

County Hunter News OnLine

June 2024
Volume 20 Issue 6

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 Frequencies are 14.0565, 10.124.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now occasionally on 7188 KHz. The CW folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565). 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

1) Sunspots – Lots of them Solar Activity – Lots of it. Some days absolutely horrible conditions for running counties. K index up to 9, quite often K-2 or K=3. We're at or approaching solar max for this cycle. Great DX on 10m, especially FT-8 and lots of contacts being worked on 6M FT-8.

CQ Magazine K2MGA now SK

From ARRL News:

Longtime amateur radio publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, has become a Silent Key. He passed away on April 27, 2024.

In 1960, Ross started working for Cowan Publishing Company and quickly became Associate Editor for CQ. In 1964, he was promoted to Editor of CQ, when Cowan Publishing moved its offices to Long Island, New York. As Ross became more involved with the business side of the magazine, he was elevated to Vice President/General Manager of the company in 1976. In this role, he was responsible for all fiscal matters and publishing operations for five publications.

His colleagues respected him greatly. “Dick was a friend as well as my boss and we saw eye-to-eye on most things regarding amateur radio. Dick was a leader in the ham radio industry for decades and an innovator in ham radio publishing. He also built the CQ

brand into worldwide leadership in many aspects of the radio hobby, particularly contesting and DXing,” said CQ Editorial Director Rich Moseson, W2VU.

Ross had been Publisher of CQ magazine since 1979. As President of CQ Communications, Inc., he was also publisher of multiple magazine titles, including Popular Communications, CQ VHF, CQ Contest, WorldRadio, Communications Quarterly, CB Radio Magazine, Electronic Servicing & Technology, Modern Electronics, MicroComputer Journal, and Music and Computer Educator. In addition, Ross oversaw the production and publication of CQ Communications books and calendars, the CQ Video Library, and more.

Ross was given the Dayton Hamvention® 2010 Special Achievement Award for his work on CQ.

“I will greatly miss his ideas, his insights, and his friendship. His passing is a great loss for our hobby,” added Moseson.

- - -

de N4CD

Likely CQ Magazine dies along with him, along with the CQ Awards program for USA-CA and WPZ, WAZ. However, lots of activity in CQ WPX contest end of May.

CQ has been unresponsive to inquiries.

Wow!

On May 10th, the Earth got hit with a triple whammy solar ejection, X-class flares and several Earth directed CMEs. Worst 'solar storm' in 20 years. It was rated a G5- the most severe.

We are at the sunspot cycle max. This also tends to produce a lot of solar disturbances such as this. You seldom see this in sunspot minimum type conditions. Note the high Sunspot number of 189!

There was great 'aurora' contacts up north on 6 and 2m (bouncing signals off the aurora

by pointing beams N, NE, NW.). Way back when, when I lived in VA with a nice station on a hilltop, I had a lot of fun when conditions were favorable and could get some 'aurora contacts' on 6m. Could work most things to north and a few further south. Not set up for 6m here in TX. CW. SSB would work 'poorly' as signals come back very distorted but could be done. Fun mode when it happens.

Solar-Terrestrial Data - click to add to web site																								
11 May 2024 1309 GMT	Condition	K-In	A-In																					
SFI: 223 SN: 189	Quiet	0-2	0-7																					
A-Index: 118	Unsettled	3	8-15																					
K-Index: 9 / Plntry	Active	4	16-29																					
X-Ray: M1.7	Minor storm	5	30-49																					
304A: 174.6 @ SEM	Major storm	6	50-99																					
	Severe storm	7-9	>100																					
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Calculated Conditions</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Band</th> <th>Day</th> <th>Night</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>80n-40n:</td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Poor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30n-20n:</td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Poor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17n-15n:</td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Poor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12n-10n:</td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Poor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sig Noise Lvl:</td> <td colspan="2">S30+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Calculated Conditions			Band	Day	Night	80n-40n:	Poor	Poor	30n-20n:	Poor	Poor	17n-15n:	Poor	Poor	12n-10n:	Poor	Poor	Sig Noise Lvl:	S30+	
Calculated Conditions																								
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Sig Noise Lvl:	S30+																							
SFI>180 A<8 K<3=E-W open SFI>180 A<8 K>3=N-S open SFI>250 A>30 K>3=Aurora http://www.n0nbh.com - Copyright Paul L Herrman 2023																								

Note the A index of 118 and K index of 9! Those are 'extreme' for sure.

Aurora was seen as far south as the FL keys and Puerto Rico. In the southern hemisphere, folks in New Zealand saw the 'southern lights'.



As the night wore on, the aurora spread and was visible in places like Alba, Texas, where this picture was taken

Aurora was visible from many locations in the US, including down in Alabama, northern Texas, OK, northern CA, etc.

This was not a day to be trying to run a lot of counties and make a lot of contacts.

MARAC Contest in July

By John, WA4JA

The 2024 edition of the MARAC County Hunting Contest will be on July 27-28.

Here are the updated rules for this year.

U.S. Counties QSO Party Rules

MARAC 2024 U. S. Counties QSO Party. Sponsored by Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club www.marac.org

Dates/Times: 00:00Z July 27, 2024 to 23:59Z July 28, 2024

Objective: To establish radio contact with as many U.S. Counties as possible in all 50 U.S. states with the emphasis on maximum scoring of mobile entries. Contacts are good towards the various MARAC awards including the initial “Worked All Counties Award.”

USA Modes and Categories:

Eligible Modes: CW and Phone. See digital modes for permitted contacts. All logs submitted are for Single Operators.

Multiple operators can participate from one station, but each operator submits an individual entry.

Fixed Categories:

CW/Digital- May be Home or Portable

Phone- May be Home or Portable

Mixed CW/Digital and Phone Fixed- May be Home or Portable

If a portable station operates from more than one fixed location in more than one county, multiple logs may be submitted. Portable stations are required to package equipment or stow antennas for travel. Portable stations shall be set-up less than 3 days before the QSO party starts, and removed within 5 days of the end of the qso party, or during the QSO party. Other stations are in the “Fixed-Home” category.

USA Mobile:

CW/Digital-Single Operator Mobile

Phone-Single Operator Mobile

Mixed-CW/Digital and Phone Mobile

DX:

Mixed CW/Phone Overall Single Operator.

A qualified DX exchange shall be between USA and the DX station. No DX-to-DX contacts are allowed.

Contest Exchanges:

USA stations send RS(T), State and County abbreviation. All logs shall indicate the proper abbreviations for scoring.

DX stations shall send RS(T) and “DX” for their exchange, and must indicate USA state/county abbreviations worked in their received log exchange.

A list of recognized abbreviations can be found at the following URL’s: Credit to Larry, W0QE for formatting and sharing for use

[CountyAbbrev-V3-4col.pdf](#) [CountyAbbrev-V3-4col.doc](#)

Hawaii stations use state/county, Alaskan stations use Judicial Districts 1 through 4.

Operational Guidelines:

Fixed- One individual performs all radio operating and logging functions from a single location as defined by the ARRL Contest Guidelines. A few fixed station footprint may

straddle a county line and they must select one of the counties to exchange for the duration of the QSO Party. See MARAC General Rules for details.

Mobile- A station which is either in motion, or capable of immediately being in motion. This includes transmitter, receiver, power source, antenna(s), and logging equipment. Mobile stations may be moving or, if stopped, be capable of drive-a-way without lowering antennas or loading equipment. Mobile class entrants must use "Mobile" or "/M" appended to the call sign. Drivers are allowed.

Digital Modes: Only digital modes that allow full 2 way exchanges between both stations are allowed, such as FT-4 with proper setup. FT-8 is NOT an allowable mode since a grid square cannot define the county of operation. Allowable digital modes shall count as CW contacts for scoring and duplicate calculations.

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, and 2m are used in this contest. Phone qso's only in the Phone sub bands, CW/Digital qso's only in the CW/Digital sub bands. No cross mode, cross band, repeater, or satellite qso's permitted. A CW/Digital and a Phone contact is allowed on each band for each station.

Suggested Freq's:

CW 50khz up from bottom of band

Phone 1850, 3850, 7250, 14341, 21341, 28341, 50135, 144.200 or 146.550 (FM)

Mobile windows: 5 khz down from suggested freq on HF. If you are a fixed station, please keep these freqs clear for mobile operations. Saturday's contest period overlaps RSGB IOTA Contest, but their rules prohibit operation above 14.300 MHz on 20 Meters SSB.

Scoring:

1 point for U.S. Fixed, 2 Points for outside U.S., and 15 points for U.S. Mobile.

Multipliers: Total of U. S. Counties worked once per mode, regardless of band. A CW or Phone only station has a maximum of 3077 mults. A mixed mode station has a maximum of 6154 mults.

Spotting and Planning: Mobile Operators are encouraged to post their plans for

operation on the K3IMC website, www.countyhunterweb.org/displaytrips.php

During the QSO Party one will find most county hunters follow the W6RK “Mobile Spot Page” at ch.w6rk.com. When posting on W6RK, please include the entire county name and the state abbreviation as mobiles change counties, bands or modes.

Since mostly written QSL are (currently) required by MARAC for first time Worked All Counties Award, please be courteous and return SASE QSLs and Mobile Reply Cards (MRC’s).

Miscellaneous:

A. Connecticut eliminated counties in favor of eight “Planning Districts.” For 2024 use the old county lines by using maps, gps, or remaining signs to determine location.

B. Self-spotting as a fixed station is not allowed. Self-spotting as a mobile is permitted.

C. Drivers for Single Operator Mobile stations are permitted, provided they do not assist in any way with the contest on-air operations. Two people may transmit from a single vehicle and both shall enter individual logs.

D. County Line operations: As defined by MARAC, a stationary mobile may operate from one county line, and contacts with that mobile shall count as one qso, and 2 counties worked. Some part of the vehicle must be in both counties for the duration of the qso. Operation from more than a double county line is not allowed under MARAC General Rules. If a safe stopped position at a county line isn’t possible, or if traffic is being slowed or blocked by radio operations, operators should transmit from each county.

E. Independent city-a station must use only one county for use in the contest exchange, for the duration of the contest. If mobile in an independent city, the entrant may not use the adjoining county listed in the same independent city as a new county without actually moving to the new county.

F. Parks-On-The-Air, IOTA and other award program stations are encouraged to participate. The basic information for MARAC must be exchanged to count towards MARAC scoring. The station shall enter the appropriate Mobile or Fixed/Portable class. Stations shall indicate in “Comments” if they are operating POTA, IOTA, US Islands, or other award programs. Each USA Portable log file shall be for a single county with WARC-band QSOs and mults removed from the log.

Awards: Certificates will be awarded to top scoring entrant in each Category. One certificate each for mobile, CW, SSB and Mixed. One certificate each for fixed or portable CW, SSB and Mixed. One certificate to the leading DX station.

Log submission: Please note that the contest committee will not score your log. Unscored logs will be considered check logs only. Please use this summary sheet (marac hotlink) and enclose a printed copy with the log copy only if you have a Mobile-Class paper log.

Fixed-Class logs shall be emailed using Cabrillo (preferred), ADIF, pdf or MS Word/Excel.

Logs must be received by September 1, 2024 to qualify for awards. Logs may be sent by email (or post only if using a Mobile paper log.)

Email: marac2024contest@gmail.com USPS: N7NU - Lee Hallin, 3413 Walton Ln., Eugene, OR 97408-4673.

Please watch the contest section of the MARAC website for updated information, including Certificate sponsors, contest records, and planned trips for the contest. There are plenty of sponsorships available. Please contact the Contest Coordinator (WA4JA-) before the contest for details at marac2024contest@gmail.com.

National Convention 2024

The 2024 MARAC National will be Hosted by W8OP/K8II/N8OYY • October 9 – 12

It will be held at the Best Western Plus • Bridgeport, WV 26330 (304) 842-5411

Room rates of: \$90.00 plus tax per night if reserved by Wednesday, Sept 25, 2024

Book your group rate for Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club

Travel: Pittsburgh International Airport 1 hour 45 minute drive south to hotel (110 miles)
North Central WV Regional Airport 10 minute drive to hotel

The hotel has shuttle service – It must be scheduled with your reservation.

Registration on line is now open.

Join the fun in WV this fall.

Florida QSO Party Late Results

Held last week in April. Reports from mobiles.

K4OJ mobile 4764 CW QSO

Operator(s): N4KM NK4O NX4N W4WF

Our usual 15m station is a KX3 'shack on a tray or glove box' and a KPA500 placed in the back of the SUV to get us to 100W. However my amp bit the dust and is still at the Elecraft hospital. Chris kindly agreed to bring his K3 and I wired it up in the back because there is simply no safe place to put it in the front passenger seat (airbags and radios don't mix so we avoid putting them near each other). I ran cables for headphones, paddle and the USB serial port from the laptop up front to the K3. But no way to control volume, filters, NB, etc. - not great for the op. AJ last year had found WIN4K3Suite software offered by VA2FSQ. Game changer! It worked well, and even in our RFI-hostile environment we found it to be very reliable and easy to install and use. Those of you who know AJ you are well aware of his love for new technology and learning - his brain is a sponge so he quickly absorbed all the features. Nearly 1200 15m QSOs later, I believe AJ has indeed mastered it! This will be our 15m configuration going forward. Tnx to Bob N4BP for loaning his K3 as our backup rig.

Cowabunga, dudes!

Florida is a simply beautiful state with many green fields. Maybe it's our new routes but we saw hundreds of FL bovine citizens enjoying Happy Hour at grazing times across many counties. During the trip we saw more cows than people - No Bull! (ok I'll stop..) We also saw a *huge* number of birds parked on a large water tower, but even weirder...

A HUGE Hallucination?

Speaking of happy hour, around 5pm both AJ and I saw something on the side of the road that caused us to stare - a *Full-Size* statue of a pink elephant! Another strange but true tale from FL mobiles!

Our New 'F1 Operator'

On Friday we needed to perform a final road test on all stations - but how to do that with just NK4O and NX4N working 3 stations and driving? So, we promoted teammate and my wife Lili from Hotel Blake proprietor to "F1 Operator". While I was driving and AJ was on his 15m station, Lili sat in the back and at my direction pressed the F1 key to call CQ on the 40m/10m and 20m stations. We used speakers on those stations so I could hear what was happening on those radios. Lili helps out so much more than that - truly our 5th team member. Tnx and 88 honey!

More to the FQP Dance than just the "Twenty Meter Two-Step"

In spite of the dip in conditions, both 15m and 10m were open for business (especially Sunday), and we had quite a following on both bands. Many K6/K7/K0 stations, KL7SB and even JO7WXN were worked on both bands - tnx everyone.

Special appreciation to the kind ops that agreed to the QSY requests from 15m to give us more 10m QSOs! All NA, some EU and KH6 were open on 15m as well. We're hoping next year folks will spend some time - even a little - on the higher bands.

Rock Solid

The K4OJ/m radios, pc's and antennas played very well this year - really nothing went down and that meant no stopping on the side of the road to debug one or more stations. We were especially happy with the minimal level of interstation interference. Everyone could make QSOs on their stations for all but the most weak signals. Nice! This decade of hard work, design and installation optimization and empirical testing by the team is paying off. Our ops were very happy - they felt loud and heard well.

That about wraps it up on this end - hope you enjoyed the joys and trials of our exciting journey. Our K4OJ/m team is all smiles - such a fun trip!

Hearty thanks also to Bob K0RC and Chuck NO5W for their super-duper county

tracking tools - these are indispensable for working the sweeps, planning routes and more. Bob/Chuck - you guys are the best! Big thumbs up also to Chip N3IW for developing the FQP spotting website, another FB tool. Thank you all for your major support.

Huge kudos to our terrific Fixed and 1x1 Spelling Bee partners - you all are the foundation of our way-cool QSO Party - thank you for standing strong on all the bands representing our Sunshine State.

A big salute as well to our talented mobile and expedition teams, many of whom changed their routes to ensure VFB county coverage - great teamwork folks! You do an amazing job of getting the cobwebs off antennas, rigs, pc's, power plants and performing station(s), vehicle and routing set up just to make the first contact. I sincerely am in awe of your enthusiasm for hitting the road and am proud to call you fellow FQP mobile/expedition op. Please come back next year and let's bring some new Roadie recruits along for the fun!

Finally - Our biggest, loudest applause is for all of you out-of-state operators who are the real heroes. Whether you make a half dozen or several hundred QSO's, your enthusiastic participation and support help make the FQP fun for all. We can throw the party, but it is you that makes it so much fun and keeps coming back every year, so Thank you, thank you, thank you!

See you in FQP 2025!

FQP - So Bright You Gotta Wear Shades!

73/OJ,Chris, NX4N - K4OJ MM/m Team Lead

AD4ES mobile 2139 cw 347 SSB QSO

What a hoot. We've been FQP Mobile for over 10 years and we were busier than ever before. QSO's on 20m CW just kept coming and coming. Quite the noise burst each time we entered a new county. Unfortunately, we had to leave some QSO's behind on the previous county. Never had it so good. This was probably only the 2nd time we ran mixed. QSO count for phone not quite what we expected but we tried. KE4YGT was under the weather for the entire contest and is still recovering from an unknown malady. The multi 2 mobile played very well and there were no hardware or software hiccups worth mentioning. Thanks to all for all the contacts and all of those that followed us

throughout the state.

AD4EB mobile 3517 CW QSO

This was our 4th time operating mobile in the FQP. In spite of the poor radio propagation on all but 20m, we managed to beat all of our previous metrics including total score, QSO count, and multipliers worked. We were really excited about doing this contest because the solar conditions had been excellent the past few weeks. But once the contest got going, we figured the chances of doing better than last year were minimal. We experienced rapid fading of signals on 20m and 15m especially on Saturday and 40 meters seemed punky.

Melody did a great job driving and keeping us on schedule. She drove thru all 49 planned counties on the 980 mile route. She had no storms or traffic jams to deal with, which was different than previous years. The 2023 KIA Carnival ran perfect, as did all the radio gear. For anybody interested, this vehicle generates zero RFI that I can hear, and transmitting 100 watts has no effect on the vehicle. It also has a very smooth suspension and low road noise (KIA did not pay me for this plug BTW). We drove a round trip total of 2,300 miles for this contest.

We operated on 6 county lines which resulted in some amazing rates. We followed the MARAC County Hunter rules at each of these stops, having a part of the vehicle on each side of the county line signs. We had planned to only stop on these lines for 10-15 minutes, but with the rates so high we stayed longer at some, and got a bit behind by around 8 minutes for much of Saturday.

We ended up with a total of 541 unique callsigns in the log. The 80 multipliers included 24 DX stations and 56 states and provinces. We missed HI and AK.

The pileups were crazier than ever, especially in the last 3 counties, which were on the west end on the panhandle. It was giant roar of very strong signals, making it practically impossible to pull a recognizable partial callsign regardless of using my 7610's narrow filters and tuning to the edges of the pile. Sorry I could not get everybody in those last few counties, they must have been in very high demand. I must apologize for not spending more time on 40m for the closer in states, and more time on 15m for those DX stations that I could have worked. It was hard for me to tear away from 20m with those

incredible rates.

I want to mention a few things that helped me better prepare for this contest:

1) CWops Tests (CWT) - worked as many of the 3 Wednesday events that I could (nice being retired).

2) Had the privilege to operate the ARRL DX CW contest at Tim's K3LR, and was able to learn from the pros.

3) Kevin W1DED and Contest Crew (N6MJ, KL9A, K5ZD, K0MD) - I learn a lot from each of these guys every week. Dan and Chris have discussed multiple times about the months of CW practice they do before the big CW contests using MorseRunner and Rufz. I have also been doing this the past few years before these mobile QSO parties, but not nearly their levels. But this year I followed their methods. For the past 6 weeks, a few hours every day was spent practicing pileups on MorseRunner. I created dta files with the 200 most common calls from my previous FQP mobile contests. I believe it made a huge difference in the pileups this year.

4) Programmed AutoHotKey keyboard macros to allows me to always keep my hands centered on the keyboard. This really helped especially at night.

As always, it is my wife Melody who deserves the Kudos for our success in the 2024 FQP. She is amazing for doing all the driving and navigating for me.

Thanks to all who worked us and hung in there in the pileups. Also, to the FCG (especially Chris NX4N, Dan K1TO, and Chris W4WF) and all the others that make this contest happen. Can't wait for next year's FQP.

73 - Jim AD4EB and Melody KI4HVY

Mobile Activity in May

At the beginning of the month:

N5MLP was mobile in MS , then to LA

K8ZZ was running counties in VA, MD, DE

K5GE was in WV, VA, MD, NC,

W4SIG ran Kauai HI

We had the 7QP, IN, DE, New England QP's the first weekend in May. Lots of activity

K5GE mobile still going, going.....now in TN and NC and KY. Into IL

K8ZZ now in NC, winds up in IL along with K5GE, K5GE into IN (QRX due to WX there) K8ZZ seen running counties in MO

K5GE now in AR along with K8ZZ

Then K8ZZ in OK...K5GE heads home to TX on the 10th.

AI5P starts the first of several trips around AR hitting parks and counties around the state. Conditions not great and often barely eeks out 10 or 11 QSOs per stop. Days with A index well over 100 and K up to NINE! (K over 6 is 'severe storm'. K=9 is extreme solar storm).

Around the 10th

K4YT heads up to NJ

K8ZZ now in KS headed north. After few days, back to running in NE and KS.

K4YT flies to Pacific NW and is running counties in ID and WA for several days. KA9JAC/KB8YVT seen mobile in IL and WI – then IL on the way to Dayton OH.

WA4PGM mobile in OH along with KA4RRU - on the way to Dayton Hamvention

K8II headed to Dayton. After would run up to Darke OH for one of last few for AG6V then home across OH to WV to home

N4CD mobile in TX and AR (for the AR QP)

N5MLP headed out again – across LA to MS to KY to AR

Later, K4YT again mobile in NJ.

K8TE popped up in NC, SC and GA

End date 5/26/2024

Indiana QSO Party

W9RWG county expedition 305 SSB QSO

My First IN QSO Party. Operated at Indiana Dunes State Park.

Turned in logs to POTA and IN QSO Party

Band Conditions not great.

Thunderstorms late caused me to stop operating before the end of the contest

N9UNX - one county expedition 578 CW QSO

Thanks to all for a successful INQP. Great to work some IN folks that I don't work that often, and really nice to hear from all the folks that I work all the time.

Thank you for the Qs!

KB0V fixed IL 49 152 CW Mults 27 Ph Mults 67 no comments

KD9LTE one county portable 194 SSB QSO

This is my first contest on my own. Had fun working some of the rare counties and working familiar calls. I had a 40-meter dipole at 7 feet and an 80-meter dipole at 14 feet. Both had wire reflectors under them. Looking forward to participating in more contests.

K9KJ mobile 311 CW QSO

POTA Coupling: I tried to make stops at three POTA parks and also announced on the POTA app. This gave me a bunch of Qs.

Mobile Station ready to go: Since I operate mobile regularly, there wasn't anything to do here, which was great

Everything worked: Laptop, antenna, CW key, vehicle, etc.

Negatives:

Single Op: I tried doing this by myself. Difficult for a couple of reasons. Next year I'll bring a friend and already have someone lined up.

POTA: Didn't make two of the other POTA parks that I was planning. Again, this was partially because I was single op, and wanted to continue operating where I was, and didn't have the time to then do the move to another park (I needed someone to help me navigate)

Callsign: I think I screwed up with my callsign. I typically operate mobile as K9KJ/M – This was also programmed in N1MM. I realized later that others logging me might just enter me as K9KJ without the /m, and now I am not sure how this will all work out with the log scoring. I should have just been K9KJ – without the M.

APRS: I took along an APRS radio... didn't EVER connect to a digipeater or gateway... EVER. What a waste, and should have launched my Android APRS app.

Stops Planning: I should have better planned WHERE I was going to stop. I was winging it.

W9RE mobile 547 CW QSO

Operator(s): W9RE WD8DSB

At the HDXCC meeting in April AE9LL mentioned that so far there was no activity from a nearby county (Boone) that put a thought in my mind that the county being so close that Don, WD8DSB and myself could activate it easily since Don has a lot of small radios, EFHW's and batteries/inverters. Remember we were both pretty well newbie's at mobile setups especially for a QSO party.

Well after we found out that Boone would be active I thought a simple mobile run would be fun. I had not ever set up a mobile station so with Don's help we borrowed a big older 100 a/h battery, I had a set of Hustler mobile antennas that I had never really used,

a laptop and a K3. The laptop battery was slightly suspect and we were not 100% sure of the borrowed battery capability so Don brought a lot of battery capacity and inverters so we could charge the batteries while the car was running. We did fish wires from the car's battery through the firewall to have that available also. I through together a small table for the laptop, radio and paddle for the back of my old Sequoia SUV.

On last Wednesday we managed to get the antennas tuned and get our power setup lined up. We put Don's mag mount on top of the SUV putting our antennas a little on the tall side (slightly over 15') so we had to be careful driving to avoid trees so we decided to mainly stick to main highways or interstates. We activated 8 counties on CW mainly only on 20 and 40 and 80(at the end). We had some engine noise, some inverter noise and of course power line noise so we operated both moving and stopping at quiet locations picked by Don. No police or public encounters.

It was a fun learning experience and Don and I had a good time, setting up (that might be as much fun as operating), operating, seeing the small towns and countryside and having great wx.

Thanks to all for all the calls and sorry for slow responses especially from me since I am not a N1MM user, we had a laptop that has never been used in a contest and discovered that the number keys were suspect. Either a number didn't appear or it would appear twice a lot of times. I had a knack of about every 5th Q to bringing up an alternate screen asking about email, connections problems, etc. that were hard to close especially with a mouse that was scooting all over. We needed a trackball and/or a bigger arrow on the screen because it was very hard to find. I got especially frustrated because of these nuisances. Don was better than me at handling these problems.

Again thanks to Don for making this a fun memorable operating event.

KA6BIM/7 fixed OR 40 8 CW Mults 23 Ph Mults 7

Conditions were not very good on Saturday. I found 4 new counties for the US county award and 2 more that I worked previously but did not get confirmed. Still have a few to go. I think the contest would benefit from longer hours. 40 mtrs is just starting to open here on the West coast when the contest ends.

Thanks for the qso's Dave ka6bim

AB9CA was in an IN Park - Green Sullivan State Forest. 430 Q

KJ9C operated as K9JF at Shakamak State Park

N9XG was at Berns-Meyers State Nature preserve

Fair Radio Sales

Fair Radio Sales, an iconic electronic military surplus store in Lima, Ohio, announced in August 2023 that they would be going out of business in October of that year. Phil Sellati, owner of Fair Radio Sales, told The ARRL Letter editor last year that it was time to close the business. "I took over the business that my dad started in 1947, and after 50 years, it's time to close the doors," he said. Sellati had an offer on the building and felt that it was time to move on and was wondering what might come next.

But they haven't closed their doors just yet. At the urging of many amateur radio operators, Fair Radio Sales is still in business and will be open during the 2024 Dayton Hamvention. The company's website recently posted: "Fair Radio will be open until June 28, 2024. We will then prepare for an auction to be held in the summer." Thousands of amateur radio operators, collectors, experimenters, and shortwave listeners have visited the store over the years. The shelves and aisles are full of old military radios and receivers. Many other electronic surplus stores, like J.J. Glass Surplus in California and Ritco Electronics in Virginia, closed several years ago.

7th Area QSO Party

K7TQ mobile 708 CW

Our best showing in a 7QP. One MT, one OR, one WA, and 21 ID counties. Lots of fun including a closed road that set us back 20 minutes which did not contribute to the fun. Full story and pictures are at

<https://sites.google.com/site/randyk7tq/home/2024-7th-call-area-qso-party>

Randy

N7WA mobile 239 CW

Didn't think I would be able to participate in the 7th District QSO Party (7QP) but I threw together a mobile station at the last minute. I've had a K4D that had been sitting around since March. It had been turned on only once so I made it the mobile rig. I had to read the manual just to get a basic familiarity.

I only had time to do a few hours for a total of 9 counties. Did not do well. Only made a couple hundred contacts. I didn't feel loud and I was constantly being pushed off frequency. I know it wasn't conditions since other mobiles did much better.

Good to get out.

K7JSG mobile 358 SSB QSO

I had a great time and traveled to seven counties in Utah and one county in Wyoming. Everyone wanted that one county in Wyoming :) The bands were fading in and out all day. Weather was perfect in Utah.

K7C county Expedition 993 405

This was my sixth 7QP expedition, this time as a multi-multi. I was joined by Tracy W7AWE. Although the ink is barely dry on Tracy's ticket, he has taken a rocket ride into the world of contesting, designed a few antennas, and is enrolled in the CW Academy. We operated from a rental house situated on 20 acres in Santa Cruz County, AZ. This was my first multi-multi endeavor. Needless to say lots of learning transpired over the last few days. We set lofty goals for ourselves in the 7QP as a Single-County Multi-Multi Expedition and are quite pleased with our results.

“Thanks to K6WSC (Bill) for taking me under his wing and allowing me to help in the 7QP! He worked his magic on CW, while I heard 'Thanks Bill' on SSB - hi. Bill showed me the ultimate power behind N1MM+ and opened a door allowing me to explore, learn, and hopefully get faster in my runs. The tips I gained over the weekend ranged from antenna design & placement, contest operating, to simple red caps on coax! I've got a long way to go to truly compete, however, his elmering pushed me further down the road to success. The bands opened at just the right time allowing me to grab QSOs and rack up points. Operating for 18 hours was truly fun and a grand experience. I

now know I can survive on coffee, pretzels, cheese sticks, beef jerky while keeping my head in the game - hi."

CW station:

FTdx10 / KPA-500. Antennas: Full size 80 & 40 fan dipole; 20/15/10 fan dipole suspended below the 80/40.

SSB station:

IC-7300 / KPA-500. Antennas: DX Commander 40-10 vertical; homebrew 80 & 40 fan dipole.

Thanks to everyone involved with running the great 7QP!

73, Bill / K6WSC & Tracy W7AWE

K7C in the 2024 7QP

Santa Cruz County, AZ

AE7EU County Expedition LAKEKlamath 83 CW 164 ssb

Operator(s): AE7EU N7GND W6RA W7JHR W7SA

Team AE7EU, for the 12th year running, had more fun than you did. We went camping in the woods, set up Mike's large elk hunting tent as our hangout and radio room, 80m OCF up 80+ft in the air, had burgers, brats, adult beverages, and laughed so hard we couldn't talk at times. Oh, and we did some ham radio stuff too. We got sun, we got rain, we got snow. We woke up to 3" of snow on the ground Sunday morning, laughed, and packed up. No thanks to mother nature and the lousy band conditions, but still managed some DX contacts too.

WS7L County Expedition Pac, WA 744 CW

Once again operating from the historic* Lamberson Cottage in Ocean Park, Pacific County, WA. I'm sure the rare county helps me a lot.

Our fears of being hammered by solar belches were mostly unfounded. 20 meters died, or at least became seriously ill, briefly -- my RBN reports all dropped to single digits. But in an hour or so they were back in the respectable 20-30 dB range.

Condx were great, quite a few EU called in on 15 & 20, even one F on 40 meters. Only

48 states because the Dakotas were nowhere to be found. Several KH6 and one JA were worked off the back of the beam.

Another plus: I managed to avoid having to do phone! I do that if I run out of stations on CW. Almost got there, but not quite.

K3 + KPA1500 + BuddiHex + wires for 40/80.

* (rustic, chilly, and decrepit but better than a tent!)

W7QM (WS4X oper) 348 CW QSO

K4D, KPA500, KAT500. Hustler whips, N1MM+.

County-line-epedition to Nevada Mineral/Esmeralda. Cut short early with weather moving in. Didn't get the contacts I would have liked, but a fun adventure. Many many thanks to W6KC for loan of KPA500 and KAT500. Many many thanks to Sunshine Rhonda for her help and support.

N7D - county expedition PAC WA 217 CW 84 SSB

I am in the middle of a 6,000-mile road trip with my XYL through the northwest states and Canadian provinces. As it worked out, we were staying in Ocean Park WA in Pacific County during the 7QP. No trees were available to get my antennas very far off the ground so I used a 17 ft telescoping whip clamped to the balcony rail and a 66 ft EFLW at an elevation of about 5 ft from our building to a low bush. It was fun but challenging given the band conditions and limited antennas plus we had mostly rainy days during our stay. By coincidence, Carl, WS7L, a friend from CWops, was also operating in the 7QP from his QTH about 2 miles north of us. We really enjoyed meeting for dinner with both of our XYLs, a couple of days prior to the 7QP. We will be back on the road tomorrow heading north.

73, Jim N7D (W6KC) <https://www.qrz.com/db/N7D>

KN7Y county expedition to Gila, AZ 131 CW

Thanks for your QSO's and especially your patience while I put the "semi-rare" Gila

County on the air for the 2024 7AQP. My wife and I had a great amount of fun and our dog Susie got more "walks" in beautiful Payson WX than she has ever experienced. We then returned to our home in Mesa to continue the fun. Photos will be soon uploaded to my QRZ page...

GILA COUNTY - "AZGLA" 13:30 - 16:45 UTC

My wife Barb and I were up at 3:00AM AZ time and drove to Payson and watched the sunrise on the way. This was a test of my portable station (anticipating the AZQP in October) running a Yaesu FT-450(AT) from my Tacoma with two 12.8V 100aH LifePo4 batteries and 100W into a Wolf River Coils "Sporty-40" coil and their longer telescoping whip mounted on a Tripod sitting on my Tacoma bed cover.

Hamsticks were used on 10-15-20 on a permanent NMO mount / adapter for NMO-to-3/8-24 thread size. I did a lot of planning and testing beforehand, and the rig and antennas worked as planned once we arrived and I got it set up.

In Gila County, I operated from Payson's Green Valley Park which, as it turns out, would have been the "perfect" location on a quiet day. However, the park is in a "valley" of its own in the lower mountainous Payson region. (There was some elevation in close proximity everywhere I looked). I was still able to make 98 QSO's, starting on 40-meters CW. Not planned was a wildlife event at the park and exhibitors started to set up an hour or so after we arrived, and as people started to show up, I rolled up the radials for my 40-meter antenna and QSY'd to 10-15-20 using the Hamsticks while in a "secluded" parking area away from the growing crowd.

MARICOPA COUNTY - "AZMCP" 21:30 UTC Sat - 02:30 UTC Sun

Returning to the valley mid-day, we took time to have some lunch and a much needed rest. I then set up portable in our living room with the Yaesu and batteries while running 50' coax out the front door to the antennas on my Tacoma. This was done to maintain the "Expedition-Other" status with antennas set up for the contest. I did this so I could continue to work the other QSO parties (so I could still give them a meaningful 7AQP exchange), and I worked a handful of the louder local stations.

I logged my final 7AQP QSO at 02:19 and disassembled the antenna arrangement and called it an evening. Even with a short rest in the afternoon, my wife and I had been up since 3:00 AM and we were exhausted. Our dog Susie was likewise exhausted and she closed her eyes earlier than usual and didn't make a peep all night.

Again, thanks for the QSO's... photos will be uploaded to my QRZ page soon.

Please also visit my QRZ page where I have plans and a map for activating 4 counties in the AZQP this coming October.

73, Jack KN7Y

N7XU mobile 705 CW

Operator(s): K4XU W7AM

Long day in the saddle. W7AM drove the whole 518 miles of our 11 county circular route and went home for a well deserved rest at 5:15 PM local. 506 QSOs in the log and a bunch of DX. Ever present OM2VL, as well as SM3DMP and G3WPF. At home I exchanged the Hustler triband pitchfork for a 20m hamstick and put the homebrew 80m in the trunk.

I connected the audio recorder to the split headphone line so I could operate while driving the 30 miles up to the ORDES/JEF border. Disaster: I could not remember the command for invoking a county line op in N1MM! I decided to drive on through Jefferson over to the Crook Co line hoping that my foggy brain would recover the secret. No luck there so I just kept going, recording the the audio, operating while driving, stopping at several places along the way where the line noise was low to provide logged contacts as time checks.

The weather was not friendly, drizzle interspersed with heavier stuff but never a downpour. Around 9PM when it was totally dark, it started to snow. Temperature was above freezing but it didn't make changing the shunt match coil between the 40 and 80m antenna any fun. Don't know where the other coil went but it meant fumbling around outside every time I changed bands.

I finished the last few contacts within a mile of home. The pot grower QRN increasing as I neared the driveway. Life in Bend Oregon.

I hope everyone had fun, we did.

73,
Dick K4XU

Rig: TS=480AT

Vehicle: VW Diesel Jetta
total distance: 627 miles

WY7AA mobile reported 371 SSB QSO - no comments

NR7T county Expedition 1073 CW 7 ssb

Set up the antennas on Friday eve of 7QP in Hamblin Valley, Utah. Assembled and raised the Cushcraft A4S before it got dark then finished the 80/40 inverted V's as it was getting dark with the help of a headlamp flashlight. Enjoyed the "calm before the storm" for setting up antennas with no wind on Friday. Saturday was a different story with wind gusts of 50 mph all daylong. At one point during a QSO run the camp trailers carbon monoxide sensor sounded off because the wind was blowing exhaust back into the trailer. fortunately I had a longer extension cord and was able to get the generator further from the trailer.

I was expecting more from 10 meters but conditions and activity were not supporting efforts there. 15 meters was wonderful and as usual 20 meters was the bread and butter overall.

Rig Yaesu FTDX-10
Amp Elecraft KPA-500

Thanks to the 7QP contest administrators and participants making this a premier QSO party. Best Regards, Jon NR7T

AI7ID multi op county expedition 2190 970 Canyon/Owyhee ID

Operator(s): AB7R KD7DY KF7XC KJ7BJS N6WTI N7ENS N7OOS W7IMC
WA7RLG WR7D
Station: AI7ID

7QP expedition during a crazy wind storm with 50+ mph winds for almost the whole day was....fun believe it or not.

W7EEE county Expedition 522 CW 246 SSB
Operator(s): W6IA W7EEE

We enjoyed our time on the WACHE / WAKTT county line despite the rainy weather. 10 meters wasn't in play but we got DX on 15 and 20. Missed NM, MD and ND but we got SD on phone. 7QP is always fun - thanks for the Qs!

K7KC county expedition 858 CW 371 SSB
Operator(s): K7MZ K7UT N7AØ N7RXL

From the county line of UTJUA/UTMIL we operated in the desert, with a wary eye on the approaching wind and rain, for 7 1/2 hours. Recognizing discretion to be the better part of valor, we lowered the tower down from sixty feet and packed in the operation about 4 p.m. Winds built from the 12-15 mph to gusts of over 60 mph that evening and the rain was substantial the next morning. We felt lucky and justified in leaving early to avoid being stuck in the mud Sunday morning. Still scored pretty well. Lots of fun!

N7D county expedition 217 CW 84 SSB

I am in the middle of a 6,000-mile road trip with my XYL through the northwest states and Canadian provinces. As it worked out, we were staying in Ocean Park WA in Pacific County during the 7QP. No trees were available to get my antennas very far off the ground so I used a 17 ft telescoping whip clamped to the balcony rail and a 66 ft EFLW at an elevation of about 5 ft from our building to a low bush. It was fun but challenging given the band conditions and limited antennas plus we had mostly rainy days during our stay. By coincidence, Carl, WS7L, a friend from CWops, was also operating in the 7QP from his QTH about 2 miles north of us. We really enjoyed meeting for dinner with both of our XYLs, a couple of days prior to the 7QP. We will be back on the road tomorrow heading north.

73, Jim N7D (W6KC) <https://www.qrz.com/db/N7D>

N8II Fixed WV 232 cw 213 SSB Mults 128

I was "all in" on 7QP this year thanks to a huge improvement in conditions on 15 and 10 meters. 10 was the best it has ever been from here. At 1845Z Mitch operating N7DX agreed to try 10 CW and we made a easy QSO; he was S6-8. Several AZ stations were worked in short order. Through 20Z, I shifted between 15 and 10 keeping up a good rate. The AZ and NV ops were booming in on 10, S9+! AA5JF in OR was loud and some UT, WA, and ID were worked. K7V and K7GA in AZ were worked at 2052Z on 10 and a

very weak N7A much later.

15 was barely open last year, this year worth about 137 Q's, and the activity could have been better. Running on 15 phone was a wonderful improvement. At 2227Z after quick dinner, the conditions had markedly worsened, 10 was closed, and signals on 15 were weak. 20 was not normal, not that many stations on phone, hard to run on SSB. There had been a solar flare. I spent about 25 minutes working IN and NEQP at 23Z. At 2354Z conditions had improved, and I finally had a decent run on 20 SSB. Off and mostly on 20 phone still produced decent runs until 03Z. I had good luck breaking 40 CW pile ups at 02Z, and there was plenty left on 40 CW easy to work until I quit at 0315Z, never made it to 80M.

Many thanks to mobiles Dick, N7XU, N7WA, and Randy K7TQ with WA0WWW for a lot of mults and Q's. Thanks also to the numerous expeditions (think I got them all). K7C in AZSCZ worked on 6 band slots was the loudest with just dipoles. K7KC in UT was nearly as loud worked on 5 slots for 10 Q's on 20-10M. N7N in NV was caught on 40 through 10M CW, nice and loud.

There was nearly never a boring moment, best hour was 14Z with 59 Q's and 02Z was 57 Q's. Catching as many as possible on 20-15-10 kept it interesting. And there was always that tantalizing rare mult to chase or be called by on phone. Trying to work 4 QP's and not getting weary is a challenge on Saturday, was there 9:22 AM through 11:15 PM was much as possible.

Many thanks for the QSO's and calling me! Thanks for the personal greetings.

73, Jeff

From Facebook page of Michael Barnes:



Walton Lake, Ochoco NF, 7QP/POTA Expedition 5,000 ft elevation 5/4-5/5

We were on 160-10 meters phone and 40, 20, 15 meters CW. We had six stations on the air. Never heard anyone on 160 though.

Packed up and our convoy (5 campers, 1 Jeep, 1 pickup) rolled out about three hours after this picture was taken. About 90 minutes at 10 mph in 4-wheel drive until we reached clear pavement.

Delaware QSO Party

KA6BIM fixed OR 9 CW 4 SSB 5 mults

Nice to see a little more activity this year. Please encourage other DE operators to get on, it is a great way for them to work all the other states.

Thanks for the qso's Dave ka6bim

New England QSO Party

W1VE mobile 416 CW QSO

Operator(s): K1EP K2TR W1VE

A take of two different years. This year, we had grand plans for M/S. Lots of experimentation before contest, but in the end, a single-radio m/s. Elecraft K3s to Comet UHV-6. We had original plans for four ops, but KC1KUG caught a cold. Fred, K2TR, Ed, K1EP and I set out with high hopes. The sun had a different story in mind. We did a loop starting from K2LE's QTH in Vermont up to the north all the way to Grand Isle, then came down 91 swinging back and forth between NH and VT, back to the K2LE QTH for the overnight. We decided to avoid CT and MA due to the I95 shutdown in CT, which was making a mess of roadways.

Sunday, we headed out early to Maine. By noon, we reached the coast. Propagation was totally stinko. At times, we could find no CW signals 40-10m. We stopped at Fro's famous Hot Dogs for lunch -- then decided to cut the trip short. We thought we would dip down into MA on the way back to see if we could find a few more QSOs, and we did.

A total of 750 driving miles (Fred, K2TR, did all the driving) for 19 counties activated. Thanks to all the "posse" for following us around all the counties. Without you, pickings would have been very slim.

Always a pleasure... Let's hope for better prop next year!

73,

Gerry W1VE for the W1VE/m crew

N2RC mobile 293 CW 24 SSB

Operator(s): KE2X N2RC

This was our first time operating mobile. Saturday we drove 2.5 hours through CTWES/CTNOW and used a Yaesu FT-857D and Tarheel. Conditions were very good and we should have operated the whole time.

Sunday we started in CTWES using a Yaesu FT-991A and Tarheel antenna. Band conditions were poor but we had fun. John and I will be back next year with a different route and hopefully better propagation and more time!

73,
Mike N2RC

NZ1U mobile 1069 CW
Operator(s): W1UJ

Wow! That was a blast!

Thanks to the contest sponsors, K1KI, and the awesome ops that followed us around all weekend.

Special thanks to N1WK for station engineering the NZ1U/m operating position and antennas, keeping the truck fueled, keeping this operator well nourished and driving all over the beautiful New England countryside safely and effectively.

N1WK Operated the Car / W1UJ Operated the Radio

This is one of one of the most successful NEQP/m trips that we have done since starting these annual adventures ~12 years ago.

~866 Miles/~1400 Km - 27 Counties - 15.5 Hours - All 6 New England States

F-150 Truck, 2 High-Sierra 'Screwdriver' antennas mounted to the back-rack with band-specific radials wrapped around inside the truck bed.
K3 Rig, N1MM+, Mortty v5 keyer, 2 Large commercial 12v batteries, Lenovo T480 with aftermarket back-lit keyboard hook-and-loop'd to a lap desk with an old home-brew paddle secured to the desk. Pumped audio into the truck stereo for the whole ride- No headset.

We had 1 failure of a coax cable's PL-259 that took us offline for ~30 minutes Sunday. The failure was evident (in hindsight...) on Saturday but couldn't pin it down until an all-out failure on Sunday AM delaying our start. (RF Noise in the truck speakers during TX and occasional High SWR).

The other unfortunate thing is the noise generated by the truck. Internet research suggests a common problem with fuel pumps in the Ford vehicles... so may be addressed

by next year, but the undertaking could... well... stink- to drop the fuel tank/etc. During our trip, the Truck's 'Check Engine' light would pop up intermittently and, at one point, during very hard acceleration, the truck just died out but did not shut off. Once N1WK was driving around the following week after this event(Weds), he actually broke down! There is a problem with the truck's fuse within the fuse box with this vintage vehicle. TLDR: The fuse for the fuel pump was melted! The K3 NB and NR took care of a great deal of the noise.

Originally, we had planned on knocking out the 'new' 2024 CT CoGs to maintain our position in operating from every NewE county (Except MA NAN :(), but when we reached out to K1KI, he suggested that coverage was light in ME- so that was where we were headed. After squashing the original plans, and planning on ME, K1KI again updated us that the furthest East counties were covered- this afforded us the ability to cover a couple of the Northern VT/NH counties that were lightly covered.

I will proclaim this - SELF SPOTTING WAS KEY to this team's success, fun, and enjoyment this year. In the past, no-one would ever hear us, we would park within a county and call and call and call- make a minimum of 2 QSOs and bail..... or get squashed out by a QRO Fixed station (Only happened once this trip) and hope for the best. On Saturday IN/7QP/ARI would be squashing us out all over the place. The self-spotting established the frequency, provided the instant gratification, refreshing of a run for the long county occupations, and provided the much needed QSOs for the hunters. We would typically only self-spot once per county or band change and it was enough. We stayed high in the band. A coordinated QSO Party mobile window could be amazing!

On Saturday we headed up the coastal counties of Maine, and while we had a good lunch before leaving it was around 2300z/1900EST when we started getting hungry... there is NOTHING open at 1900 EST in Northern Maine apparently... by the time we did find a place, (Anglers Restaurant, Searsport ME *****) it was ~1950 and the restaurant closes at 2000 EST - they stayed around and re-fueled us with a fine seafood combination platter! The one battery we were using kind of fizzled out early but towards the end of the day as expected, so instead of running the 100w and 4-second delay between CQ repeats, we adjusted on Sunday to 50w and 8 second delay for CQ repeats and did not have a problem with the longer operating time. Some of the roads were bone-rattling! I would wedge myself in the passenger seat with my elbows and try not to hit more than one key while working/logging QSOs- It is hard to say who won the 'worst roads' this year. MOST of the roads were just fine. Our overnight stay was at Gateway Inn, Medway, ME - it was very good. We stopped operating around 0230z.

On Sunday, we woke early and hit the road to enjoy a wonderful breakfast at Grandbelly's Cafe in Medway, ME, then about 15 minutes before the contest we were wringing things out and we found the bad coax which led to a ~15 minute delay after the start before the first QSO, but the N1WK temp coax repair helped recover nicely. Sunday is great since we get to enjoy the awesome scenery and have minimal competition from other QSO parties. The scenery was slightly less enjoyable since we were battling torrential rains and winds while coming through the White Mountains of New Hampshire. DL3DXX (Most QSOs! Thank you!!) Pushed me to 15m But no-one answered other than DL3DXX! We CQ'd for a few minutes, but went back to 20m. We had made pretty good time covering North ME, NH and VT so we decided to traverse MA and hit at least one county in CTNOE and RIPRO before finishing the QSO Party in the W1UJ, MAWOR, Driveway. (No Noise with the truck off!)

There are some pictures and a tour of the NZ1U/m vehicle at this You Tube link;
<https://youtube/dmG4OaCLRyM>

Thanks again from the NZ1U Barnstormers.

Counties covered and QSO count per;

CTNOE	34
MAMID	40
MAWOR	143
MEAND	31
MECUM	46
MEFRA	34
MEHAN	66
MEKEN	30
MEKNO	34
MELIN	27
MEOXF	38
MEPEN	71
MEPIS	66
MESAG	18
MESOM	43
MEWAL	36
MEYOR	46
NHBEL	22
NHCOO	47
NHGRA	45
NHHIL	24

NHMER	28
NHROC	10
NHSTR	13
RIPRO	23
VTCAL	18
VTESS	36

K1IB mobile 715 CW QSO

10 hours on the road. 196 miles. Five county line stops touching five VT and three NH counties. Excellent propagation, especially on 15m.

K1NZ mobile 304 CW 50 SSB

Murphy was out to get me before the contest even started. I had lost a set screw in my 80m mobile antenna recently and replaced it with a cheap Amazon version. I found out on Thursday that the set screw had, after about a week, rusted and fused itself into the screw hole. I could not get it loose even with copious amounts of PB Blaster. At least HRO Salem was on the way up to Maine and I was able to pick up a replacement on Friday.

On Saturday, we had some time to kill before the contest started and Bissell Brothers Brewing - Three Rivers opened so we checked out the Fort Halifax Historic Site which was near our AirBnB. I did a POTA activation and had to struggle to get 10 QSOs and figured that was going to be the theme for the weekend: horrible conditions. Seems to happen every NEQP but I digress...

Once the contest started, Murphy decided to throw me another curveball. 20m CW would hose the winkeyer and cause N1MM to barf. I was able to limp along on 15 CW 20 SSB until later in the evening. It worked out that most of the breweries we hit on Saturday were earlier in the evening so that I could run 40 after dark. 40 seemed good enough to not warrant switching to the 80m antenna so I stayed on 40 for the rest of the night.

Conditions seemed even worse on Sunday. I did manage to get a few EU on 15 CW and some really rough-copy SSB stations on 20. By the time we got into Portland, had lunch, and got on the road again, most of the activity seemed to have shifted to 40 which is where I stayed for the rest of the contest. I had quite the following of regular chasers

from MEYOR when we left Barrelled Souls all the way to MAHMD where we quit a few minutes early for dinner at Yummy Asian Cuisine.

Overall, I'm happy I beat last year's numbers, especially being unable to use 20m CW.

Miles driven: 832

Counties activated: 15

Breweries visited: 11

QSO to Brewery Ratio: 32

Rig: FT-100D, ATAS-120, and 2018 Camry

K1JB mobile 187 CW

Operated Sunday from MESAG, MELIN, MEKNO, MEKEN and MEAND. Conditions poor but operators persistent. Thanks to all for your patience.

73, Joe

N1AIA QRP mobile 101cw? QSO

First "mobile" effort. Four counties. Fun. Cold.

N8II Fixed WV 155 CW 79 SSB Mults 64

I wasn't "feeling it" in NEQP this year. Trying to work scatter QSO's Saturday on 20(almost no direct skip) was mostly a waste of time, got a few around sunset when activity was low and signals came up a little. 40 M activity when I checked seemed pretty low. At 02Z, the IN ops outnumbered the NE ops on 40 phone. Activity Sunday definitely seemed lower than last year. 20 on Sunday at its best was open to RI, coastal MA and farther north, but that did not last long, more typically northern NH/VT, and ME, then about 18Z only upstate ME. I did very well to gather up 64 mults, never heard NZ1U/M on Saturday. I worked NZ1U much more than any other mobile,thanks. All of the 80M Q's were Sunday evening.

Thanks for the QSO's. My total Q's for 4QP the weekend were 737, the great majority in 7QP.

73, Jeff

OM2VL - fixed DX 105 CW 22 SSB Mults45

Unfortunately this year I had very limited time on HF. Our club station took part in the VHF/UHF contest.

MA-39, NH-20, CT-21, VT-12, ME-22, RI-13

73, Laci

KA6BIM fixed OR 199 cw 82 ssb Mults 57

Propagation was fair across the continent most of the time. The rovers were tough to hear, but home stations with beams and amps were much easier. I found most of the counties, but missed MADUK, several in Maine and Vermont. It is always fun to work COOS NH from COOS OR.

Thank you to the organizers who switched the exchange format to match the 7qp & INqp format. Some Ops in CT were still unaware of the change from the old counties to new regions for their exchanges.

Thanks for the QSO's Dave ka6bim

WN4AFP fixed SC 257 cw 72 ssb Mults 66

I was away most of Saturday at my daughter's college graduation, so I focused on the NEQP. Thanks to all the amazing mobiles and fixed stations for all the Qs. Go Swamp Foxex! 73 Dave WN4AFP

On the Road with N4CD

The trip to Dayton didn't happen this year. Was set to go, but my long term 'house guest' Savannah decided to have a crisis on the day I was planning to leave and that took priority. That was after I already had delayed the trip due to A indexes over 200 and K

of 6+. Really horrible propagation.– for a trip to put out 20 parks along the way. Worse, the weather for 2 days was 'storms' and 2 inches of rain. Major solar storms underway – day after day. Not that it would get much better for the next week, but it's no fun getting somewhere then struggling to get even a few contacts. You need 10 to get credit for a park.

We're at the sunspot maximum of the 11 year cycle. It's not uncommon to have lots of 'solar activity' but this year we've seen solar storms the worst in 21 years. Five years from now, we'll be moaning about 'no sunspots' and no upper band propagation.

So Plan B - head out the day before the Arkansas QSO party and head up to SW AR. Run 4 new parks – driving almost to Little Rock – then back home on the Saturday.

One factor determining activity in the AR QP was that they Dayton Hamvention was going on. 30,000 hams descend upon the Greene County Fair Grounds in Xenia OH (near Dayton) for a 3 day event. Lots of contesters and park chasers head there. N4CD has made most of the events for the past 30 years. Usually, I'd hit AR on the return trip on Sunday – the day after the QP. Hi hi. So this year, I'd put out a few counties. Typically there's 2 or 3 mobiles, half dozen portable stations/rover, and 15 fixed stations on. Recently K5CM/m has run in the past few contests.

Friday Day 1

Headed up to Hope AR and the Super 8 motel there. Three and a half hour trip, nearly all at 70 mph. Been there many times. It's going downhill. When I got to Hope, there's a new park there recently added to the POTA system so ran it first. It's been well run by others.

Hope is known for the 'Boyhood Home' of President Bill Clinton. There's a POTA/WWFF park site of his early place of residence (as a child) with a museum there. About the only thing worth visiting in Hope. You have to run portable as only 'on street' parking which doesn't count.

Well, the normal 3.5 hour trip wound up being a miserable 6.5 hour drive instead. Headed east and hit I-30 toward Texarkana. Didn't go 20 miles till the first back up. Stopped on the Interstate I-30 – dead stop – then creep and crawl for 10 miles and 5 to 10 mph. Repeat 10 miles later – then even worse backup for over an hour going 3 mph creep and crawl, stop, stop, creep, stop, etc – after 10 miles, exit the Interstate onto one lane access road for a few miles then back on I-30. Groan. 3 hours lost creeping at 3 mph – stop and creep and stop and creep and go. Lots of trucks, too. No accident, just

road construction. After that – 75 mph to AR.

Huckabee Lake State Recreation Area – US- 9169

from the web: The Mike and Janet Huckabee Lake was built in cooperation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The 11-acre lake complex features a concrete walking trail completely around the rim of the lake, several handicapped-accessible fishing piers, concrete lined shores, and boat ramp. The lake is divided into two sections. The main part is 10.2 acres and the smaller section is a 1 acre derby pond that can be cut off from the main lake for fishing derbys.

31 QSOs there on 20M CW in an hour or so. Then checked into motel. At 5pm headed to Los Gringos Mexican Restaurant. Had a nice 'kind of big' Dilla (quesadilla) for dinner. Hmmmm...about half the size it was 5 years ago. Oh well, more than enough to fill me up. Back to motel. Decided to take shower at 9pm. Nope – no hot water.

Saturday

In the morning – no hot water. Hmmmm.....not good. Wander over to the breakfast area. Used to be great breakfast with eggs, sausage, waffles, toast, cereal, fruit. Nope. Sticky buns, tiny chocolate muffins, juice boxes, coffee, granola bars. Hmmmm....Well, at least the price was right for the motel \$65 including tax. Might have to look for another favorite place along I-30. Have stopped at one or two before often on the way from trips back east (MI MINI, Dayton, etc).

The AR QP starts at 1400Z. Decided to run up to Saline County to the north east early and hit the first park there, then see how long that took and head back southwest along I-30 putting out counties and parks. 60 miles up I-30. A index surged overnight. “Poor on 40 and 20M”. Good on 15 and 10M but useless there from center of US where skip is to far far west coast and DX. Well populated county, too, right next to Little Rock (Pulaski County)

Goats Beard Bluff State Natural Area US-10425 Saline County

from the web: “Goat's Beard Bluff Natural Area is located along the lower portion of the Alum Fork of the Saline River, 3 miles upstream from its confluence with the North Fork (where it becomes the main stem of the Saline River). The natural area is located at the transition zone between the Ouachita Mountains and the Gulf Coastal Plain and is inhabited by both upland Ouachita Highland Species and lowland Gulf Coastal Plain species. It includes 0.75 mile of the Alum Fork and 3 miles of unnamed tributary

streams, supporting at least eight species of state conservation concern (five of which are also of global concern) including the federally listed Threatened mussel, the Arkansas Fatmucket (*Lampsilis powellii*). The natural area is named for a plant that occurs there, Goat's Beard (*Aruncus dioicus*), which grows near the bottom of a large bluff along the river. This showy wildflower is so rare in the Ouachita Mountains that this is the only known population within that ecoregion. “

It was early in morning – Well 1345z – and 20m didn't cooperate well. 18Q including K8II/m on the way to get one of the last few for AG6V. Probably could have added in some AR QP folks as ran past 1400z – the start time. Didn't. Hard enough to drag out 15Q with conditions.

Headed to Next.

DeGray Lower Lake State Recreation Area US-7443 - Clark County

from the web: Lower Lake Recreation Area is located beside the Caddo River, providing visitors with a variety of activities such as hiking, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, disc golf and picnicking. It has a group use shelter available for renting, a playground, a sand volleyball court, a boat ramp and the Lower Lake Disc Golf Course. The Voss Fitness Trail is a 1 mile gravel trail with four fitness stops, and the DeGray Lake Sunset Trail is a 1.7 mile loop trail featuring lakeside views. The area is also home to the DeGray Lake Resort State Park, the Ouachita National Forest and Hot Springs National Park.

Lower Lake is an area developed for visitors of the regulating dam. Fishing in the continuous outflow of the dam is a popular pastime. Other visitors fish the 400-acre pool above the dam or float and fish the river below the dam. Individual covered picnic tables plus one group shelter with a large cooking grill are available for use. The openness of the area lends itself to volleyball, softball, 18-hole disc golf course, and a fitness course.”

Did about 40 Qs here with QP activity and some parks thrown in.

K8II/m reached county line of Miami/Darke OH. Darke being one of last 3 for WBOW for AG6V. Then he headed east through OH.

Highway 7 State Fish and Wildlife Area US-7443 - - still Clark County

from web: “Highway 7 is a small, popular scenic area adjacent to State Highway 7. A

narrow wooded land spur provides the facilities and environment picnickers enjoy throughout the warm and mild season. A group shelter is located inside the loop turn-around at the extreme west end of the area. The open and gradually sloping land near State Highway 7 provides two beach areas where visitors find relief from high summer temperatures. “

After that, I stopped to run Nevada, Hempstead, and Miller Counties on the way home. Left the state and home by 6pm. Frustrated with conditions – so just headed home rather than run more counties. Heard KM5G but he couldn't hear me. Know K5CM/m was busy in northern part of AR. Never heard him but heard others working him. Think there could have been an SSB mobile or two. Never heard the bonus station. Never worked another AR station. None.

563 miles for the trip. Operated CW only

Arkansas QSO Party

There are 75 counties in AR. Rick AI5P is running all of them this month if you need one along with dozens of state parks. Otherwise, the AR QP was going on. Many contesters were still at Dayton Hamvention having fun there as usual.

There were several 'portable' stations on – LOGAN(W5MAG) , HEMPSTEAD (W5NX/P) , Think W5NX on 4 way line that isn't even near 2 of them – miles away. You can be 3 miles away and run the county.

N5TTI was portable in Saline.

KU5J was a 'rover' but listed only Union Don't know if he 'roved' elsewhere.

Looks like no one caught more than about 30 of the 75 counties. If it weren't for K5CM mobile, probably a lot less.

From the 3830 scores page:

K5CM mobile 954 cw 520 SSB

Conditions were not great, but considering how bad they were last week-end for the Canadian Prairies QP they were great hi hi.

28 VA3IDD
27 N0HJZ
24 KA6BIM
23 K4DR
22 K2KT N2CU WA5SOG
19 KN7Y WA2JQK
17 OM2VL W9DC
16 K4BAI W5XG
15 NS2N
13 K5XK KE8PX N7EPD
12 KD2KW W1SSN
11 K0XF K9CW W0ZQ W4EE
10 K3QP K4ORD K5TIA KB9S N4IJ NQ2W VE3HZ W4LEW W5RZ WN4AFP
9 AA4TI K0TRL K4NMR K7ZYV KA2G KE0TT N5KW
9 VE7ZO W4NZ WA5DTK WA8ZBT WB2PJH WS4K WT4U
8 KA5USN W4KRN WB9HFK

73,
Connie / K5CM

N5KW mobile 0 cw 361 SSB

Rides/Drives with K5CM mobile.

KA6BIM fixed OR 48 43 0 Mults 28

Conditions still poor due to recent CME's. 10 was unusable, 15 ok but not many there. 20 was the main band for activity and 40 was late in opening, finally was opening at the end of the contest. I was down 1 QSO and up 3 counties from last year, for a slight overall gain. I worked 2 new counties. Thanks for the QSO's Dave ka6bim

NS2N fixed NY 32 CW 30 ssb Mults 24

challenging condx ... unsettled GMF, QRN

K4BAI fixed GA 67 cw 26 ssb Mults 21

Activity seemed better than in recent years. Conditions were very poor. Skip too long from GA to AR on any band higher than 20M. See KD5J was QRV on SSB and sorry to have missed him. Thanks for all QSOs. Look for us in CQ WPX CW next weekend from TCI as VP5M. Four ops. Low power. 73, John, K4BAI.

OM2VL fixed DX 13 cw 11 ssb Mults 13

Just few QSO ...

K5CM/M 20/8

KU5J 2/2

73, LACI

WA5BDU was CW mobile inside AR. No report seen but filed log with AR QP.

Logbook of the World

The ARRL Logbook of the world and other ARRL systems was disturbed by a hacker ransom event. Systems have been down for 2 weeks as they try to repair the damage. As of print date (5/26) all ARRL systems are down. No financial information such as credit card humblers, etc, were ever stored no no worry for ARRL members.

Hopefully this will get quickly resolved. Logs cannot be uploaded or awards searched for new contacts.

Awards Issued

Clarification

Last month under USA-CA and Nth Time, we noted that K8MW received #446. That was for second time. (he needs just 16 counties to complete Second Time All CW, too).

Ran All State Award

K8II completed all Michigan. He received #40

W8OP completed all Michigan. He received #41

KB6UF Completed all Minnesota. He received #30

KB6UF Completed all North Dakota. He received #37

W4SIG ran all of Ohio and received #35

RoadRunner Award

K5GE attained 825 last counties. He received #20 5/13/24

County Challenge:

WA4STO attained Level 1000 and received #4 5/13

WA4STO has attained Level 2000. May 21 2024

Bingo Award:

KE3VV completed Bingo Four and was awarded #18 5/13/24

Master Gold:

WA3QNT completed MG with 1200 hours and was awarded #79 5/13/24

Events for County Hunters

Second District AK News - KB6UF heads to AK on June 5. No rental cars available but made arrangements to use private party car for few hours.

Lots of POTA activity. Field Day this month to prepare and operate for.

June 1 1300 2 0100 1.8-28, 50,144

Kentucky QSO Party CW Ph Dig

RS(T), KY county or SPC

<http://www.kyqsoparty.org/rules>

That's all folks.