on I-80 in COL, MTR, and CLI. NUM was at the Milton State Park (in the middle of the Susquehanna River at Milton), in UNI up the hill from exit 199 (a very out of the way road that had about as much horse traffic as motor vehicles) and the Wykoff Run parking area in CRN. With mostly clear weather the fall leaves were again a highlight of the PaQP.

As always, it was a fun weekend. With my daughter now living a hour from the eastern side of PA (and me a hour away on the west), I will have new possibilities for future years.

W3NO rover

Running a rover operation from eight counties is work! We did have some problems. We lost one tube in the amp the first day so didn't have a full KW. But we were still plenty loud and had real big pile ups. We were taking down

antennas in McKean about 10PM and turned on the car headlights to help see. The car wasn't running and as a result, it ran down the battery and wouldn't start.

We were about a mile back a dirt road and hadn't seen one car in the three hours we were there. We had cell coverage but couldn't find a tow truck to come help us. Finally called 911 and they sent the local volunteer fire department out to give us a jump. I was able to give them the GPS coordinates so they were able to find us. So we lost two hours of operating, and missed two counties on 75/80, which would have been about 150 more Q's. Overall, we only missed three PA counties and 16 ARRL sections. One of the counties we missed was Forest where we had spent two hours giving out 171 contacts.

WI2E – Northampton

I never expected that I would end up with more QSOs on phone than CW. I think this is the first time that's ever happened for me in a multi-mode contest.

Obviously, the high bands were challenging, and my relatively low inverted V picked up a good deal of local noise at my suburban location. I normally don't run high power, and it was frustrating to know that there were many signals momentarily emerging from that noise that I knew could hear me but that I couldn't work.

The other challenge arose when my 40M dipole failed (for lack of a better description), but thankfully that happened with only an hour to go; the vertical wasn't nearly as effective.

That said, this was a really good time. Rates were much higher than I was anticipating, and it was great to work so many stations on multiple bands and modes. Thanks to everyone for all of the QSOs and to the folks at the Nittany ARC for sponsoring the event.

K3PP fixed Carbon PA

LOWS:

Conditions were awful on the high bands. My usual tactic of running Europeans on the high bands never really materialized. There goes about 300 QSOs. The trick to doing well in the PA QSO Party is to do as much CW as possible. The giant scores are always heavily biased to CW. I tried more CW, but I'm pretty slow. My apologies to those who had to tolerate my low rate and frequent

repeats. My new 75m dipole is too close to the house. The RF flooded the shack and kept locking up the computer, so I had to turn the power way down and suffered there.

HIGHS:

This is still the VERY BEST contest of them all! My fellow contestants are friendly (and friends!)! Despite my CW woes, I felt I did much better this time. With more time to work on my skills, I'll be there soon. My station worked well and put out a generally loud signal! I was afraid nobody would get the county sweep, but those mobiles and rovers saved the day for a bunch of us! I made the sweep, with KA3EEO in SUS at 1915z Sunday for my final one!! I got 10 QSOs with the W3SC bonus station, FOUR on 2 meter FM! W3SC/M drove thru LEH, NHA, CAR, and then SCH, all within earshot of my QTH! I LOVE THIS STUFF AND I LOVE ALL OF YOU WHO MAKE THIS SUCH A WONDERFUL EVENT!!

N4PN – GA

THANKS TO NARC FOR GREAT ACTIVITY AGAIN THIS YEAR..THE MOBILES INCLUDING K8RYU, K8MR, W3CG, N2CU, W3EC, K3YTL, W3NO and OTHERS SURE KEPT THE OLE BIC....THANKS TO OLE PAL, JIM, K8MR, FOR MAKING HIS WAY BACK HOME FROM NEW JERSEY THRU PENNA...AND GIVING ME THE LAST TWO...UNI AND NUM..

On the Road with N4CD IV

There was a 'boatanchor' auction up near Little Rock AR which was a good excuse to go mobile once again for a day or two. ("Boatanchors" refers to HEAVY old radio equipment – military or old ham stuff that weighs 30, 40, 50 and more pounds for a receiver and maybe 80 or 120 lbs or more for a transmitter). It's what many modern hams in the solid state era of 8 or 10 lb radios would use as scrap, a door stop, or throw overboard. Jim Sargent, the auctioneer, had another big sale of items scheduled. He does a lot of the vintage radio/old phonograph auctions and knows his stuff. Therefore, it would be worth heading up that way for a day auction near Little Rock. Joyce, N9STL, needed some in AR I could get and others had listed needs.

The car was packed with an overnight bag, and I'd hit a few off the interstate counties in AR to help fill in a few counties for the folks. It was up the interstate toward AR, then off at Rt 8 up into Little River, AR and continuing up north on AR route 41 through Sevier, then across on route 70 through Montgomery, Howard, Pike, and Garland eventually arriving in Saline, AR where the auction would be held. Conditions were so-so with a few DX stations in the log mostly on 17M. Barry, N0KV was out in HI on the 'Big Island' and I managed to snag him 559 on 17M on Hawaii with good signals. The SSB net was going full blast with several mobiles returning from long trips to South Carolina, but only N4JT ran on CW. Bill, K2HVN, and Ed, N3HOO were running on CW, along with N0KV. Otherwise, it was fairly quiet.

The preview for the auction was held on Friday afternoon/evening. There would be 300 items up for sale, with about half of them military radios from the 40s and 50s. Some would already have phone in bids as they were unusual or a bit scare. Most of the items were in decent condition, but not restored. Most had all the knobs, the meters were intact, they were in cases (not rack mount type). Some had been stored in a storage building for a long time. The fellow who collected all of them was a retired military Lt. Colonel, who then went on to get his MD and practiced medicine for 30 years before retiring. He had plans to set up a museum of 'radio history' and collected over 300 radios.

They went from lots of military units – most decent communications receivers like the RBC, ANSSR-11, 12, 13 (19 plus tube 1950s HF receivers), a Hallicrafters HT-4 transmitter, and lots of stuff I wasn't familiar with, and didn't have the least interest in hauling home. There must have been five tons of military radios there, but nearly all of them sold, some for \$150 and up. The RBC receiver was used on ships – it was a 4-27 MHz receiver, often called 'an engineers dream' since it had every bell and whistle of the day. It cost the taxpayer \$2400 a copy in 1942 during WW2. They are now used for restoration, and the units sold at his auction were headed to the Battleship Texas. Each weighs 82 pounds! The Houston ARC is deeply involved in trying to restore the radio room to WW2 operating status. They bought 15 items at the auction the next day to restore the radio room, and it appears from the serial numbers that some of this equipment was actually in service ON the battleship at one time! Along with the RBC, most ships had the RBB receiver, which was the VLF companion receiver covering 170 KHz up to 4 MHz.

Oh...and that 82 pounds for the RBC receiver doesn't include the power supply!



RBC Receiver – 82 lbs of boatanchor

After the preview, I headed back to the Super 8 motel in Bryant, AR, with a quick detour to the Cracker Barrel for a country ham dinner. It was nice warm weather – shorts and tee shirt and I had the windows open all night. In the morning it was back over to the auction. You could have used a truck and/or trailer if you wanted to load up on stuff. A whole pallet of 1/2 inch and 5/8 inch hardline, maybe 30 pieces of 50 foot or more, with connectors, sold for \$20. Very few had a way to get it home. You could have sold it for \$50/piece at a hamfest to a VHFer. It probably had \$200 of scrap copper in it, too. There was a whole pallet of WW2 test meters – went for \$10 for the whole pallet, but you had to haul it all away and take all of it!

Then it was on to the better stuff, with maybe 20 national receivers of every type from NC-240-Ds to 183s, to Hallicrafters – maybe 20 of them from all the S-38 models up to SX-62, 101s, etc, (no Collins radios). There were a dozen Heathkits from SB-101s, SB-104s, SB-303s, HW-1680, 1681, the SB-500 digital display, some station monitors (scopes), one Galaxy transceiver, at least a dozen Swan transceivers from 350s to 500s, to remote VFOs, several EICOs, and lots of nostalgia from the 1950s, and 60s. Two HP-23 power supplies, one HP-20 for the older rigs. I broke down and bought a few things. One Knight Kit – a T-60, my first novice transmitter, was of interest but it went up too high so I didn't buy it. It was a crystal controlled sixty watt input rig. Had fun with it – and upgraded to the big brother when I got my general license and could use a VFO. Ah, nostalgia – it can get expensive at an auction.

There was a Johnson Invader (heavy) that sold for \$10, and a Johnson Adventurer – little

novice rig - \$20. One regen receiver – a Knight Space Spanner in a wood cabinet - \$20. Many of the big national receivers went for \$10-40. If you had the room, you could have loaded up on vintage radios by the dozens. Fortunately, I resisted the tugs but the car did fill up with 'stuff'. There was a Johnson Mobile TX (sold \$10), some Heathkit early mobile stuff including Cheyenne mobile SSB transceiver, the matching receiver., two Mult-Elmac AF-67 Transceters (\$10 for both of them). Whew! Stuff that costs hundreds of dollars back in the 1950s and 60s, and you could buy it cheap – if you wanted it! There were about 30 folks at the auction, although maybe 40 of the 300 items already had bids on them from call in bidders.

Well, after spending a few bucks, I loaded the stuff into the car and headed back home at 3pm trying to beat the weather front moving through. No problem, and home by 8pm. The band conditions on the way home were miserable!. I worked 20 PA QSO Party stations, and two in the AZ QP. Where were the AQP stations? I tuned and listened for a couple hours and heard only 2 the whole trip home. There were a few mobiles in the PA QP to chase plus working the loud fixed stations. After dark, I just concentrated on cruising on home the last 2 hours or so. Sure enough, 1 am the front moves through and there's a solid hour of lightning flashing and nasty storms – missed me but sure was enough to keep you totally awake for an hour. OK got clobbered, and a few areas around the Metroplex had power failures with the high winds and lightning strikes. Fine at my QTH. It was headed to AR.

Now to play with a few things brought home. One that found it's way here was a Pee Wee transmitter made by the Chicago Transformer company – a 25 watt xtal controlled transmitter advertised in 1939 in the Radio Shack (of New England) on line catalog, pg 37. Here's a pic of it. There's not much information on the web about it – none I've found so far, but I haven't done too much digging. Got it for \$10, the minimum bid.



Pee Wee transmitter 25w 'as found'

Come with the original dirt from years and years of storage. Note the capacitor- oozing white crud. What do you think would happen if you plugged this in? (more than smoke likely!). Remember the article last month? Those old electrolytics are 'toast' after 70 years. This covered five bands – 160, 80, 40, 20, and 10M (no 15m back in 1939). Note the genuine covering of vintage dirt and crud on it.

Cleaned it up a bit – looks like it's an 80 rectifier and 6L6 single tube transmitter. Has a power transformer and there's a choke underneath with a replacement for the obviously leaking cap on top. Link coupled output – 100 ma meter to tune with. A new type 80 rectifier tube will set you back 15 or 20 bucks these days! (or replace it with two 15c silicon rectifier diodes and a dropping resistor).

If you want to peruse the 1939 catalog, go here

http://www.radioshackcatalogs.com/catalog_directory.html

Pick 1939 for a trip to the 'way back' years!

After a few days, cleaned the dirt off the Peewee, and noticed someone had put a new filter cap underneath – but who knows how old that is? Someday I'll check it out. Now it is a show piece or something for trade for a regen goodie I don't have.

Battleship Texas Tours

Step aboard the USS Texas, and follow the flashlight's beam into history. Down plunging stairways, through silent corridors dark as midnight, past lifeless steam engines and a sepulchral radio room, Paul S. McCann, U.S. Navy, retired, leads the way. This is the old battleship's tour of tours, and what it reveals only a few have seen.

"When the Texas was commissioned," says McCann, "it was the most powerful ship on the face of the planet. It fought for our freedoms. It was slated to be decommissioned three times, and each time it got a new lease on life. It's the last dreadnought-style ship we have, and it should be preserved."

On this mild fall afternoon, McCann, the Battleship Texas Foundation's director of overnight education programs, is leading a preview "hard hat" tour of the vessel's rarely seen lower decks. Beginning Oct. 20, First Texas Volunteers, a foundation-related group that works to restore the vessel, will launch a series of extended tours open to the public.

Stops will include areas in which ammunition was stored and readied for transport to the Texas' 5- and 14-inch guns, the boiler room for the ship's twin, four-cylinder steam engines, the pilot house, the No. 1 turret and other areas normally off limits to battleship visitors.

The three-hour tours will mark the first time since this summer's series of debilitating leaks that these remote areas will be accessible to the public. Starting next spring, the ship, managed by the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, will undergo about \$29 million in repairs, primarily to replace rusted internal structures.

Plans to display the vessel in dry berth have been put on hold until sufficient money is raised. The battleship foundation is poised to begin a campaign to raise the \$30 to \$50 million needed for such an exhibit.

Source: Houston Chronicle

More info on the 'hart hat tours ' here – reservations are required

<http://www.usstexasbb35.com/hard-hat-tours.htm>

Wiki on the Battleship Texas – all the history – pics, etc

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Texas_%28BB-35%29

Arizona QSO Party

Was there a AQP this year? Wow...I listened for two whole days on cw and heard exactly one station on cw – on 20M – K7A, and one on 40M in rare Maricopa. I saw and worked a few on SSB but they were very scarce! It's like AZ went on strike from what is usually a good QSO party! I heard more AZ stations working PA stations than I heard calling CQ....and that was only a few more.

from the 3830 contest reflector

W7PP Mobile (SSB only)

This was my first ever contest in a mobile! I had intended to work from all 15 counties but a mechanical problem stooped us... I couldn't winch my butt out of bed on Sunday morning! All together we logged 1144 miles and worked from 12 counties. Best spot seems to be at the NVO/APH county line. Lots of county hunters needed that one! Our best (and only) DX was from a KG4! Not bad for a 100 watt mobile. The rig was an Icom 7000 with a bumper hitch mounted Texas Bugcatcher. Next year we just might do it again!

AE7VA – SSB – Pinal AZ

Operated mostly on Saturday. Six hours for 47 Qs is a wrist slitting adventure. Fifteen minutes to a full hour between Qs was the norm. Tried working all bands to see if I could generate anything. I resorted to working Special Event Stations, PAQP, and some DX just to put something in the log. The lack of response was unusual and I don't think it was propagation. Other operators were giving me excellent signal reports and excellent audio reports across central and eastern U.S. Heck, I worked a vehicle mobile station in Virginia on 10m with no difficulty.

Tried operating 40m and 20m Sunday morning. After an hour of calling and not generating a single Q, I decided to call it quits. However, I did pick up two PAQP stations, one on 20m the other on 10m just 5 minutes apart around 1530Z and both were loud and clear.

The highlight of my weekend was picking up a new DXCC entity for me, Iceland. I easily worked not just one, but two Iceland stations about 30 minutes apart on 20m.

KK7AC – Pima AZ - SSB

Worked some guy in Tennessee. I think I already worked him a few weeks ago in the TnQSOP? He said he did not need Pima for USACA, but liked and remembered my callsign. I'm glad to give him Pima and put a smile on his face for the QP.....I think? It took about 2 minutes to exchange, but we got it! Ya! I

logged an RST of 5/5 so I will be ready if he sends a card. Called again for about 15 minutes with no answer. One guy just QRM'ed me with a CW carrier. Maybe a jealous PA guy? I hope to double my score next year. 15 minutes and one point is just to short to put in a real effort ya know?. I hope conditions are better then. Now on to a beer and the Cardinals in the NLCS!!! I love October baseball -and beer too!! Is Pima AZPMA or AZPIM?? I better check that before I submit.....73 and 88 for now -KK7AC

WK7S – Yuma AZ - K6LL operator

Just a casual, part-time, Sunday-only operation here. The 260 SSB QSO's were in two hours on 10 meters.

N2WN – TN – fixed

Thanks to K3RN, W0PAN and W7QNG for multiples and county line operations. Worked a couple guys who were not in the contest and trying to explain the significant year option was interesting to them, but not like saying "you're my number 1". I logged them but used 0000 as the date FWIW.

The Giant Green Jobs Failure

So far, 36 companies that have received federal support from taxpayers have either gone bankrupt or are laying off workers and are heading for bankruptcy. This list includes only those companies that received federal money from the Obama Administration's Department of Energy. The amount of money indicated does not reflect how much was actually received or spent but how much was offered. The amount also does not include other state, local, and federal tax credits and subsidies, which push the amount of money these companies have received from taxpayers even higher.

The complete list of faltering or bankrupt green-energy companies:

1. Evergreen Solar (\$24 million)*
2. SpectraWatt (\$500,000)*
3. Solyndra (\$535 million)*
4. Beacon Power (\$69 million)*
5. AES's subsidiary Eastern Energy (\$17.1 million)
6. Nevada Geothermal (\$98.5 million)

7. SunPower (\$1.5 billion)
8. First Solar (\$1.46 billion)
9. Babcock and Brown (\$178 million)
10. EnerDel's subsidiary Ener1 (\$118.5 million)*
11. Amonix (\$5.9 million)
12. National Renewable Energy Lab (\$200 million)
13. Fisker Automotive (\$528 million)
14. Abound Solar (\$374 million)*
15. A123 Systems (\$279 million)*
16. Willard and Kelsey Solar Group (\$6 million)
17. Johnson Controls (\$299 million)
18. Schneider Electric (\$86 million)
19. Brightsource (\$1.6 billion)
20. ECOtality (\$126.2 million)
21. Raser Technologies (\$33 million)*
22. Energy Conversion Devices (\$13.3 million)*
23. Mountain Plaza, Inc. (\$2 million)*
24. Olsen's Crop Service and Olsen's Mills Acquisition Company (\$10 million)*
25. Range Fuels (\$80 million)*
26. Thompson River Power (\$6.4 million)*
27. Stirling Energy Systems (\$7 million)*
28. LSP Energy (\$2.1 billion)*
29. UniSolar (\$100 million)*
30. Azure Dynamics (\$120 million)*
31. GreenVolts (\$500,000)
32. Vestas (\$50 million)
33. LG Chem's subsidiary Compact Power (\$150 million)
34. Nordic Windpower (\$16 million)*
35. Navistar (\$10 million)
36. Satcon (\$3 million)*

*Denotes companies that have filed for bankruptcy.

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/10/18/president-obamas-taxpayer-backed-green-energy-failures/>

- - - - -

And some want 4 more years of distributing cash to politically connected buddies, who clean up themselves, but cost the taxpayer trillions? Other than funding research, to the tune of a few million here and there, the government has NO BUSINESS being in the 'picking losers' venture capital business. Got it Obama? Time to send a message to DC!

The Giant Green Jobs failure is Obama himself!

IOWA QSO Party

Wowie! A good one with 4 or 5 mobiles out there. The good news is they put out a lot of counties. The bad news is they seemed to duplicate a lot of counties for some reason! Still a great day for picking up IOWA counties! Conditions were good and the mobiles were busy.

WI0WA was a multi-op mobile with N0AC N0XR

W0ZQ Mobile

It was a nice day to be out and about in Iowa and playing radio. Many thanks for all the Q's and to the sponsor for this fun event. Most worked stations were:

KV8Q 15
WB0TEV 14
K5WAF 14
N4VV 12
NN9K12
W4ANT 12
OM2VL 12
KS4X 11
W0EAR 11
WA9LTA 11

KV8Q – OH

I decided to play in two state QSO parties at the same time, New York and Iowa. I had a ton of fun and picked up some needed counties in both states. In the Iowa side of the log, I had 95 Q's with 50 counties. I really enjoyed chasing the mobiles around, as usual.

Hat's off to:

K0PC - 27 Q's
K0DAS - 16 Q's
W0ZQ 15 Q's
NU0Q - 11 Q's
WI0WA - 10 Q's
W0GXA - 8 Q's (Even tho Bob was sick all week)
K9IUA - 3 Q's

Your Money at Work

Factory has yet to ship out a single battery

HOLLAND, Mich. (WOOD) - Workers at LG Chem, a \$300 million lithium-ion battery plant heavily funded by taxpayers, tell Target 8 that they have so little work to do that they spend hours playing cards and board games, reading magazines or watching movies.

They say it's been going on for months.

"There would be up to 40 of us that would just sit in there during the day," said former LG Chem employee Nicole Merryman, who said she quit in May.

"We were given assignments to go outside and clean; if we weren't cleaning outside, we were cleaning inside. If there was nothing for us to do, we would study in the cafeteria, or we would sit and play cards, sit and read magazines," said Merryman. "It's really sad that all these people are sitting there and doing nothing, and it's basically on taxpayer money."

Two current employees told Target 8 that the game-playing continues because, as much as they want to work, they still have nothing to do.

"There's a whole bunch of people, a whole bunch," filling their time with card games and board

games," one of those current employees said.

"There's no work, no work at all. Zero work," another current employee said. "It is what it is. What do you do when there's no work?"

The plant all started with such great hope, and a presidential groundbreaking in July 2010.

"This is a symbol of where Michigan is going, this is a symbol of where Holland is going, and this is a symbol of where America's going," Pres. Barack Obama told a crowd at the groundbreaking.

Nicole Merryman was among the first in line for a job.

"It was something exciting, and I thought it would be better for the family, more overtime, more money," said Merryman, who said she worked on a line that folded the battery cells.

The company's goal: 300 employees pumping out 15 million battery cells a year. Its biggest customer: The Chevrolet Volt.

The U.S. Department of Energy provided a \$151 million grant, part of Obama's Recovery Act.

The Korea-based company recently said it has 200 employees, and the company's most recent federal filing shows 100 of them are funded through the Recovery Act grant.

The company has spent \$133 million so far, most for construction and equipment, records show. About 40% has gone to foreign companies -- mostly to Korea, a Target 8 analysis shows.

A Target 8 analysis of federal records shows taxpayers spent \$7 million to train workers and have paid more than \$700,000 for workers' health and dental insurance.

There's millions of dollars more at stake for LG Chem if it doesn't keep hiring, or if its job numbers fall. The state approved a \$25.2 million job-creation state tax credit over 15 years, and a battery cell state tax credit worth \$100 million over 4 years. Both are tied to job creation.

LG Chem has yet to file claims for that money, state officials said.

The City of Holland created a Renewable Energy Renaissance Zone, allowing LG Chem to operate free of property taxes for 15 years -- if it reaches 300 employees within 5 years. That's another \$48.5 million.

The city expected the plant's payroll to pump \$270 million into the local economy over 15 years, and to create up to 1,500 spin-off

Source: http://www.woodtv.com/dpp/news/target_8/Volt-no-jolt-LG-Chem-employees-idle

- - - - -

I wonder if Obama still counts these folks as part of his ONE MILLION GREEN JOBS that he was going to create? Gimme a break!.....and each one he actually created that hasn't gone bust yet costs us \$450,000 each!

New York QSO Party

This was a good one with most of the counties making it on the air. A couple of mobiles were out including W2PV in many(25) , NT2A in the NYC area in the tough ones with all the congestion and traffic and several others including AK2X and K8MR. Lots of 'big guns' were on putting out their counties too.

It was a feast of 1x1 calls, too! Need a QSL? Find out who had the 1x1 call for QSLing purposes. See

<http://www.1x1callsigns.org/>

Toward evening, all the activity headed to 40 and 80m. Many stations never appeared on 20M but were only spotted on 40 and 80M. Dang!

From the 3830 reflector

N2R (N2ZN) mobile

A leisurely ride through the North Country of NY activating some usually rare counties, especially on CW. This was a single op, no driver entry, so my 8 hours of operating time also includes driving from county to county.

Counties activated: HAM, HER, ONE, LEW, STL, FRA, ESS, CLI, WAR. Sorry to say that I did not spend much time in Essex or Warren due to one thing or another. Clinton has typically been one of the super rare counties, so I spent extra time

there, time that was probably going to be spent in Essex or Warren.

CQing on SSB was mostly fruitless, so stuck to running on CW and S&P on phone just to keep the rate up. I also have no 80 meter antenna for the car, so the contest was basically over for me three hours early, when everyone abandoned 40 in favor of 80 or 160. Even still, it was an excellent time. Special thanks to K2CS and N2TWI for providing their W2CCC home in Herkimer County as a "base" for this operation, as starting from Rochester to get to these counties would have killed so much time that I may never have gotten to operate!

NT2A mobile

Thanks to the organizers of the QSO party and my wife Lucy, KC2ILN, who heroically led the car through NYC traffic day and night. The traffic was particularly heavy in the Bronx and in NJ during the move from Rockland County to New York, NY. The night before the party, my Tarheel Little II wished me a long life and died when I tried to get it resonant on 80m. Had to get my old reliable set Hustler antennas and replaced periodically to their seats. I used an additional battery for transceiver and also had a problem, because the on-board battery connected in parallel via the cigarette lighter did not charge it too quick. Power dropped from 100 to 60 W and, I suggest, the CW tone was not very good. So my fault. I should had been prepared more thoroughly.

WA2JQK – Dutchess NY

THE other CONTESTS that also on , made it difficult to use 20 - 10 MTRS..

-- ----

de N4CD - You mean the IA QSO party and the Worked All Germany one? Heh heh. He stayed on 40 and 80M. Missed that county. Yeah, the QRM from Germany was high on the east coast. There were barely there in mid and west America. Other '2' calls were doing fine on 20-10m.

--- --

K2O (WB2ABD opr)

List of trials, tribulations and excuses too long to list. Tops had to be having 10m open to EU and not working any : right along with PSK failure: 80m antenna flaky. That's enough. 10 hours on the meter but it was more like 8.5 in seat time.

Thanks to all for pitching in and special thanks to mobiles N2Y(N2CU), NT2A and W2PV who were easy to find, or they found me easy to find!

N2Y mobile (N2CU operator)

Now this was fun. Two weekends in a row out single-op mobiling! Thank you to all the regulars who followed me from county to county: K2O (12), WA3HAE VE3KZ (9), KV8Q (8), W4UT K6RB W1HIS N4VV N1KW (6) and many others with multiple QSOs. Also thanks for the safe driving wishes, of which there were zero issues.

I activated 8 counties while working 42 counties and 35 sections myself, and just under 500 QSOs. Conditions were good for once but I was disappointed at the lack of left coast participants. K6RB was my only CA worked but other states were well represented; PA (38), OH (23) and TN (22) were the QSO leaders. I also had 28 DX QSOs.

I drove far fewer miles than I did for the PaQP, probably because of a different strategy, but I finished the contest a couple hours away from home. That's OK but its a little nerve wracking driving at night through deer country. I only encountered two herds crossing the roads :)

I had a great time and look forward to next year. Thanks NYQP organizers for another great one!

WQ2EG fixed NY

20 mtrs was TERRIBLE, and 10 was just about a waste of time.

Would like to see more activity; as it was, operating cw only, 12 hours was too long: the well ran dry before 12 hours was up.

W2M (AD8J, W3NO) – county Expedition – Yates

This was a four day operation. One day to drive to Keuka Lake, one day to put up wire antennas, one day to operate and one day to remove wires and drive back

to Pittsburgh. Amplifier blew up during setup on Friday so canceled plans to do high power multi-one and switched to multi-multi. Worked all NY counties except for Orleans and Yates (OURS!) Loud Germans on 40 meters at our sunset provided additional Q's. Great weather where we were.

KV8Q fixed – OH

I decided to play in two state QSO parties at the same time, New York and Iowa. I had a ton of fun and picked up some needed counties in both states. In the NY event, I had 169 Q's with 48 mults. I really enjoyed chasing the mobiles around, as usual.

Hat's off to:

NT2A - 13 Q's

N2Y - 8 Q's

W2PV - 8 Q's

N2R - 4 Q's

W2PV – mobile – went out with W2PV K2XA,K1RQ,NJ1F – had no soapbox comments.

N2BEG –multi-op SSB mobile – went out with N2BEG, KC2JXP and ran 4 counties as a rover. No soapbox comments.

W2W Mobile - W2JO oper – zipped through 8 counties – 80-20M cw with most contacts on 40m CW - no soapbox comments.

Yet Another One!

ReVolt Technology, a government-subsidized company developing batteries in Portland for electric vehicles, is going under, according to a financial backer and board member.

The city of Portland and the state of Oregon backed ReVolt to the tune of \$6.8 million in loans and tax credits, with the federal government kicking in a \$5 million grant.

The public money involved is nowhere near as much as that lost on Solyndra, the California solar manufacturer that went bust after receiving a \$535 million federal loan guarantee. That bankruptcy has become a political football in the presidential campaign, as Republicans accuse President Barack Obama's administration of squandering tax money on green companies.

Patrick Quinton, executive director of the Portland Development Commission, confirmed Friday that ReVolt plans to file for Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Quinton told The Oregonian that ReVolt was one of the riskier ventures backed by the PDC. He said that given liquidation proceedings, it would be difficult to recoup the public loan money.

ReVolt managers could not be reached Friday. The Swiss company's U.S. headquarters were located in Portland's Airport Way urban renewal area.

http://www.oregonlive.com/business/index.ssf/2012/10/revolt_technology_backed_by_or.html#incart_river

Illinois QSO Party

This is a strange QSO Party. Some years there are lots of mobiles to chase around. In addition there are county expeditions to 2, 3 and 4 way county lines where you get to work all of them at once with one contact. (Some ops want two contacts on 2 way ones). There were half a dozen county expeditions out. Some only on SSB, too. Others both modes.

Propagation started out OK with the top half of IL booming in, and not a peep out of the south end of IL at my QTH. Within 2 hours, the band starting shifting north, and in 4 hours there was almost nothing left other than the very top part of IL coming in on 20 and nothing but noise on 40M. Toward late afternoon, the loud fixed stations were heard – but i'd already worked the county on 20M. Nothing new! Frustrating to watch the spots and not hear the mobiles/rovers. The majority of contacts seem to be made on 40 and 80m by the IL stations. Way late in the contest the IL mobiles were heard coming through on 40m. I did snag a dozen new ones but missed two dozen others! Oh well. Yet last weekend, IOWA, which is closer, was pounding in all day on 20M. That darn skip gets you now and then.

Jim, N9JF, was one of the county hunter mobiles out, and some other county hunter folks were active. Maybe 20 fixed stations with big signals were on. Usually there's 10 or 15 Cook County stations but I only heard two. Was activity down this year? The weather was good up that way – maybe too good as folks took advantage of a great fall day?

From the 3830 contest reflector:

N9NEW mobile

First time to operate mobile in a QSO Party. This was a fairly casual operation as I was coming home from a wedding in MO and had to travel across IL anyway. I decided the week before to attempt this and gathered up antennas from a few local hams. I wasn't sure how well a hamstick would work mobile, but having a good ground seemed to be the key. I would have liked to have stayed in Piatt county longer, but at the same time wanted to get home and get the car unloaded before dark.

Ended up having an antenna problem the 40M stick half way through Champaign county. Got out once to redo the connections and inspect it, but it was intermittent at best. Decided to wait till I got home in Vermilion county to take a look at it and since I had a spare 40M stick I just put that on there and worked from that the rest of the contest. I was contemplating going to another county such as Ford or Iroquois for a while, but decided to stick with Vermilion since I would have wasted 30 minutes or so just driving there and I'd lost my driver (wife) to laundry by that time! The last hour and a half of the contest I worked from my driveway on the same mobile setup but with the new 40M stick. Seemed to be doing fairly well until the end and then switched to 80M which was pretty dead from the contest perspective and only ended up with 5 Q's there to wrap things up.

All in all I learned a lot and the best part is I had a lot of fun doing it. I think this experience will strongly make me consider a mobile operation for a future QSO Party.

K9CT – fixed - Peoria IL

Best mult total that I can remember. Thanks to the mobiles that spent a lot of time on 40m and stayed close to the same freq. It was easy to work you and get the multipliers. Also, thanks to the stations that set up portable. It takes a

lot of effort to do that and it is appreciated.

QSO total was down from my expectation but still ok. It seemed like there wasn't much domestic propagation early on 20 - 10 meters. Mostly dx....maybe everyone was watching football! Things picked up later when skip shortened up on 20m and 40m rocked. Best hour was 131 at 2320z 20m SSB plus 80m cw.

40m was very good. Used a dipole at 50 feet and mobiles were easy copy. Some of the stations in IL were very loud...way over S9. I hope we get this prop in SS. 20m was mostly east coast with a few west of the Mississippi mixed in. I still managed to work a few IL stations including mobiles. 80m had good activity and even tried 160m for a few contacts. 2m brought nice qsos early..this could be very useful for adding to our county totals. I even worked a couple of multipliers not duplicated on the other bands!!

Getting Folks Done!

Time to figure out a plan to get the following folks, who are closing in, done! Before the big snows fly and the winter storms appear.

Here's some who need YOUR help! - from K3IMC – 10/23/12

K2MF - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/17/2012

Remaining work list for the WBOW after chasing this award since April, 1981. Any help with these last few will be greatly appreciated! Cell 973-558-0099.

NE: Hooker

TX: Coryell, Hansford, Robertson

Let's get K2MF done!

-- -- --

N1QY - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/09/2012

I've added some that have to be reworked.

GA: Dade

IA: Jackson
ID: Lemhi
IN: Adams
MT: Blaine

He's another one at it for a long time. Let's get him done!

-- --

K1SO - BINGO using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/22/2012

MT: Daniels
RI: Newport
WY: Teton

--

VE1WT - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/15/2012

AL: Coosa
IN: Owen
KY: Edmonson, Taylor
LA: Beauregard
MO: Moniteau, Morgan
OR: Crook

WV2B - BINGO using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/03/2012

CA: Glenn, Mendocino
IA: Cherokee, O'brien, Tama
MN: Fillmore
MO: Henry
MT: Blaine, Carbon, Wheatland
NE: Logan
NY: Rockland
OK: Cleveland
TX: Jasper, Morris, Randall, Schleicher
VT: Addison
WA: Pierce

K2HVN - 3RD using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/04/2012

NE: Garden

K3IMC - MASTER'S GOLD using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/07/2012

CO: Pitkin
KS: Graham, Sheridan
MO: Knox
MT: Madison
NC: Martin
NY: Queens
OH: Brown, Highland
OK: Le Flore, Pushmataha
TN: Cannon, Sequatchie, Stewart
VA: Franklin

- - -

KA3QLF - BINGO using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/21/2012

ND: Grant
NH: Carroll
NY: Bronx, Fulton, Queens
PA: Montour

- - - -

WA4EEZ - USACA using SSB - Updated: 10/20/2012

CA: Humboldt, Madera, Plumas, Sutter, Trinity, Tuolumne
KY: Knott, Owsley, Russell
MN: Goodhue, Houston, Kanabec, Kittson, Lyon, Marshall, Traverse, Wabasha, Watonwan, Wright
MT: Chouteau, Garfield, Lake, Petroleum, Powder River, Sanders
NE: Antelope, Madison
OH: Ottawa
OR: Benton, Crook, Gilliam, Harney, Morrow, Wheeler
SD: Mellette
TX: Castro, Cochran
WA: Chelan
WI: Florence, Price

- - - - -

VK4EJ - USACA using SSB - Updated: 10/14/2012

GA: Atkinson, Pulaski
ID: Camas
KS: Comanche
MS: Leake
MT: Powder River, Treasure

ND: Grant
NE: Pawnee, Rock
SD: Campbell

- - - - -

WD4OIN - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/19/2012

GA: Burke, Macon
ID: Lincoln
IN: Blackford, Dearborn
KY: Todd, Union
MD: Harford, Worcester
OK: Cherokee, Lincoln
TX: Floyd, Gonzales
UT: Piute
VA: Giles
WV: Hancock, Wetzel

- -

Let's get Mike done!

KA4RRU - USACA using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/13/2012

KY: Bourbon
MS: Neshoba

K4XI - 2ND using CW - Updated: 10/22/2012

IL: Randolph
KY: Grayson, Spencer
NE: Cuming

- - - -

K4YT - MASTER'S GOLD using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/21/2012

CA: Calaveras, Lassen, Plumas, Shasta, Tehama
LA: Franklin
MT: Meagher
PA: Northampton
TX: Borden, Cochran, Crosby, Kent

- - - -

N5PR - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/01/2012

AL: Jackson, Marshall

CT: Litchfield

IN: Greene

KY: Breckinridge, Harlan, Marion

OK: Harmon

TN: Unicoi

VA: Lee

WV: Lincoln, Pocahontas

- - - -

KB6UF - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/17/2012

IN: Greene

KS: Logan

KY: Jessamine, Meade, Mercer, Shelby

- - - - -

SM6VR - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/01/2012

AL: Escambia

LA: Ascension, Cameron, Vermilion

MS: Marion, Wilkinson

- - - -

KL7D - BINGO using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/04/2012

KY: Leslie, Russell

LA: Franklin

- - - -

KC7OD - USACA using SSB - Updated: 10/22/2012

AL: Choctaw

FL: Duval

GA: Dawson, Murray, Pickens

KY: Jessamine, Johnson, Martin

SC: Abbeville

TX: Dawson, Howard, Mitchell

- - -

Just a handful to go!

K7TM - 2ND using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/22/2012

IA: Taylor

IN: Pike

LA: Tensas, West Carroll

MS: George, Greene, Walthall

PA: Indiana

- - -

W8FNW - 2ND using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/20/2012

AR: Yell

IN: Harrison

KY: Crittenden, Lee

TN: Lake

- - -

nothing hard here – no snow country high mountains to go to! Let's get Ed doe

N8OYY - 2ND using SSB - Updated: 10/20/2012

IN: Parke, Wabash

MN: Redwood, Watonwan

NE: Hayes, Pierce

TX: Comanche, Goliad, Rusk

- - - -

Let's him him done by New Years!

K9AAA - USACA using CW - Updated: 10/22/20125

GA: Heard, Jones, Macon

IL: Cass, Christian, Jo Daviess, Mercer

MO: Bates, Benton

TX: McMullen, Newton

- - -

Just two to go!

WB9STT - 6TH using SSB - Updated: 09/28/2012

KY: Meade, Monroe

- - -

Just two to go!

KØFG - 2ND using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/07/2012

MO: Ozark

TX: Motley

- - - -

Time to get Mike finished up!

NFØN - MASTER'S GOLD using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/22/2012

AL: Blount

AZ: Yuma

CA: Imperial, Modoc

IN: Fayette, Union

NJ: Warren

TX: Jones

- - - -

WAØRKQ - 2ND using both SSB and CW - Updated: 10/02/2012

CT: Litchfield

MT: Carter

NM: Taos

OH: Adams

PA: Adams Lawrence

UT: Unitah

WY: Hot Springs

- - - -

Hmmmm.. I see some needs in TX...might be time for some fall/winter planning to get some of them. Some of them are 500 miles away.

What can you do to help out?

Some have only 2, 3 or 4 to 10 to go! I see lots of IN needs, one in SC, one in CT, a bunch in MS, a bunch in TX, some in NE, some in MN, and lots scattered about.

Getting those Counties

Sometimes you see needs and you wonder if folks are really working hard to get them. Say, take a need for California. We just had the California QSO Party. Lots of stations got on for the QSO Party.

Let's say you need Madera, CA. Plug in "Madera" in the search box on W6RK, and you'll see the last 10 spots for Madera. Hmm.. Well, we have W6LTR spotted. You check on QRZ and it's a club station – but it lists a dozen members. You could check on them and send out some emails. How about KF6ZXO? His QRZ page says he QSLs. Hmm. Should be possible to get that one on a sked, no?

Someone in zero land needs Adams OH..... well, if you check the spots...no one there...but if you were on in the OH QSO Party, you would have heard KB8OMG be working stations from his home county of Adams OH. That someone in "0" land could benefit from checking the MARAC county hunter database under 'state' and finding that KB8OMG, an active county hunter lives in Adams County. That one should be an easy one to get!

How about Lawrence PA? Check W6RK..... wow...W3FI was spotted there in the PA QSO Party - and a quick check of QRZ.com shows he's an extra class and lives in the county. Plus his email is listed. Hmm... and if he can't get on SSB, maybe CW would work, or he would know someone who could get on for you!

Adams, PA? K3ONW was on in the PA QSO Party in October. No email under QRZ.com but an address and maybe you could use White pages on line to find a phone number.

Sometimes you wonder - folks need 10 or 15 and don't seem to be trying too hard to help themselves close the gap. Now, you probably won't find too many without a lot of work in some counties, but others are 'easy as pi'.....

It's a pretty sad situation when you hope a mobile makes a special trip to say, Adams, OH, when a regular active county hunter lives there ! Right? Save the trips for the ones with no active hams.

Postage Rate Increase

First class postage is going up in January 2013. If you want, stock up on some 'Forever' stamps. Buy 'em now at current prices and they'll be good forever for a first class letter.

17 and 15 Meter Activity Report

The bands have been fairly decent, with lots of propagation on 17 and 15 meters (and some contest activity on 10M in the CA and other QSO parties). There were hundreds and hundreds of spots in the QSO parties on 15M, both SSB and CW. The DX is rolling in on 15m and even 10m at times at my QTH on the vertical. We are approaching the sunspot maximum, so now is the time to be using these bands. In five years, they'll be sounding quite empty once again.

It helps if you can 'self spot' or QSY up to 17m after you run on 20M. Hopefully, someone will spot you and then the crowd turns out. Same if you are going to QSY up to 15m. Few 'listen' there. Even fewer spot there.

Here's a brief summary of who was spotted on the bands above 20M.

W5QP, Rick, ran around in AR and put them out on 17 cw.

W4SIG, Kerry, busy on 17m cw

Bill, K2HVN, running 17M SSB and CW frequently on his trip back home to the east. Also ran on 15 cw and 10 cw – self spotting. Lots and lots of counties.

KC7YE, Jack, spotted on 17 cw and 15 cw

Larry, W7FEN, spotted on 17M CW on his trip.

Barry, N0KV and Pat, N0DXE did well on 17 and 15M SSB from Hawaii, and Barry put them out on 15 and 17 cw.

Wy7LL/WY7ML, Leo/Chris spotted on 17M SSB on their trip to WI.

WQ7A, Terry, ran on 17M SSB all during his trip. He needed at least 3 contacts on two bands for the Mobile Diamond award, and out west, 40M is not often useful. Worked out well but he didn't stick around too long on 17m most runs. He also QSY'ed to 15 SSB out west.

Greg, NM2L, spotted on 17cw and 15 cw on his trips.

K7TM, Bob, spotted out in ID and MT on 17cw. Once was spotted 15m cw.

N4JT, Jim, ran 17cw on the way to SC and back.

Ron, KB6UF spotted on cw in MS.

Ed, N3HOO, appeared on 17cw a few times on his trip.

Ed, KN4Y, showed up on 17m on his trip in FL. Also up on 15m cw.

Jerry, W0GXQ, ran 17m on his trip to MO and back. Also 15 and 10m.

Gene, NT2A, ran 15cw in the NY State QSO Party mobile.

N4CD was on 17m in most counties he ran through.

- - - -

Between WQ7A and K2HVN, they had about 90% of the spots on 17M!

Awards

Second Time #418	W8TZA, Bill	Sept 27, 2012
Second Time #419	K4YT, Karl	Sept 30, 2012
Third Time #234	Larry, W9SUQ	October 20, 2012
Fourth Time #157	Doug, WA4UNS	October 19, 2012
Fifth Time #109	Jeff, W9MSE	Sept 30, 2012
USA CW #131	Terry, AA1VA	October 18, 2012
USACW V #5	Jeff, W9MSE	Sept 30, 2012
Bingo #345	Janet, KC5QCB	Oct 7, 2012
Bingo #346	Gary, K4EXT	October 12, 2012
Bingo II #90	NF0N, Mike	Sept 27, 2012
Five Star #62	Dick, N8CIJ	October 2, 2012
USA-PA-N #18	Dave, KE3VV	October 17, 2012
Master Platinum #20	Chuck, W3CR	October 21, 2012

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

The Fall QSO Party season is over. Hope you had a good one. Just one state QSO Party this month after a good dozen of them. Beware the Sweepstakes weekends – not good to be a county hunter fighting the QRM. One weekend SSB, one weekend CW. This is one of the most popular (and busy) contests of the year. It's a good chance to work AK and HI sections if you need them (KL8DX in 4th AK, big contest stations on in 3rd AK, and 3 or 4 of the HI counties).

1.8-28 ARRL November Sweepstakes - CW

Serial, category, call, check, ARRL sec

www.arrl.org/contests

Nov 3, 2100Z - Nov 5, 0300Z

1.8-28 50 Kentucky QSO Party

RST and KY county or S/P/C

www.wkdx.com

Nov 10, 1400Z - Nov 11, 0200Z

CW--1.815, 3.550, 7.050, 14.050, 21.050, 28.050, 50.090;

SSB--1.855, 3.820, 7.240, 14.280, 21.390, 28.390, 50.190.

ARRL November Sweepstakes SSB

Serial, category, call, check, ARRL sec

www.arrl.org/contests

Nov 17, 2100Z - Nov 19, 0300Z

That's all folks!