

County Hunter News

November 2018
Volume 14 Issue 11

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

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

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

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

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 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>

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) It was a good month for events and county hunters. Only so-so for propagation including a few hours of total blackout and a half dozen days of high A and K index wiping out the bands. We had the National Convention – and half a dozen state QSO Parties – with hundreds and hundreds of counties up for grabs! Toward the end of the month, mobile activity faded away. Some days had horrible propagation as coronal holes appeared on the sun and spewed solar winds toward the Earth – resulting in days of high A/K index numbers. We bounce along the bottom of the sunspot cycle.

2) Lots of coverage of the National Convention follows – along with reports on the State QSO Parties including TX, CA, AZ, SD, PA, NY



Attendees at the 2018 National Convention – Kansas City MO
(Picture courtesy of N8HAM)

(Higher resolution picture available at: <http://marac.org/nationalpix2018/2018all.jpg>)

3) Fall weather is upon us. Temps in the 20s and 30s way up north. TX had record rains in October – wettest fall in history and second wettest October as of part way through the month. That's put a damper on mobile activity this way with days and days of steady rains. Folks in FL are still recovering from the hurricane. Lots of flooding in areas around the country, so drive safe. Soon it will be snow/ice and loss of daylight savings time.

4) Ed, K8ZZ, announced there WILL be a MI Mini in Traverse City, MI in 2019. Yeah! Folks volunteered to help him out and any other help would be appreciated. It takes a lot of work to make conventions and minis work.

On the Road with N4CD

The annual convention in Kansas City was coming up in a few days so N4CD hit the road five days early - planning on hitting many Kansas and Missouri State Parks along the way – and of course, their respective counties. So...I loaded up the car for a 10 day trip - packed warm weather clothes – cold weather clothes. Didn't pack my rain gear though and that was needed if you had to be outside most of the week. This was a

rainy, rainy week in Kansas City and the areas nearby. It rained every day – especially in the mornings. However, that didn't dampen things as 100 folks descended upon Kansas City from every direction.

We had AB7RW headed in from the west coast - K5GE, W3DYA, and N4CD from TX, K5OH from southern OK, K8TE from NM, AB7NK/K7SEN from AZ, folks from NC and Kraig KA2LHO and AB2LS from FL, N8OYY from WV, NS2N from NY and lots from the midwest. Jerry, W0GXQ came from CO. More on folks attending later.

Saturday September 29

I joined the group headed toward KC – and my route would be via parks. From here – I headed north from TX to KS, zipping through OK – been there – done the parks there – so it was a beeline to southern KS and the first park – **Elk City – KFF 2337 in Montgomery County KS.**



From the KS web site:

“Located about 5 miles northwest of Independence, 1 mile north of US-160

Dense oak and hickory woodlands meet rolling meadows of big bluestem and Indian grass at this striking 857-acre park located on the east shore of 4,500-acre Elk City Reservoir with 12,000 acres of wildlife area nearby. Elk City State Park offers a quiet, family-oriented get-away. The compact park allows easy, quick access to features including boat ramps, a swim beach, camping, playgrounds, and hiking trails. The lake area offers picturesque views ranging from open prairie to wooded hills and limestone bluffs.

The area is well-known for its diverse trail systems, including the Eagle Rock Mountain Bike Trail, the Post-Oak and Green Thumb Nature Trails, the Table Mound Hiking Trail, and the Squaw Creek Hiking Trail. Also nearby is the Elk River Hiking Trail, a 15-mile trail from the west end of the dam to the US-160 bridge over the Elk River south of Elk City. Wildlife watchers can see a variety of Kansas wildlife, including the large pileated woodpecker which is common in the mature trees along the Elk River”

The Texas QSO Party was in full swing. I had checked the proposed counties to be activated and there was nothing nearby that wasn't covered by one or two mobiles already – so I could skip out and miss it this year. That would provide lots of quick contacts to reach the magic 44 QSOs if the county hunters and park hunter totals fell short. (plus I needed a few TX counties - for next time around). Unfortunately, propagation didn't cooperate to W3DYA/m in east TX who hit many I needed! Dang. I sure wasn't going to hear him from home on 40m in east TX with the long skip. Surely from KS- 400/500 miles away, I'd hear him. Nope – saw him spotted, heard folks calling him, but skip was right over him even from KS. We've got 'long skip' and on this trip I seldom heard a mobile within 400 miles – even 500 miles at times. Just not there like the old days – when we had 50 mobiles headed to the 3M in TN or a National, and you could hear ALL OF THEM whether 50, 100, or 300 miles away! We kept two frequencies back then – usually 7238 and 7243 busy on 40M SSB. At the current part of the sunspot cycle – we have none of the 'normal skip' we had in those days. So.....I'd miss hearing K5GE and N8KIE for Double Diamond in nearly every county they hit. They were using 75M SSB to reach each other. That seemed to work well for them.

Elk City went well, so it was off to **Fall River State Park**. Greenwood County KS



from the KS website:

“Positioned between the Cross Timbers region and the grasslands of the Flint Hills, Fall River State Park is home to a remarkable diversity of plant and animal life. The 980-acre park is a unique blend of forested flood plains, blackjack savannahs, and tallgrass prairie. Six hiking trails and an orienteering course offer visitors an up-close and personal perspective on this unique area.

A favorite pastime is canoeing Fall River, which feeds into the 2,450-acre reservoir of the same name. Bird watchers, photographers, and naturalists will enjoy a variety of native plants and animals here. More than 9,000 acres of public wildlife area next to the park are managed for a variety of game and nongame species. Dove, quail, deer, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, waterfowl, and prairie chicken are common.”

I reached the 44 number using a combination of park chasers, county hunters, and Texas QSO (TQP) folks.

Last up for the day was **Cross Timbers State Park** in Woodson County KS.

“The park is located 12 miles west of Yates Center in Woodson County. This region was a favored hunting and camping ground of Native Americans of the Osage Nation. The forested flood plains, surrounded by terraces of prairie and hills of oak savannah, provide visitors an opportunity to immerse themselves in some of the most diverse flora

and fauna in Kansas.

Shaded campsites within easy access of the lake are available for both full RV hookup and primitive camping. All park campgrounds are served by modern bathroom and shower facilities. All park trails are open to hiking and backpacking. All but the Ancient Trees Trail are open to other non-motorized uses such as jogging and mountain biking. Back country camping is allowed by special permit on segments of the Chautauqua Hills Trail.

Fishing in the river and on the reservoir can be excellent. Both are noted for excellent white crappie, white bass, channel catfish, and flathead catfish angling. Black bass, bluegill, and sunfish round out the diverse fishing opportunities available here. The adjacent 4,600-acre Toronto Wildlife Area is a diverse collection of habitats, including forests, grasslands, farmlands, and marshes. Species common to the area included white-tailed deer, wild turkey, quail, squirrel, rabbit, dove, and raccoon. A rich variety of songbirds appeals to wildlife observers and photographers.”



The combination of lots of county hunters on the road and at home, regular park hunters and TQP folks allowed 44+ QSOs to be reached. With poor propagation, that can be a challenge these days.

I headed on into Yates Center – a small town – with two motels – none a major chain. I stayed at the Townsman Motel – probably a 60 plus year old one – but it was OK. No breakfast in the morning, though. Dinner nearby at the Wrangler Ranch – right on the town square in the small town. When I went in, I thought I might be the youngest person in there – lots of seniors enjoying a Saturday night dinner – until a multi-generation family of about 12 came in with seniors to baby carrier folks. Likely most

of the young people here have gone off to the 'cities' to find jobs.

Grabbed a egg/ham biscuit and coffee at a convenience store for breakfast the next day.

Sunday September 30

First up today would be **Prairie Spirit Trail State Park. KFF-2350**. I ran it in Iola in Allen County – nice place to park 500 feet north of the east west road through town. It runs through 3 different counties.



from the KS web:

“This linear park is located along a former rail bed between Iola and Ottawa, a distance of 51 miles.

The Prairie Spirit Trail offers a peaceful and calm tranquility away from the hustle and bustle of big city life. The trail is a linear park passing through three counties with eight pocket-parks along the way. It is a greenway and travel corridor open to pedestrians and bicyclists that traverses diverse ecosystems including tallgrass prairie, riparian areas, agricultural lands, and communities.

Along rural portions, the trail is a hard packed limestone screening surface. The trail is asphalted through Garnett and Ottawa. The trail averages a minimum of 8 feet wide. It follows the original rail bed of the old Leavenworth, Lawrence and Fort Gibson Railroad. Built in the 1860's, it was the first north-south rail line in Kansas. The grades are moderate, providing easy travel for hikers and cyclists alike.”

For WWFF/POTA, you should be within 50 feet or so of the trail, or at a designated 'trailhead' parking area that is part of the park. That can sometimes be challenging as much of the 'park' passes through areas with no car access – check the web for the park

for the 'pocket parks' and trailhead parking areas – usually well identified – if you are going to activate one of these.

Next up was **Crawford State State Park KFF-2331 in Crawford County**. Grid EM27.



From KS web:

“The 500-acre park features six campgrounds. For your convenience there are two boat ramps, three bathhouses, courtesy docks, and a dump station. Four hiking and biking trails, and a swimming beach offer more recreational opportunities in addition to camping, fishing and boating. In the summer months there is campground programming for all to enjoy. Anglers enjoy excellent fishing for channel catfish, crappie, and striped bass.

Pleasure boating, skiing, and swimming are among favorite recreational pursuits. Located on the edge of the Ozarks, Crawford State Park provides a variety of landscapes seen in Kansas state parks. Redbud trees offer spectacular beauty in the spring along with a wide variety of colorful wildflowers, birds, and butterflies. The lush foliage of the surrounding forest is a naturalist’s delight.”

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On to **Prairie State Park** in Barton County MO – KFF -1779 out in the southwest part of the state and out in the boonies. Real boonies and miles of gravel roads to get there! When you get there – not much there but lots of grass, and if you are lucky, Buffalo! Didn't spy the herd but didn't look for them. Ran it, then left. Then it's more miles to get out of the area to the next park unit!

From the MO web site:

Tallgrass prairies once covered more than a third of Missouri; today, less than one percent remains, much of it preserved at Prairie State Park. Visitors to the park see panoramic vistas of swaying grass and ever-changing wildflowers. They also may spot the park's resident bison herd. The park's Regal Tallgrass Prairie Nature Center offers exhibits and interpretive programs designed to inform visitors about the special place.



A few people came by on the gravel road toward the visitor center. I found a nice spot away from everything – including good internet access – but it worked out OK with the TQP going on and many mobiles on the way to the convention to work!

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Along the way to the next WWFF/WWFF-KFF park, I made a real quick stop at the **Harry Truman Birthplace Home** site in Independence, MO. It's only in the POTA system as park **K-4589**. You only need 10Q in that system. I hit the park, found mostly TQP stations, worked them quick and was out of there in 20 minutes. Skipped the house tour too. No real reason to stick around for more! That system rewards 'activations' so best to be a 'hit and run' type operator to get to the top of the listings for POTA.



Truman was born here May 8, 1884

After that quick visit, it was off to **Osage Village Historic Site** – another one out in the boonies and accessible by gravel roads. KFF-3361 in Vernon County MO.

From the MO web:

“The quiet and peaceful hilltop scenery at Osage Village State Historic Site only hints at the presence of a village that once housed between 2,000 and 3,000 people living in about 200 lodges. The site features a walking trail and outdoor exhibits that help visitors visualize the village, which was inhabited between 1700 and 1775.”



Wiki adds a bit more:

The Osage Indians were first recorded in 1673 by explorers Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette. The territory claimed by the Osage at its greatest influence was vast and consisted of what is now southern Missouri, Arkansas, eastern Kansas, and Oklahoma. Between 1700 and 1775, a large group of the Osage lived in a village situated on a high, open hilltop near the Osage River valley. This area, designated as a National Historic Landmark for the importance of the Osage in this region and the size of the village, has been preserved as the Osage Village State Historic Site.

At its peak, the village contained about 200 lodges with 2,000 to 3,000 people living in them. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that the shape of the dwellings was rectangular. Artifacts such as pottery, weapons, and tools excavated from the site have provided information about the daily lives of the villagers. The men hunted game and traded with the Europeans for furs in exchange for guns and goods. The women cultivated and processed the crops, and processed game and hides to make food,

clothing and tools. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Osage Indians accounted for more than half of the total European-American trade in furs along the Missouri River.

After the United States government took control of the Louisiana Purchase territory in 1804, its settlement policies encouraged European Americans to come into the area. It made treaties with the Osage so that they would cede their territory to the US. The Osage Indians were gradually forced to retreat to a reservation in Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.”

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Good run and afterwards, the GPS lady took me on 20 mile of gravel roads to get back to the interstate – it only took a few miles of gravel roads getting there off the interstate! Duh! At one point, the gravel road went down to one lane – and a bit muddy with all the rain they had in the KC area. Yuck. I'm not impressed by the GPS lady in MO navigation!

I headed to the motel for the night in Butler, MO – A Days Inn.

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Monday October 1

Now many mobiles had hit the road headed to Kansas City for the National that would start with activities on Thursday. I'd work more mobiles and less fixed county hunters as time went on – and with the 40m skip, not all that many county hunters. You'd see mobiles spotted – but- dang – you'd hear nothing but folks working them from far away. 20M was really bad most of the time, and unless someone was 20-30 miles away, you just heard stations in SC and CA and OR/WA working them. So it was mostly 30M and 40M QSOs, and a bunch of park chasers on 20M CW from Europe.

First up – **Marais des Cynes National Wildlife area – KFF-0295 in Linn County KS.**



DX worked includes DL1EJA, F2YT, DF1YQ, F1BLL, IW2NXI, DL2NO DL1EBR, OH6RP, ON4ON and UT5PI. They all have outstanding stations in Europe to be able to work mobiles here in the USA.

45 QSO went in the log and I headed to the next. The TQP was over so no easy contacts that way.

From wiki:

Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is located along the Marais des Cygnes River. The 7,500 acre Refuge was established in 1992 to protect one of the northwestern-most examples of bottomland hardwood forest in the United States as well as the largest contiguous tract of bottomland hardwood forest in Kansas. Marais des Cygnes means "marsh of swans" in French.

More than 30 species of warblers migrate through or nest on the refuge. The refuge also is known to harbor 30 species of mussels. Other interesting species are raccoons, badgers, minks, coyotes, skunks, beavers, muskrats, river otters, two species of fox, bobcats, paddlefish, crawfish frogs, scissor-tailed flycatchers, loggerhead shrike, and red-shouldered hawks. The refuge provides a rare opportunity to view high quality examples of a number of uncommon plant and animal communities all within a short distance of each other. Some of these communities are rare throughout North America, including bottomland hardwood forest, which has been reduced by 80% nationally, and tallgrass prairie, which has been reduced by 99% nationally. “

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Next up today would be **Battle of Island Mound State Park** – again off in the boonies and you won't find road signs to it. If you don't know where it is.....good luck getting there. Now- with smartphones and GPS you are set, but you are old school without

them, good luck finding many of these places. There are few if any signs off the main roads to many sites here.

KFF-3338 – Bates County - Battle of Island Mound SP

Now we have a civil war site – and this war raged across MO back in the days.

from the MO state site:

“The peaceful setting at Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site is in dramatic contrast to the battle that occurred here in 1862 – a battle that marked a significant milestone in the history of the Civil War. This minor skirmish has national significance because it was the first time black soldiers engaged in combat during the Civil War.

Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site preserves the site of the Toothman Farm, which the First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry used as its headquarters and renamed “Fort Africa.” Exhibits at the site interpret the Battle of Island Mound and its significance in the history of the state, the nation and the Civil War. Courage Trail, a half-mile trail around the site, includes wayside exhibits with more information about the battle.



from wiki:

During the Battle of Island Mound on October 28–29, 1862, the Union 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers—composed of former Arkansas and Missouri slaves—and a scouting team of Cherokee and blacks from the 5th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry engaged a numerically superior force of Confederate guerrillas and recent Missouri State Guard recruits. The Union forces had crossed into Missouri on a mission to clear Confederate guerrillas from their base known as "Hog Island" in the Osage River.

Finding themselves outnumbered in an early sortie, the Union troops commandeered and fortified the homestead of Confederate guerrilla Enoch John Toothman, and a one-day siege ensued. Part of the regiment was caught out on the tall-grass prairie by mounted Confederate guerrillas. They stood their ground through several volleys of gunfire and a cavalry charge, before the Confederates withdrew from the area on October 29.

The clash was significant as the first time African-American troops engaged Confederate forces during the Civil War. It was covered by a correspondent of the New York Times who was with the regiment, and he praised the men's "desperate bravery." The battle was also covered by Harper's Weekly. Such positive reports provided encouragement to other African-American units that were forming across the northern states and petitioning the Union government to fight in combat. The United States Colored Troops were established, contributing critical fighting and support to the Union effort.”

You never know what you'll run into on your tour of various state park and NWR sites along your travels! History, nature, birds, buffalo!

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Next up was a very nice state park – **Harry Truman State Park in Benton County MO** – KFF-1762. I'm headed generally north but wandering around. No need to rush directly to KC as there are loads of parks than can be run on the way there.



From the state site:

“Clear waters, dramatic bluffs and vibrant summer and fall colors make Harry S Truman State Park an ideal place to vacation. Located on a peninsula, the park offers a marina, ample fishing and boating opportunities, and water that’s perfect for every kind of swimmer. Hiking trails, picnic areas and campsites dot the park’s open oak woodlands and provide a home for abundant wildlife.”

Had success with more than 44Q, worked a bunch of county hunters. K5GE was down in TX so he was 'far enough away' I could hear him. AB7RW/m was headed east from the west coast – now in MT - and still good copy on several bands.

Next up – the **Katy Trail State Park** – which is a linear trail that runs 50+ miles along an abandoned railway line. KFF-1766 in the system – Johnson County MO. The whole line runs over 200 miles.



From the MO webpage:

“Welcome to Katy Trail State Park, the longest developed rail-trail in the country. Katy Trail State Park attracts people of all ages and interests. Whether you are a bicyclist, walker, equestrian, nature lover or history buff, the trail offers opportunities for recreation, a place to enjoy nature and an avenue to discover the past.

The park, built on the former corridor of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (MKT or Katy), is 240 miles long and runs between Clinton and Machens with 26 trailheads and four fully restored railroad depots along the way. The section of trail between Cooper County and St. Charles County has been designated as an official segment of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Katy Trail is also part of the American Discovery Trail, has been designated as a Millennium Legacy Trail and was added to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Hall of Fame in 2008.

Trail users have the opportunity to wind through some of the most scenic areas of the state with the majority of the trail closely following the Missouri River. The park also takes users through a slice of rural history as it meanders through the small towns that once thrived along the railroad corridor and reflect the rich heritage of Missouri. Information at the trailheads makes a ride or walk on the Katy not only a healthy adventure, but also an educational one.”

There's nice trail head parking area in Leeton, MO. The GPS lady took me on 20 miles of gravel roads to get there – even though there were paved roads maybe 3 miles longer but likely a lot faster! The GPS lady gets a “D” for navigation in MO! Maybe an F at times! Had success with enough in the log.

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In the logbook next is **Knob Noster State Park KFF-1767 in Johnson, MO – Grid EM38.**



From MO web site:

“Knob Noster State Park is a tranquil retreat of open oak woodland with a few patches of prairie along both sides of the meandering Clearfork Creek. It’s a place for fishermen to wet a line, for mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders to get some trail time, and for families to spend quality time together. The park also features an oxbow slough, which has been officially designated as Pin Oak Slough Natural Area. “

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That was it for the day. Motel - Days Inn in Concordia MO with dinner at a nearby truck stop. Dinner actually pretty decent buffet there. Slept well.

Time for a short break here.....

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Texas QSO Party

Mobiles were out and running! A majority of the counties of the state were 'on the air' and up for grabs! Propagation was challenging especially on Sunday.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

W5CT multi-op mobile 1509 CW 215 SSB

This was the sixth QSO Party outing with Madison W5MJ and me operating. Steve WK5S once again kept us on our route and out of the ditch. :-) He also used an earbud to keep an ear on the action, and provided A+ tech support. We've had the good fortune to have some others with us in past years, but this year it was just the Three Amigos.

Most years we try to do something a little bigger – this year we just tried to do things a little better. We've been doing two transmitters since 2015, and we're starting to get the bugs worked out. Multi-transmitter mobile is no walk in the park – there WILL be inter-station interference, and sometimes it can be pretty serious. But with good antennas and coax, band pass filters, and some attention to detail, it can work well.

To do things better, we reworked all the cabling. Everything now uses good quality shielded cable, and we took off all the "hamfest special" toroids and used only mix 31 snap-ons that are designed to block RF at *HF* frequencies. We also used double shielded coax for most of the RF jumpers. All this made quite a difference. Over 18 hours of operating, we had zero GPS or Winkey issues. One radio had no interruption in communication with the laptop; the other had only a couple, which were quickly resolved (no reboot required).

We used the same antennas – a Tarheel 100A and a Bug Catcher. Both needed a bit of cleaning and tightening which took a couple extra work days.

This year, we changed our antenna strategy a bit. We use the Tarheel for 40 so we could move between CW and SSB. The Bug Catcher doesn't have enough bandwidth on 40 to cover both modes. It does, however, have enough bandwidth to cover the entire 20M band. So we moved the tap and used the Bug Catcher on 20. As it got dark, we swapped the coil and put the Bug Catcher on 80 CW.

We had the Ameritron ALS-500 amp hooked up. We used it for most of the day on Saturday, but when we had a bit of trouble with it on Saturday afternoon, we just turned it off for the rest of the contest.

We changed our operator strategy a bit. Madison took 20 and 80 this year. He had a microphone and footswitch, but reported that the knob on his radio just wouldn't turn to

the right. :-) I worked 40 and while I consistently found better rate on CW, I'm pretty sure I spent at least a few minutes on SSB in each of our counties. Over time, we developed a "fan club" that would be good for at least 8-10 SSB QSOs. It was nice to work W5KFT, who completed work on some antennas at his NM QTH just in time for TQP.

Conditions didn't seem very good. The biggest problem was noise. There was an S5-S8 atmospheric roar on 40M all weekend. I kept the DSP cranked way up, which helped a lot with signal-to-noise, but came with some digital artifacts. Madison also had a high noise floor on 20 and had to contend with the harmonic from 40M. We got nice compliments on our transmit signal, but we just couldn't hear well this weekend.

We made 36 of our planned 37 counties. We missed the turn for Erath, but it was probably for the best since we lost about a half hour a little later when we had to stop and tinker with the Bug Catcher. We also lost about 20 minutes in swapping out the Bug Catcher coil Saturday evening. Somehow in the packing or unpacking, we knocked the tap off the coil, so we had to pull out the analyzer and set the resonant point again.

Activity seemed down this year, both fixed and mobile. N5RZ did a mobile operation and was easy to find on Saturday. We also worked N5NA/M several times. WT5NA/M gets the prize, though, for working hardest to complete a set of QSOs with us on 40 SSB. We crossed a county line during one, so were able to give him a couple mults for his effort. We missed the competition from W0BH/M this year, although Bob gave us a few Qs on Sunday. NO5W called us regularly on Sunday, but we sure missed his FB mobile operation. Hope you'll be back on the road soon, Chuck!

Robert K5PI

N6MU - fixed - CA - 231 CW - 139 counties worked

Interesting fact, I had exactly the same number of Qs(231) as last year but 6 fewer mults. Poor conditions are humbling and really showed how weak I am, hi. Sure got tired of CQs in my face. Watching the spots, it seems several mobiles mainly stayed on 40 which makes it tough on us left coasters during the day when we have no propagation. Oh well, we play the hand we're dealt.

I counted eight active mobiles on CW. Top mobile for me was N5NA with 47 Qs followed by W5CT(32),

N5RZ(27), W3DYA(13), WA5RR(10), AF5Q/K5GQ(8) and WB5KIA(5).

Thanks to all who participated. 73...

John, N6MU

N5NA - mobile 1577 CW QSO

Conditions were poor. Lots of weak signals. I finished with 63 fewer QSOs and 13 fewer multipliers than 2017. Thank you to all the callers!

Top 10 callers were: N6MU(47), WB9CIF(39), W5TM(34), K2DSW(32), K0AP(30), K4BAI(29), AE5GT(26), DL3DXX(25), WA6KHK(22), and KE0TT(21).

DX stations worked were: DL3DXX(25), DK2OY(10), DL8USA(9), HI8A(4), DL5ME(1), and XE3A(1).

Equipment: Elecraft K3, Scorpion SA680 antenna, Dell D630 laptop running CQ/X logging program, Ford F250 Superduty antenna support.

A very special thanks to my wife, K5AKS, for driving me around WTX on our 34th wedding anniversary!

N5RZ mobile 1185 CW QSO

Another Texas QSO Party in the books. First time mobile since 2010. Had 30 counties on the plan but only made 29. Ran out of time Saturday night to activate Kendall.

Condx were good at times and real poor at times.

40M was generally pretty good. I was able to stake out 7026.7 most of the contest. However, skip was usually too long to work many Texas mobiles. Worked W5CT 9 times, N5NA twice, WA5RR three times, and K5GQ once. Never heard Norm, W3DYA or others.

20M was another matter! Never seemed to be able to establish a good clear frequency. Would go up to 20M at times, work DL3DXX, DL8USA and a couple of others, then nada. Figured if I was on another TX station frequency, I'd at least hear the guys calling them, but that only happened a couple of times. Lots of QSB on 20M also. Very frustrating. Lots of unanswered CQ's.

Went thru a lot of rain on Saturday, but noise wasn't a problem except occasional power line noise. Also hit some rather rough roads. Since I was logging on paper and sending by hand (except for the limited CW memories in the IC-7000), it made for some wild transmissions and holding onto to everything!

Was running two Hamsticks on each rail of the pickup, one for 40M and one for 20M. Around 2000Z, the 40M antenna became intermittent on receive causing a real pain. Became unusable in Karnes County about 2107Z, and went out to find a loose coax elbow. Tried to tighten it, but it stripped out and had no spare. Ended up swapping the 40M antenna to the 20M mount for the remainder of Saturday and no more 20M that day. Had a lot of ground to cover and didn't want to have to stop and swap antennas. Apologize for that. As it turns out, due to a couple of wrong turns, was only able to get 10 minutes in Bandera county on a by then poor 40M before 0200Z the first day. Didn't make Kendall. Still another 2 hours to get back home for some shuteye.

Got up the next morning and repaired the 40M mount and also grabbed a spare 40M Hamstick - no problems on Sunday.

Scheduled to put out eight counties on Sunday - some large West Texas counties with few roads. Ended up spending 1:08 in SUTT, and 1:18 in EDWA, which had one narrow winding road on which we could only average 40 mph if that. Sure got slow! Turned on a road to go the UVAL, and the road was closed! Went around the sign and 20 miles later found out why - there was a low water crossing at the Nueces River which luckily was passable - but because of the heavy rains earlier in the week, probably would not have been a day or so before. Lucked out. As it turns out, we hit the eighth county, KERR with 10 minutes to go. Was too busy on 20M to make it to 40M to work the close in guys. Sorry to my 40M buddies.

All in all a good time. My XYL, Deborah, K5RZA was a trooper and drove almost 1K miles over the weekend! Thanks Darling!

Worked 45 counties. Missed ND SD NH RI AK and WY for 43 states. In Canada, only worked VE2 VE3 VE7 (last QSO was VE7JH- thanks!). Only DX was DL3DXX 18Q DL8USA 10Q DK2OY 4Q HI8A 2Q and ON4AAC 1Q.

Top stations:

N6MU = 27 K2DSW = 27 WB9CIF = 26 WA6KHK = 24 and K0AP = 22

Thanks to all for the QSO's, your patience, and sorry to those of you I could not dig out.

Rig: IC-7000 Paper log 40M and 20M Hamsticks.

Power plant: Honda EU2000i generator

Used Microsoft Streets and Trips with USB GPS for planning and navigation.

Spent all day Monday keypunching log into N1MM+.

Thanks again & CU next year.

--73, Gator and Deborah

WA5RR mobile 338 CW 138 SSB

This was my first "all-in" serious chase for TXQP mobile operation. My route plan changed as I realized that driving and operating alone would require a different approach. So, I reduced my overall county count plan and concentrated on running 2-county lines. All of my runs were as such except for an awesome 4-county line near Amarillo.

I saw some gorgeous country in our great state! It was the first time I've seen the Palo Duro Canyon and I even ran through Turkey, TX, which is the home of Bob Wills. They had his "Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys" bus sitting out on display downtown!

The weather couldn't have been better. God bless Texas!

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N8II - fixed - WV - 115 CW 97 SSB - 94 counties

Activity seemed a lot lower than expected in the first 2 hours on 20M, probably a lot of not workable stations from here on 40. We had a terribly wet week here; the Potomac

River crested over 4 feet above flood stage Saturday (not the first time, was worse twice before this summer). Saturday, the grass was finally dry enough to cut, so that finished off any hope of a serious TXQP effort. TX stations did a pretty good job of avoiding the CQWW RTTY onslaught on 40, but there was next to no 40 SSB activity after 24Z when 40 opened well from here.

There were not that many serious full time mobiles compared to past years. W5CT/M and K5GQ/M were often Q5 here on 40, but could not hear me. Others calling W5CT could not be heard as well. N5NA heard me well. Highlight was at 1622Z Sunday on 20 phone when I ran 7 Q's in a row (3 were same station on tri-county line) with either portable or mobile stations. I did not hear any TX on 15M, but the band opened well to EU as far north as Germany with peak 1630-1705Z, so I spent some time chatting with EU stations on 15 phone.

Judging by the highest Q total being around 350 Q's, activity is heading downward. The long skip does not help, but 20 was in good shape until around 18Z Sunday when there seemed to be a dip, did not hear any mobiles between 18015-1815Z when I quit and took the family to a MD park with a large flooded flood plain, but it still was nice.

73, Jeff

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WA6KHK noted 149 counties worked – the top number claimed. Had no further comments.

ARRL Special Six Volume Handbook

ARRL Releases Limited Edition 2019 Handbook Six-Volume Ultimate Boxed Set

The 2019 edition of The ARRL Handbook for Radio Communications is now available as a six-volume boxed set in a handsome hard slipcase in addition to the traditional, soft-cover print edition.

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- Volume 1: Introduction and Fundamental Theory
- Volume 2: Practical Design and Principles -- Part 1
- Volume 3: Practical Design and Principles -- Part 2
- Volume 4: Antenna Systems and Radio Propagation
- Volume 5: Equipment Construction and Station Accessories
- Volume 6: Test Equipment, Troubleshooting, RFI, and Index

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- A simple SLA float charger project by John Boal, K9JEB
- Amateur Radio data platforms by Paul Verhage, KD4STH, and Bill Brown, WB8ELK
- The latest information on the WSJT-X digital suite by the WSJT Development Team
- Filter and circuit design software by Tonne Software and Jim Tonne, W4ENE
- Low-noise VHF and UHF oscillators by Ulrich Rohde, N1UL, and Ajay Poddar, AC2KG
- Update on Solar Cycle 24 by Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA
- Updated SSTV practices and technology by Larry Peterson, WA9TT
- Designing dual-band loaded dipoles by David Birnbaum, K2LYV

- Latest transceiver survey by Joel Hallas, W1ZR
- Updated component tables
- State-of-the-art guidelines for SDR (software-defined radio) design

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The Handbook Kindle edition comes in six separate volumes, automatically delivered to your Kindle, starting on October 8, \$9.99 per volume

On the Road with N4CD III

Continuing the trip to the National Convention – now in MO

October 2 2018

Today started out with a visit to the **Confederate Memorial State Historic site, KFF-3345, in Lafayette County MO.**

From the MO state web:

“Step on to the peaceful grounds of Confederate Memorial State Historic Site and experience where the last voices of the “Lost Cause” lingered. The site was once home to the Confederate Soldiers Home of Missouri, which provided comfort and refuge to 1,600 Civil War veterans and their families for nearly 60 years. Today, visitors can visit the restored chapel and the Confederate cemetery, as well as three other historic buildings. Visitors will learn about the Confederate Home and the role it played in post-Civil War Missouri. The site’s 135 acres include numerous lakes to fish in as well as walking trails and places to picnic.”



The run went well with a combination of park chasers, county hunters, and county hunter mobile contacts. Grid EM39. Just a few mobiles – most were getting too close to copy. Caught N8OYY, K5GE and N8KIE out mobile.

Next up – **the Battle of Lexington State Park – KFF-3339** and still in Lafayette County. That can be tricky as some county hunters have already worked the county and snooze in. Others help out N4CD reach the magic 44 QSO number.

From the MO site:

“People called Oliver Anderson’s house “the best arranged dwelling house west of St. Louis.” But it became more famous as the center of a bloody three-day Civil War battle in 1861. Walk through the Anderson House at Battle of Lexington State Historic Site and marvel at the bullet holes still in the walls and evidence of the cannon shots. The battlefield is peaceful now, dotted with orchards and gardens, but battle scars remain. A visitor center provides a comprehensive view of the battle that raised Southern spirits that the war was winnable and made Unionists in Missouri think twice about whether they could hold the state. The site is located in the town of Lexington and is one of the closest Civil War sites to Interstate 70.”

Wiki adds:

The First Battle of Lexington, also known as the Battle of the Hemp Bales or the Siege

of Lexington, was an engagement of the American Civil War. It took place from September 12 to September 20, 1861 between the Union Army and the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard in Lexington, county seat of Lafayette County, Missouri. The victory won by the Missouri Guard bolstered the considerable Southern sentiment in the area, and briefly consolidated Missouri State Guard control of the Missouri River Valley in the western part of the state.



Prior to the Civil War Lexington was an agricultural town of over 4,000 residents that served as the county seat of Lafayette County and enjoyed a position of considerable local importance on the Missouri River in west-central Missouri. Hemp (used for rope production), tobacco, coal and cattle all contributed to the town's wealth, as did the river trade. Though Missouri remained in the Union during the war, many residents of Lexington's residents were slaveowners, and several openly sympathized with the Southern cause. Lafayette County had a high ratio of slaves to free persons, with slaves comprising 31.7% of its population.

Casualties at Lexington were relatively low because the battle was largely fought from protective positions. Price claimed a loss of only 25 men killed and 72 wounded in his official report. However, a study of his subordinates' after-action reports reveals a total of at least 30 killed and 120 wounded. The Federals lost 39 killed and 120 wounded. The relatively light casualties may be attributed to Mulligan's excellent entrenchments and Harris's hemp-bale inspiration; nevertheless, the entire Union garrison was taken

prisoner.

The surrendered Union soldiers were compelled to listen to a speech by the deposed pro-Confederate Missouri governor Claiborne F. Jackson, who upbraided them for entering his state without invitation and waging war upon its citizens. The Federals were then paroled by General Price, “

- - -

The run went well with over 44Q. On to the next.

Big Muddy NWR – KFF- 0374 – many counties - stretches all the way across the state of MO with 17 'units' you can run if you can find them. As I drove along, I saw signs for at least 3 or 4 and headed to one indicated on my MO map.



Wiki notes:

“The Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge was established in 1994, and has grown to over 16,700 acres. Like pearls on a string, these acres are spread out as individual units along the Missouri River between Kansas City and St. Louis. These pearls of habitat benefit floodplain-dependent fish and wildlife species. The Big Muddy Refuge is planning to grow to 60,000 acres by buying land from willing sellers who want to see their properties set aside for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of all.

The pre-development Missouri River as documented by Lewis and Clark was considerably different from today's river. The historic Missouri was a broad, slow-moving, shallow river with braided channels. These past river conditions created a haven for wildlife, which included vast floodplain forests of giant trees, marshes, and even wet prairies. Today's river is channelized. It is deeper and faster, and controlled by levees,

dikes, and other containment structures. These controls make the river more navigable and the surrounding floodplain ideal for agriculture.

The Big Muddy Refuge is allowing the Missouri River to be a river again, to enter its floodplain. This occurs during minor flood events. Management has created side channels, cut down levees, and allowed the floodplain vegetation to return. Currently, in many places the refuge is an impenetrable thicket of young trees and vegetation, but, as the trees grow and the refuge matures, its appearance will change. The process may take decades or even centuries”

Just of smidgen of internet there but it worked out OK with 48Q.

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I'd try for more today. **Van Meter State Park** in Saline County MO – KFF-1791.

From the state web:

“Van Meter State Park features remnants of the Missouria Indian village that sat at the Great Bend of the Missouri River, marked on a map by Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet in 1673. A hand-dug earthwork -- Old Fort -- and several burial mounds lie within the park’s boundaries. The state’s Indian history is interpreted in displays and exhibits at the park’s Missouri’s American Indian Cultural Center. For outdoor enthusiasts, the park features hiking trails and an 18-acre fishing lake. The boardwalk that leads visitors through the Oumessourit Natural Area takes them over a freshwater marsh and fens, and through bottomland and upland areas. The park’s lofty trees shade picnic sites, picnic shelters and a campground.”

- -

Next up – **Pershing State Park** in Linn County MO – KFF – 1777.

From the MO web page:

“Wander through a slice of pre-settlement landscape at Pershing State Park. The park includes a boardwalk and hiking trail that winds through a wet prairie near a meandering stream with oxbow sloughs and cutoffs, and into a bottomland forest. The park’s wetlands attract a variety of birds and waterfowl as well as scores of other wildlife species. Locust Creek and four small lakes give anglers a chance to try their skills and a shady campground with electric and basic campsites makes the park an ideal overnight

location.”



After a successful park run – headed on into the Days Inn in Cameron, MO. Dinner at a nearby Mexican food establishment. Whew- six parks in one day – that's about the limit if you are going to achieve 44+ QSOs from each park.

October 3 2018

The convention would be starting soon – but first a full day of counties and parks. First up was **Wallace State Park** – run early for the morning session of the CW Weekly Test from 1300-1400z every Wednesday. You try to work as many folks as possible in an hour, giving your name and CWO number (or state if you don't have one) and receiving the same. I got to the park 10 minutes early and worked some DX on 20M – you have a nice opening often to EU at that time. DK2OY, DL2EJA, DF1YA, IW2NXI, F1BLL and ON4ON made it in the log early. Caught VK7CW on 40m cw!

Worked 15 county hunters on 40 and 30 before switching to the lower frequencies in the band (usually .025-.040) on 40 and 20M for CWT.



After 45 minutes in the CWT – picking up a quick 50 QSOs, I hit the county hunter frequencies again to wind up with 96Q in an hour and a half. Good run.

From the MO website:

“Less than an hour from Kansas City, Wallace State Park is an island of serenity. Visitors can fish in the park’s six-acre lake or hike one of four scenic trails with benches along the way for relaxing. Picnic sites that are shaded by trees are scattered throughout and the family-oriented campground includes modern restrooms and hot showers.”

- - -

Off to the next park – Watkins Woolen Mill State Park in Clay County MO – KFF-1795. A repeat of Clay County but maybe things would work out. It's best to run only one park per county!

From the MO website:

“Stepping on to the grounds of Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site is like stepping into 19th century pastorage. Many of the buildings that Waltus Watkins spent half a century building – including an elegant home and a three-story woolen mill – have been preserved to give visitors a sense of life in the 1870s. The mill is the only 19th century textile mill in the United States with its original machinery still intact. The site's visitor center offers an introduction to the Watkins family and their many business ventures.”



wiki adds:

“Waltus L. Watkins established the 80-acre livestock farm he called Bethany Plantation in 1839. Watkins Mill was built in 1859-1860. Watkins built housing for the mill workers nearby, creating one of the first planned communities in North America. The community was effectively self-sufficient, the mill producing yarn and wool cloth. The mill operated at capacity until 1886, two years after Watkins' death. From 1886 to the turn of the twentieth century production declined.

Nearly all of the mill machinery has been preserved, including a 65-horsepower steam engine that powered the factory. After going through several changes in ownership, the state of Missouri took possession of the property, creating a 1,442-acre state park in 1964. It was named a National Mechanical Engineering Historic Landmark in 1980.”

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Now it's time to get on into the hotel in KC....but wait....there's a park no more than 3 miles from the convention site – so a quick visit to the **WW1 Memorial and Museum** site in downtown KC is going to happen first. It's got two different numbers – one in the WWFF system – one in the POTA system. For POTA, all you need is 10, so I'd make a quick stop and come back and make more another day. Actually, I wasn't even sure this was in the WWFF system. That would take some discussion with the WWFF-KFF coordinator – Kraig – KA2LHO.

From wiki:

“The National World War I Museum and Memorial of the United States is located in Kansas City, Missouri. Opened to the public as the Liberty Memorial museum in 1926, it was designated in 2004 by the United States Congress as America's official museum dedicated to World War I. The Museum and Memorial are managed by a non-profit organization in cooperation with the Kansas City Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners. The museum reopened to the public in December 2006 with an expanded, award-winning facility to exhibit an artifact collection that began in 1920. The National World War I Museum tells the story of the Great War and related global events from their origins before 1914 through the 1918 armistice and 1919 Paris Peace Conference.”

It's rated on of the best museums in the country and a top attraction in the KC area.



A quick 20 went in the log here and I headed to the motel. Time to get checked in.....BUT WAIT! There's another park unit 1.2 miles away and the 1900Z session of the CWT could be used to get some quick contacts – it's the same county! So off to KFF-3365, the **Thomas Hart Benton Home** – a state owned 'historic site' in downtown KC.

From wiki:

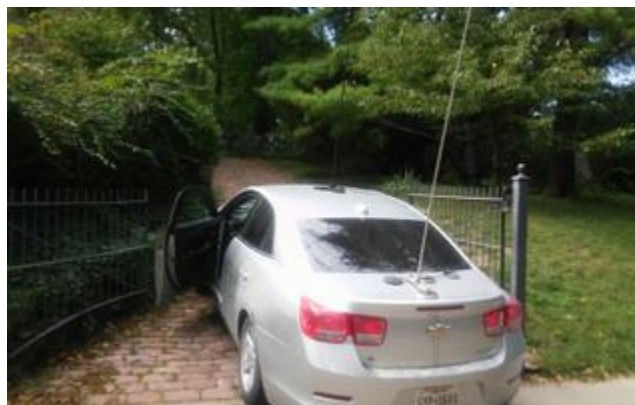
“The Thomas Hart Benton Home and Studio State Historic Site is a state-owned property located at 3616 Belleview, Kansas City, Missouri, that preserves the house and studio of Missouri artist Thomas Hart Benton. The historic site was established in 1977 and is managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Tours are provided that show the furnished house and studio as Benton left it when he died on January 19, 1975. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.”

from the MO web:

“Thomas Hart Benton's life is present in both his home and his paintings, and both are preserved at Thomas Hart Benton Home and Studio State Historic Site. A trip to the home and studio of the renowned painter, sculptor, lecturer and writer offers a glimpse into how the talented Benton lived and worked. Benton converted half of the carriage house into his art studio, which remains as he left it. Visitors can still see coffee cans full of paintbrushes, numerous paints, and a stretched canvas waiting to be transformed into another of his masterpieces. Thomas Hart Benton died in his studio in 1975”

- - -

It's closed to the public on Wednesday.....but the gate was open. There was no one around....so I pulled off the road (there's only street parking for this site other than special access for handi-cap) - 20 feet into the driveway and ran it there.



You've got to be 'on' the property for it to count. Parking on the street in front of it is not 'on' the property. Luckily the gate was open and I just went in 20 feet. It's a steep narrow drive. I walked up first to see if anyone was around but the place was locked up solid. Radio conditions were absolutely horrible – and this wasn't a great location on the side of a hill and higher ground immediately to left and right of car. The CWT

(1900-2000z Wednesdays) saved the day with enough Qs to finish off 44 – just had 46 after a lot of struggling. Left and closed the gate. Not sure why it was open.

I finally arrived at the Holiday Inn and checked in – ready to meet and greet the 100 county hunters descending upon KC. A majority of folks seemed to be there already!

N2CX – Parks on the Air

We had spent the night at Peaks of Otter Lodge on the Blue Ridge Parkway, KFF-3378 so this was an excellent opportunity to slip in a repeat performance from NPOTA as a Late Shift activation. The setup was a duplicate of the previous outing, using the W4OP loop on the balcony of our lodge room with a fantastic evening view of the last moments of a sunset over the surroundings hills. We even had a rodential night light on the operating table! A downside to the location was a total lack of cell coverage even with a booster and minimal WiFi to self-spot.

The BLP is very scenic and a great place to visit in addition to the opportunity to do a unique park activation. BTW, you know those three letter stickers folks slap on their cars to brag where they've been? Peaks of Otter has their own, imprinted POO! No there is not one on the N2CX park-wagon...

Due to the late hour, 20 had shut down for the night so we opted to use 40 and 30. 40 chugged along quite well until FOC cranked in. For first class operators, those guys are rather inconsiderate. A shift to 30 nabbed another handful of contacts though lack of ability to self spot cramped our style. As a first, we tried 60m for a while with not success. The loop is not terrible efficient down there and no one knew to check 5232. A last ditch try on 40 up above the FOC'ers netted a couple more Q's including reliable VE2GT and, as a first for the loop on 7 MHz, W6LEN out on the left coast! Looks like Late Shift is something to add to the repertoire.

The 22nd was National Public Lands Day so to honor it we traveled most of the BLP in VA. We also made a stop at Carter Mountain, a high-altitude apple orchard overlooking both the the Thomas Jefferson James Monroe estates. The site was jam-packed by

several hundred produce-hungry visitors who were guided in amongst local traffic by a flag man. If you are in the area don't miss the orchard, bakery and winery!

After this necessary diversion we set sights on Powhatan Wildlife Management Area, KFF-1313. The state conveniently waived entrance fees as a nod to the Public Lands Day, a pleasant surprise. As a WMA, recreation here is limited to camping, wooded trails for hiking, fishing and canoeing. The area was chosen was close to a canoe launch ramp whose muddy slope showed the aftereffects of the recent heavy rainfall. A young couple emulated a Keystone Cops performance desperately hauling their watercraft up the ramp from waters edge. They probably didn't view the experience as humorous as we did.

The site was very radio-quiet which was a plus. Unfortunately the ionosphere was quiet as well. 40 once again was best though light while both 20 and 30 were long, favoring the western US but zero EU DX. OTOH, the overall total logged was about average for a so-so site at two dozen.

The last effort of the day was Lake Anna SP, KFF-1306. Once again VA had waived entrance fees for the day. The lake is a large man-made feature built to provide cooling water for a nearby nuclear power plant. In spite of these origins it supports many recreational facilities and exclusive resort housing. This in spite of signs highlighting the presence of the nearby facility and alerting the possibility of emergency warnings should things go awry. Having lived near Three Mile Island I'm not sure I would want to live in the shadow of such a "feature."

As we got there within an hour's time of its daily closing and the fact that cell coverage was poor, filling the log proved difficult. On the positive side, late-day prop on 40 meters was enhanced, allowing contacts with both VE6 and EA! Kind of a disappointing way to cap the day, but all in all not without its highlights. This site will be a for-sure future target.

On the Road with N4CD III

The convention was hosted by Ed, K8ZZ in Kansas City, MO



Ed, K8ZZ, Convention Host – USCA #1134
(pic courtesy of N8HAM)

Ed has lots of help from Rev Kate, AB7NK/K7SEN(registration) and others to make this happen. LOTS of effort went into putting on this convention. (Big round of applause here folks!).....

At the convention

2018 list of attending:

K8ZZ Ed, Topeka, KS

AB7NK Mary, Cordes Lakes, AZ

Rev Kate, Smithtown, NY

K7SEN Neil, Cordes Lakes, AZ

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| N8HAM Jim, South Lyon, MI | KB0BA Lowell, Blue Grass, IA |
| N0XYL Sandra, Blue Grass, IA | KC3X Hollis, Snow Hill, NC |
| K4PXB Jim, Donaldsonville, GA | KA2TED Sharon, Donaldsonville, GA |
| W0GXQ Jerry, Evergreen, CO | K0FG Fred and Vee Jay, Sunrise Beach, MO |
| N1API Al, Meriden, CT | N2JNE Charlie, Saugerties, NY |
| W9DC Don and Joy, Salem, SC | W0ULU Fred and Kaye, Cottage Grove, MN |
| WD4OIN Jack, Wilmington, NC | KG4IIL Anita, Wilmington, NC |
| W8TZA Bill, Kalamazoo, MI | W8WKD Sharon, Kalamazoo, MI |
| AB7RW Phil, Vancouver, WA | AC7UH Barb, Vancouver, WA |
| N4CD Bob, Plano, TX | N8OYY Ed and Sharon, Fairmont, WV |
| NU0Q Bill and Karen, Ankeny, IA | N8WTQ Dorie, Midland, MI |
| WB0CQO Joe, Murray, IA | Shannon, Ames, IA |
| K0AP Dragan, Olathe, KS | N1QY Ron and Ellen, Holliston, MA |
| WY0A Butch and Jamie, Derby, KS | WG9A Bill and Sandy, Batavia, IL |
| W9OP Mark, Neenah, WI | W9PIP Joan, Neenah, WI |
| K0DEQ Bill, Rolla, MO | NF0N Mike and Dianne, South Sioux City, NE |
| N8KIE Bob, Clarkston, MI | N8RLJ Jaci, Clarkston, MI |
| NN9K Pete, Colona, IL | N9DQS Nancy, Colona, IL |
| KA2LHO Kraig, Ocala, FL | K5GE Gene and Mary Ida, Seguin, TX |
| W9GUY Don, Walton, IN | K3IMC Don, LaGrange, GA |
| KJ4NIT Jean, LaGrange, GA | KN4Y Ed, Crawfordville, FL |
| Clayton, Tallahassee, FL | K2MH Mark, West Orange, NJ |
| KD2KHJ Karen, West Orange, NJ | KA9JAC Bob, Hortonville, WI |
| KB9YVT Ann, Hortonville, WI | N5MLP Ron, Magnolia, TX |
| NM1G Chuck, N Kingstown, RI | K8OOK Mike, Grand Rapids, MI |
| N8IPG Nancy, Grand Rapids, MI | K5OH Rick, Lawton, OK |
| K5FLO Flo, Lawton, OK | AI5P Rick, Albuquerque, NM |
| NA8W Darl, Findley, OH | KA8JQP Pam, Findley, OH |
| AJ5ZX Randy, San Angelo, TX | KC5QCB Janet, San Angelo, TX |
| KD9ZP Gene, Fond du Lac, WI | K9FDL Dottie, Fond du Lac, WI |
| N4UP Peter, Victoria, VA | AC0B Cliff and Kathy, Saginaw, MN |
| NX0X Brian, Duluth, MN | KB0MHH Shari, Duluth, MN |
| K0PFV John, Omaha, NE | WA0VDO Marian, Omaha, NE |
| W6OUL Jim, Lompoc, CA | W7SRR Sherry, Lompoc, CA |
| W0FP Frosty, Liberty, MO | K2MF Barry, Lutz, FL |
| Nancy, Bloomington, IL | K1BV Ted and Betty, Columbia, CT |
| WB0PYF Ray, St Louis, MO | Ellis Mae CG, St Louis, MO |
| K0ARS Jim and Delight, Bevier, MO | |
| K0MAF Jack and Linda, Windsor, MO | |
| W3DYA Norm and Karen, Tyler, TX | |

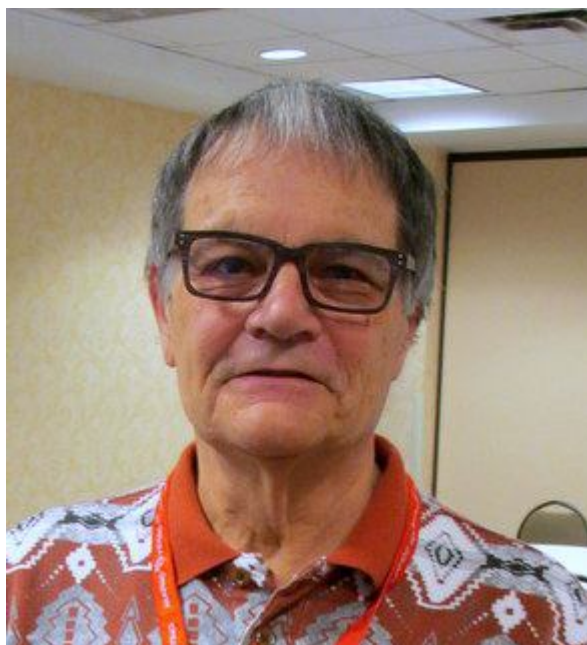
K8TE Bill and Judy, Rio Rancho, NM
WA9DLB Tony and Helen, Barrington, IL
KU4YM Dave and Ellen, Summerville, SC
W4SIG Kerry and Amy, Collierville, TN
NS2N (ex WB2ABD) Paul, Lake View, NY
AB2LS Carol-Ann and Warren, Villages, FL
Rose and Val sisters of NS2N, Lake View, NY



W0FP Frosty USCA #1135



N8HAM Jim USCA #682
Photographer



NM1G Chuck - USCA #216



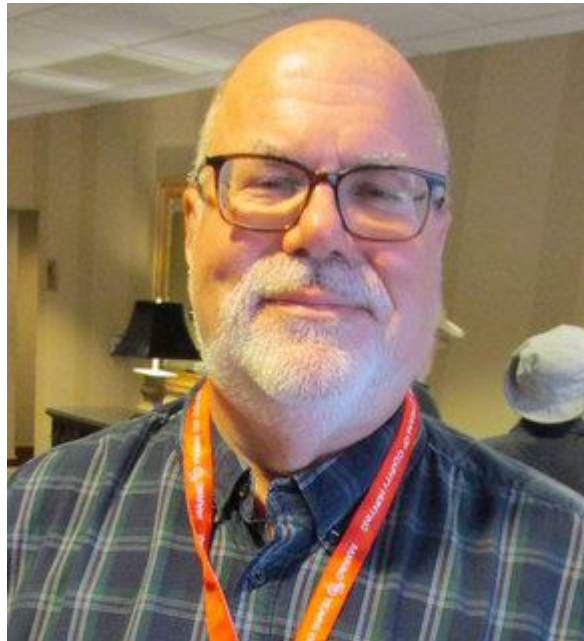
K1BV Ted - USCA #1066



NU0Q Bill USCA #1171



K0AP Dragan



KA2LHO Kraig



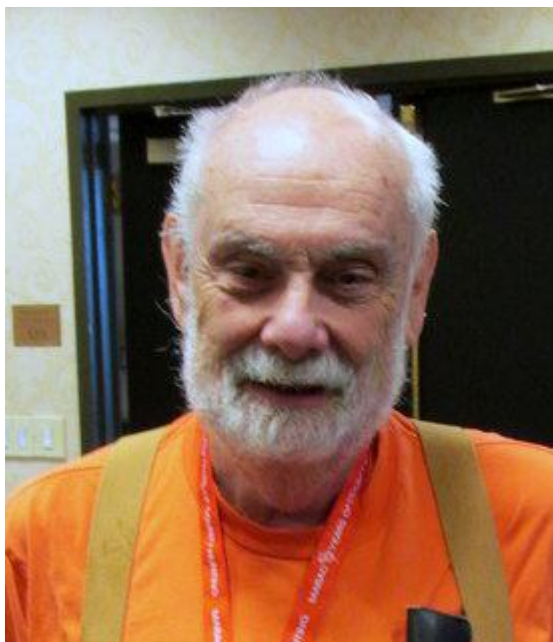
W3DYA Norm



N1API Al USCA #806



N2MH Mark Karen KD2KHJ



N1QY Ron USCA #1243

- - - - -

Wednesday -

I had dinner at the hotel restaurant Wednesday night. The food was delicious. Not cheap but good.

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Thursday

The hotel had an excellent breakfast buffet in addition to the regular menu items. The buffet came to about \$15 with tip.

On Thursday, a group left the hotel for:

“The Art of Lunch in Kansas City”.

The group met in the Lobby at 10:45 a.m. and took the shuttle to Webster House which is a most unique Kansas City dining and shopping destination.

Located inside a restored 19th century Romanesque style school that is next door to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Webster House offers guests a distinctive shopping experience and truly remarkable dining.

In the evening, a large group participated in the BBQ dinner – which was very good – no one went away hungry!



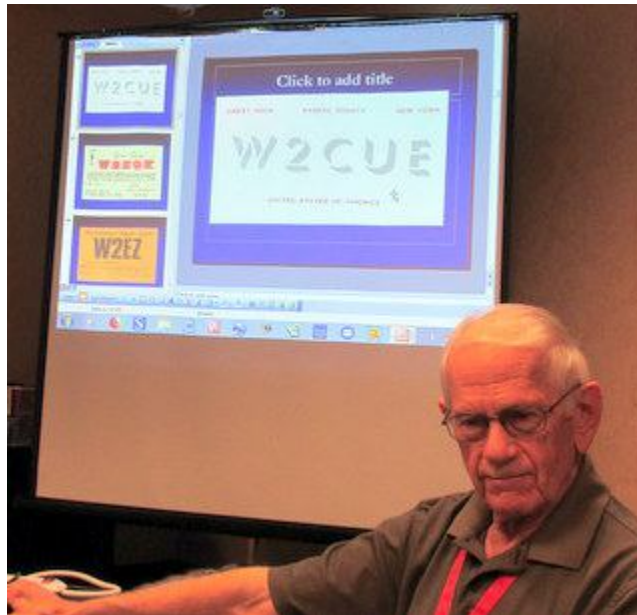
BBQ Dinner Night

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Friday

Many enjoyed the breakfast buffet , or ordered ala carte off the menu, at the hotel restaurant. Very good food!

Friday morning featured several meetings including a nice presentation by Jerry, W0GXQ, on the history of the CW net. He showed many QSO cards from the early CW net participants. A short discussion session on current issues was held. We agreed to try 10.124.5 for a while to escape the WA4SZE/B digital beacon on 10122.2 that was messing up the regular net frequency of 10122.5.



W0GXQ – USCA #1006
CW History Presentation
W2CUE card shown

There was an informal session on Parks on the Air by Bob N4CD. Kraig, KA2LHO talked about his MO-spot – a utility for spotting counties and parks. Later there was a

demo of FT-8 by AI, N1API.

Friday mid-day activities included

“Buried Treasure – A Day on the Town”.

Folks met in the Lobby at 10:45 a.m. and took a shuttle to Union Station City Park. They then took a tour of Arabia Steamboat Museum and had Coffee KC Style inside Union Station afterwards. This is a historic KC Attraction. When the mighty Steamboat Arabia sank near Kansas City on September 5, 1856, she carried 200 tons of mystery cargo. Lost for 132 years, its recovery in 1988 was like finding the King Tut’s Tomb of the Missouri River. Remarkably preserved clothes, tools, guns, dish ware and more. The discovery was truly a modern day treasure hunting story at its best. Nearby, the Arabia Steamboat Museum displays paraphernalia salvaged from a ship that sunk in the Missouri River in the mid 19th century.

Friday at dinner time, a large group took off for a well-known KC Italian Restaurant – **Michael Smith on Main Street** about 3 miles from the hotel. We filled up both shuttle buses and had half a dozen taxis to get us over to the location. Probably 50 participated.

From the KC Spaces web page:

“Michael Smith, the restaurant, not the man, is small enough, he says, to focus on making small batches of the best stuff on earth, namely handmade pasta. The resulting menu, titled “Finding Guido”, is ever-changing

The menu is broken up into antipasti, pasta fatti a mano e en casa (pasta made by hand in-house), secondi di Pesce e Carne (seasonal fish and meat), and contorni (side dishes). A cheese course and dessert are, of course, also available. What’s missing is an oversized portion of red sauce with meatballs. This is not Olive Garden.

Instead, Smith focuses on purity of flavors. Most dishes feature a maximum of four to five ingredients. This is Italian at its finest, with the spotlight on artisanal products being used judiciously for the highest impact.

On a menu like this, the pasta should be the star. And while it's not surprising, it is shocking how good these pasta offerings really are. There were nine options at the time of writing, all diverse and focused on seasonal flavors. Portions are smaller than your typical Italian-American joint and meant to be either combined with another pasta for an entrée portion or ordered within a coursed meal of antipasti and a protein course. That being said, they are also not minuscule portions either, especially considering the rich ingredients used.

My favorite dish of the evening was the rabbit gnocchi. This is one of the few dishes that has remained constant on the menu, and thank goodness. I'll dream about the rich umami flavors created by the combination of shiitake mushrooms, leeks, and perfectly succulent rabbit. Topped with lavish curls of Grana Padano, the pillowy gnocchi somehow manages to be light and hearty simultaneously. There's little worse than gummy, heavy gnocchi. Conversely, there's little better than light, soft gnocchi that dissolves in your mouth.

If you can bear to move on from the pasta menu, you're in for a treat.

I had to go with the standard though—eight-hour pork roast on scallion risotto with pan jus and housemade tomato jam. The roast is fork-tender and topped with two tempura-battered spears of zucchini. Once again, Smith nails the combination of textures between tender pork, crispy veg, and soft, ever-so-tender risotto. There's a reason that this is a crowd favorite.

Michael Smith has made a name for himself as a chef focused on innovation and quality”

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de N4CD: Quality doesn't come cheap. Most folks spent at least \$30 for a light dinner, many spent \$45-50 each. Dinner for two could easily run near \$100 and that without any wine. A multi-course dinner and wine could set you back \$80 each easily.

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Several folks visited the WW1 Monument and Museum not far away during the convention. The Museum is one of the top rated in the entire country and very comprehensive on what transpired during the Great War.



W6OUL Jim USCA #1234



WA9DLB Tony USCA #983



NX0X Brian -USCA #1096
KB0MHH Shari - USCA #1121



KN4Y Ed -USCA #757



WG9A Bill USCA #199



AI5P Rick - USCA # 387



W0ULU Fred USCA #840



W9DC Don USCA #688

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On Saturday , there was the MARAC Board Meeting. Alternatively you had the

“Let’s Go Kansas City Green”.

Folks met in Lobby at 9:15 a.m. And took the shuttle to City Market. A true farmers market Mid West Style. Folks caught a Brunch right there following the time at the Market.

CITY MARKET – Busy River Market centers on City Market, dating to 1857, where casual global eateries, gourmet grocery stores and indie boutiques surround pavillions hosting a weekend farmers’ market.

Since its inception in 1857, the City Market has been one of the largest and most enduring public farmers’ markets in the Midwest, linking growers and small businesses to the Kansas City community.

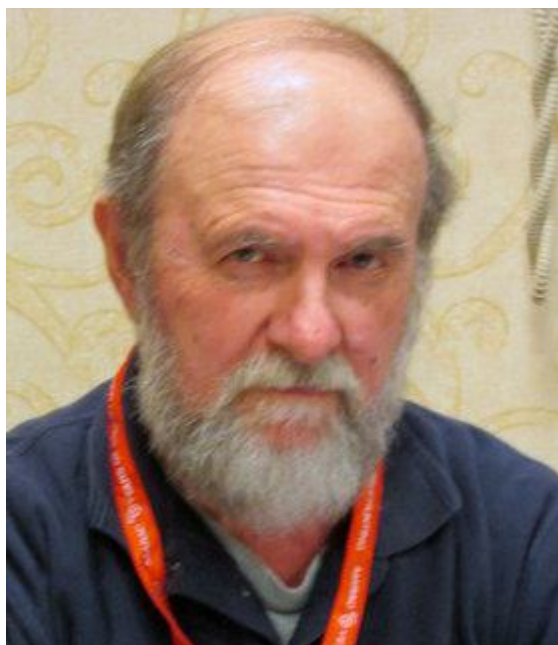
- - -



K8OOK Mike USCA #480



Kathy ACOB – Cliff USCA #1099



NS2N Paul (ex WB2ABD)
USCA #622



CW Ops

Picture Courtesy of N8HAM

(Higher resolution pic available at: <http://marac.org/nationalpix2018/2018cwops.jpg>)

California QSO Party

The CA QP is one of the top events of the year as folks go all out to get all the counties on the air. Nearly all the rare ones are fixed portable operations going to some of the rarer counties, and others are visitors at good stations that put in multi-op and often multi-transmitter operations to make 600 or more Qs. I noted one mobile out on CW – K6AQL and he hit many of the really sparse counties. I caught him half a dozen times – relatively easy to work – must have a great set up there. All 58 counties were on the air this year and some managed to snag all 58.

Many contacts made on 15M, a few on 10M during the CQP. The missing 'state' for most operators in CA seemed to be MS. Apparently, no one in MS was enthused about the CQP!

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from the 3830 reflector:

W6BX - county expedition - 1318 CW 1425 SSB

Regular members of our CQP team, N3ZZ, N6RNO, K9YC, and W6GJB were thrilled to be joined by K6YL, KU6F, and K6EU. K9YC and N3ZZ mostly manned our two CW

stations with relief from K6EU and W6GJB; KU6F and K6YL ran our SSB station. We all pitched in for setup and teardown.

W6GJB contributed his wonderful contesting trailer, which housed the two CW stations AND supported antennas for 80, 40, and 20M. We set up a C3SS on a W6GJB-modified modular army surplus mast (the one built with 4 ft sections) and a third party tripod adapter. All stations used K3s; both CW stations used KPA500s, and SSB used Glen's SPE legal limit amp. Running on 120V, it probably ran about 1.2kW.

N6RNO brought his tower trailer, which supported his KT34 and wire dipoles for 40 and 75M. It was used for the SSB station. The ranch allowed us lots of separation between antennas -- our setup had SSB's tower trailer about 500 ft from Glen's contesting trailer.

San Benito county is extremely rural, with very low population density. We set up on a horse ranch (about 50 miles N of Pinnacles National Park) that boards and trains horses and rents a half dozen or so nicely appointed cabins. The owner is an old friend of W6GJB from the time when Glen boarded horses there. We also had use of a very nice Dining Hall, with showers, toilets, and a full kitchen. We used it as a community room when we were breaking from setup, operating, and tear down, and long into the evenings. Most of us arrived Thursday evening, sipped KU6F's wonderful rum, and retired. Setup was nearly complete by dark on Friday, with only a few details to finish.

Fairly early in the contest, the K3 in the SSB station started becoming erratic, and by around 04Z became unusable, because the front panel buttons had somehow gotten remapped. We couldn't turn on VOX, turn on RIT, and lots of other functions. SSB shifted to the trailer, using one of the CW stations. Meanwhile, N6RNO rode to the rescue, tenaciously finding instructions (buried several Tabs down in the K3 Utility Help) for going back to "ground zero" firmware. Forty minutes later, the radio was back to normal and on the air, and the second CW station back on 80M. Monday communications with Elecraft suggested that there might be a defective button or button controller on the front panel board, that should be replaced if the problem returns. What really blew our minds is that the K3 that N3ZZ brought as a spare had the same problem!

By luck, we caught part of the 10M opening. It was my practice to go up to 10M every hour or two and call CQ for a while. I did that around 1930Z and heard N6TV working a W3, so I slid down one kHz and called CQ. And alerted the SSB station. Our last CW 10M QSO was at 2006Z, but SSB kept making QSOs for another five minutes. The opening covered a lot of area -- we worked VE3, W1, W3, W9, down to TN, FL, KP4, AL, and TX. From other comments, I learned that the opening started to SoCal and

gradually moved up to us, about 70 miles E of Monterey. I'd be interested to know how much of the opening we missed!

With stations separated by a city block, we found 2M talkies very useful, both during setup and while operating.

W6DOJ multi-op - 476 CW 389 SSB
ops K6ON K6XN K6YN N6SWX

We operated at an elevation of 5000 feet in a forest running on solar power, batteries and a small generator. The closest paved road was over two miles away and there was no commercial power, water or anything else for miles. Lots of fun! We could occasionally hear rifle shots nearby as it is deer season...and we have deer...and bears...as neighbors. We love CQP! K6ON, (Bob-2) K6XN, (Ted) K6YN (Bob1) and N6SWX (Dave).

N6YEU – County Expedition – Trinity - 221 CW 452 SSB

Murphy came along for the ride this year. 5 1/2 hour drive to site and had gas can fall over in utility trailer on rough road and spilled over 2 gallons of the 5 I brought for generator. Nearest gas station was over 2 hours away. Then discovered I had left the power cord to my IC 7300 at home!!! The back up rig I brought was the FT 450 Yaesu which is a lousy rig to put it mildly. Then couldn't get logging software to key the rig so ended up sending CW manually the whole contest, ugh! My annual field day style worked out OK I guess but I could have done better. Due to concerns about running out of gas I cut my operating time back quite a bit. I missed MS and VT for mults. I hope those who needed TRIN were able to find me.

73, Fred-N6YEU

W6IA - multi-op - county expedition - 162 CW 223 ssb
ops: AC6AC W6IA W7EEE

We had steady wind & gusts of about 20-25mph most of the day on Saturday but it was a great time in COLU. Thanks to Tim, W7EEE, and Buz, AC6AC, for all of the hard work. Thanks for the Q's and for pulling out our LP operation. We missed KY, MS and MR for the sweep. 73 to all, Mark W6IA

K6QK - multi-op - Imperial CA - 1067 CW 805 SSB
ops K6ZH N6EEG N6ERD N7CW N7TY

We missed MS - sheesh.

K0EJ/6 County Expedition - TUOL - 584 CW 7 SSB

Some dear friends from back in my submariner days recently moved from the hustle/bustle of Livermore to Groveland and invited my wife and I to visit their new digs. I asked if I could bring along a few items to play in the CQP and they said "well, sure!!". I figured I would celebrate 50 years as a ham and the TCG 25th anniversary and embrace the TCG Prime Directive and activate TUOL. Setup was simple using an 80M OCF inverted vee about 30' up and a Yaesu FT897D/LDG tuner. I also recently purchased a 30' SOTAPole and fashioned a 40M GP. Didn't seem to make a difference on 40M but helped on 10/15M.

QTH was in a bit of a ravine and antenna ended up oriented E/W so I know I wasn't very loud. Never could get anything going on SSB but keep the BIC and CW usually gets through!! Post-contest RBN didn't show many spots so thanks to all who found me!! 20M was a slow steady slog on Saturday but 80/40 played OK. LDG tuner even got the OCF to work on 160 - mostly locals but the super ears of NO3M found me as well!

A few sigs on 15M but nothing on 10M. Sunday was different with some good signals on 15 and a smattering on 10M. Played Saturday straight til 11PM minus some time off for meals. Got up around 5AM for 3 hours then joined the family for church and brunch. Finished up the last few hours - happy to hear the 15M signals.

Had a great time - plenty of TCG in the log along with plenty of CCO vying for the club trophies. Missed ND, SC, MS, MAR, and BC - Thanks to NCCC for sponsoring the event. Though we lived in Monterey back in 84-86, never played the CQP from in-state before -but got an invite to return to TUOL next year.

73, Mark K0EJ

K6T - multi op Tehema CA - 992 CW 764 ssb

ops: AA1ON KØBEE N6DE W1RH W1SRD

W6COW - multi op county expedition - 348 CW 158 SSB

ops: AA6DW NK6A

Set up portable in Santa Ynez for Santa Barbara County. Ran a K2-100 to a 2 ele portable yagi at 20 feet, 40 meter dipole and a G5RV.

15 minutes before the QSO party began my power supply let out a puff of smoke. Two caps ready to explode. Switched from the fried Samlex 20 amp switcher to a large Astron linear supply. All was good for the rest of the weekend. Hard to be heard with 100 watts at times. Had fun.

KF6NCX - county expedition - Lassen - 324 CW 13 ssb

Father-son county expedition to Lassen County! Our setup was a Buddipole tuned to 40 meters and a home-brew ground-mounted 20 meter vertical in the backyard of an Airbnb in Westwood, CA (near Lassen Peak). In our makeshift shack (AKA the kitchen table), we ran a Yaesu FT-450D with a Z100Plus autotuner and N1MM+ on the laptop. Thanks to all the suport we received from NCCC, in particular from K6MR & K6DGW (for antenna theory consultations) and N6DE (for software tech support). Thanks also to KF6ONI & WA6ZRT (for antenna mechanics consultations) and to XYL, Margot, for logistical and dietary support.

W6ML - county expedition single op - Mono - 909 CW 287 SSB

Back in Mono...After operating CQP the last 4 years from my home QTH in LA County, this year I returned to Mammoth Lakes for another Mono county expedition. Since my wife and I both just retired in September we had time to plan an extended High Sierra vacation and fit CQP in the mix too.

My antennas consisted of dipoles on 80, 20 & 15M plus a 40M Inverted V all launched to heights of about 60ft in the surrounding pine trees. I only needed a total of 5 trees to support my wires since I tied the 20 and 15M dipoles end-to-end to share the same 2 trees. It took me only one extra shot with my high-powered slingshot to hit the mark on my 5 trees.

All my antennas and equipment worked as expected. After a first blazing hour of 106

QSOs on 20M CW, I averaged about 52 QSOs/hour for the balance of my time. When I quit for the night at about 0600 I had a sweep minus MS. I finally got my sweep on Sunday afternoon when I was tuning on 15M SSB and caught the tail end of KF5K giving his report to a CA station saying his section was MS. I quickly jumped on his frequency and asked if I could work him up 3. I QSY'd and called CQ MS and he came right back giving his number 13 in MS. Lucky 13 for me as that was my only MS QSO. And thanks to Hank, W6SX for helping us share the bands with minor interference between our HP stations about 1/2 mile apart in Mammoth Lakes.

73, Jim W6ML (W6KC)

AI6DO/QRP - county expedition - LAX - 81cw 5 SSB

Operated from a different park than my go-to site for portable work over the past year: a little less busy with cars and passersby. Conditions seemed better than last year, although I did change the antenna system since Field Day and last year's CQP. In lieu of my usual low inverted-vee fan dipoles for 40M and 20M, I set up the MFJ-2286 vertical with a single elevated tuned radial for 40M, 20M, and 15M. The KX3 and PX3 performed well as usual. Used RBN to keep an eye on 10M and 15M, but both were unproductive for me.

K9CT - fixed – IL - 415 CW 474 SSB - all 58 counties worked

One of the best QSO parties. Thanks to those that organize and do all of the log checking and scoring.

Condx were not very good Saturday but did improve a bit on Sunday. We had storms with lightning and lots of QRN to make things more challenging. Several times I had to leave the radio and come back.

Prop on the high bands seemed to be over my head and to the east of here. Skip improved on 20m later with better signal levels. Sunday started slow but 20 opened to CA with better signal strength than Saturday. 15m was marginal up to mid-day and then opened with very strong signals. Soon I could see 10m signals appear on CW but not strong. Again, east of us were hearing better. But in an hour the band really opened with some good signal strength for about an hour. It was very nice to make several phone QSOs on 10.

My last county was LASS at 21:12Z Saturday with KF6NCX. He was the only one worked in that county and had 98 QSOs when we worked. I found him by watching for a CW spot. WL7YQ/6 was the only Glenn that was worked. He was worked at 20:14Z with only 25 QSOs. He was on SSB and not spotted. Both were worked twice on other bands.

There were few SSB spots and you just had to work through them. There many SSB operators that never called CQ and just worked S&P. CW ops were consistently spotted and not many were worked by calling CQ.

Thanks for all of the QSOs and great time. Everyone seemed in good spirits and having fun. Many new hams were worked and enjoyed learning about the contest and joining the fray.

73, Craig K9CT

Note de N4CD: he worked over 50 stations on 10 and 15 meters

W7YAQ/6 - county expedition - Del Norte 379 CW 75 SSB

This was my 6th trip to DELN and 3rd as a single operator. Our (my wife and I) 700-mile round trip from Central Oregon to Del Norte County included two days at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland prior to CQP and a visit to the historic town of Jacksonville on the return home.

Finding an ideal QTH in DELN is a challenge. In 2008 the windows of the fire lookout a group of us had rented at Bear Basin Butte blew out in a storm, and a Spiderbeam became pick-up sticks. The house we rented in 2015 was recently sold, and the resort we stayed at in 2016 went out of business. This year we found another house to rent in Smith River. The place looked good on Google Earth, right at the mouth of the Smith River looking west, with an ample parking area to the east, and vacant lot to the south for extra antenna space. Unfortunately, the house was only available Friday and Saturday nights, but we decided a partial activation of DELN was better than no activation.

We arrived Friday afternoon in a light rain to discover that there was a web of power line feeds over the parking space, and a 6-foot stone wall between the house and the “vacant lot”, which now had some RVs parked on it. So, my available antenna space was

reduced to a small lawn directly west of the house. The rain steadily increased so by the time I had erected my R5 and a 33-foot fiberglass pole with a vertical wire for 40 and inverted L for 80 taped to the pole and 8 radials thrown in the bushes and over the bank, I was drenched.

The noise level from the wet power lines faded as things dried out on Saturday, but was never as low as I would have liked. I often had to ask for repeats from those I could hear, and I'm sure I was considered an alligator by others who I could never pull out. The good news – signals from KH6 and KL7 rocked! I was pleasantly surprised by having all the VE/VO/VY mults call in the first few hours. But as I had to tear down by 1530 UTC on Sunday, 5 mults went missing. I was sorry to hear that N7MZW missed DELN, as I missed WY.

Overall it was a fun adventure and thanks to the CQP organizers for their encouragement to get DELN on the air.

73,
Bob W7YAQ/6

K6W county expedition - single op - 639 CW -

I considered a County Expedition to Ventura County, but could not find any willing SSB ops to share the expenses of a great location. Maybe next year. So, it was back to Borrego Springs. Things did not start well. The internal tuner of the IC-7300 would not match 15m on the DX-CC dipole. Not wanting to repeat the 7QP expedition near hard disk crash, I got a new solid-state drive computer which worked fine at home. During station checkout, the function keys switched computer hardware instead of being responsive to N1MM. I eventually found the control for that. A friend from San Diego met me there and we had an enjoyable dinner Friday night. At the start of the contest, it took two contacts before the serial number got incremented from 1 for some reason. There was a wind warning Saturday night and some very strong local gusts. The dipole did not blow down, so I guess it was not ... (you know the rest). I struggled on 15m to get runs going with only 20 watts out. When TV Bob starts calling CQ on your run frequency, its time to move on (no offence, he could not hear me as I tried to work him). On a whim, I looked at 10m and was astounded to find it open. Station tear down occurred under threat of rain and some lightening. The menu was the same as last year, five meals of carrots and energy bars. Like Ward N0AX said, portable expeditions are a lot of work. Why do it? Fun. The satisfaction of success (and some nice runs) in the face

of zero redundancy in anything so far from home, all with mediocre antennas. Also, there is no better BIC enforcer than an expedition. I bettered my 2017 CQP expedition score by 33k. On the drive home, I saw the sunrise over the Salton Sea. You haven't lived until you have seen that.

Thanks to all of the CQP staff for a great QSO Party.

73, Bill K6WSC
San Diego County, CA

K6EI - County Expedition - Sierra 1096 CW 427 SSB

Ops: K6EI, W9KKN, KZ2V, N6GD, K0XI, AE6JV, AI6ZU, AI6TK, and KF6EMB each of whom made a significant contribution to our expedition.

This was our 4th year in Sierra County. The previous 3 years we've located ourselves at the Campbell Hot Springs resort/hotel/campground and would operate in tents on battery power, since they wouldn't let us use extension cords from their lodge, nor operate generators. While we're all for having butts in chair, we didn't want our butts to literally be frozen to the chairs anymore. This year we made the change of using an AirBnB cabin on the side of a hill. The cabin was beautiful, had a nice view, comfortable beds, heat, power, toilets, etc. Also, it rained outside Friday and Saturday night, so we were quite glad to not have to be outside and deal with that.

Unfortunately, what we saw on Google Earth didn't exactly match what we saw down here on Planet Earth. Some of the 'dirt road paths' we saw on Google were not passable by our vehicles much less the tower trailers. We were faced with the reality that we would not be able to locate our towers where we needed to. Instead of the 700 feet or so apart we had planned for, we ended up down the hill a fair bit and only 73 ft apart. Yep, this was pretty much the pattern-wiping inter-station interference disaster it sounds like it would be. We ended up mostly resorting to the use of dipoles on SSB and in some cases were able to transmit on the beam and listen on the dipole. Stubs helped out a bit, high quality bandpass filters helped too, solid radio front ends courtesy of Elecraft and Flex helped, but when conditions are like this, what else can you do besides suck it up and try to knock out some Qs and enjoy a weekend retreat with some good friends?

The highlight of the weekend was getting our new contesters in the chair Amy/AI6ZU and Jeri/AI6TK to make a few more QSOs. In a CQP near you, we hope to see them activate a county or two with their RV.

Between the Sunspots and our location troubles, we're down about 500 Qs from last year, which is about right all things considered. The only mult we missed was Mississippi, but we did beat our score from 2016 and this is still a solid result considering everything that didn't go to plan.

Summary of the propagation:

10m: We didn't bother.

15m: Well, we were pleasantly surprised to see 15 meters as open as it was with quite bit of activity. Due to inter-station interference, we mostly used CW on 15 and only had a small window on Sunday with which to work on SSB, and by then there just wasn't enough activity left to do much with it.

20m: Worked, but not as well as it used to, thanks to the Sunspots. The geomagnetic storm on Sunday pretty much put it out of its misery.

40m: Almost as much activity as 20 meters, but again, subject to inter-station interference, so we had to scale back on the SSB side.

80m: Lots of good activity in the early evening with even some east coast contacts on CW, but as is typical, only a little bit of useful activity on SSB

160m: In a brief window we were able to work a few stations, and our little dipole on the side of the hill did its job.

Thanks for the Q's everyone, especially the ones we both had to work for!

See you next year!

--Bill/W9KKN

K6M - county expedition - MODOC - 1081 CW 243 SSB

Ops: AA5TL AE7EU K4XU WN7K

Rainy setup on Friday afternoon. Very windy on Saturday with occasional rain but we weathered it just fine in the trailer. We had just two operators and two support personnel: AE7EU was the cook and WN7K was our driver, crew and spiritual guide.

Conditions on 40m went long quickly so we changed to 80m. It was noisy but more stable. I went to bed at 0630Z and Rick carried on until 0820. It was worth it because he finally found VE7MM for our last multiplier. It was the only BC we got.

Our mast clamp was not tightened securely and we spent a fair part of Saturday with the beam pointed south before we noticed it. we'd check it every 15 minutes after that. It was easier to keep turning it than cranking down the tower.

It was amazing how well 15m played. I don't particularly like SSB but went to it when the CW rate dropped below 30/hr on the idea that, being 'new meat' on SSB I could get more than 45/hr and more points. SSB activity seemed lower this year.

We all had a great time. Weather Sunday was sunny and warm, which made the tear-down easy.

Our thanks to the NCCC for a great party. We will see you all in the 7QP in May.

73, Dick K4XU

On the Road with N4CD IV

Well, dang....I couldn't sit still. Not much goes on during the day at the conventions if you don't take the tours and nothing was of interest. It was raining and I'm not a shopper looking for cute shops to spend \$\$\$ or to eat lunch out. So...why not run a few nearby parks instead?

Thursday Oct 4

Off to **Weston Bend State Park – KFF 1796** in Platte County MO an hour away. It was the middle of the day and the bands sag quite a bit – but I squeaked by at 46Q.

From the MO website:

“Not far from the hustle and bustle of Kansas City, Weston Bend State Park offers secluded picnic sites, a campground and sweeping views of the Missouri River from trails and a scenic overlook accessible to persons with disabilities. A three-mile paved loop trail takes hikers and bikers through the park's woody terrain.”

Then off to **Lewis and Clark State Park** in Buchanan County MO. KFF-1770 Bands were really horrible at this location. Made only 30 Q with lots of effort. Of course, most of the county hunters weren't around for contacts either! They were all at the

convention or nearby. Oh well! Some you win, some you don't. Fortunately there weren't too many parks like this.

From the MO website:

“The Lewis and Clark Expedition headed west in 1804 and encountered a lake that William Clark described as “full of Geese & Goslings.” Today, that lake is Lewis and Clark Lake, which is bordered by Lewis and Clark State Park. The park’s broad open spaces make it a favorite for families who take advantage of the scenic picnic areas and playground. Bird watchers come to Lewis and Clark to watch geese, great blue herons, eagles, swans and snowy egrets flock to the oxbow lake throughout the seasons.”



The Lewis and Clark Trail, which is in 'entity' only in the POTA system, passes by here. (Split my log and got both for 'activation' credit for POTA (only 10Q required in that system)). The Trails are not currently supported in the WWFF system.

Then I headed back in to KC to not miss out on the BBQ dinner at 6pm. It rained most of Thursday – the rain started Wednesday and never let up for more than 2 hours at a time for the whole time the convention took place. The 'poolside' BBQ was held indoors.

October 5 Friday

On Friday – well, another day to head out after the morning meetings. Rained most of the day – sometimes heavy. Headed over to the **WW1 Memorial site** and added in another 40Q or so in a short time, then back on to the hotel. The National took place in Jackson County MO. Rained most of Friday but things were in high gear at the hotel with a large hospitality room. There were quite a few new folks who were attending this year.

Saturday – October 6 - not much going on beside the MARAC board meeting – so it was off to more state parks! I could squeeze in two today.

Off to **Clinton State Park** KFF-2332 in Douglas County to the west. Arrived about 10am and had success with over 44 in log. It was a weekend and that helps and the California QSO Party was going on. Bagged a lot of CQP stations to easily reach 44Q. .



From the KS web:

Located only four miles west of Lawrence, and the University of Kansas, Clinton State Park meets the needs of traditional recreationalists while also providing a venue for a variety of non-traditional uses. Some special events draw visitors from across the country. One of the largest marinas in the state, and abundant scenic beauty, offer satisfaction on the lake.

25 mile hike/bike trail, 5 mile cross country ski trail, 1 mile self-guided nature trail, archery range, 10 hole disc golf course "Archers Park" & 18 hole disc gold course "Mowery Meadows", swim beach, sand volleyball, mountain bike skills course, 3 acre trout pond, 1 acre children's fishing pond, accessible shoreline use trail, fish cleaning station and 2 fish feeders, 2 playgrounds."

238 campsites, too. Nice place but – it was raining.....

- ----

Next up – **Perry State Park KFF-2347** in Jefferson County KS. Grabbed a bunch more CQP stations for easy Qs then ran the CH and Park frequencies.



From the KS website:

“Located between Topeka and Lawrence on the southwest shore of Perry Reservoir, 4 miles north of US-24 on K-237

Extensively forested rolling hills offer shaded camping at Perry Lake. 25 miles of horse trails and 20 miles of biking/hiking trails wind through the upland forest providing visitors a great outdoor experience. Lake Perry also offers excellent channel catfish fishing on 11,000 acres of Perry Reservoir with 160 miles of shoreline.

Hike along the lakeshore and through the woods. The nearly 11,000-acre wildlife area includes about 1,000 acres of marshes, making it a great place to watch and hunt waterfowl. Quail are usually abundant. The reservoir is known for its excellent crappie and channel catfishing. Whether you’re just camping or want to use the area as a base for fishing, hiking, hunting, or other activities, Perry offers a scenic location in the wooded region of northeast Kansas.”

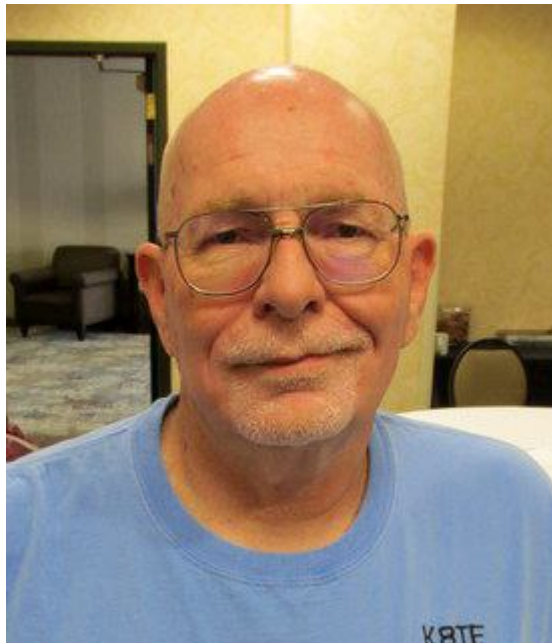
Thanks everyone for working me. I'd always spot on ch.W6rk.com when I had internet access – which was pretty much everywhere in MO and KS with just a few exceptions. It's mostly 'flat' which provides good ground coverage from the cell sites although you

get into the rolling hills of MO as you head to the northern parts! Big gigantic up/down roller coaster hills that go up and down several hundred feet in elevation.

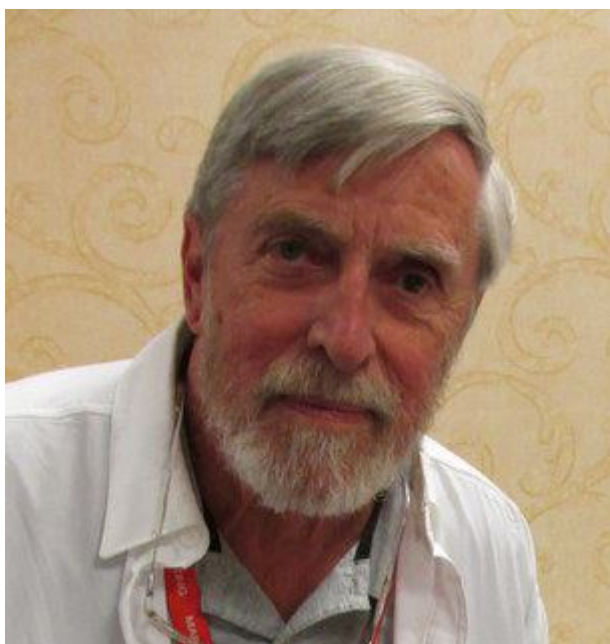
Then I headed back to the hotel an hour or so away to get ready for the group pictures and big banquet/awards/prizes.

At the Convention

More Pics



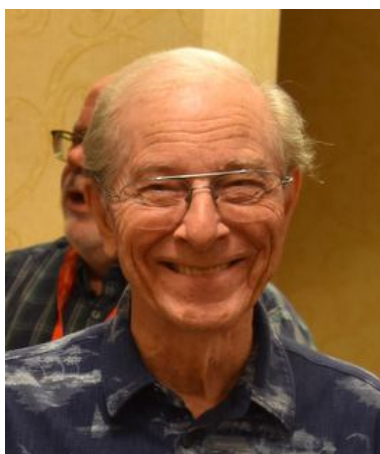
K8TE Bill



KU4YM - Dave



WY0A, Rory USCA #1150
(pic courtesy of N8HAM))



K5GE Gene USCA #862



The YL s At the convention
Pic courtesy of N8HAM

- - - - -

During Saturday morning, Mike, NF0N, presented MARAC history – going back to the CQ Magazine columns and the first USA-CA awarded to Cliff Corne K9EAB. Much of the historical information was on display and available for perusing during the convention.

Ron, N5MLP talked about the status of Logger and tracking self credit and other recent awards.

There was an SSB meeting for the folks, too, hosted by Ron, N5MLP

- - -

Who won the BIG prize at the dinner? Cliff, AC0B won the brand new HF mobile radio Yaesu FT-857 - presented by convention host K8ZZ



| | |
|-------------|------------|
| Cliff, AC0B | Ed, K8ZZ |
| USCA #1099 | USCA #1134 |

Phil, AB7RW presented plaques for several awards to folks



AB7RW, Phil USCA #1132
Pic courtesy N8HAM



Don, K3IMC and Master Gold Plaque
USCA #820
(Picture courtesy N8HAM)

Annual Awards

Awards were presented by Ron, N5MLP, MARAC Awards Chairman at the annual dinner and awards ceremony.

County Hunter of the Year – SSB



Kerry, W4SIG presents Award to Ron, N5MLP
USCA #1205 USCA #1169
SSB County Hunter of the Year

Kerry Long, W4SIG announced the winner of County Hunter of the Year - SSB. This winner was determined by a single nomination for this award made during the announced nomination period from 4/1 through 5/15/18.

County Hunter of the Year – CW

I was very pleased to announce the following winner of County Hunter of the Year - - CW award tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in Kansas City, MO. This winner was determined by a single nomination for this award made during the announced nomination period from 4/1 through 5/15/18. Since there were no other nominations received from other District Directors, there was no electronic vote conducted for all eligible members to vote on this award.

The winner is: N4CD (Bob Voss)



Bob, N4CD USCA #883 Ron , N5MLP
County Hunter of the Year – CW
Pic courtesy of N8HAM

The nomination of N4CD for this award was received from N0KV (Barry Mitchell) who was the South Central District Director during the time the nomination process was in effect.

Net Control of the Year - CW

N5MLP: “I was very pleased to announce the following winners of Net Control of the Year - CW awards tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in

Kansas City, MO. All winners were determined by the results of an electronic vote conducted between 8/24 and 9/8/18.

The winners included:

1st Place - K0DEQ (Bill Morgan)

2nd Place - W0GXQ (Jerry Mertz)



K0DEQ N5MLP
USCA #1220

SSB Net Control of the Year

N5MLP: I was very pleased to announce the following winners of Net Control of the

Year - SSB awards tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in Kansas City, MO. All winners were determined by the results of an electronic vote conducted between 8/24 and 9/8/18.”

The winners are:

1st Place - KZ2P (Jim Grandinetti)

2nd Place - NF0N (Mike Nickolaus)



NF0N, Mike

N5MLP, Ron

USCA #52

(Picture courtesy of N8HAM)

3rd Place - N8KIE (Bob Woody)



N8KIE, Bob

N5MLP

USCA #1093

(Picture courtesy of N8HAM)

Mobile of the Year - CW

I was very pleased to announce the following winners of Mobile of the Year - CW awards tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in Kansas City, MO. All winners were determined by the results of an electronic vote conducted between 8/24 and 9/8/18.

1st Place - N4CD (Bob Voss)

2nd Place - K8ZZ (Ed Eklin)



Ed, K8ZZ N5MLP
Pic courtesy of N8HAM

3rd Place - KB6UF (Ron Jones) – not present.

Mobile of the Year – SSB

N5MLP: “I was very pleased to announce the following winners of Mobile of the Year - SSB awards tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in Kansas City, MO. All winners were determined by the results of an electronic vote conducted between 8/24 and 9/8/18.”

The winners are:

1st Place - AB7NK (Mary Vince)

2nd Place - N5MLP (Ron Clift)

3rd Place - N4CD (Bob Voss)

Mobile Team of the Year Award

N5MLP: I was very pleased to announce the following winners of Mobile Team of the Year awards tonight at the MARAC 50th anniversary national convention in Kansas City, MO. All winners were determined by the results of an electronic vote conducted between 8/24 and 9/8/18.”

The winners are:

1st Place - K7SEN/AB7NK (Neil and Mary Vince)

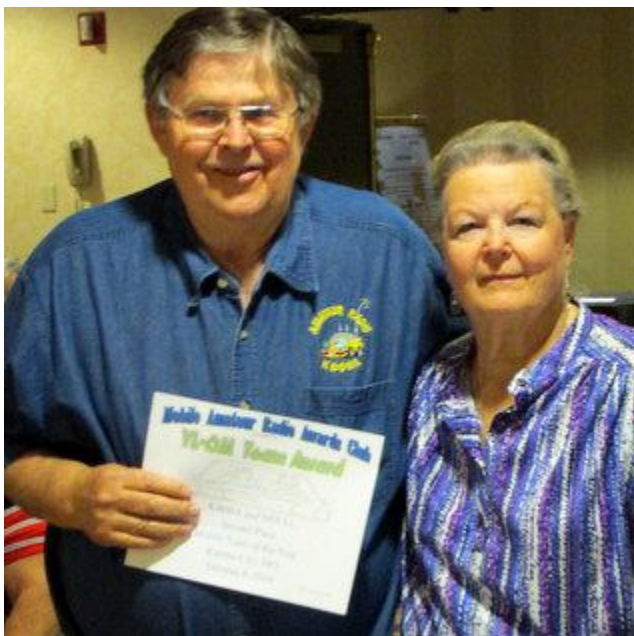
2nd Place - KB0BA/N0XYL (Lowell and Sandra Tennyson)

3rd Place - KA9JAC/KB9YVT (Bob Gedemer and Ann Heimann)



K7SEN, Neil AB7NK, Mary
USCA #825 USCA #1229

Mobile Team of the Year
(Pic courtesy N8HAM)



KB0BA, Lowell N0XYL, Sandra
USCA #1154 USCA #1214

Runner Up – Mobile Team of the Year



KA9JAC Bob Ann KB9YVT N5MLP
USCA #1079 USCA #1170
Pic courtesy N8HAM

On the Road with N4CD V

On the way home.....

Sunday October 7

After 4 days of rain in Kansas City, it was time to head home. Early in the morning it was still raining but only a bit – so I grabbed a quick breakfast just before 7am – at the hotel restaurant buffet – then headed out around 7:30 am. Total overcast and drizzle on and off as I worked my way south and west. I'd run 3 parks today then stop in southern KS – followed by a six/seven hour drive straight down I-35 all the way to TX. That was the plan.

Others had a few misadventures on the way home. KC3X, Hollis, got a flat tire an hour out from Kansas City – it cost him some time waiting for the auto service to come and change a tire, putting on the small 'donut' tires that should not be run above 50-55 mph and a good for maybe 1000 miles max – but better if you do only 100 or 200 miles. Newer cars don't even have spare tires! You get a 'fix a flat' can, a tire inflator (air

compressor) and hope the 'flat tire' can be fixed that way! After the tire change, Hollis had to hit two Walmarts before they found a tire of the right size- lost 5 hours or so with that 'misadventure'.

Ed, N8OYY, had a worse incident just an hour out from KC. A vehicle in front hit something large in the road that kicked up in pieces and broke the car windshield. Wiped out a tire. Put a big scratch in the hood. Luckily, no injury to the people in the car. Cost them an extra five hours on the way home to WV - but he made it home in time to head on in to work the next morning.

Luckily, no major incidents on the way home for me. I've had my share of flat tires, though – about one every 50,000 miles it seems from 'road debris' or when I pull off the side of the road in parks/counties to run. (broken glass and whatnot).

First up park was **Hillsdale SP KFF-2340** not too far south from KC in Miami County KS. The CA QP was still going on, and I could catch a bunch of them on 40M. You can only work them once per band/mode so many on 20M CW would be dupes today and I couldn't work them again. It was early and 40M CW was good to CA. Added them in and got to 44Q here.



From the KS web:

“Conveniently located south of the Kansas City Metro Area, one of Kansas’ newest reservoirs awaits visitors to its more than 12,000 acres of park and wildlife area.

Completed in 1982, more than 70 percent of the standing timber was left in the reservoir basin to provide fish habitat. Walleye, catfish, largemouth bass, crappie, and bluegill are abundant. Approximately 4,500 acres of water and 51 miles of shoreline are open to fishing. Roughly 7,000 acres are open to hunting at Hillsdale within the wildlife area and state park.

Common wildlife includes whitetail deer, bobwhite quail, squirrel, rabbit, beaver, muskrat, and a variety of waterfowl. Birdwatchers will see bald eagles, shorebirds, finches, warblers, sparrows, and hawks. The Saddle Ridge equestrian area on the east side of the reservoir has about 32 miles of marked trails available to horseback riders.”

Still raining.

Headed out to the next park – **Pomona State Park KFF-2348** in Osage County KS. There were a few new CQP stations I could snag, plus the mobile K6AQL I could work in each new county. A dozen CA stations went in the log, along with 10 DX stations. It was still too early for most US stations on 20M but 30M did fine. Hit 45Q easily but it was a weekend which makes a big difference. Caught two mobiles on 40M SSB – things were a bit better for working them today for some reason and many were close to where I was. They'd fade away before long leaving just the 'far away' stations like WY8I, W3CR to work.



From the KS state web:

“This 490-acre park on the shore of 4,000-acre Pomona Reservoir features scenic beauty as well as an abundance of wildlife. Well-known by northeast Kansas residents for shady campsites and a great family atmosphere, Pomona State Park is in a transition zone from prairie to eastern woodlands and also offers great wildlife viewing. The park is nestled in an area with historical connections to the Santa Fe Trail, as well as easy access to several metropolitan areas. The lake is popular with water skiers and anglers. Visitors can

expect good crappie, catfish, white bass, and wiper fishing.”

I didn't dawdle too long – off to the next – **Eisenhower State Park KFF-2335** – still in Osage County KS – a potential recipe for disaster – running two parks in the same county – hi hi.

From the KS web:

“Eisenhower State Park has 1,785 acres. It features 1,000 acres of tallgrass prairie, 440 acres of woodland and a complete range of recreational facilities in addition to the 6,930 acres of Melvern Lake. Eisenhower is also home to a burgeoning trails system for horseback riding, biking, hiking and archery. Crooked Knee Horse Trail offers equestrians a 20-mile excursion through the undeveloped west side of the park. Biking and hiking is available on the horse trail. Wildlife include white-tailed deer, eastern wild turkey, bobwhite quail, squirrels, furbearers, and waterfowl. Anglers seek walleye, crappie, sauger, white bass, and channel catfish. Two nine-lane boat ramps offer excellent access to Melvern Lake.”



Worked a few more 'new' stations in the CQP then mostly park hunters and county hunters to reach 44Q.

In between parks, I'm hunting for the mobiles – catch a few – W4SIG and W0GXQ. Not much luck at that with the propagation we've got.

There's time for one more today – **Flint Hills NWR KFF-0291**. It's a large reserve that

you can access at several points. The GPS lady took me to one area – up a gravel road....and then said 'Leave road to access". Huh? Nothing around but fields. No signs. Had to resort to plan B – another area the GPS lady said was 15 miles away. Dang....OK off to the new area. It's out in the boonies....no data service – on burst for one spot, then gone. Of course, the pouring down rain doesn't help propagation at Gigahertz frequencies!

From wiki:

“Flint Hills National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is a wildlife refuge located north and east of the city of Hartford, Kansas, United States, in northwestern Coffey and southeastern Lyon Counties. It was established in 1966 as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, John Redmond Reservoir flood control project. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages 18,463 acres upstream of the reservoir, most of which is in the floodplain of the Neosho River. Refuge habitats, consisting of prairie grasslands, bottomland hardwood timber, shallow wetlands, and croplands, are managed to provide food and habitat for migratory birds and resident wildlife.

The Refuge is an important resting area for waterfowl migrating through Kansas. Thousands of mallards, blue-winged teal, Canada geese, and snow geese can be seen on the Refuge during their spring and fall migrations. The Refuge also provides valuable habitat for shorebirds, bald eagles, wild turkey, bobwhite quail, bobcats, white-tailed deer, and many species of warblers. “



Had to really work at it without spots to get to 44Q. No internet, no spots and not many left to work in CQP.

I headed down the road a bit and stopped inside the KS/OK border at a small town

called Wellington KS. Found a Travelodge there. Raining still. Strange place – this motel looked like the overflow from the Baymont Inn, that appeared to be all booked up with contractors. You checked in across the street at the Baymont Inn. No breakfast of any kind here – just a coffee maker in the room.

Dinner at Penny's Cafe – very good. Chicken Monterrey, green beans, biscuit.

Monday Oct 8

I was up early at 5:45 and drove across the street to Penny's Cafe for breakfast in the dark and the rain. Yuck. Sixth day of rain. Good breakfast there. Then I hit the road for the 7 hours to Plano TX and home.

The rain lasted almost to the TX border – where it was just total overcast. The rain would hit TX that evening with T-storms that woke me up at 1am. Hmm.. It's been a rainy September here in TX– and showers continue into October. No shortage of water here!

Caught a few mobiles on the way – and, well, I'd be home early so I stopped at **Lake Murray State Park** KFF-2790 in southern OK for a quick run. In at 1611z, out at 1702z. I'd run this before so getting to 44 was not important but still had over 40 in the log. Somebody might need Carter County OK.



Home by 2pm.....now for hours and hours of entering park Qs into Fast Log Entry for each of the dozens of parks – and uploading to LoTW with state/grid info, to WWFF and, what the heck, to POTA databases. Good trip! Lots of interesting places visited,

lots of friends meet and greet, came home with some awards which is nice.....now to rest up, do laundry, clean the house, do the logging, answer some QSL cards, and rest up a bit before the next N4CD adventure.

Thanks for riding along – and all the Qs. Gained 3 lbs on the trip – too many good deserts and too many buffet breakfasts!

Reverse Beacon Network

Ever wonder if you are getting out? Being heard anywhere on CW ? Well, there's an answer for you – the Reverse Beacon Network at

<http://www.reversebeacon.net/index.php>

When you go there – go the main page...and you'll see lists of current spots – and where spotted and where and signal level. Set the filter to “K” and you'll only see US listings. You can also select the bands of interest. Or just one call!

Now, one of the nifty things it will show if YOU are getting out. On the main page, click on search spot by callsign. Enter your call sign after calling 'CQ CQ CQ de YOURCALL' or something similar. It needs two CQ's...with no more than a word after de YOURCALL. Like “CQ CQ CHN de N4CD”.....and if one of the skimmers around the country picks you up, you'll see a listing.

I entered N4CD – no current spots but, after some wheels ground away, then got the following info that was several days old.

search spot by callsign

| de | dx | freq | cq/dx | snr | speed | time | W1NT-2 |
|------|---------|------|-----------|-------|--------|--------------|--------|
| N4CD | 14041.0 | CW | CQ [LoTW] | 14 dB | 23 wpm | 1653z 08 Oct | VE6WZ |
| N4CD | 14041.3 | CW | CQ [LoTW] | 21 dB | 23 wpm | 1652z 08 Oct | N6TV |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW | CQ [LoTW] | 26 dB | 23 wpm | 1652z 08 Oct | N6WIN |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW | CQ [LoTW] | 11 dB | 23 wpm | 1648z 08 Oct | VE7CC |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW | CQ [LoTW] | 14 dB | 23 wpm | 1648z 08 Oct | KO7SS |

| | | | | | | |
|------|---------|--------------|-------|--------|--------------|-------|
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 13 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | N7TR |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 22 dB | 22 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | WZ7I |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 10 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | W3LPL |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 6 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | W8WWV |
| N4CD | 14041.3 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 12 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | AA4VV |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 14 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | AE4PM |
| N4CD | 14041.1 | CW CQ [LoTW] | 4 dB | 23 wpm | 1646z 08 Oct | N9YKE |

It comes back with 15 lines of the last spots. At this time, I was on 14041.1 calling CQ (likely CQ CQ POTA DE N4CD K). I was received around the country with signal to noise from 6db to 26dB. I was being heard – at least by the skimmer stations checking activity on the band!

Now – a useful tool you can use – to check antennas. Or compare your set up to someone else. If you want to do an A/B comparison of antennas on your car – put antenna A on the car and call CQ.....check the reverse beacon for the SNR. Change antennas and check again. How does that Hamstick do against a 54 inch mast with Hustler on top? Find out! Real world! Want to see how you do compared to someone else? Sit nearby – one call CQ..... then the other – see what the received levels are. No need to go to an antenna range or mobile bake off test.....for quick comparisons.

Nifty. Some of the park chasers watch the reverse beacon network waiting for N4CD to pop up somewhere! Or other CW mobiles. The last column indicates which stations(s) are receiving you.

I have my filters on the Reverse Beacon network set for CW, 20/30/40m and “K” so I’ll only see those spots. You can do whatever filters you like.

Give it a try. It’s a handy dandy tool. Also works, naturally, for home stations.....and for DX and general operation.

Nevada QSO Party

This occurred while AZ, PA, SD QSO Parties were going on. Caught 3 NV stations

while out mobile in the park here in TX

K7XC - fixed NV - 16 CW 460 SSB

What a fun event! never expected to generate such interest in a small QSO party but alot of folks were happy to hand me QSO #1 with several folks being the first time they worked the state ever! One fellow in CT1 was very worried to get confirmed in LOTW that it took 5 minutes to make him understand RRR LOTW, HI HI. Worked only one fellow Nevadan for the state. Missed only KH6, AK, OR, UT, & WA for WAS. Thanks to all who stopped by for a quick contact! Station: Flex 3000 driving an AL-80B to 800W, 3ele wide spaced homebrew 20M Monobander at 43ft, 3ele 15M @ 28ft, 80M/40M Inv Vee @ 38'.

W7TR - (KH2TJ operator) - County Expedition ELKO - 16 CW 1 SSB

One hour to play before heading back out to work. Set up on SOTA peak W7N/ES-116, just north of Elko. Heard lots of activity out of PA and AZ but not much chance of my little 5 watts doing much. Ran KX2 into EFW up about 12 feet at the high end, and just 2 foot (used my hiking stick for an ant support) at the far end. Seemed to work OK for the usual SOTA chasers, but no joy in getting a run and/or calling other stations...Temp was sitting around 44 degrees, but with the wind chill I'm guessing at was somewhere's around the mid 30's. Sat up there just under an hour, then decided to call it a day as I wasn't dressed for the conditions ;-). Anyway's, thanks for the chase!

73 Todd KH2TJ

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI - - 9 CW 8 SSB 5 counties worked

Worked in my spare time while chasing AZQP stations.

FCC Tower Action – ARRL

FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 Overhauls Marking Requirements for Short Rural Towers

Thanks to ARRL efforts on Capitol Hill, language in the 2018 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act, just signed by President Donald Trump, resolves the issue of problematic or preclusive rules affecting some rural Amateur Radio towers. The previous FAA Reauthorization Act of 2016 had instructed the FAA to enact tower-marking requirements, similar to those in some state statutes, aimed at improving aircraft safety in the vicinity of meteorological evaluation towers (METs). These towers are typically between 50 and 200 feet and set up in rural areas, often on short notice.

In the wake of fatal crop-dusting aircraft collisions with METs, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) had recommended that states institute laws, sometimes called "crop-duster" statutes, requiring marking and registration of METs. While some state crop-duster laws exempted ham radio towers, federal regulations dating to the 1996 FAA Reauthorization Act did not, and ARRL had expressed its concerns since.

"There is no evidence whatsoever that even one Amateur Radio antenna below 200 feet has ever been involved in an aviation accident," ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, said. "To impose painting and lighting requirements on Amateur Radio antennas between 50 and 200 feet tall would preclude many, if not most, of the exurban, rural, and, in some cases, suburban Amateur Radio antennas that are and will be sited outside incorporated towns and cities. This would ironically defeat the entire reason such antenna facilities are sited in those environments: because rural and exurban areas are where such antennas are permitted and the few areas where antennas are not precluded entirely by private land use regulations."

Prior to 2017, per long-established FAA regulations, unless such short radio towers were located within the glide slope of airports or heliports, they were not required to be painted or lighted.

After attempting to address the issue through the FAA, ARRL's legislative team met with staff members of Senator Jim Inhofe (R-OK) and other lawmakers and their staffs associated with the congressional committees of jurisdiction. Senator Inhofe -- himself a pilot -- was of the view that the 2016 legislation was excessive and that exemptions

should exist for both broadcast and Amateur Radio antennas and support structures. "We worked with our close allies at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), [who were] afraid that this legislation would have a large adverse effect on short broadcast towers," Imlay recounted. "We also worked with the Association of American Railroads, which has hundreds of short towers along rail lines in rural areas that would have been affected."

Imlay said Section 576 of the large 2018 FAA reauthorization now requires that the only towers less than 200 feet tall that have to be painted and lighted are meteorological aids and those within the glide slope of an airport or heliport. The remainder of such towers in rural or agricultural areas lower than 200 feet need to only be included in an FAA-maintained database, which will be updated by the owners of such towers.

Imlay credited members of the ARRL Legislative Advocacy team, as well as Senator Inhofe and ARRL's broadcast and land mobile association partners for getting the language revised in the new, 5-year Reauthorization Act. "We consider this a big success for Amateur Radio," Imlay said, "and it would not have been possible but for the visibility that has been achieved for ARRL through our active Capitol Hill advocacy for the Amateur Radio Parity Act."

Courtesy ARRL Weekly News Letter – ARRL, Inc, Newington, CT 06111

Pennsylvania QSO Party

This was another good one – with much of the activity on 40 and 80m. Some mobiles never left 40/80m which make it rough for folks 800 miles or more from PA..like west of the Mississippi River.....2/3rds the country!

K8MR mobile 761 CW 41 SSB

A good one day ride around my home state of Pennsylvania. Two days on the road is too much IMHO, and in any case I had other things planned in Cleveland on Sunday.

Things started poorly. I got the antennas installed on Friday evening, but did not get the time to test them. Saturday morning things were behaving oddly, which I was able to trace to a crappy coax connection on the mag mount. Got out the soldering gun and put on a real connector. Then the K3 was behaving oddly, apparently from a night in the cool damp car. Fortunately it warmed up after the first half hour heading to PA and gave no further problems.

Our start was delayed by a 15 minute construction tie up on US 422 in Parkman Ohio. Only three cars ahead of us, but nobody passing while every dump truck, front end loader, and paving machine moved around in front of us. Arrived in PA 10 minutes after the start.

The contest started off slowly - barely doing 50/hr for the first few. Then late afternoon things got going well, and kept it up until the last few hours when things slowed down. 80 CW worked well, but very little action on 40 in the last few hours. After the great 15/10 opening in the California QSO Party last week I made a few tries on 15, but heard absolutely zero.

One new mobile contesting experience: while parked at a picnic area in Prince Galitizin State Forest in Somerset county, a small bus pulled in carrying a wedding party. Not sure if they were there for photos or to just to check us out.

Thanks to Gary, AF8A, who willingly did 90+% of the driving, letting me get my radio fix; to the new folks running the PAQP; and all who got on to work us.

And the PAQP was not the best thing of the weekend. New granddaughter arrived this afternoon in Cleveland, via a scheduled C-section which allowed me to better plan for PAQP. All, including Grandpa, are doing fine.

73 - Jim K8MR

N2CU mobile 461 CW 160 SSB

Murphy hit right away. Had all my macros programmed but when I had my first QSO all the information was wrong. This never happened to me before. Took 20 minutes to figure out what was wrong (still don't know why it did what it did). Then it was all fun until mid-day Sunday when Murphy hit again. Had to cut the trip short and made only a handful of contacts in the most-wanted-county of all.

Activated 10 counties. OM2VL and AA3B worked me in each of them, plus I had 26 and 16 QSOs with each, respectively. Also had 10 with K1RO.

I want to shout out a big THANK YOU to the PA QSO PA for a single-op category for mobiles. Operating while driving is too dangerous so driving between counties results in ZERO QSOs, while ops with drivers can continue to operate full-time. I wish all QSO parties had separate categories.

K3, KA8KIP screwdriver, N1MM Classic.

73,
Tom N2CU

KA3QLF - mobile rover

Thank you everyone for the qso's this weekend. It was a fun time. To help some folks clarify what was happening, I was part of a m/m rover team in the PA QSO Party. Our primary goal was to participate in that contest. We decided, that since a few of our stops were in parks, that we would help some chasers out should they like. None of our activation's were KFF or POTA only, but all of them were for the PQP. To those who may have been confused, put back, or otherwise, Sorry. The intent of the weekend was PQP, and we tried to help Park chasers. applicable logs will be uploaded in a few days. thanks and 73 Scott,

N3XF County Line Portable - HP 720 CW 510 SSB

Band conditions seemed odd to me this year. I had lots of problems hearing close in stations. Lots of distractions kept me from doing the 22 hours, but I enjoyed every minute I was on. The County Line scoring makes my score look much better than I was. Lots of stations confused as to how to log County Line stations.

I was really impressed how many times I would hear a rare county and the station on frequency would let others jump in to snag the rare one. Happened several times. That's why the PAQP is considered the friendly QSO Party!

K4AMC - fixed TN - 113 CW 48 counties worked

Great contest. Thanks for the contest

N4PN - fixed - GA - 133 CW 201 SSB 65 counties worked

Strange condx again....seems like it's good one weekend and bad the next.

40M was a life saver....20m was way long from here...

Thanks to KA3QLF/R for 9 Q's; and K8MR-7; K8RYU-6; N2CU-6. Also, Bud, AA3B for 5 Q's. Missed POT and GRE. Sure they were on - other projects prevented my usual full time operation.

Thanks to all...

73, Paul, N4PN

NS2N - fixed - NY 156 CW 106 SSB

Missed BRA PER SUL

Action gets a little thin on 80 and 40 in the middle of the afternoon here, but gets busy.

Thanks to all especially the mobiles with the good ears.

AA4GT - fixed - FL - 25 CW 29 SSB 29 counties worked

This was my 37th year running the QSO Party

N2CX Parks and PA QP Oct 14

To spice things up we hit two ATNO sites and the PA QSO Party on Sunday.

Not a great mix to say the least!

First off was Jacobsburg SP, KFF-4358, near Nazareth, PA in Northampton County. Two sort of landmarks were seen on the way. One was what remains of the one-time Nazareth Speedway, historic home of many popular auto races, now moldering in disuse and being reborn as commercial real estate. The other was the Martin Guitar factory, still in swing to the delight of the string set. No tours on Sunday, though.

The park is a large environmental showpiece, not too far from the city. It has several features, including scenic preserved buildings and a number of trails, some predominantly hiking trails and others tailored for trail bikes (not motorized) and some for equestrian use. This day the bikers were definitely in evidence. There is a Environmental Center building though not very busy on this day though they do offer many programs at other times. The outdoor setting and attractive old buildings provided the backdrop for a unique event during our stay. It was some sort of Girl Scout photo shoot apparently honoring several young ladies who had gained significant awards.

On the air, things were so-so. The on-going PA QP practically took over 40m, so, if you can't lick 'em join 'em! 10 QP contacts were made, interspersed with some park hunter contacts, a strange mix. Eventually the QP gang took over the low end of 40, forcing a QSY up above 7100. 20 was almost a bust with only a single contact - W6LEN! For whatever reason, POTA CQ's were fruitless and not a single QP contact logged. 30 picked up the load, fortunately safe in the confines of non-contest spectrum and eking out one and only one EU in the log. I think that the PA QP and others across the country squeezed the air out of POTA activity even at an ATNO. Only 24 Q total, so shucks, gotta come back another time...

Next stop was much different. It was the Beltzville SP, KFF-1330 on the Pohopoco Creek in Carbon County. The lake and man-made dam were formed as part of a flood control project by the Army Corps of Engineers. It also serves as a reservoir, providing drinking water for local municipalities. The lake is naturally the focus of this large facility though some is partitioned off for seasonal hunting and multi-use trails. One interesting feature is a narrow covered bridge which once spanned the Pohopoco and now provides visual interest to picnickers, beach-goers, boaters and fishermen. It is one of many PA covered bridges that was preserved as an example of once common structures in the Commonwealth.



It naturally draws those who want to photograph their families and four-legged friends. A sign not often seen, warns that since the lake is a swimming area and drinking water resource, children should be not allowed to relieve themselves in the lake, only clean diapers are allowed and frequent use of the provided sanitary facilities by all is recommended. In other words - don't pee in the pool!

Since on the air activity was late in the day, the QP crowd seemed to have vacated 40 meters and park hunters showed up in droves! Whew, finally... Action was very brisk on all bands, though the recently vacated 40 meters was hottest, giving up even a contact with Portugal. 20 came to the fore with coast to coast action and several more EU stations and 30 was almost as hot. As the end of the allotted hour neared the contact total hovered just shy of the desired 44, so action surged on. Some judicious begging and band-hopping finally brought the total to 48 Q.s including a singleton on 17 meters. A great way to end the day thanks to park hunters who came out in force after QP action died down. Yet another super day in the wilds!

WN4AFP - fixed - SC - low power - 91 CW 58 SSB 54 counties worked

The PAQP was a 80/40 contest from SC to PA. Last year I won the QRP prize, but I didn't feel like going through the pain of fighting band conditions, QRM etc., this year, so I cranked it up to Low Power. Saturday was a lot of fun with several mobiles running PA counties including K8MR, N2CU, K6RYU and KA3QLF. I thought that activity was pretty good this year. I've got to learn the secret to adding the county line contacts in

N3FJP, but I did it the hard way. From SC, 40m came to party... my favorite band was open to PA during the entire contest. 80m was fair at night, but I had extremely difficulty working the mobiles. During late Sunday afternoon during the last 3 hours of the contest, there was an exodus of PA stations to the 80M band. The result was fewer PA stations available to the majority of the out of state stations. I did enjoy working a ton of my CW friends on phone for a change.

Thank you Mike, N3LI for all you've done for the PAQP over the years and the new PAQP group did a great job this year!

Mobile Activity in October

At the end of September, the TX QSO Party was held. Lots of activity including some mobiles on the way to the convention in KS

N5MLP, Ron, was on the road in OK.

AB7RW, Phil, left home in the Pacific Northwest and was headed east

KC3X, Hollis, was headed west from NC and in KY. Would run a hundred counties on the way to KC.

N4CD, Bob, was on the road headed northeast and in KS running many parks.

AJ5ZX, Randy, and KC5QCB, Janet, headed from TX north to the convention.

WA9DLB, Tony was on the road to KS.

KA9JAC, Bob, and KB9YVT, Anne, headed south from WI.

NU0Q, Bill, hit the road headed east from KS

Starting in October

N8KIE, Bob, hit the road headed southwest from MI

K5GE, Gene, was spotted up through TX, OK, on the way to KS

N8OYY, Ed, headed west from WV.

W4SIG, Kerry, left TN headed to KC

KN4Y, Ed, headed to KC from FL.

AI5P, Rick, noted in KS – he commented on his long trip “Back home in ABQ on 10/16. . Thanks for the company thru 9 states, 3400 miles, snow, rain, etc. 19 parks activated. Time for a rest! 73 Rick AI5P”

WB0PYF, Ray, headed in from MO

K3IMC, Don, noted in AR headed KC way.

Meanwhile, N5KUC was out in NM putting them out on a western trip.

N9JF, Jim, was noted putting out counties in ME, MA, RI. Later in IL and ran in the IL QSO Party.

After the convention – most of the mobiles headed home. Rick, AI5P headed to SD to put out many counties/parks. Also ND and NE.

WY0A was spotted in CO on a trip west. Headed a bit further west then returned home.

Karl, K4YT noted out and about in WV and VA.

KA3QLF, Scott, participated in PA QSO Party. (parks and counties)

Kraig, KA2LHO, spotted running parks/counties in FL many days. All through the month.

Norm, N9MM, noted out for five days running parks in TX and OK.

Kerri, WB3WAV, noted out on many days in PA and WV parks.

Mobiles/Rovers were out running in the IL QP including N0AX, AD4EB, KJ9C, W0PC,

Mke, NF0N, spotted in NE and IA counties.

The rarely heard team of James, KZ2P/Pat, N2FPM was noted headed south from SC to FL.

AB7NK, Mary, and Neil, K7SEn, hit the road again headed east.

Arizona QSO Party

Not many 'county expeditions' this year – usually there are half a dozen. Maybe weather? Dunno. Most of AZ counties were on the air.

K7A - portable - STV AZ 114 CW 253 ssb

Between limited prep time and weather - ended up running low power with low dipoles for the event. Wasn't going to setup more aluminum in the thunderstorm. Enjoyed giving out points as the bonus station, but many qsos had no idea that AZ had a bonus station. Many stations reported that they were REAL happy that we dropped the serial numbers for the AZQSO party. Band conditions were not that hot, with a lot of fading and noise - but even poor conditions on the air are better than a good day at WORK! Thanks all for the participation, it is nice to see more activity for the AZQSO party, and thanks to the Radio Society of Tucson for taking on the sponsorship of the event.

K7L - fixed - AZ - 313 CW 1381 SSB 257 digital

This contest was a LOT of fun. It's so pleasant to work SSB with virtually no QRM. If a net starts up on your run frequency, it's no problem, just move to another open frequency. There are plenty of open frequencies to choose from.

The opening to Europe was better than last year, but it was still short and weak. There was virtually no JA participation. OM2VL was sure active and loud.

This is the second contest in a row (the first being CQWW RTTY) where operations were disrupted by thunderstorms from the remnants of a Pacific hurricane. It was Hurricane Rosa in CQWWRTTY, and Sergio in this contest. I had to quit early on Saturday evening because Yuma was surrounded by thunderstorms.

South Dakota QSO Party

Yes, there was a SD QSO Party. Stations reporting on the 3830 reflector had a handful of QSO's with the highest being 5 on CW , 4 on SSB. On Sunday while out in the local park, I heard two SD stations weakly on 20m CW but they didn't hear me in the mobile, so no QSO for N4CD.

No one on the 3830 reflector had any comments either.....

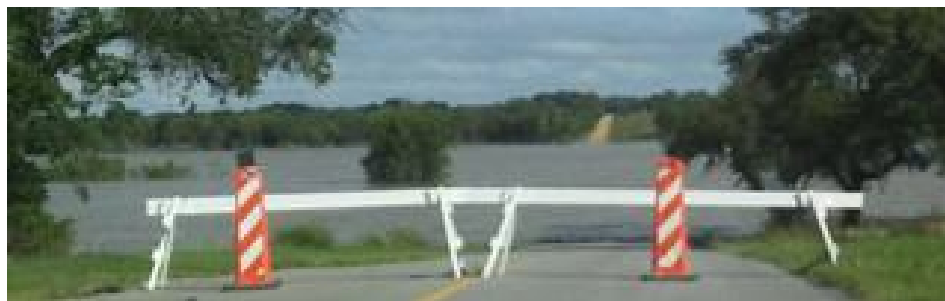
On the Road with N4CD VI

After six days of continual rain – it finally let up so I decided on a short one day trip to some less activated parks north of me. There were QSO Parties going on and it was the last day of “Get Your Park On the Air” week – so why not.

First up was Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge. Kff-0548. It doesn't show up on the WWFF map in the right place, so it's a hidden gem. Folks simply don't know it is there – just about 60 miles north of Dallas in Grayson County. I've been there four times before. So I head on out after a quick muffin, cut up navel orange, and decaf coffee at home – for the hour and ten minute trip up there. It's located along Lake Texoma – the big lake that separates TX and OK for 30-40 miles. Elsewhere, it's the Red River that runs for hundreds of miles that is the border – except for the panhandle. It's right along side the lake – with swampy areas, grasslands, etc. I never thought about how high above the normal lake it was – probably not much. During bird

migration, there can be 100,000 birds there flying about. Maybe more. The sky is full of them at times. The ground is covered with flocks of them.

Maybe I should have checked first. I get there – pull in the main road, past the visitor center and what do I find?



Whoa! 95% of the roads in the Refuge are – under water. Just past the visitor center – the road descends into the lake! Well, the lake is up 11 feet above normal (it's a huge lake) according to the lake web site. We've had the wettest fall in history, and second wettest October as of mid month, with just 8 inches of rain in the past week alone.

Not to worry, there's a convenient trail head parking spot nearby and that's where I sit for 2 hours – working special event stations, NY QP stations, and of course, county hunters and park hunters. The trail goes 100 feet before it, too, goes underwater. It would be a good day to bring your kayak here – hi hi.

Half a dozen EU stations go in the log. The big German W.A.G. Contest is going on. Lots of weak EU stations – I manage to work 2 of them, but most are too weak – and they are likely running hundreds of watts and have all sorts of QRM from other stations. I leave after 2 hours and 65 contacts including 20 NY QP stations. Not too shabby.

Then it was off to Eisenhower State Park – KFF-3005. This has been run many more times. 20 miles away. The band has taken a turn for the worse. NY fixed stations that were S9 are down to S4. It's a challenge to put QSOs in the log. I catch the two CW mobiles for 2, catch some new NY stations showing up, or catch them on a different mode, and work some park hunters. It's the same county and a common county so that doesn't help. 20M is flat....mid day slump. Not much going on on 30M. 40M? Just about zip. I do catch K2ZR on 40cw. He's got real good ears, folks. Tried 2 others but they didn't hear my little mobile signal from 1000 miles away mid day on 40m – hi hi. They were only S3. Well, not that many went in the log, but I'd run this before, so

getting to 44 was not critical. That's only for a first time activation.

Decided it wasn't worth sitting there for a few more hours till things recovered so headed home, entered the paper log into the computer and put some time into doing this newsletter!

NY QSO Party

As usual, most of the activity was on 40 and 80m. Very few QSOs noted on 15 and 10m – one or two or three local ones probably. N4CD was out mobile for a few hours and caught two dozen stations – mostly CW but a few on SSB. There were some LOUD SSB stations on - filling the band in between the JOTA (Scouts Jamboree on the Air), Special events like Battleships and Centennials, plus the ESW- Earth Science Week stations. SSB mobiles had it real tough on 20m SSB.

From the 3830 reflector:

N2CU mobile 235 CW 120 SSB

Two weeks in a row I was not able to do full-time mobile (PA and NY), but I did what I could and activated 5 counties. Thanks for the QSOs.

N2ZN mobile - 317 CW

This is another mobile entry in my goal to activate all 62 NY counties during NYQP. I still needed four in western NY, and fortunately, I was able to activate them this year (ORL, NIA, CHA, ERI) in addition to the intervening counties (GEN, WYO). Historically, ERI and MON are the two least rare counties, but I got to them both, anyway. I can literally see GEN from my home, and ORL is about 5 minutes away from home also.

A few years ago, after doing a mobile multi with NW2K, he suggested I install a second radio in the car to work a second band while things were slow on the main band. Well, it took a while, and some more bugs need to be worked out, but in car SO2R finally became a reality this year. With the latest craze being dual-CQ, I operated in dual CQ mode most of the time I was on. Too bad the bands didn't cooperate, since the only time

i got real serious rate in 2BSIQ mode was when 40 was still open a bit and 80 was just starting to open. But it does work-this was the test to find out what needs improvement, mostly RFI and cross band interference. Even with stubs inline, the antennas are still only 4-5 feet from each other, so this needs to be worked out a bit, especially for when the sunspots come back and 20 is more usable.

Since this was a one person effort, I could only operate while parked in each county, so actual on-air time was only about 6-7 hours, and driving between spots took up the rest of the time. Quite inefficient, but that's the way it goes sometimes.

Order of county operation: ORL, NIA, GEN, WYO, CHA, ERI, GEN, ORL, MON.

Passed some local landmarks such as the Pembroke TA (twice) and got gas at "The Rez".

Station:

Yaesu FT-857 + ATAS-120 (20 and 40 meters)

Icom IC-7000 + Hustler mobile antennas (40 and 80 meters).

Green Heron Radio Boss and PC parallel port CW interface.

My old HP laptop with Windows XP and a real serial and parallel port is still going strong after six NYQP trips and other trips to V3, VP2M, PJ4, and PZ.

Thanks to everyone for all of the QSO's. I think I only worked one other mobile, N2CU, and only once at that.

73, Ken N2ZN

NS2N (ex WB2ABD) - fixed - NY - 426 CW

Thanks to everyone who stopped by for a contact. Not full time ... breaks for WC, Food, medicine . T-storms

NS2N (ex WB2ABD)

WN4AFP - fixed - SC - 55 CW 28 counties worked

The NYQP this year was a one-band experience for me. 40m played well for the entire contest. Thanks to N2ZN, KV2X and N2CU for keeping me going on this one. Since 40m only band that worked for me, I quickly ran out of fixed stations to work. I'd loved to have heard a few more mobiles out there. I was surprised with lower NY activity than in past years. The /MI guys were on the air today along with Keith HAE killing it. I'll have to run LP Mixed next year to keep my BIC. 73s Dave WN4AFP

N6MU - fixed - CA - 60 CW 25 counties worked

Most of the action was on 40/80 which negates a competitive score from the left coast. Ran out of stations on 20 about 18Z which made a long day. 73...

John, N6MU

K0BAK – rover

I activated five parks during the New York QSO Party on Oct. 20. This rove was 80% about park QSOs, especially since I only activated two counties for the QP. All but one park was new to me, and two were never activated before (ATNOs). I was particularly hoping for a successful rove to cleanse the stench of my complete failure in the Pennsylvania QP the weekend before.

The first location, Lake Kanawauke in Harriman SP (park # 2069), did not have cell service so that reduced contacts, especially from park chasers. Although it was disappointing I couldn't announce my location, the upside of this relatively isolated location was a very quiet RF environment, which is a rare treat in activations here in the crowded East. Between the testers, Boy Scout stations, and the usual stultifying ragchews and useless nets, it was difficult to find calling frequencies on both 20m and 40m. 20m was so unproductive compared to 40m that I hardly touched 20m for the rest of the rove. 13 contacts in just under an hour is a very low rate for me, and demonstrates how much spotting is vital to attract park chasers.

High Tor SP (# 2073) main attraction is a swimming pool that is only open in the summer, so the fairly large and high parking lot there was closed to me. But the full park is quite large, and during planning I mapped two tiny trailhead parking areas along a state road. Luckily the lower of the two was open, but I was only able to squeeze out 10 contacts there in a little over 30 minutes. Early to mid afternoon was poor, strange,

changing band conditions.

In planning the rove, Hook Mountain SP (# 2078) was difficult to define. The NY parks department website does not show a clear border between it and Rockland Lake SP (which I activated last year at this time). Rockland might be kind-of sort-of part of Hook. I did my best to determine a legit location, at a parking lot of a public golf course within the park land. Band conditions seemed to be improving, but that good news took a back seat to my amplifier acting goofy. The symptoms pointed to a sticky TX/RX relay, but in any case I took the amp out of the RF path and (horrors!) operated barefoot. Still got decent signal reports, but the biggest problem was answering QP CQs because big QP signals tend to be more from amplifiers than antennas, so not having my own amplifier prevented those “alligators” from hearing me. The Q rate was picking up a bit, and I got some answers from NY county chasers when I called CQ on 80m.

Nyack Beach SP (# 2115) is a tiny park in the 100 feet or so of flat land between the Hudson River and the near-vertical Palisades. A narrow steep access road and tight parking area with only two available spots made my ~ 8.5 x 20 foot van a tight fit and anxious drive. I won’t be back any time soon. The very steep 600 foot hill immediately to the west made contacts in that direction pretty difficult. The 17 contacts I made were all park chasers I think. My time was limited because of time spent parking and working to make a P2P with K4CAE. I experienced a mini-pileup at the end, indicating band conditions might be improving more, but I couldn’t stay because I needed to get to the final park and have enough time to operate there before its sunset closing.

The trip from Nyack to Tallman Mountain SP (# 2149) was slow through narrow and poorly-maintained roads. I had roved through this area a number of times before during VHF contests, moving between operating near the top of Bear Mountain, an old Nike missile site on top of a hill, and a parking lot just over the grid border in FN30. I had considered operating from Tallman during VHF contests since it’s a locally high spot, but their main parking lot is a little low and surrounded by tall thick trees. This is also a problem for getting HF launched, though much less so. Band conditions seemed to continue to improve, and I got by far my most contacts in slightly more than an hour operating – 50 Qs. As it got visibly dark I went to 80m, S&Ping a number of NYQP callers, then calling CQ myself at the end netting mostly QP chasers.

Pulling out from the Tallman entrance heading for home, a park police car was pulling in, indicating I had squeezed out all the time available there. My trip home included possibly-illicit travels on the car-only Palisades Parkway and the car side of the New Jersey Turnpike. The next day I was surprisingly tired and sore, but glad to have done a pretty good park rove. Thanks to all chasers who contacted me or tried to!

Stats:

313 miles driven

Almost 13 hours on the road

\$118 out of pocket: \$77 gas, \$41 tolls

5 parks activated (2 ATNOs)

123 total contacts

Get Your Park on the Air Week

As part of **Earth Science Week**, the WWFF-KFF group sponsored a one week Get your Park on the Air. It was picked up in the weekly ARRL Newsletter in September and the CH News covered it last month.

From the web site:

“Since October 1998, the American Geosciences Institute has organized this national and international event to help the public gain a better understanding and appreciation for the Earth sciences and to encourage stewardship of the Earth. This year's Earth Science Week will be held from October 14-20, 2018 and will celebrate the theme "Earth as Inspiration." The coming year's event will emphasize artistic expression as a unique, powerful opportunity for geoscience education and understanding in the 21st century.

Earth Science Week 2018 learning resources and activities will engage young people and others in exploring the relationship between the arts and the Earth systems. The coming year's theme will promote public understanding and stewardship of the planet, especially in terms of the ways art relates to geoscience principles and issues as diverse as energy, climate change, the environment, natural disasters, technology, industry, agriculture, recreation, and the economy.

Reaching over 50 million people annually, AGI leads Earth Science Week in cooperation with its sponsors and the geoscience community as a service to the public. Each October, community groups, educators, and interested citizens organize celebratory events. Earth Science Week offers opportunities to discover the Earth sciences and engage in responsible stewardship of the Earth. “

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So.....many park activators got inspired to go out and activate parks this week. Here's a brief summary of what happened (not all inclusive). Over 100 parks were on the air during the week.

Most operations happened on SSB just a few on cw.

Kraig, KA2LHO, put out many in FL during the week.

N4CD, Bob, ran 3 during the week.

Peter, K0BAK, ran several parks as part of the NY QSO Party on 10-20-18. His agenda was 2069 Harriman SP, 2073 High Tor SP, 2078 Hook Mountain SP, 2115 Nyack Beach SP, 2149 Tallman Mountain SP

N9MM, Norm and K5RX ran half a dozen in TX and OK on a five day trip

N2CX, Joe, was busy in NJ running many parks. Also did the PA QP with parks.

K6WDE as active in HI on the Big Island at Volcanoes National Park

Jim, N9JF, using W9AWE call as park of the IL Centennial Challenge, activated IL parks.

KB3WAV, Kerri, ran half a dozen in MD/WV – hit and run type.

KD0IRW hit NE parks – for those needing LoTW NE contacts – SSB mostly

VE2WFF put out parks in Canada. (no counties but still parks!)

Ed, K8ZZ, is now into park activation – ran several in KS

Some folks made over 100 contacts with parks over the one week period!

KD8MQ did a 200+ mile plus run for OH parks

AL2C was noted in AL – Bicentennial celebration and a park

K1VWQ, WK2S, W0YES, K5CM, KG6LI, WA5KBH, WD9Q, KC4JNW, KD4CB, KB1VSX, KD9FM, KC1EWL, KK1TLS, KF7RK, N4SOC, W1NVT, W4JL, AI5P, KB3WAV, KG5MDS, were all out and about putting out parks.

Illinois QSO Party

N0AX mobile 157 cw

A fine afternoon for a short ramble through three IL counties. Minor Murphy bites, some self-inflicted, but nothing a little scrambling couldn't solve. Flooding along the Mississippi made for an early change of plans - no ferries there! - but the Kampsville ferry across the Illinois was running just fine. Glad to put some hard-to-get counties in a few logs.

73 and 88 from Ward and Ellen

K9CT - fixed- IL 421 CW 386 SSB

Good turnout...however there was some absorption that kept signal levels down early. Things picked up later. Missed a lot of counties I couldn't hear.

Thanks to all the mobiles and rovers who did a lot of work...it is much appreciated. It would not be as much fun without you.

Thanks to the organizers for putting on a great event.

73, Craig K9CT

KI9A - fixed - IL 312 CW 363 SSB

Maybe the weirdest ILQP I've been part of! Started out fair, then hour 3 hit and was like someone took my antennas down. Hr 3/4 were horrible, then it popped open and finished with 4 100+ hours.

Failed to hear ANY mobiles on 20, which is normal. I always miss a ton of mults that way, and didn't hear any on 40 until the last 4 hours. Got lots of "man, you are strong" reports on 40, which made me feel big...lol

73- Chuck KI9A

K4BAI - fixed - GA 165 CW 112 SSB 89 mults

Fun contest. Lot of activity. Thanks especially to the fine mobiles. 20M was too long and only a few CW QSOs were made and most of them were weak.

K8MR - fixed - OH 140 CW 227 SSB 88 mults

A excellent contest! I took advantage of being prime skip zone from IL to have fun, which increased my interest after a 75 QSO run in 45 minutes on 40SSB, which included occasional small pileups.

Most interesting "QSO" was in that 40 meter run: guy calls me, asks me if I can hear him. I say sure, where are you located?. He says he just bought the radio from a guy at a flea market. I said fine, what's your callsign? He asks "what's a callsign?" I say you get one by taking an FCC test, likely from a local club. He moans about the thought of having to do that. I say "QRZ Contest" and move on.

FB mobile activity - I especially enjoyed working K0PC and KJ9C after lots of QSOs with them last weekend when I was out on the roads of PA.

Some more 160 activity at the end would have been nice. One suggestion: the county abbreviations are very non-intuitive and confusing. Maybe go to just the first four letters, with exceptions for the (I think) three county pairs with the same first four letters?

73 - Jim K8MR

OM2VL - fixed - OM - 164 cw 95 SSB 95 counties

My friends on FB Jim N9JF and Matthew KD9ERS few days before the IL QP let me know that this weekend will be the IL QP ... of course I had it marked long time ago on

my calendar so I can take part.

But unfortunately on Friday my son was very unwell so we went to the doctor. He sent us to the Hospital where he was operated on that evening. Of course when I was back home from hospital Friday midnight, I wrote to my friend that I must skip this year the IL QP.

Fortunately my son Laci junior is a big fighter and on Saturday he felt well when I visited him, so on Sunday when I went visited him I took with me laptop + notes about QP etc and if everything OK with him and the traffic will be not bad, maybe I can reach my QTH before the QP started. He felt much much better and traffic was okay - I was on the QTH 30 min before the QP.

I prepared my setup and began the party.

And what a party !!!!! - fortunately 20m was good and some mobiles or portable stations was few minutes also on this band + I can made solid pileup on SSB - thanks to so many resident station who called me.

My last 20m QSO was at 20:51Z with N0I and my first 40m QSO was also with N0I at 20:31Z. First 80m QSO was with K9KM and unfortunately here I lost about 1 hour because my antenna was turned to the JA ... I heard on my RX ant USA stations but never ending callings and no any answer. when I seen where beaming my YAGI and turned it to right direction in my first call back K9KM :)

It is amazing that I can worked with 95 counties and missed only: BROW, HANC, LIVG, MNTG, MRCR, SANG, TAZW - 3 of this I called but can't break the USA wall.

My big handicap is that many stations are CQ'ing only above 7.200 (where I can't transmit) I missed because of this many QSOs and some multipliers.

My BIG thanks to W2WCM who moved down on my frequency from 7.256 W0RMS/9 and to KE0FKE who moved down AC0RA from 7.228 - it means 3 multipliers for me!

Of course my BIIIIIG THANKS to all mobiles for his excellent job and portable or resident station.

Most QSO's with: (QSO/cty):

AD4EB 21/20

K0PC 15/15

KJ9C 14/14
W9AIU 12/4
N0I 11/11
W9AWE 7/5
AC0RA 7/7
K9BGL 6/6
K9NYO 4/4
W9Z 4/4
K7DZE 3/3
KM9O 3/3
N0AX/9 3/3
ND9E 3/3
W9WE 2/2

I have much more points than in last year, so pity that no DX category - of course I can't competitive with US stations IL QP plaque will be missed in my wall ;)

Thanks for organizing this FB QSO Party!

regards, Laci OM2VL

K0AP - fixed - KS 45 cw 40 SSB

Despite being very busy working around the house I still managed to log 45 Qso's of which many are new counties thanks to the mobiles. N0I (N0AC), K0PC, AD4EB, KJ9C did an excellent job covering good part of IL. On top of that these are all FB CW operators with predictable operating pattern easy to follow. Thank you all!

73 Dragan K0AP

AC0RA rover - 1183 cw QSO

Had a great time in my first hf contest from the rover. Setup was a 20m dipole at 35ft and 40m dipole setup in an inverted vee center about 16ft up and ends about 6ft up. Also had 40m hustler mobile used while driving. Used kw on 20m, about 500w on 40m and 100w on 40 while mobile.

Already working on improvements for next year so see you then.

W3DYA - fixed - TX - 15 cw

I was just hunting call prefixes and got six new ones, mostly from AD4EB. The activity late in the contest reminded me of the times I was mobile in 2000 through 2004. Best 40M activity I've heard in recent QSO Parties.

Park Activations

Saturday October 20

MANY THANKS From TEAM KK1TLS to the Chasers, both those that made the log and those that tried. We appreciate you being out there Chasing from your shack and Park to Park contacts (P2P's!)

The day started out with a wicked headache. The drive was 2 hours and the Park was empty when we got there. We unloaded the car... I forgot the dolly.... so we carried 4 loads down the walkway to a picnic shelter. We were just getting set up when a volunteer came and said someone just reserved that picnic pavilion. Uggh! She did offer to load the battery and some of the heavy stuff on her golf cart and move it to another pavilion which was not real close and further away from the car. Oh well!!

We got set up and started calling. Conditions were a bit strange Saturday. The first 2 hours were pretty active including the largest pileup I've ever had including a bunch of EU contacts. The next two hours was slow including only three 40M contacts. The bands were overflowing with QSO parties and BSA so I had to move 4 times after the first 2 hours. I don't like changing frequencies unless I plan on going to another band or my tiny little signal is forced out! After the 4th hour, my back gave out and we decided to make the 2 hour drive home. The total for 4 hours was only 67 contacts, but on the bright side, that included 1 Italy, 1 Ukraine, 1 France, 1 P.R., 1 Lighthouse, 2 Germany, 3 Belgium, 3 BSA, 4 Canada, 8 P2P, and a Partridge In A Palm Tree! Being Florida... only Scrub Brush or Beach... Debi didn't have a whole lot to paint so she focused on

birds.

Thanks again for your contacts. Logs will be in tonight to coordinators, QRZ, LOTW, and eQSL.

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Recap: N2CX NJ/NY Parks extended weekend - Day1

Call me nuts but I decided to combine the Annual NJ Lighthouse Challenge with some park operations.

The first day of the weekend had us visit a half dozen lighthouse and lifesaving locations and four parks along the Delaware River and Atlantic Ocean.

Let's just say that it was ambitious. The lighthouses are cool to visit and we understand that they host as many as 1500 visitors over the weekend.

The parks chosen were interspersed between them so doing the activations was "only" a matter of taking the time to stop along the way.

Parks visited on day 1 were:

Supawana Meadows NWA KFF-0455

Maurice Wild and Scenic River, KFF-0886

Cape May Point, KFF-1606

Corsons Inlet SP, KFF-1612

Lots of neat photos were taken by my son Kevin, mostly at the lighthouses, of course and a smattering at the parks.

In the photos there were a couple of pleasant surprises. A snapshot of the Cape May Point LH showed what looks like a throw rug with a leash. It was really a dog laying spread-eagle in front of its owner. Though seemingly inactive, it responded happily to petting and head-scratching. The other surprise was a shot of a boat launch area on the Maurice River with a water bird. At first mundane and almost camouflaged by the marsh grass, a good action shot came to life when it was startled by the photographic effort and graciously took wing.

On the air things were mixed. Early on it was decided to operate for only 20 minutes or so at each site to minimize travel disruption. This went out the window when chasers relentlessly kept calling when the allotted time was over. Not gonna disappoint them. The average Q total was in the mid-twenties before we had to pull the plug. Interestingly a handful of EU stations was worked at each site, generally on 20m, but several also on 30 and then on 40m in the late afternoon. One lesson learned was that the activation before noon had few takers but action picked up significantly as the day wore on. Oh, and don't try to activate during a major QSO Party!



It was a frantic effort, but lots of fun and more to look forward to the next day of multiplexed action.

Awards Issued

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| USCA #1267 | WB5JID, Bob | 10 Oct 2018 |
| Master Platinum #30 | K8ZZ, Ed | 8 July 2018 |

Events for County Hunters

QSO Party season is....OVER.....here are some events to participate in – or avoid as the band will fill up from end to end!

3 Nov 2100z to Nov 5 0300z 1.8-28
ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW
Serial, precedence, your call, check, section
www.arrl.org/sweepstakes

Nov 17 2100z to Nov 19 0300z 1.8-28
ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB Ph
Serial, precedence, your call, check, section
www.arrl.org/sweepstakes

Nov 24 0000z to Nov 25 2359z 1.8-28
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW
RST, CQ zone
www.cqww.com

Nov 30 2200z to Dec 2 1600z 1.8 ARRL 160-Meter Contest CW
W/VE: RST, section; DX: RST
www.arrl.org/160-meter

Lots of other events going on during the month like Ten Ten Digital, DX sponsored contests, QRP sprint events, etc. Check them out at

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Contest%20Corral/2018/November%202018%20Corral.pdf>

Above courtesy of the ARRL Contest Corral published each month by the ARRL, Newington , CT 06111.

Ed, K8ZZ, announced there WILL be a MI Mini held in 2019. Details to follow.....

That's all folks! 73