

County Hunter News

August 2019
Volume 15 Issue 8

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

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at ch.W6RK.com

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

<http://marac.org/awards.pdf>

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) Good month for catching Second District AK with 3 separate stations there this month. Could be a record!

2) Propagation – still pretty miserable with lots of days with SFI of 66 and 67. One good point is that a Cycle 25 sunspot made a brief appearance. It was a 'high latitude' one of the the right magnetic polarity but only stuck around for a day or so before vanishing. So there is hope cycle 25 will be there rather than some forecasts of doom and gloom and no sunspots.

3) Many mobiles out on long trips. Jim, N9JF trekked to AK putting out the districts on many days, including Second AK. He headed up to Prudhoe Bay. Reported that he lost a tire on the way – gravel road for 600 miles – each way. Bring spares – more than one if you trek that way. Gene K5GE headed out to ND, Mary and Neil off on a big trip and N8KIE on the road. KB0BA/N0XYL now in MT and who knows where they'll wind up! N4CD will join them this coming weekend on a 10 day trip to IL via lots of parks in IA.

4) Well, the good news at the N4CD QTH is that the cataract surgery went OK. Right eye now 20/25 but left eye still needs help with glasses. Oh, and of course, I still need

'readers' for close up things – like reading maps!

Sunspots I

Interesting article...here is abstract and conclusions. Their prediction is long minimum lasting 20-30 years with little solar activity and sunspots.....we'll have a 'grand minimum' like the Maunder Minimum (no sunspots for 100 years) starting now.....but lasting only 30 years.

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Oscillations of the baseline of solar magnetic field and solar irradiance on a millennial timescale

V. V. Zharkova, S. J. Shepherd, S. I. Zharkov & E. Popova

Recently discovered long-term oscillations of the solar background magnetic field associated with double dynamo waves generated in inner and outer layers of the Sun indicate that the solar activity is heading in the next three decades (2019–2055) to a Modern grand minimum similar to Maunder one. On the other hand, a reconstruction of solar total irradiance suggests that since the Maunder minimum there is an increase in the cycle-averaged total solar irradiance (TSI) by a value of about $1\text{--}1.5\text{ Wm}^{-2}$ closely correlated with an increase of the baseline (average) terrestrial temperature. In order to understand these two opposite trends, we calculated the double dynamo summary curve of magnetic field variations backward one hundred thousand years allowing us to confirm strong oscillations of solar activity in regular (11 year) and recently reported grand (350–400 year) solar cycles caused by actions of the double solar dynamo. In addition, oscillations of the baseline (zero-line) of magnetic field with a period of 1950 ± 95 years (a super-grand cycle) are discovered by applying a running averaging filter to suppress large-scale oscillations of 11 year cycles. Latest minimum of the baseline oscillations is found to coincide with the grand solar minimum (the Maunder minimum) occurred before the current super-grand cycle start. Since then the baseline magnitude became slowly increasing towards its maximum at 2600 to be followed by its decrease and minimum at ~ 3700 . These oscillations of the baseline solar magnetic field are found associated with a long-term solar inertial motion about the barycenter of the solar system and closely linked to an increase of solar irradiance and terrestrial temperature in the

past two centuries. This trend is anticipated to continue in the next six centuries that can lead to a further natural increase of the terrestrial temperature by more than 2.5 °C by 2600.

Conclusions

Until recently, solar activity was accepted to be one of the important factors defining the temperature on Earth and other planets. In this paper we reproduced the summary curve of the solar magnetic field associated with solar activity^{5,6} for the one hundred thousand years backward by using the formulas describing the sum of the two principal components found from the full disk solar magnetograms. In the past 3000 years the summary curve shows the solar activity for every 11 years and occurrence of 9 grand solar cycles of 350–400 years, which are caused by the beating effects of two magnetic waves generated by solar dynamo at the inner and outer layers inside the solar interior with close but not equal frequencies⁶.

The resulting summary curve reveals a remarkable resemblance to the sunspot and terrestrial activity reported in the past millennia including the significant grand solar minima: Maunder Minimum (1645–1715), Wolf minimum (1200), Oort minimum (1010–1050), Homer minimum (800–900 BC) combined with the grand solar maxima: the medieval warm period (900–1200), the Roman warm period (400–10BC) etc. It also predicts the upcoming grand solar minimum, similar to Maunder Minimum, which starts in 2020 and will last until 2055.

A reconstruction of solar total irradiance suggests that there is an increase in the cycle-averaged total solar irradiance (TSI) since the Maunder minimum by a value of about 1–1.5 Wm⁻²²⁷. This increase is closely correlated with the similar increase of the average terrestrial temperature^{26,43}. Moreover, from the summary curve for the past 100 thousand years we found the similar oscillations of the baseline of magnetic field with a period of 1950 ± 95 years (a super-grand solar cycle) by filtering out the large-scale oscillations in 11 year cycles. The last minimum of a super-grand cycle occurred at the beginning of Maunder minimum. Currently, the baseline magnetic field (and solar irradiance) are increasing to reach its maximum at 2600, after which the baseline magnetic field become decreasing for another 1000 years.

The oscillations of the baseline of solar magnetic field are likely to be caused by the solar inertial motion about the barycentre of the solar system caused by large planets. This, in turn, is closely linked to an increase of solar irradiance caused by the positions of the Sun either closer to aphelion and autumn equinox or perihelion and spring equinox. Therefore, the oscillations of the baseline define the global trend of solar

magnetic field and solar irradiance over a period of about 2100 years. In the current millennium since Maunder minimum we have the increase of the baseline magnetic field and solar irradiance for another 580 years. This increase leads to the terrestrial temperature increase as noted by Akasofu²⁶ during the past two hundred years. Based on the growth rate of 0.5 °C per 100 years²⁶ for the terrestrial temperature since Maunder minimum, one can anticipate that the increase of the solar baseline magnetic field expected to occur up to 2600 because of SIM will lead, in turn, to the increase of the terrestrial baseline temperature since MM by 1.3 °C (in 2100) and, at least, by 2.5–3.0 °C (in 2600).

Naturally, on top of this increase of the baseline terrestrial temperature, there are imposed much larger temperature oscillations caused by standard solar activity cycles of 11 and 350–400 years and terrestrial causes. The terrestrial temperature is expected to grow during maxima of 11 year solar cycles and to decrease during their minima. Furthermore, the substantial temperature decreases are expected during the two grand minima to occur in 2020–2055 and 2370–2415, whose magnitudes cannot be yet predicted and need further investigation. These oscillations of the estimated terrestrial temperature do not include any human-induced factors, which were outside the scope of the current paper.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-45584-3>

On the Road with N4CD I

On Wednesday, July 3, I headed over the 25 miles to Spring Creek State Forest Preserve KFF-4423/k-4423 to the east of the QTH in Dallas County, TX for the weekly CW Open Test which runs from 1300 to 1400z each week. It's a good check of propagation. I started on 40m as 20m was still asleep and most folks wind up on 40m. Put 35 in the log in half an hour then switched to 20m along with many others. The band was still 'long' but New England, Florida and California were in there. I stuck around for another 20m to see if any other park hunters needed it on 20M SSB and 30M cw, then headed home before it got 'hot'. 82 QSOs in the log.

Next day was Fourth of July so decided on a short road trip to see if the eyes had

recovered enough from the cataract surgery— a test run so to speak. Usually you can see OK the next day, but it takes 2-3 weeks per eye to fully heal and you've got a routine of eye drops a couple times a day, no swimming for 2 weeks after each eye done, and limited exercise. So I stuck close to home for a couple weeks. The time was up so time to to a test run.

Headed up to Bonham State Park in Fannin County – a 90 minute drive to the northeast. KFF-2991/k-2991 with over a thousand QSOs and 33 prior activations. Gary, N5PHT, went camping there in his RV many times – a few miles from his QTH - and made most of them!

It was very overcast and warm but no sun. I'm not complaining – it would get a lot hotter and muggy as the day wore on. Had a good run with 68 in the log from around the country but no DX. Sunspot index of 67 and generally 'poor' to 'fair' conditions. 20M did not do all that great – but pulled out over 20 on 20m SSB, then more on 20,30,40m cw. Checked Six meters as this is till time for E-skip season – and lots of thunderstorms and fronts moving across the country. Did hear a few beacon stations coming through, but nada SSB or CW sigs. 17M was nothing but noise. The park was going to get fairly full by afternoon, but not all that many there in the morning at the lake. Picnickers were setting up for large groups to arrive. I left the park to them.

Next up was the Caddo National Grasslands, KFF-4370/k-4423 also in Fannin County. There are a few spots you can run this, but internet is sparse. Over 700 QSOs had been made from here, but no one had been there in six months and there are many new park chasers.

The POTA spotting site will use the Reverse Beacon Network (RBN) and automatically spot you in the last park you ran. Hmm....I don't need to be spotted in the wrong park. Ah, as you enter the area of the Grasslands, which is like Swiss Cheese with just a few areas you can actually stop and be in the 'Grasslands' mixed in with lots of private farms and houses not in the 'park'. To the south of the area, you have internet, but at the points you can stop to run it – the 'recreation area' and small lake with a boat ramp - internet is usually gone, especially in the summer as the foliage does a good job of absorbing the cell signals. OK...I'd spot myself on Six Meters a few miles south of where you can run and where there is internet. N4CD on 50.200. I use a Hustler 4 ½ foot mast – about 3:1 at 50.2 and 1.1 at 50.01 if you run CW there. Had not heard a signal there all day. Then, subsequent spots by the RBN would put in in the right park! A few miles later, I hit the rec area and sure enough, mostly no signal with a few short periods where it would show up and you could get a spot through if you were watching the spotting pad at that time. Did not work a soul on 6m all day. But you never know. There was some

short skip on 20m (less than 300 miles) which usually indicates 10m may be open and maybe 6M too.

Had a good run with 81QSO in the log.

I was getting hungry – but the route to the next one takes you on some nice rural roads with nary a town for mile after mile. Had to go 25 miles to find a convenience store/gas station and wound up in a bit of Oklahoma on the way to Eisenhower State Park – KFF-3005/K-3005 in Grayson County . Grabbed a mini-pizza in Achille, OK (pop 500) – food which is not on the diet plan, but I was hungry. It went down quickly.

Eventually you arrive at the state park – and – most of it is closed. The boat ramps, beach and picnic areas are closed due to 'high water levels' in Lake Texoma – still a couple feet above normal from more than normal rains. This is a huge man made lake – of 140 square miles that lies between Texas and Oklahoma on the Red River. The past year has seen lots of rain. So – there weren't a lot of folks there other than campers – which occupy the high areas.

I pulled in to a parking area for a trail head and operate from there. It's the middle of the day and the bands are in horrible shape. Spent an hour and barely eek out 31 QSOs. 705 QSOs have been made from here before. (over 200 by N4CD). Mid day slump on the bands and I suspect many park chasers are off doing Fourth of July activities.

Time to head to the last for the day – Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge. Last time I was there , it was severely flooded – road in closed right after the entrance visitor center which lies on high ground. KFF-0548/K-0548 and there have been 550 previous QSOs and all but 100 made by N4CD on previous trips. This time...well, you could make it about a half mile into the park before the roads went into the swamps of Lake Texoma. You could make it to the first 'stop' on the trail around the park – and I sat there for an hour trying to fill in the log. Conditions were still 'mid day slump' and I worked at it till I got up to 40 QSOs there in Grayson County, then called it a day. Heard one park activator on 17M SSB – not strong at all – fading in and out. There was no need to reach the magic 44 number as this was a repeat park. It would have been tough to get there. Time to head home the 60 miles or so to the QTH. It was getting hot and muggy – up to 95 with 105 heat index! Yuck.

Decided to stop on the way home and celebrate the Fourth with an ice cream cone at Braums – tried the Deep Raspberry Ganache. Good. Fattening! Made it home in good shape. Bad day for the diet but don't do that too often with pizza and ice cream.

Now to do the logging for the couple hundred contacts. Hope you caught something you needed.

Ebay Items



from the Ebay ad:

ONE VINTAGE COLIN B. KENNEDY TYPE 110 UNIVERSAL RECEIVER, AND TYPE 525 TWO STAGE AMPLIFIER. The pair, dates from 1921 or so, and is in generally well preserved condition, with some issues. The radio and amplifier are being sold as a pair. The model 110 Universal Receiver, has one type 200 tube, and the amplifier, has two 01a tubes. Asking price is \$1600 on Ebay.

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Not a regen, but an early crystal detector radio built for use on submarines during/after WW1 – those very primitive subs that would evolve quickly to the killer subs of WW2. Mostly tuned circuits that tuned from 300 to 2500 meters. Or 1 MHz down to the tens of KHz. Up for sale on Ebay for over a thousand bucks.



From the Ebay ad:

Here's a 1917 CN-113 receiver, a beautiful and uncommon early radio manufactured for the US Navy by the National Electrical Supply Company (NESCO) in Washington DC. A marvel of miniaturization, the radio was designed to be used on submarines, where space was tight but high quality radio reception was critical. Although the radio measures just 17" x 7" x 6", it has almost all of the features found on a Marconi 106, but it's 70 percent smaller and a fraction of the weight.

Condition of this example is excellent throughout. The cabinet is original, and the chassis is clean, as you can see in the photographs. The radio's small, tightly compacted, and electrically robust tuning mechanism is complete and original. The wiring is also original, with no re-wiring, no re-soldering, no repairs or modifications. Coils are pristine, with no stains, no loose wire, no issues.

Panel is excellent and undamaged, and the engraving is legible everywhere. Original knobs, original pointers, original buzzer and buzzer cover, original tap switch, original contacts. All of the binding posts are original, and none of the binding post nuts are missing.”

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The buzzer was used to generate RF noise so you find a spot on the galena crystal detector to 'rectify' strong RF signals. This sold for \$3,100 on Ebay!

KA2LHO Rove Report



KA2LHO West Central Florida Park Run Summary

Dates: July 3, 4, 5, 2019

Miles Traveled: 469

Hours On the Road: 27

Counties Activated: 6

KFF Parks Activated: 13

Number of Radio Contacts: 261

States Contacted: 31--AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, IN, IL, KS, LA, MA, MD, MI, MO, MN, NC, NE, NJ, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WV

Other Countries Contacted: 1--Canada

Fun with Ham Radio: Priceless!!!

The bus worked, radio/antenna system worked, computer and software worked, nice hotels, my wife drove, I played radio and people got new parks. A GREAT TRIP! Thank you all!!!!

LOVE KFF!!!!

Logs will be uploaded to eQSL, LoTW, park databases

de KA2LHO

On the Road with N4CD II

Wednesday rolled around and again I headed over to Spring Creek State Forest Preserve which is 25 miles from the QTH for the weekly CWT that runs from 1300 to 1400z. A few county hunters show up – KN4Y, K4BAI, KM4FO and occasionally others. Put the usual 60 or so in the log in 1 ½ hours there then headed home.

A few things kept me close to home in July – but it was time for another weekend trip to nearby parks. First up was Purdis Creek State Park down in Henderson County – 85 miles away. Down through Kaufman and Van Zandt. I arrived there at KFF-3050 and got up to 63 QSOs. The IARU contest was going on so it was easy to get CW contacts, and I added in park chasers and some on 20M SSB although that was pretty full of contesters. Did work a few DX stations like YV5, XE1, P40, PZ5, etc. Couldn't work the Europeans – not strong enough and the east coasters had a 20 db edge. Dang low sunspot numbers!

After a while there, it was over to Lake Tawakoni, making a detour to Kaufman again for Kerry, W4SIG and a LC there on 30M. Got lost with the GPS lady taking me on some roads that just ended and wound up 30 minutes behind schedule but not to worry. Lake Tawakoni State Park – lots of folks there enjoying the lake. Hot outside and not much shade either!

The IARU contest was still going on so I was able to make 66 QSOs from there – county hunters, contesters, park chasers. After 2 hours headed on home, with a stop at Spring Creek State Forest Preserve where I worked another 22 contesters for a 'quickie' activation. I'm working on getting to 1,000 'activations' even though I don't like playing that game. For Parks on the Air, any time you hit a park and make more than 10 contacts, you get credit for an activation. Some folks drive past the same 5 or 6 parks quite often and run them a couple times a month racking up the 'activations'. I'd rather be running new parks for me....but that takes a lot of driving these days since they are all 500 miles or more away – sort of like counties when you run them. Soon you

find out you're driving a couple hundred or a thousand miles to get to new ones!

Came home and that was it for mobile activity other than the weekly jaunt on Wednesday to the local Spring Creek State Forest Preserve. 75Qs on 7-17-19 with mostly the same stations each week, and a few new park chasers and few county hunters.

However, trip to IL through IA coming up at the end of July! I'm headed to the Antique Radio Club of Chicago (ARCI) annual Vintage Radio Convention near Chicago.

Dayton Report 2019

Dayton Hamvention 2019 Attendance Approaches All-Time Peak

The Hamvention Executive Team announced July 15 that attendance at Dayton Hamvention® 2019 was 32,472, the second-largest ever. This marks the highest attendance recorded since Hamvention moved from Hara Arena to the Greene County Fairgrounds and Exposition Center in Xenia, Ohio. This year's attendance also approached an all-time Hamvention high. Attendance at the show peaked in 1993, while Hamvention was still being held at Hara Arena, at 33,669, before the 1996 change in date from April to May. Last year, Hamvention welcomed 28,417 visitors in its second year in Xenia. Attendance in 2016 for the show's final year at Hara was 25,364. Hamvention hosted the ARRL 2019 National Convention, and both embraced the theme of "Mentoring the Next Generation."

"Our early indications were that 2019 would be a big year, and it lived up to our expectations," Hamvention General Chair Jack Gerbs, WB8SCT, said. "Our more than 700 volunteers worked hard to ensure that we presented a great show for our visitors. It wouldn't have been possible without them. I also want to thank all our vendors and visitors and hope they will all be back next year."

Hamvention officials suggested that a small factor behind the increased attendance might have been the free admission on Sunday, an effort to allow local non-hams to experience Hamvention. Free Sunday admission is expected to be continued next year. The world's largest Amateur Radio exposition, Dayton Hamvention is sponsored by the

Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) every third full weekend in May. Hamvention 2020 will take place on May 15, 16, and 17.

Source: ARRL Newsletter, ARRL Inc, Newington CT 06111

Mobile Activity in July

It's been a busy month for mobiles. Even more amazing, 3 stations ran the Second District of AK this summer!

At the start of the month:

N5MLP, Ron, was continuing his quest to put out all of FL. Then headed into GA for even more. Came back through MS, LA to TX.

N9JF, Jim, was in Alaska running the various districts.

KA2LHO, Kraig, was busy putting out parks in FL. Later he headed up to SC and a bit later back to FL.

N4CD, Bob, put out some parks in TX on different days.

Mike, KA4RRU, put out counties in OH. IN and IL, then headed back to VA

For a short time, the '13 colonies' stations were on the air from the 13 original states of the US

Bill, K2HVN, was up in Aroostook, ME and put it out several times.

Gene, WB4KZW, ran counties in MS

Jerry, W0GXQ, ran a bunch in NE and KS

Larry, W7FEN, activated counties in WA and ID

Don, K3IMC, ran counties in GA and AL

K6VVA, and IOTA station, was spotted up in Second AK.

KB0BA, Lowell, and N0XYL, Sandra, were spotted in IA, SD, MN, MT, counties.

K6YEK was spotted out in CA counties

Gene, K5GE, headed north from TX on a big trip up through MO, IA, SD,

Seth, N3MRA, noted in CA counties

Mary, AB7NK, and Neil, K7SEN, headed out from AZ on a big trip, through NM, CO, WY,

Bob, N8KIE, headed west from MI through IL, WI,

KC6AWX, Bob, ran Second District AK for a day. Loud signal through most of US.

end date 7 23 2019

On the Road with N4CD II

Sunday July 21 rolled around. On Saturday, I picked up several radios from Mary Calhoun, XYL of Charlie, W0RRY, which included a ICOM IC-706 Mark II, A Yaesu FT-736R, a Yaesu FT-736, a TenTec 2140 10w in, 100w out UHF amp, a Microwave Modules 28/144 transmitting converter/receiver converter, and a Kenwood TS-940. Some were missing knobs and I suspected several were problem radios that Charlie never got fixed or had major problems, so I've got to check them out first. Charlie sold most of his equipment on Ebay before he moved out of Tulsa 10 years or more ago.

So what better way to check out a mobile than head to the local park – Spring Creek Forest Preserve – 25 miles from the QTH and see what was happening for a few hours

on Sunday morning. Park activators likely would be out despite the record setting high temps due to a heat wave and I'd catch enough of them for an 'activation' on my part. There were several mobiles on the road including AB7NK/K7SEN headed east from AZ for a trip to ND and around. N9JF was on his way back from AK after entering the lower 48 US again. K5GE was in MO and IA on a trip he was taking. Seth, N3MRA was headed west.

Hmm.....not so good. Power out on the 706 Mk II is lower than it should be – maybe quarter power of normal. Sadly, that usually indicates a dead PA transistor. Early Mk II's used transistors were are now 'unobtainium' and later ones had different PA boards with different transistors. Not sure which one this is. It still worked and put 20 people in the log on 20M SSB. Seemed OK on CW – at lower power out, though.

Put my regular 706 (original) back on line and made some CW contacts.

Whoa, what's this? Listen on 14336 and Percy, KA1JPR is there. Something must be up. Tune up to 14339 and there is KC6AWX in the Second AK. They moved up there because of some QRM on 14336. Oh, a bit later, KZ2P is doing relays along with several others. Let's see...it's 9:30 local time in TX.....must be VERY early up in Nome AK....ah, yes, sunrise time at 6:30 local – which would be sunrise time if you had one - (of course, you've still got 20 hours of sun there – night is 'relative' even in July there).....well, that's typically a good time to be on – sunrise AK time. KC6AWX is S5 in the mobile – wow..... maybe he was at AL7X's QTH – using his hex beam up 60 feet? I dunno. Never heard him sign or say 'mobile'. Worked him. So did many others from all around the country.

I worked 40 stations from the park then headed home before it got 'real hot' in TX as the day wore on – I was looking for park activations and found several around the country.

K0BAK, Peter, Rove Report

K0BAK Maryland rove report July 17-18 (long)

Given this past week was the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11, it was especially gratifying visiting my daughter at her new job at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in

Maryland. Before that visit, I activated new-to-me parks on the way down to my hotel near the Center, and a few more near the hotel the next morning.

July 17: Nine parks were planned for the trip down, although I didn't think I'd really accomplish the entire list. Leaving around 6AM EDT allowed me to avoid most rush hour traffic, and I arrived in the area of my first two parks about 1.5 hours later. My planned first stop was Elk Neck State Park, but I got to the area so early I aimed for my second park instead, Elk Neck State Forest, hoping it would be more accessible. As I was driving toward my planned location, I happened to find a trailhead parking lot I hadn't seen on the satellite view. Being more open it was better than my planned location, and since I arrived there early, I got on the air by 1145z so it counted as a "late shift" activation with 11 contacts before 1200z. It was already getting hot at only 8AM local, so I was not looking forward to the low 90 temps predicted for most of the day.

Since it was now only a little after 8AM, I decided I didn't want to wait for the 9AM opening of Elk Neck State Park since I didn't know if there was an appropriate non-gated operating location there. As I was returning through the area the next day, I might have another opportunity to activate it on my way back home. Reluctantly, I continued to the third park on the list via a Dunkin Donuts for a breakfast stop and coffee.

Susquehanna State Park is fairly big but heavily wooded. Last year I arrived to activate it at a parking lot at a high point, but as soon as I installed my antenna mast, there were lightning flashes so I had to pack up and go home. This rove I decided on a riverside large open parking lot servicing a boat launch for the wide Susquehanna River. Although it was very open to the east, there is a heavily wooded large hill to the west toward most chasers, so I wasn't sure how good the location would turn out to be. I was pleased to have a good short run of 21 contacts in just 11 minutes on 40m. Getting even hotter, I resolved to just stay on 40m at the next parks to make quick activations so I could get back on the road with air conditioning. After Google sent me down a narrow road that turned to gravel, I had to back up a quarter mile to get back to my activation location to drive out the way I drove in.

Palmer SP is a minimally developed park with just one obvious parking area. I was alone there where the area was fairly open, though there was an abundance of insects that visited me while the doors were open during my operation. 17 contacts on 40m in 10 minutes for a great rate of over 100/hr, then I was out of there, continuing my hit-and-run policy. The next park was a similar ride west over winding narrow roads. Rocks SP is much hillier than Palmer, and the shallowest valley parking I could find was at the visitor's center. This is apparently a popular park, because I only found two regular parking spots available in the narrow lot on a weekday morning. I backed into a

downhill spot, which meant the screwdriver quick disconnect was too high to reach even standing on my bumper, so I had to partially climb the van's roof access ladder just to install my 17' whip. Although I was worried about being heard from a narrow valley with close trees, my rate was almost the same as the previous park at 19 contacts in 12 minutes.

Gunpowder SP is a multi-location state park. I decided on a beach unit because it seemed more open than other units. After paying a small entrance fee, I drove to overflow parking away from the beach. I first found Maryland super activator KB3WAV spotted at Fort McHenry 14 miles away for two park-to-park ground wave contacts. 29 contacts in 21 minutes were more contacts but a slower rate; I probably was feeling better about making my schedule so spent a bit more time here. North Point SP is a relatively large park on the Chesapeake Bay only a few miles from Baltimore. I operated from an empty parking lot just past the pay gate in an open area. Since I was doing well on my schedule at this point, and with a good breeze ventilating the van, I decided to start on 20m for the first time on the rove. A total of 47 contacts were gained, about two-thirds of which were on 20m. This surprised me because I had been disappointed for weeks almost every time I tried 20, so I had become reluctant to even bother with it.

My rove plan called for me to check into my hotel next, then activate two more parks after resting at the hotel. But given that I was still feeling strong and thunderstorms were still holding off, I decided to head directly to the next park. Sandy Point SP is a beach park at the western end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Being a beach park on a weekday, finding a wide-open parking area was easy, and another good breeze was a bonus. I again started on 20m which was a bit less busy than at the previous park, although I did get my only DX contact from France. Chasers gave me 40 contacts in 27 minutes for a rate of 89/hr. The last park of the day Jonas Green was a short drive from the previous one, in the shadow of the Naval Academy Bridge across the river from the Academy. This location had high RF noise, so all 22 contacts were a struggle. I drove to my hotel to arrive only minutes before a strong line of thunderstorms rolled through.

After walking to an IHOP for dinner where I think the employees pocketed my payment, I settled into the hotel for the night where I noted a number of problems for a review I never did write.

July 18: Since I was visiting my daughter at nearby Goddard for lunch, and I'm an early riser, I thought I could activate three parks located just a few minutes from my hotel before my visit. The first was the NPS' Baltimore-Washington Parkway, part of the omnibus National Capital Parks (# 0654), which I activated before 1200z for another early-morning "late shift". I had 22 contacts on 40m and 80m, then ended right at 1159z.

After a good diner breakfast, I went to the large Greenbelt Park. I remember this location as having a lot more noise the last time I activated it than I encountered this time, though I only got 12 contacts total on 80m and 40m. The last park was the sprawling Patuxent NWR, where I found a gated access road with enough room to park the van, saving me a number of minutes over going to other locations in the Refuge. Because I was running out of time, I had to make this one a quick activation only on 40m, although I still got 17 contacts in 10 minutes for a rate of over 100/hr.

I had a wonderful albeit too-short visit with my daughter, walking through hallways where she and other smart folks are designing the next generation of space probes and their missions. I began my drive back home, but thunderstorms prevented me from activating Elk Neck State Park that I had skipped on my way down. I dropped the van off at my rented spot in a large garage owing to upcoming very hot weather followed by multiple predicted rain days that would keep me from activating parks anyway. I'll probably be off the air for a couple weeks while I make yet more installs in the van while it is indoors.

Stats:

255 total contacts

354 miles driven

11 parks activated (out of 12 planned):

4764, 1601, 1587, 1592, 1577, 1586, 1595, 1581, 0654, 0668, 0334

Top chasers:

- Pierre VE2GT was the big winner with 11 contacts in 8 parks from Quebec. Thanks Pierre, your distinctive voice and rhythm lets me pick you out from a pileup even if you're not the loudest station.

- Dimitris NE1D got me 9 times in 7 parks from Massachusetts. Thanks for following me around Dimitris!

- KD8EDN and K4WP had 8 contacts each.

Thanks to every chaser for all your contacts, and for every time you tried but couldn't get me.

Awards Issued this Month

MARAC County Hunter of the Year for CW: AB7RW

MARAC County Hunter of the Year for SSB: AB7NK

K0DEQ Has transmitted 100 Last counties - number 259 Dated 18 Dec 2017.

N5MLP Has transmitted 200 Last counties - number 127 Dated 18 Sep 2017.

WQ7A Has transmitted 650 Last counties - number 27 Dated 24 Mar 2013.

AB7NK Has transmitted 825 Last counties - number 17 Dated 10 Jan 2017.

N0RQV Completed 1000 Digital contacts -number 17 on 25 June 2013

N5MLP Completed USA-PA Letter "N" on 25 April 2019

K5GE transmitted from 550 counties - number 36 Dated 25 April 2018

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

It's summer. It's hot but events are scheduled as we begin the QSO Party season. In addition there are other contests that are good for lots of contacts.

- - -

Aug 3 1800z to Aug 4 0559z
North American QSO Party, CW CW
Name, SPC (if North America)
www.ncjweb.com

Aug 10 1400z to Aug 11 0400z
Maryland-DC QSO Party CW Ph Dig
Entry class, county or SPC
www.w3vpr.org/mdcqsoparty

Aug 17 1800z to Aug 18 0559z
North American QSO Party, SSB Ph
Name, SPC (if North America)
www.ncjweb.com

Aug 24 0400z to Aug 26 0400z
Hawaii QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), HI QTH or SPC
www.hawaiiqsoparty.org

Aug 24 1400z to Aug 25 2000z
Kansas QSO Party CW Ph Dig
RS(T), county or SPC
ksqsoparty.org

Aug 24 1600z to Aug 25 0400z
Ohio QSO Party CW Ph
RS(T), county or SPC
www.ohqp.org

Thanks to ARRL Contest Corral for above . ARRL, Inc, Newington CT 06111

Source: <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Contest%20Corral/2019/August%202019%20Corral.pdf>

That's all folks! See you next month.....