

County Hunter News

July 2020

Volume 16 Issue 7

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in ham radio county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation. We also cover some park chasing activities these days. Contributions of articles, stories, letters, and pictures to the editor are welcomed, and may be included in future issues at the editor's discretion.

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

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.

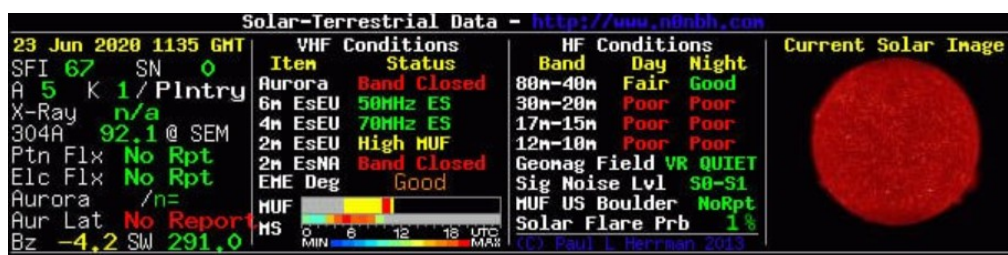
Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at www.CHNewsonline.com

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) **Sunspots** – This is supposed to be the 'bottom' of the sunspot cycle. So far, we aren't getting out of the bottom quickly – or at all at this point. SFI once again down to 67 after a week at 70. 20M has not been 'good' on the prop charts but you can still make contacts with some parts of the country after sunrise. Band shuts down fairly early, too, as skip gets long then disappears. 40M has been the workhorse back east and evening hours but is usually almost useless in TX as the skip is 'too short' to get to anywhere back east where most of the activity is.



2) COVID-19 –

Our local ham radio clubs are 'on-line' with monthly programs – on ZOOM. No date set for in person meetings and might not happen till next year.

Big trips by county hunters/park activators have been near zero – and that also includes most state QSO Parties this year as the states are 'locked down' or have strict 'stay at home' orders. Few mobiles venture out – and usually just day trips here and there.

This month, both QSO parties had a few mobiles out for the day.

In TX, toward the end of the month, things are NOT going well. Since the end of May, COVID cases have doubled. Hospitalizations have gone up 212% in the same time frame. Memorial Day resulted in massive spreading and allowing bars to open at 50% capacity has been a disaster for TX. FL is in the same boat as well as AZ where cases are climbing through the roof.

Worse, the idea of 'herd immunity' seems to have gone out the window. In Sweden with it's no lockdown situation, only 7-8% of the entire population has anti-bodies – and they have more deaths than if they had locked down by a significant number. In Italy, it might be 13% have anti-bodies but Italy really had massive death totals. The idea of 70% herd immunity is not a reachable reality without millions more death.

Governor of TX telling everyone to 'stay home'. Too many, cooped up for months, suddenly socializing with large parties, big group activities, the 'bar scene', etc., have driven us back to 'epidemic' conditions. Looking at the map, nearly every large and small city in OK, CA,KS, NE, IA, NM, FL, and most back east are seeing rising cases

That's really put the damper on much travel here at the N4CD QTH in TX. Same for many other county hunters – the majority of whom are in the 'senior' endangered category. For someone 20-40, the death rate is 0.2% or so if they get COVID. For those over 70, it's more like 5-10%, with 1 in 6 needing hospitalization. For those over 80 – it's really really bad. For them, flip a coin – heads to live, tails you die.

As of May 30, these are the stats of age breakdown of deaths from COVID-19

Age Stats as of May 30

Under 1 year	5
Age 1-4	3
Age 5-14	12
Age 15-24	106
Age 25-34	483
Age 35-44	1524
Age 45-54	4238
Age 55-64	10,586
Age 65-74	18,360
Age 75-84	23,611
Age 85--and over	29,213

You can see that the amount of deaths over age 55 or so are 90% of the total deaths. Over 65.....well, you see the figures.

If you are a senior, YOU DON'T WANT TO GET THIS!

3) **MARAC Annual Convention** – hopefully 'good' in the COVID world when it happens in October. Plan for the best – sign up now!

MARAC Convention
October 25-27, 2020.

<http://ag6v.com/MARAC//>

4) **Gas Prices** - Prices bottomed here at \$1.20 a gallon – but now are back up to \$1.90 for the summer season and still headed up each week. Still reasonably cheap unless you drive a monster truck or SUV and get 13 mpg! Not that I'm using much gas these days.

5) **Ham Activities** – every hamfest and gathering is pretty much shut down through the summer and into the fall. Might be a 'flea market' around but likely to be sparsely attended. I sure wish it could be different – but so far – it's still 'shutdown' and safety.

On the Road with N4CD I

There was time for another road trip. The endless days of rain, rain and more rain and thunderstorms was over – maybe for a couple months. During the summer, we can go for 3 months with little rain. Who knows but usually thunderstorms magically arise Field Day weekend to make it interesting.

At any rate, in the COVID world, I could take a one day trip to the east to get to some new POTA only parks and a few repeats of state parks along the way. This would take a LONG day of driving and putting out parks but I was tired of essentially stay at home for most of the time. Around here, restaurants were opening inside – at 25% of capacity. Most were nearly empty inside as most patrons ordered take out or made meals at home.

So – early – at 5:15 I woke up and got ready. Breakfast at 5:35 am with a nuked Jimmy Dean Egg/Canadian bacon biscuit and coffee - and I was on the road at 6am after antenna installation on rear deck of the Malibu. The sun was coming up soon so it was light outside. The route starts headed toward downtown Dallas – traffic 'medium' on US 75 and then the 'beltway' around to route 80 headed east to I-20 going east to LA. Not sure where all the folks were going on a Saturday morning as just about every 'entertainment venue' here is still shut down – like theme parks, sports games, auto races, movie theaters, etc. Maybe off to the lakes and vacation homes there? Oh well, not to worry about them. Gas prices up to \$1.60/gal from the lows of \$1.20/gal a month ago. Folks must be traveling more. I still made good time.

After nearly two hours, I reached **Tyler State Park – KFF/K-3059** - built by the CCC boys in the 1930s. Pulled in and had a short run – working a dozen CQ WPX stations and a few dozen park chasers. This has been run 24 times with over 850 contacts made. I added in 49 more QSOs. This was the weekend of the WPX contest which filled 40m end to end at this time and would fill 20M later in the day. No DX stations for most of today made it through. I suspect many CW folks were active in the CW WPX contest. I'd make a few dozen contacts during the day.



Previously, I had printed off my state pass reservation. I had to wait for the park to open at 8am but was busy on the radio at 7:50 putting out the park. Let in past the gate at 8am. Be sure, if you plan to run TX parks, to do it. No problem getting in here or at the other TX park today to be run. At most TX parks – no reservations – no entry. They don't want to deal with 'paperwork' and entry fees in the COVID world.

Headed out to the next a half hour away – an all time new one (ATNO) – **The Nature Center WMA – K-6588 in Smith County TX**. It's a POTA only (Parks on the Air) as it is too small to be a WWFF one.

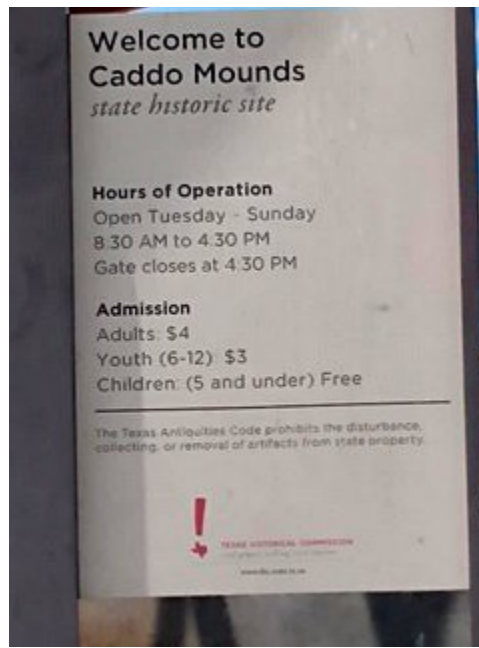
From the state web site:

“The 82 acre Nature Center was developed from a former game bird hatchery into an ecological education center. A visitor's center, indoor and outdoor classrooms, wetlands, grasslands and ponds provides a natural setting for area birds and animals. The facility and surrounding lands are available for use by instructors or other outdoor enthusiasts. The Nature Center grounds hosts a year round schedule of native plants and inhabitants for visitors to enjoy. “



I had a good run here with 26 in the log. The band conditions were not great. On 20M I had to operate on 14.113 as everything below 14.070 was filled with CQ Test with stations piled on top of each other vying to contacts. The contest had been raging for over 12 hours now with most activity on 80m moving to 40m and later up to 20 and 15. . For POTA, you only need 10Q for an activation. 30M conditions were really poor. I didn't hear any signals on 40M so skipped running it here. I'm sure others will be back here as it's in the Tyler TX area not far from Tyler State Park. Both in Smith County TX.

Now it was more than an hour to get to the next park almost straight south. You head to Alto, TX (pop 1,300 or so) then east on Highway 21 for 8 miles. You'll arrive at **Caddo Mounds State Historic Site – K-6543 – in Cherokee County TX.**



From the state web site:

“Caddo Mounds State Historic Site is a prehistoric village and ceremonial center located on the original El Camino Real de los Tejas. Visitors can walk the 0.7 mile self-guided interpretive trail that includes the grass house, mounds, and borrow pit. An additional 0.4 mile interpretive self-guided trail along El Camino Real de los Tejas allows visitors to learn about the historic road and see a piece of the original road.

Self-guided tours of Caddo Mounds typically take 1.5 hours, and guided tours are 1.5 - 2+ hours depending on selected activities . The site has two golf carts available on request for those who do not wish to walk the trails. Visitor parking is available on site.”

The Caddo selected this site for a permanent settlement about A.D. 800. The alluvial prairie possessed ideal qualities for the establishment of a village and ceremonial center: good sandy loam soil for agriculture, abundant natural food resources in the surrounding forest and a permanent water source of springs that flowed into the nearby Neches River.

From here, the Caddo dominated life in the region for approximately 500 years. They drew local native groups into economic and social dependence through trade and a sophisticated ceremonial/political system. They traded with other native groups in Central Texas and as far away as present-day Illinois and Florida. Caddo Mounds’

sphere of influence was only a small portion of the broader Caddo cultural domain encompassing northeast Texas, northwest Louisiana, western Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma. The Caddo culture, in turn, had trade connections, and perhaps religious and political ties, with similar cultures farther east in the Mississippi Valley and beyond.

The settlement at Caddo Mounds flourished until the 13th century, when the site was abandoned. Most archeologists agree that the elite ruling class left Caddo Mounds after the loss of their regional influence, as outlying hamlets and trade groups became self-sufficient and grew less dependent on the cultural center in religious and political matters. There is no evidence that war played a major role at Caddo Mounds, either in the maintenance of local influence or as a cause of abandonment. The Caddo culture that remained in the area was similar to the earlier culture in many ways, but lacked much of its sophisticated ceremonialism and material wealth.

The Hasinai Caddo groups continued to live through the 1830s in their traditional East Texas homeland in the Neches and Angelina River valleys, but by the early 1840s, all Caddo groups had moved to the Brazos River area to remove themselves from Anglo-American repressive measures and colonization efforts. They remained there until the U.S. government placed them on the Brazos Indian Reservation in 1855, and then in 1859 the Caddo (about 1,050 people) were removed to the Washita River in Indian Territory, now western Oklahoma.

The Caddo continue to live in western Oklahoma, primarily near the Caddo Nation Headquarters outside Binger, Oklahoma.”

It seems that disaster struck this historic site in April. Continuing from the state web site:

“On Saturday, April 13, during the annual Caddo Culture Day event, Caddo Mounds State Historic Site was hit by an EF3 tornado. Many visitors were injured and one guest lost her life. Damage to the visitor center and museum is extensive, and a replica Caddo grass house was completely destroyed.

Tragically, many people were injured and one person lost their life.

Site staff had only minor injuries. But members of the Caddo Nation and of the Friends of Caddo Mounds were among the many injured and traumatized by this horrific event. We have seen media accounts that 30–50 individuals required medical attention and that some of these were transported by helicopter to area hospitals.

Roughly 50 percent of the visitors center building was demolished by the storm.

Fortunately, the exhibit items in the visitors center were replicas—we do not display actual tribal artifacts out of respect for the Caddo people and their beliefs.

The Grass House is gone. Some interpretive signage on the site grounds is intact, but some was lost. Conditions of the utility buildings across the road range from demolished to mostly intact. The demolished structures were primarily garage space for tractors. Those vehicles appeared to be okay, but were inaccessible when staff visited. The site managers' house was slightly damaged. On Wednesday, April 17, power was restored at the site.”

The visitor center was demolished and now there's a manufactured building visitor center – which will re-open June 2. For my visit it was closed but it didn't matter much. Lady ranger came out – pointed best place to park for the visit – and I headed to it and stopped and sat in car for an hour. I just intended to operate here with the radio. You can still walk around and visit the sites along the trail. It was getting 'hot' with temp up to 88F under blazing sun. No shade.

This was a first time activation (POTA only) so I hoped for a good run. Band conditions were absolutely miserable. SFI=69 or 70, A=4, K=0 which should be OK but only rated 'fair' on 30M and 20M, and poor on 17M and above. It wasn't. No DX, mid day slump and not much happening. Managed to put 57Q in the log – with half a dozen WPX stations in that mix. Put some SSB Qs in the log for a change and tried 17M with some worked on 17M CW. Just a handful on 30M and 3 on 40M CW.

This is also a 'two fer' with the El Camino Real de los Tejas K-4568 which runs along Highway 21 for a bit here. It's the 'royal road' from San Antonio TX over to Nachodoches, LA that the Spanish missionaries used to carry the looted wealth from Mexico and 'church contributions' back and forth along the trail.

Not far away, also on Highway 21 a bit to the east, is **Mission Tejas State Park KFF/K-3040 in Houston County TX**. This also lies on the Texas Trail – El Camino Real de los Tejas.



From the state web site:

“El Camino Real

From 1686 to 1692, the Spanish identified a 2,500-mile route from Guerrero, Mexico, to Louisiana. It passed through Laredo, San Antonio, and what is now this park. The route became known as El Camino Real: The Royal Road.

People traveled this route pursuing business opportunities and seeking a new life. Alternative routes were established during the 1800s, and the Royal Road fell into disuse.

Texas Highway 21 and Louisiana Highway 5 follow much of the path of El Camino Real.

In 2004, this historic road became El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

French colonists settled on the Texas coast in 1685. In response, the Spaniards built Mission San Francisco de los Tejas in a village of Caddo Indians in 1690. It was the first mission in the province of Texas.

The Caddo blamed a smallpox epidemic that winter on the Spaniards and plotted to overthrow them. When the Spaniards discovered the plot in 1693, they burned the mission and retreated to Mexico.

Spanish friars tried to rebuild the mission in 1716. But conflict between France and Spain led them to abandon it a few years later.

In 1828, Joseph and Willie Masters Rice built a log home close to El Camino Real. They added on to the cabin for the next 10 years.

Imagine yourself with little food, less money and no job. This was the case for many Americans during the Great Depression. President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933. The CCC provided jobs and job skills by hiring young men to work on conservation projects.

The program enrolled men between the ages of 17 and 25 who qualified for public assistance. They earned clothing, food, medical care and \$30 a month; they sent some of their pay home to their families.

The CCC built a model of the early home and made improvements all over the park including a small lake. “

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You can run the Trail here but it is away from the parking area where it runs through the park. One of the hiking routes goes to sections of the original trail.

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Off Highway 21, you can get to Davy Crockett NF if you have the time for an activation within a mile.

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From here it was about 3.5 hours to home. Along the way, I could easily run one more and make it home by dinner time. I stopped by **Gus Engeling WMA** – in both systems with different numbers! **KFF-4879 and K-6564** in Anderson County TX.



Band conditions were not great and I had to work at it to get to 55Q. About 6 contesters in the mix and 12Qs on 17M SSB and CW. 30M provided 8, 40M only 1.

from the web page:

Gus Engeling WMA (GEWMA) is located in northwest Anderson County, 21 miles northwest of Palestine. This 10,958-acre area was purchased from 1950 to 1960 under the Pittman-Robertson Act using Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program funds. The GEWMA's primary purpose is to function as a wildlife research and demonstration area for the Post Oak Savannah Ecoregion. The area is comprised of 2,000 acres of hardwood bottomland floodplain and almost 500 acres of natural watercourses, 350 acres of wetlands: marshes and swamps and nearly 300 acres of sphagnum moss bogs.

The GEWMA is an island of Post Oak Savannah surrounded by coastal bermuda grass pastures, harvested timberlands, and fragmented wildlife habitat. Its rolling sandy hills dominated by post oak uplands, bottomland hardwood forests, natural springs, pitcher plant bogs, sloughs, marshes, and relict pine communities contain a rich variety of wildlife. Sound wildlife management tools like prescribed burning, grazing, brush control and hunting are used to demonstrate the results of proven practices to resource managers, landowners, and other interested groups or individuals.

History

Historically, the upland sites of the Post Oak Savannah were open and dominated by waist-high grasses and large scattered trees. In addition, early observers reported large oak "motts" or islands of hardwood forests scattered throughout the grassland prairie. Massive, mature oaks dominated the deep, rich, moist soils of bottomlands. Both

uplands and bottomlands supported an abundance of wildlife in early reports.

The Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission purchased most of the land comprising the GEWMA between 1950 and 1960. Federal-Aid in Wildlife Restoration Funds purchased the area to act as a wildlife research and demonstration site for the Post Oak Savannah Ecoregion where trained personnel could study wildlife and wildlife management practices.

The area was originally named the Derden Wildlife Management Area after Milze L. Derden, from whom much of this land was purchased. The area was renamed in 1952 after Gus A. Engeling, the first biologist assigned to the area, was shot and killed by a poacher on December 13, 1951.

The GEWMA has not been impacted by man's presence as much as most of the Post Oak Savannah. Although livestock grazed the area for many years, it was not extensively cleared. Mature bottomland forests still dominate Catfish Creek. Native tallgrasses such as little bluestem and indiagrass can still be found in the areas pastures and open woodlands. “

Had to bypass one other park on the way home – getting late

From here it was a two hour haul to home at 70 and 75 mph speed limit roads. First about 40 miles of two lanes to hit I-45 and the rest up I-45 to downtown Dallas and then up US-75. Fortunately was early enough to avoid the 'protesters' (rioters) who burned more of downtown Dallas looting more stores in another night of ANTIFA inspired leftist incited crime spree. Later they blocked many roads, looted more businesses, burned out stores, some minority owned, overturned police cars, etc.

Home by dinner time after 12 hours in the seat either driving or operating. Whew! Long day and 371.6 miles on the car. Somewhere between the last park and home (likely after 25 miles of very rough surface US287 which rattled the car), the 40m resonator fell off.....so that's another maintenance item to do this week to replace it. Those miles cause all sorts of problems to develop.

250Qs in the log for the park runs.

Solar News I

The biggest solar flare since 2017 could be a sign that our star is waking up from a long slumber, according to NASA.

The NASA Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) spotted the 'strongest flare since October 2017' on May 29, suggesting it may be entering a new solar cycle.

A solar flare is a burst of radiation coming from sunspots - relatively cool patches on the surface of the Sun - and NASA says there's also an increase in sunspot activity.

The flare poses no danger to Earth as it wasn't aimed at our planet - but NASA says it is a sign of the star moving to a more active phase of its 11-year cycle.

The flares were too weak to pass the threshold at which the Space Weather Prediction Center would trigger an alert to scientists on Earth, NASA said.

After several months of very few sunspots and little solar activity, scientists and space weather forecasters are keeping their eye on this new cluster to see whether they grow or quickly disappear.

According to NASA 'the sunspots may well be harbingers of the Sun's solar cycle ramping up and becoming more active.'

Whether they are just a temporary change or a move to a new more active phase won't be known for a few months months, NASA said.

'It takes at least six months of solar observations and sunspot-counting after a minimum to know when it's occurred,' the space agency wrote on its website.

'Because that minimum is defined by the lowest number of sunspots in a cycle, scientists need to see the numbers consistently rising before they can determine when exactly they were at the bottom.'

It means that solar minimum is only recognisable after the fact - you can't say 'we're currently in solar minimum' as it takes up to 12 months to confirm - by which point we would be out of solar minimum.

During its 11-year cycle activity from the Sun rises and falls, sunspots also rise and fall in number - these sunspots are tracked by NASA and other agencies.

By tracking the sunspots they are able to determine and predict the progress of the solar cycle and solar activity coming towards the Earth.

'Currently, scientists are paying close attention to the sunspot number as it's key to determining the dates of solar minimum,' NASA wrote.

We are currently in Solar Cycle 24 but if we are going through solar minimum then we would be entering the start of Solar Cycle 25.

'This new sunspot activity could be a sign that the Sun is possibly revving up to the new cycle and has passed through minimum,' said NASA.

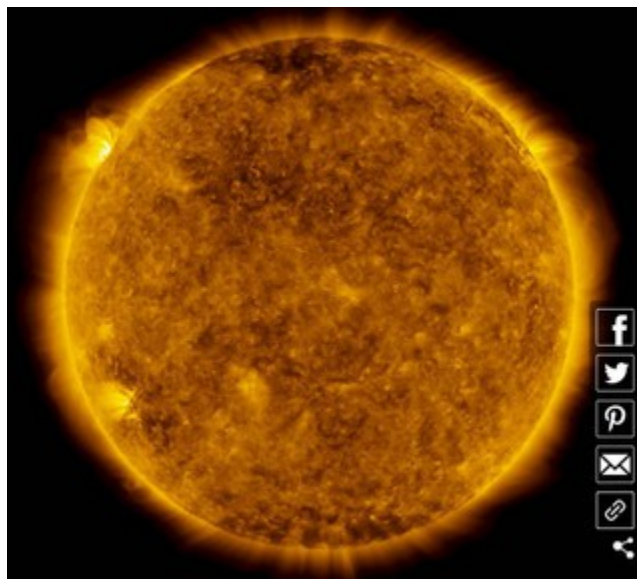
The natural variability of the Sun is one reason why we won't know the exact details for at least six months.

If numbers of sunspots go up or down in any one month, that doesn't mean it won't reverse course the next month.

Which is why scientists need long-term data to build a picture of the trends the Sun is currently going through to decide if it is entering the next cycle.

'Commonly, that means the number we use to compare any given month is the average sunspot number from six months both backward and forward in time.

'Meaning that right now, we can confidently characterize what October 2019 looks like compared to the months before it (there were definitely fewer sunspots!), but not yet what November looks like compared to that,' NASA said.



The flares detected on May 29 were classed as M-class solar flares - coming from the new sunspots seen on the surface of the Sun.

Solar flares are given a classification of either A, B, C, M or X depending on just how powerful the radiation they emit is when it reaches the Earth.

An M-class flare is 'medium-sized' and if hitting the Earth directly can cause brief radio blackouts over the polar regions and minor radiation storms.

However, these flares were not pointed towards the Earth and pose no danger.

According to SpaceWeatherLive this is the first M-class flare from the Sun in 925 days and said it is 'very likely' this is the start of the next solar cycle.

The solar cycle is an average of 11 years - but it can last from nine to 14 years and it starts from a solar minimum - the least active point in a stars cycle.

The cycles have been measured since 1755 and this would be the 25th in the chain.

At peak, during solar maximum, the Sun produced more electrons and protons and lets off more intense solar flares.

'Interesting times and possibly a historic moment if this indeed is the first M-class event of the new Solar Cycle,' said SpaceWeatherLive.com.

Kentucky QSO Party

This was an active KY QP – much more than normal years. Many KY stations made it on the air - in the COVID era of 'stay at home' especially for seniors. At least 3 mobiles were out – and recognized. Looks like about half the KY counties were on the air from fixed stations or given out by mobiles

Most of the activity was 40 and 80m making it rough for distant stations to enjoy this one.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

N4TY Mobile 738 CW QSO



N4TY - A1

THANK YOU to everyone that dropped by to work us, and who spotted us too. Without your help, our Rover operation would be lonely indeed.

My driver (Deb XYL) was very tired, and we had to trim out ALLEN county, and she drove up I-65 to finish. I apologize for that.

Also, I regret not operating on 20M. The 40M pile was never-ending, and it didn't occur to me to QSY. This is a lesson learned, I'll do better next time.

THANKS again everyone!

Tyler N4TY

Deb N4TY/2

AE8M Mobile 262 cw 102 ssb

“Very good activity, both in-state and out-of-state. I operated mobile in 3 counties, parking to operate. Rig was K2/100 with hamsticks (40, 20) and Hustler (80, 75).”

KM4CH mobile 358 cw

rover: Anderson;Franklin;Shelby;Henry;Spencer;Mercer;Boyle;Lincoln.

KY4KY multi-op bonus station - 1472 cw 902 ssb

Multi-multi club effort as bonus station

K3WJV - fixed PA 77cw 53 ssb 42 mults

First time in this contest. Don't know how I never got in for at least a few Q's over the years. Maybe has something to do with my birthday being on June 7th or the time of the year, it sure was a pretty day here. Sat out on the back deck for a few minutes throughout the day.

Nice that KY4KY was in multiple counties for 13 Q's. Tnx to the three mobiles that I know of. Q's per KM4CH-9, N4TY-13, and AE8M-6. 80 mtrs was mostly rough copy with the static crashes and some I just couldn't pull in for a contact. Checked 160 a few times. Also checked 15 a few times and managed to hear W4CDA. Didn't hear anybody in the first hour, W4NJA was the 1st Q at 1401z. Also never heard K4WW showing 500 Q's on the online scoreboard. Bumped into a few of the CwOps members even on phone. I used to just do cw in the QP's but for the last year or so I have done mixed mode for more action. Enjoy saying hello to guys I normally work on cw all the time.

K1RO fixed NH 82 cw 47 ssb 44 mults

Worked KY4KY and K4KCG on 6 band/modes each, W4NJA on 4 band/modes, and K4MSU only on 20 SSB.

I have never made more than a few contacts in this contest and was pleasantly surprised by the amount of activity. The weather here was nice during the day, so I ended up doing some stuff outside and checking back periodically. Had to shut down for a while early evening when a strong thunderstorm blew through.

I started off low power for the 2X score multiplier, but signals were so weak on 40 that I couldn't work anyone, and so I turned on the amp. Signals on 20 were a lot better for me than 40 most of the day, but the activity wasn't as strong.

It was nice to have mobiles/rovers to chase again after so many QSO parties this spring with everyone staying home. 40 was tough, but I managed QSOs with N4TY in 17 of his counties. KM4CH had a great mobile signal on both 40 and 20 -- 9 Qs and 6 counties.

AE8M also had fine signal and I worked him on SSB a couple times as well as CW -- 8 Qs and 3 counties.

Thanks to the home stations and mobiles for a fun contest.

K8TE - fixed - NM 29 cw 11 ssb

Propagation was tough for this event in the Rio Grande valley of New Mexico. Many KY ops stayed on 40m, sometimes 80, and little to no activity on 20m. There weren't a lot of strong stations here that I could hear. I missed the first 90 minutes due to lightning (again) left over from Friday night.

When spotted, I could work about 75% of those stations. Tuning around, I found others not spotted. I wonder why so many QSO Party enthusiasts don't spot on S&P?

Thanks to all the non-contesters who braved this new world! I appreciate you QSO's! Propagation wasn't bad, it just wasn't great. Better antennas are on the way here. Thanks for the QSO's to all, even those outside of KY who answered my CQ followed by "NM" which is also a State.

73, Bill, K8TE

N8II - Fixed WV - 69 cw 59 ssb 49 mults

Activity on 20 was low, the band was open from here to at least the western 2/3 of KY for at least 2 hours. I was out of sync with N4TY/M; he seemed to take a big break every few hours and I missed him when he got back or could not find him right away when he moved to 7056 KHz. Thanks to N4TY, and rovers - John, AE8M, and John, KM4CH for making it interesting. KM4CH did not attract that much attention despite being near same signal strength as N4TY here. Perhaps if he had signed KM4CH/cty it would have helped. Conditions on 40 were ideal with a drop off of signals around 23Z, but they were back at 01Z. The QRN on 80 from storms was very loud here before the band opened well to KY and never abated. I struggled to copy stations on SSB, and they struggled to copy me which reduced the number of Q's. It was so noisy that activity had really declined at 01Z on 75/80M.

73, Jeff

West Virginia QSO Party

There are 55 counties in WV. Several mobiles were out and running including N8OYY on SSB and W8OP on cw. A fair number of fixed stations made it on the air. As usual, much of the activity was on 40 and 80M and not so much on 20M. Well, for this contest, the SFI was back at 67, sunspot number was zero once again, A index=5, and conditions weren't in the 'great' category. Or even good. Some appear to have worked 40+ of the 55 counties.

From the 3830 contest reflector scores/comments:

WB8WKQ - Fixed - MI - 25 cw 50 ssb 31 counties

Pretty fun. My all time high in QSOs, prior to this year, was 38. I practically doubled that this year, and tripled my score. Was that me or was that more participation from the WV ops? I'd guess the latter. 40M was of course my money band with over 50 Qs. Interesting though, I kept checking 20M and really didn't get any short skip (3 Q's, two of which were N8II). N8II was a true 599 on 20 CW, but I couldn't make much more on 20M. I don't know if that's a tip of the hat to Jeff's signal, or just specific propagation. I think part of my success this year was following NB3A/M around like a sick puppy dog. Thanks to Justin and the other mobiles, N8OYY and W8OP. Again, pretty fun and thanks for the great turnout of WV stations.

NS2N - fixed NY - 27 cw 38 ssb 30 counties

Noisiest contest /// every band had QRN. 20m ghosted as expected from here
thanks to the mobiles ... really helped out, and all WV stations in the contest

Paul NS2N

AA4TI - fixed FL 21 cw 27 ssb 16 counties

Very tough going today. Good propagation on 20 meters to WV but no one was

operating there. Did not have much success on 40 meters until early evening. Signals were generally weak from WV all day and evening. Worked W8OP mobile a few times but he was very much hit and miss. There seemed to be a bit more WV activity than last year but still not all that many operators.

WB4AFP - fixed - SC 16 cw 27 ssb 19 counties

WVQP activity was up this year! It was great to work NB3A/m in several counties. I missed the first five hours of the party. Great to work many of my WV friends.. N8II, WT8WV, K8NYG, WA8KAN and of course W8WVA four times.

73s Dave WN4AFP

N8II - fixed - WV 230 cw 935 ssb

A memorable event for me and especially because of a "seismic" increase in in state activity. I would guess I worked close to 3 times as many WV QSO's as last year. There was significant sporadic E for at least 7 out of the 12 hours. There were 2 good 20M openings into New England at the start and in the 23Z hour. Around 24Z I worked a few WV stations in other parts of the state and several OH and KY stations on 20. 40 was excellent to the close in states including WV for several hours. 19 and 20Z were fairly poor for any short skip as were the last 2 hours. I checked 10M a couple of times, not much happening, but 15 was open well to the west coast for 2-4 hours with almost no activity.

I worked all states. There were very few EU Q's compared to last year. Best DX was loud VK7RG at 03Z on 20 phone.

It was fun to work some high rates; I made 102 QSO's in first 30 minutes on 20 phone and first hour was 167. Other hours over 100/hr were: 18Z-135,19Z-110, 23Z-119,00Z-133,01Z-107,02Z-105. Right around 03Z activity plummeted. I think this was the first year when end time was moved from 02Z to 04Z. My overall rate was approximately 120/hr in about 9 hours 40 minutes on the air. Power was only 200W.

Thanks to all of the WV stations who were active making it fun for all. And thanks to the many who just called in for a casual QSO along with the serious ops. This is the first year in a while with decent in state activity, a trend which we hope will continue.

73, Jeff N8II

K1RO - fixed - NH 35 cw 87 ssb 45 counties

I thought I would just spend a short while in this contest working the regulars, but the excellent home station turnout and three mobile operations kept me coming back to check. Was pleased to work quite a few needed counties. Conditions on 40 were decent throughout the contest. 80 was a bit noisy from thunderstorms in the area, but the short skip was fun on 20.

OM2VL - fixed - DX 43 cw 39 ssb 38 counties

The condx were very bad. On 20m I heard only some stations who called N8OYY/M, but here unfortunately no any whisper.

Fortunately W8OP/M was also on 20m from each county and he had good signal on CW.

Later 20m opened and was open till 04:30Z also to the West Coast, but unfortunately no any station called me from WV.

Unfortunately the 3rd mobile NB3A (same as during VA QP in March) was only on 40m SSB and on the part of the band where EU can't transmit ... :(I missed so many QSOs because of this and when no DX category it is extremely big handicap for EU stations.

My score is more than 4x higher than in 2017, but I heard in pileups all USA QP BIG GUNs who can work 40/80m SSB + NB3A/M so for me no chance win this year.

Thanks to Ed - N8OYY/M - I worked 3 new counties (Calhoun, Clay, Webster / missed Tucker).

I still need Fayette, Tucker, Tyler, Wetzel counties.

W0BH - fixed - KS 38 - 32 24 counties

I was working in the home "office" most of the day which just happened to include my ham shack, so it was fun to take breaks and visit WV from time to time. Propagation was

there most of the time on both 40 and 20, but signals were quite weak on 40 so it was challenging at times.

It's always fun to work Jeff/N8II, this time with 9 contacts including 2 on 10m! We did QSY to 80SSB at one point, but I didn't hear him for some reason even though I subsequently worked several other WV stations calling CQ on 80SSB. We did have lots of noise from nearby thunderstorms which got worse as the evening progressed.

Thanks to the 3 mobiles for all the Qs and mults: N8OYY (17), W8OP (8), and NB3A (3). Great to see mobiles in action again and I hope we keep hearing them going forward.

End of an Era

Gator rides no more to the QTH of Ed, KN4Y, downshifting and sliding his 4xs to a screeching halt at the recycled railroad tie. No more trips to pick up the lattes for a visit. No more hearing how many QSO's Ed had the various state QSO parties and which mobiles made it in the KN4Y that month. He kept us up to date on the cw happenings.

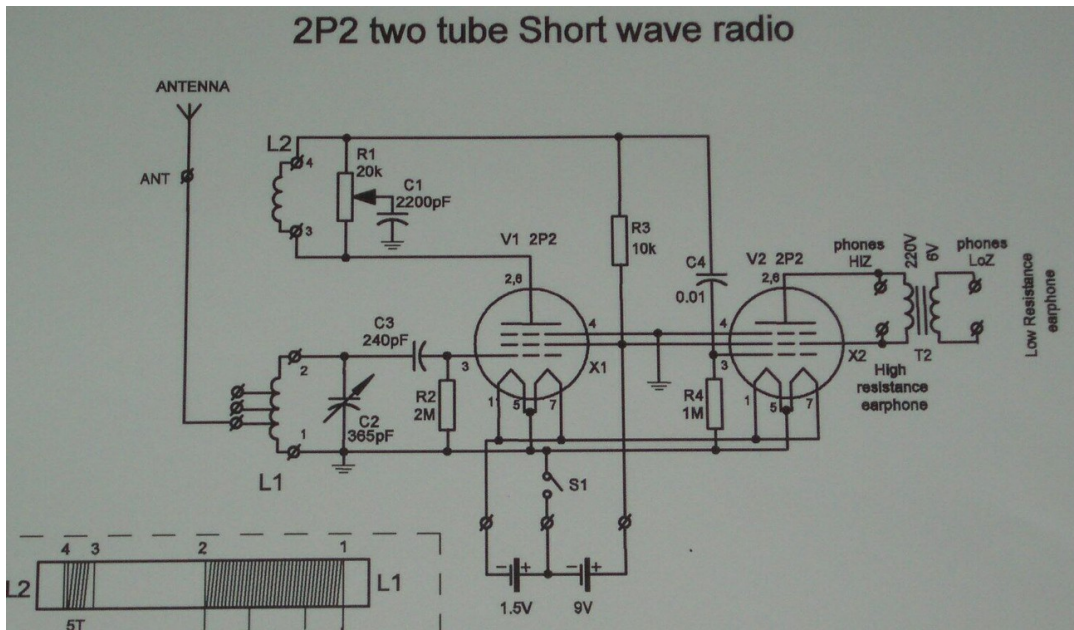
There won't be a "Dateline CW" column in the MARAC Road Runner by Ed, KN4Y. No more big cw signal out of Wakulla County, FL.

Ed, KN4Y, USACA #757, passed away in June, 2020 at age 88.

On the Trail of Regens

An interesting new kit showed up on Ebay this month. For the past year, one Chinese seller has been advertising 1 and 2 and 3 'tube' FM superhet receivers using the 2P2 tube. That tube is similar to the 3S4 – a popular tube back in the 'portable radio' days of the 40s and 50s.

The new kit is a simple two tube regen for the shortwave band from 6-25 MHz. There's a small PC board where all the parts mount. No fine tuning capacitor which it probably really needs but could easily be added. Say 10-15 pf across the main tuning cap.



Simple regen detector with regen controlled by R1 variable which shunts some of the feedback to ground. Pentode detector in classical design followed by one audio amp stage. \$33 plus \$4 shipping on Ebay. You can use old style high impedance phones or newer low impedance ones with the output transformer included.

A few other items for regen fans showed up this month on Ebay. Some very early plug-in coils from about 1926-28 (now almost 94 years old!) showed up for sale. There were made by Aero Products, Inc, which provided 'kits' and parts to people interested in building their own. Back then, assembled radios were expensive – and the manufacturers of assembled radios had to pay very onerous high patent fees for the regen circuit to RCA and the Gang of Four. So radio building was a lot less expensive way to go, and the short wave craze started after 1926 as international broadcasters jumped on board. By the early 1930s, it was really really a craze. By then, the Great Depression was everywhere in the world. As the 1930s wore on, Hitler came to power in Germany and things started going downhill fast there.

~ THE ORIGINAL ~
AERO COIL



**95%
AIR
DIELECTRIC**



**SHORT WAVE
REMOVABLE-COIL
TUNER**



**15-130
METERS
\$12.50**

AERO-PRODUCTS, INC.
4611 E. RAVENSWOOD AVE. CHICAGO, ILL.
PROTECTED BY PATENTS ISSUED
AUG. 25, 1925 JAN. 5, 1926

TO BE WITHOUT MEASURING DEFECTS



Sadly, only 3 of the 4 coils were present, but it was still a very good find. I've got at least one radio that these fit into, including a whole Aero kit from that era.

Another brand of plug in coil, from about the late 1920s, showed up. Air-King. Never have seen this brand so I bought them, too, off Ebay. Sadly, here, too, only 3 coils showed up, with the lowest frequency range coil likely still in the radio in which these were used. Likely 1929-32 era.



That's all new that showed up on Ebay and elsewhere this month. Prices were good on the items.

Just about all these plug in coils were for circuits that used a 140pf main tuning capacitor. That was the 'standard' back then.

You have to keep in mind that less than half the homes in the US had commercial power in 1922 when broadcasting started. It would take till 1940 to connect most of the remaining homes to the power grid. Battery operated radios persisted through the 1940s for the farm and rural areas. Regen sets had the fewest power hungry tubes. However, as main power distribution increased, a/c power sets took off in the late 1920s with super-het designs which were a lot more easy to operate and provided better performance and selectivity. Simple regens still, however, provided an easy way to listen in on short waves and worked decently there.

You have to remember that assembled ham gear was very, very expensive in the early 30's, and 25% unemployment made it difficult for society. Most people barely got by and there was no spare cash for ham goodies. Folks built their own – often from obsolete broadcast sets from the early 1920s that fell by the wayside.

In the COVID-19 World

Why to 'stay at home' and socially ISOLATE

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North Texas family shaken after 18 relatives test positive for COVID-19 following surprise birthday party. Three are now hospitalized, including two elderly family members and one woman battling breast cancer.

CARROLLTON, Texas — As North Texas watches COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations surge, one family is shouldering a health crisis that they never expected to face. That crisis, all began on May 30 when just a single relative, unknowingly infected with COVID-19, interacted with seven family members at a surprise birthday party.

Those seven family members then contracted and spread the virus to 10 other relatives. Now, Ron Barbosa is keeping track of 18 people in his family who have tested positive for COVID-19. Barbosa didn't attend the party himself, but the celebration was for his daughter-in-law who turned 30. However, Barbosa's nephew hosted.

That nephew is the one who was unknowingly infected, thinking a slight cough was the byproduct of working in construction. Before the party, he played golf with a few family members who also attended the event, according to Barbosa. Even though everyone did their best to stay socially distant, Barbosa said it wasn't enough.

"It wasn't that long. It was only a couple of hours," Barbosa, a volunteer EMT said. "But during that brief time, somehow the other 18 family members are now infected with COVID." Barbosa, who is also married to a doctor, said he and his wife refused to go to the party due to safety reasons.

However, it was a party that by current state health standards appeared harmless. A total of 25 people attended, and not all of them arrived and stayed for the same duration.

"When people started getting sick, we really let everyone have it," Barbosa said. "We knew this was going to happen, I mean this whole time this has been going on we've been terrified." Among those infected are two young children, two grandparents, a cancer patient and Barbosa's parents, who are in their 80s.

Three are now hospitalized: Barbosa's parents Frank and Carole, along with his sister Kathy, who is battling breast cancer. Kathy, per Barbosa, is recovering and feeling better, despite contracting the virus while simultaneously undergoing chemo treatments.

He says she went to the party and got infected, even though she was socially distanced outside on a porch. But Barbosa's parents are in a much tougher situation. Frank and Carole are highschool sweethearts and have been married almost 68 years. Barbosa said it's likely Carole infected Frank after she stopped by the party to drop something off.

Carole has been hospitalized since June 13, and Frank has been in a hospital since June 17. Frank is in the ICU and is on life support. Barbosa told WFAA that he is inches away from being put on a ventilator. "My dad's hanging on by a thread," Barbosa said. "They're saying this is one of the last straws for my dad."

[https://www.khou.com/article/news/north-texas-family-shaken-after-18-relatives-test-positive-for-covid-19-following-surprise-birthday-party/287-ea8960ea-4c3c-40c1-b75e-f4437fe6f836?](https://www.khou.com/article/news/north-texas-family-shaken-after-18-relatives-test-positive-for-covid-19-following-surprise-birthday-party/287-ea8960ea-4c3c-40c1-b75e-f4437fe6f836?fbclid=IwAR0ZDDL5wHZrZhqbME237qldlkYgFg4sH2lN1x1POrBB8dP9Rgw87a6yT0k)

[fbclid=IwAR0ZDDL5wHZrZhqbME237qldlkYgFg4sH2lN1x1POrBB8dP9Rgw87a6yT0k?](https://www.khou.com/article/news/north-texas-family-shaken-after-18-relatives-test-positive-for-covid-19-following-surprise-birthday-party/287-ea8960ea-4c3c-40c1-b75e-f4437fe6f836?fbclid=IwAR0ZDDL5wHZrZhqbME237qldlkYgFg4sH2lN1x1POrBB8dP9Rgw87a6yT0k)

[fbclid=IwAR0ZDDL5wHZrZhqbME237qldlkYgFg4sH2lN1x1POrBB8dP9Rgw87a6yT0k](https://www.khou.com/article/news/north-texas-family-shaken-after-18-relatives-test-positive-for-covid-19-following-surprise-birthday-party/287-ea8960ea-4c3c-40c1-b75e-f4437fe6f836?fbclid=IwAR0ZDDL5wHZrZhqbME237qldlkYgFg4sH2lN1x1POrBB8dP9Rgw87a6yT0k)

Many Michigan diners heralded the reopening of restaurant dining rooms on Monday, June 8 as a return to some form of normalcy in the pandemic. However, a new batch of novel coronavirus cases traced to an East Lansing bar are shedding light on the risks of dining out.

Health officials in Ingham County are telling customers of Harper's Restaurant and Brew Pub who visited the establishment between Friday, June 12 and Saturday, June 20 to seek testing for COVID-19 and self-quarantine. At least 51 new cases of novel coronavirus are linked to the Harper's outbreak, according to WDIV. Of those cases, 49 represent people who actually visited the bar. Most of the confirmed cases were people in their late teens and early 20s. Symptoms can take up to 14 days to surface.

<https://detroit.eater.com/2020/6/23/21300673/michigan-restaurants-bars-east-lansing-close-covid-19-positive-cases>

Likely, each of those 51 people likely infected 1-2-3 or 20 more and that's the way it spread. Maybe 1 person wound up infecting 200 – 500 people. Those people went on to infect 2-5 or more each – and so on.

Awards Issued

Bingo #373	N9JF, Jim	June 8, 2020
USCA 5 th Time #119	WA3QNT, Bob	June 1, 2020
Bingo II #107	NU0Q, Bill	June 8, 2020
RAS Alabama #26	KB6UF, Ron	June 9, 2020
RAS Alaska #24	KB6UF, Ron	June 20, 2006
RAS – Pennsylvania #26	N8OYY, Ed	June 19, 2020
RAS – Ohio #32	N8OYY, Ed	June 16, 2020
RAS – Arkansas #26	Ron, KB6UF	Nov 28, 1999

Mobile Activity in June

At the beginning of June:

Ron, KB6UF was on his way south from CT after being up in ME and running all the counties there. He headed south putting out the counties along the way. He took a

detour through AL to get needed counties there.

Bill, K0DEQ was putting out counties in MO

Bill, K2HVN ran a few in MD and DE.

KT7Q was running counties in ID and lots in WA

Jerry, W0GXQ, was out and about in CO – later he'd take a trip that including WY counties. Plus UT counties.

He had the KY QSO Party with good activity and three mobiles the weekend of the 6th. N4TY did a great job on CW.

Jim, N7JPF, was running counties in WA

Ed, N8OYY was in WV and OH putting them out by the score. Probably ran a good part of OH counties. Later in the month, he'd be real busy in the WV QSO Party. Also was up in PA putting them out there.

AB4WL/KF4INA took a trip out west and activated parks in SD, WY, and further west into MT. Then into ID. South to UT.

Ed, K8ZZ, headed east to OH running counties along the way. While in OH, out on day trips here and there. Mostly CW. Put out a bunch of MO counties. Out on trips to IN and IL counties during the month.

County Hunters W8OP (CW) and N8OYY (SSB) busy in the WV QSO Party around June 21

KT7Q again busy in ID and OR toward the end of the month. Not much info on him – QRZ doesn't have much and not in MARAC database. He was active in the 7QP.

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end date: June 25 – from the N4CD view:

Most active CW mobile this month– K8ZZ by far – W0GXQ in second place with nice runs to WY, UT and CO.

Most active SSB mobile this month – N8OYY by far. Kudos to N7JPF running in difficult propagation from the far west putting them out.

Events for County Hunters

Nothing – no QSO Parties. No major contests. You'll have to wait for August for the fall QSO party season to resume for 2020. No hamfests or conventions – maybe some again late fall. Maybe into late next year, too. This COVID crap is contagious and too many folks are tired of being 'cooped up' and will likely keep it spreading and spreading.

The MARAC convention is scheduled for October out west. Time to sign up - things might be well under control by then. If not, you'll get your money back. Let's hope for the best.

That's all folks!