

County Hunter News

November 2019
Volume 15 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, 10.124.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. The CW folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB . (21.336 and 28.336)

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

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

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

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) Sunspots – what sunspots – very, very few of them! Latest propagation report from ARRL HQ:

“Solar activity remains very low. At the bottom of the sunspot cycle, any sunspot activity is fleeting. Again, another week passes with no sunspots at all. Spaceweather.com reports no sunspots for the past two weeks, and the total number of spotless days this year is now 213 days, or 73%, matching the percentage of spotless days in 2008.

Average daily solar flux during the week of October 10-16 was 67.3, down insignificantly from 67.6 during the previous week.

Average daily planetary A index was 6.4, down from 14.4 in the previous week, and average daily mid-latitude A index declined from 11 to 5.1.

The predicted solar flux for the next 45 days is 66 on October 18-25, then 68 on October 26 through December 1.”

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The good news is that when sunspot activity hit the low 70% area (days without sunspots) the last cycle started up again. Predictions for the start of the next sunspot cycle predict an upturn either late this year (not likely) or sometime in 2020. But some suggest it might be into 2021 before sunspots appear again! Groan!

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Worse, toward the end of the month on Friday 10/25 – the following Propagation Bulletin from ARRL came out:

Over the past week, on Monday, October 21, 10.7 cm solar flux sunk to possibly the lowest level in recorded history. Solar flux was 64, which is even lower than the 64.4 value recorded way back on July 2, 1954 at the start of Solar Cycle 19, by far the biggest solar cycle ever recorded. I understand that solar flux dipped to 64.2 in 1906.

“The average solar flux this past week was lower than the perhaps all-time lowest weekly average reported in this bulletin (66) back in ARLP035 in August:

<http://www.arrl.org/wlaw-bulletins-archive/ARLP035/2019> .

Over the recent reporting week, October 17-23, average daily solar flux was 65.3, two points lower than last week. Average daily planetary A index dropped from 6.4 to 4.7, while average daily mid-latitude A index declined from 5.1 to 3.1. And of course, there were no sunspots.”

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On the plus side, Tamitha Skov in her weekly presentation on 10/25 (comes out every Thursday) noted that solar activity – not sunspots – seemed to be increasing – which might indicate the sun is ready to start Solar Cycle 25. So there's hope – sometime in the future!

2) County Hunter Activities – well, the mobile trips seem to have dropped off with the beginning of the school year, the fall/winter weather moving in, and generally not so great propagation days. I usually head over to the local park to run one of the sessions of the weekly CW Open Test – anyone can participate – which gets about 100 different

people on the air – maybe more. I typically can work 60 or so in an hour using 20 and 40m (can work the same folks each band and do work some of them both bands). It runs 1300-1400z and 1900-2000z during the day. The exchange is your name and CWO number (or state if you don't have one). It zips along at 25 wpm plus – but it's all calls and the same exchange. I'm 'Bob 1928' sent as 'Bob 1n28'. You'll find folks with numbers from 3 to 2140 or so now.

The other activity that keeps county hunters busy in the fall are the QSO Parties. There have been many good ones – east to west coast, north to south – but it's coming to an end shortly in Nov as international and national contests take over – DX, ARRL 10M and 160M, ARRL Sweepstakes, etc. There are some trips by county hunters mixed in

One other thing that provides opportunity for counties is Parks on the Air. Every day there are several and on weekends maybe two dozen parks around the country 'activated'. Back east most of the action is on 40M SSB.

AI5P Trip Report

Arches Nat Park Utah : Water and ice, extreme temperatures, and underwater salt movement are responsible for the sculptured rock scenery. Over 2,000 cataloged arches range in size from a three-foot opening, the minimum considered an arch, to the longest, Landscape Arch, measuring 306 feet base to base. 22 contacts in the log on Sept 23.
Rick AI5P





Canyonlands Nat Park, Utah, preserves 337,598 acres of colorful canyons, mesas, buttes, fins, arches, and spires in the heart of southeastern Utah's high desert. Water and gravity have been the prime architects of this land, sculpting layers of rock into the landscape we see today. 50 contacts in the log on Sept 24.





Capitol Reef Nat Park, Utah. Its defining geological feature is a wrinkle in the Earth's crust, extending from Thousand Lake Mountain to Lake Powell. It was created over time by gradual, yet powerful processes - deposition, uplift, and erosion. The result is a classic example of a mono line, or a one-sided fold, in the otherwise horizontal rock layers.

This park has absolutely no cell service so I could not spot myself. Called CQ on SSB many times with no luck. A real HF black hole! Finally eked our 12 contacts on CW on Sept 25.





Dead Horse Point St Park, Utah. Legend has cowboys trapped wild mustangs on the point in a corral made of branches and brush, selected the ones they wanted and left the others to die of thirst within sight of the Colorado River ... although 2,000 ft below the point. Got “sticker shock” here as it was \$ 20 to enter. 30 contacts in the log Sept 24.



WKY Radio

from Ebay this month – one of the very first broadcast transmitters

“WKY – 1921 – Oklahoma (the 28th radio station to make it on the air once broadcasting started). 5XT became the 87th licensed station in the United States on March 16, 1922. It was owned by the Oklahoma Radio Shop (Earl C. Hull and H.S. Richards). The station was assigned the WKY call letters and began broadcasting weekdays from noon to 1:00 p.m. and from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. On Sundays, WKY was on the air from 3 to 4 p.m. and 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The 'studio' was at his home – with a microphone, piano and Victrola as the main program sources for a few hours of broadcast a dayy!

On November 1922, WKY announced a "silent night" policy, meaning the station would broadcast only four, and later three nights a week. This was so listeners could have a chance to tune into other stations in neighboring states. “ Source – Wiki

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This was the first broadcast station on the air west of the Mississippi River. The first

transmitter was 20 watts and located in the owner's garage. It was on the air in 1920 as 5XT but did not have a 'broadcast license' till 1922. In 1925, they went up to 500w.

From Ebay ad:

First transmitter built for and used by WKY radio (Oklahoma) in 1921 as documented on the internet and other sources; includes Western Electric (3) 216-A tennis ball tubes and two type 50 tube (all not tested as of posting). See attached photos. Many of the parts on this transmitter are early Western Electric manufactured.

Initial check of tubes reveals all three 216-A have good filaments. Two of the tennis ball W.E. tubes test good, each measuring (40/38) on a TV-7D. The third 216-A test very weak (3/38). The globe type 50 tubes registers weak emission(24 of 38) on a TV-7D tube tester. Nice display tube. Sold \$1875





The 216 tube was similar to the famous VT-2 produced during WW1 – a triode tube that had a filament that ran on 5.5-6v , usually off a 6v wet cell lead-acid battery.

A type 50 tube had a plate dissipation of about 20 watts and had to be transformer coupled or direct DC coupled. It was rated at about 4.5 watts of audio. 7.5v filament and 1.25 amps. It had directly heated filament/cathode. You can buy reproduction type 50 tubes for about \$750 a pair! Ouch! You'll see the old tubes at antique wireless auctions and a box of NOS tubes or pulls can go for \$1000 – condition unknown as to whether they work and how well after 100 years.

If you need a new type 50 tube in working condition – good luck – they sell for hundreds of dollars if good! I suspect this transmitter is a bit later than 1921 as the type 50 tube wasn't made for another five years! There are a few audiofiles that swear by the tube power amps of the 1920s. The type 50 was in between the 2A3 tube and WE 300B, which is another sought after rare audio tube that was in many audio amps of the day. They can sell for \$500 each in good working condition!

WKY is now a Spanish language station.....but you can watch WKY-TV. Or listen to WKY-FM.

Late TN QSO Party Report

One new mobile reported on the 3830 reflector for the TN QP held last month:

N4ZZ multi-op mobile 928 CW QSO (AD4EB, N4ZZ, KI4HVY ops)

This was our 8th time operating mobile in the TNQP, and all three of us enjoyed the contest. Weather was perfect, participation was fantastic, and propagation was not bad considering where we are in the sunspot cycle. Don and I operated and Melody drove the 2000 Montana van and navigated. We used an Icom IC7600 with 2 hustler verticals. We made it thru the planned 25 counties (377 miles).

We were doing very well for the first half of the contest, but Murphy got us when we took down the 20/15 hustler coils and put up the 80m coil. I was driving and hit a branch which bent the coil and one of the top hat stingers. SWR was infinite but we could still hear signals. We were certain the antenna was non-functional, so we took it down and limped along operating just 40m for the next 2 hours. We finally figured out what the problem was during the last hour, put the 80 meter antenna back up, and Don quickly worked the 128 QSOs and 39 multipliers. Turned out we had the 40m antenna mast selected when the radio was set to 80m. Man did we feel dumb, we will never make that mistake again.

The top 10 operators based on the number of QSOs were:

K1GQ (27) K3WJV (24) VE3NNT (23) K4BYN (22) K9OM (20) K7SV (18)
W5TM (18) K0PC (16) W6OAT (16) WA8KAN (16)

We only worked 2 DX stations, EA2VE and TJ4ZX.

The night before the contest we met Jeff K8UE and John K4BAI for dinner at J. Alexanders in Franklin, TN. We had a wonderful time talking ham radio and getting psyched up for the contest. Thanks to both for making the trip to TN.

We appreciate everyone who worked us in this contest. This event sure brings out some fantastic operators and stations. It just amazes me how signals can be so strong using simple verticals on a van (really booming in on 80m). Don and I especially want to thank Melody (KI4HVY) for joining us again on this one, sure is easier with her along

doing most of the driving and keeping us on track. Congratulations to the W4NZ team (Ted, Mark K0EJ, and Brandon) for their excellent mobile performance. Ted is the guy who encouraged and helped Don and I to get started in these mobile QSO party adventures.

Hope to hear you all next year in the 2018 TNQP.

73 - Jim - AD4EB

Dateline CW by Ed, KN4Y

From the County Hunter Forum while the Road Runner is in suspension pending a new editor

DATELINE CW - By: Ed, KN4Y (October 2019)

A man's death closes his reputation and determines it as good or bad.

I arrive at the radio shack early, get the mail out of the mailbox and enter the radio shack. I turn on the air conditioner. I hear Gator downshift his 4X4 and slide to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. He slides out of the cab, checks the mailbox and enters the radio shack. "Dude, I got your call and you were sounding so sad I got here as quickly as possible. You look okay what is the problem?"

"Gator, the MARAC newsletter editor, our boss for 14 years, David KU4YM, became a silent key." I get a Kleenex and wipe my eyes. Gator's expression goes from a quizzable look to a sad expression. "Boy Dude, that sure was unexpected. Any details?" "The disease that took his life at a young 78 years was a type of Carcinoma that when detected it is too late. I remember chatting with David at several MARAC conventions where I met his lovely wife Ellen." I sip my latte.

"Gator, this is how Ellen explained the sequence of events: `David was a healthy man - almost to the end. He managed his health as an Electrical Engineer would manage a project. The full identity of the disease that ended his life could not be determined for certain at first. One week we were planning a road trip to Pittsburgh for a family reunion, and David was gathering Road Runner articles. The next week, the Labor Day

Holiday, with Hurricane Dorian a possible threat and suddenly we were arranging for hospice. David, KU4YM became a silent key three hours after being transported to hospice. He passed away with his family in attendance.'

“Gator, I am going to sit here by myself and mourn for a while. Why don’t you go get us some lattes?” But first we dim the lights and bow our heads as Gator recites, The Shepherd’s Psalm. Gator leaves the sad atmosphere in the radio shack to go to the joint of joy. I grab another Kleenex.

I turn on the computer, lean back for a moment and fall asleep. I am jolted back to reality when I hear Gator’s 4X4 downshift and slide to a stop at the recycled railroad tie. He enters the radio shack carrying a white cardboard container, sets it on the desk, opens it and hands me a supersized latte and an éclair surprise. I give Gator the high sign as we sip and munch.

Gator goes to the computer. “Dude, I want to see how you did in the CWops OPEN COMPETITION as a member of the Florida Contest Group Team the Florida Orange Juicers.” Gator giggles and brings up the log, “Not bad, I guess. You logged 143 QSOs but I see you only worked the first session.” I shake my head yes. “Yes Gator, I had to work at the church Saturday getting ready for our low county shrimp boil event. How about checking my Washington QSO party log also known as the Washington Salmon Run? Don’t ask me why.”

Gator sips his latte as he loads the log. “Not bad Dude. You logged 48 QSOs in the Washington QSO party. Dude, you needed only two more contacts to qualify for prizes.” I laugh. “NOW you tell me! How many mobiles did I work?” Gator sips his latte. “Dude, you worked 3 mobiles, the only MARAC member was Steve, N7VS.” I laugh. “Gator, years ago I received a smoked salmon prize.” Gator laughs. “Dude, how did you smoke a salmon?” We laugh hilariously and sip our lattes. Gator is looking at the computer.

“Damn Dude, you also made 16 QSOs in the Iowa QSO party, 8 QSOs in the New Jersey QSO party,” and laughing, “1 QSO in the New Hampshire QSO party. I notice you made all your contacts on Saturday.” I sip my latte. “Yes Gator, going to church and the No-Tap bowling tournament wiped out Sunday, radioactive wise.” Gator is not paying attention; he is looking at the computer screen. “Dude, how was your mobile run in the Alabama QSO party?”

I smile big. “The weather was great with plenty of sunshine, but the love bugs loved up the entire front of the van. Took me over a hour to wash them off. The bands were

up and down sometimes five minutes to receive an answer to my CQ. At times there was plenty of band activity because the Texas QSO party was also in progress and I got a lot of Texan contacts. I worked Bob, N4CD in many Texas counties but never heard Norm, W3DYA. Gator, check my log.” I finish my éclair and wash it down with a still hot latte. Gator brings up the log on the computer. “Not bad Dude, for the conditions you stated. You worked 350 QSOs, traveled 785 miles and operated from 13 Alabama counties. I notice you had a nice run on 80 meters.” Gator turns around in the high back swivel chair.

“Dude, I drove pass the senior center and noticed you with a couple senior ladies. I hesitate to ask what was going on because every time I do...” Gator’s cell phone goes CQ, CQ, CQ and Gator answers. “Dude, got to run, for some reason 3 guys arrived at the plant. All are wearing shirts with ICE inscribed on the front and back and asked for me.” He is gone like a lightening flash. I hear him yell, “Farewell Farfel Nelson”.

The printer stops and I extract the printout listing the mobile county hunters who checked into the county hunters’ CW call frequencies during the month of September. I read: AB7NK, AG6V, AI5P, K4BAI, K8ZZ, KA4RRU, KB6UF, KC3X, KC7YE, KL7RRC, KN4Y, N4CD, N4TY, N9MGZ, NF0N, W0GXQ, W3DYA, W8OP, WD7JS and WK2S.

The month of October is gearing up to be a fun time for the State QSO party junkies with 376 counties up for grabs. Starting with the granddaddy of QSO parties is the California QSO party (58 counties) followed by the Nevada QSO party (16 counties), the Pennsylvania QSO party (67 counties), the Arizona QSO party (15 counties), the South Dakota QSO party (56 counties), the New York QSO party (62 counties) and rounding out the month, the Illinois QSO party (102 counties).

Maybe if contesting is your bag, try the German Telegraphy Contest, the 10-10 International 10-10 Day Sprint on 10 meters of course, then the 10-10 International Fall CW QSO party, or maybe another Worked All Germany Contest, and of course the top band guys in the Stew Perry Contest. The future of amateur radio is in the media-soaked generation, so support the ARRL School Club Roundup. There are a lot more events on the air, but for now it is Nap Time.

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Please note: KN4Y plans to give the 10-10 International 10-10 Day Sprint and 10-10 International Fall CW Contest full time operation. Please check between 28.035 and

28.045 MHz. and help open 10 meters, the “sleeping giant”.

Late Salmon Run Report

Late Salmon Run - from mobiles

K7JSG mobile 79 SSB QSO

First time doing Mobile and had fun. I made contact with the most counties since I have been participating in Salmon Run. I contacted 23 counties and heard a number more but they couldn't hear me.

I used my IC-7100 running 100 watts with a Alpha Antenna FMJ. I replaced the stock whip with a 17ft expandable whip from MFJ. I used a Buddipole Veratee for the mount and used two 5ft whips on each side. It worked surprisingly well.

I was able to activate 7 Counties. The band conditions died on Saturday night so I didn't make any contacts from what would have been 8 counties. Found out a Solar Wind came through and wiped out the bands.

I tried to make contacts on 40 meters but no one heard me.

I might do mobile again next year. Learned lots of things and how I could possible make more contacts.

N7WA mobile 747 CW

Having heard that Randy K7TQ would not have his usual partner running mobile in the Salmon Run, I asked if he would like to join me going mobile. We once ran together as a mobile during the 7QP and he did a wonderful job in planning the route. I asked if could plan our route for the Salmon Run as well. He did another great job that had us able to visit all 20 counties in eastern Washington. Many of the counties have a very small ham population base and activation by mobiles is essential.

Randy lives in Moscow, ID and I live in the Seattle area. The best location to meet up, so neither of us would have to drive too far, was the middle of eastern Washington. It just so happens that mutual friend Bob N7AU lives in Ephrata and was willing to let us crash Friday night before the test. It also allows us to test out the gear one last time in a suitable location.

The week before the test, I got email from Eric, N7EPD. His concern was for locals being able to work us mobile. 40M went long too early and he had prior success using 80M. Neither Randy or I had considered doing 80M during daylight hours and we did some testing using the RBN. 80M looked very good for locals and maybe a bit further out. We decided that we would spend the first five minutes and the last five minutes of each county on 80M. In most situations, that would be a solid 10 minutes on the air. That also helped limit the antenna adjustments since 80M and 20M were the same antenna.

The basic plan was to start in the middle of eastern Washington, work our way west to the Cascades, then along the southern counties back to Moscow to crash for the night. Sunday, we headed to Northeast Washington and started the test there, working our way back along the northern counties back to Ephrata. We were only late a couple times from our published schedule and there was always a group waiting at each new county. The 80M idea worked like a champ and will probably become a permanent of both Randy's and my mobile protocol.

Every Salmon Run seems to have an animal component. This year it was a horse (being walked by a girl in Yakima County), turkeys in Stevens County (never trust a flock of turkeys), and a rattle snake in Douglas County. All were in the road as we went by, usually forcing some kind of slow down. The rattle snake was just sunning itself in the middle of the lane and we just drove over it leaving it unharmed and not realizing what it was until we had passed.

The only real equipment issues were amplifier faults in the KPA100. At times, the high RF environment just causes issues that get resolved by adjusting the antenna tap slightly. Sometimes it was hard to get it fixed. Of course, there was the one time on 40M where the tap just disconnected and was blowing in the breeze. That was a first.

On our Sunday jaunt across the northern counties, we found that one route was closed to us at the Keller Ferry which crosses the Columbia River. This caused some anxiety among our followers as our reported counties were not matching the published schedule on our new route. Fortunately, we were able to recover.

It was amazing to still be able to work some DX from a mobile. Probably more of a testament to the ears of the DX than the strength of our signal. All in all, it was a lot of fun this year. Thanks to all our followers. It is always great to work the same group of guys and gals as we get to each new county.

Many thanks to my partner Randy K7TQ. You can read Randy's comments

at <https://sites.google.com/site/randyk7tq/home/2019-salmon-run>

On the Road with N4CD

The weather was great – last 'hot' days of summer with sizzling 90s expected but no rain. Last year we had 6 inches of rain in September. This year NIL. The Belton semi-annual swap meet was coming up. That's about a 3 ½ hour trip down I-35.

Friday October 4

I left on Friday morning right after morning rush hour as the car had to head right to downtown Dallas to get to I-35E headed south. Fortunately no accidents occurred on the highways, so it went smoothly at 9am through the Dallas-Ft Worth Metroplex. I zipped on down the interstate to Waco Mammoth National Historic site – KFF-0975 for quick activation. That's a ten mile detour off I-35. I've run it many times before and it was really popular in the NPOTA days. Made a couple dozen Qs but the bands were not in great shape. A index 13, K was 3. Some signals decent, many in the noise or barely there. Only needed 10 here for a quickie activation so that was fine.

Next, I headed on down the interstate another 50 miles to the motel in Temple TX – Super 8 where I've stayed at many times before. \$80. After checking in, it was time to go to the hamfest grounds and check in to the indoor flea market. I've got a few radios from Charlie, W0RRY, that his wife Mary asked me to sell. Been trying to do that and 2 are gone, had 3 more to sell. I missed the big hamfest in the Dallas area in June – didn't get the radios till mid-summer. So I paid \$15 for an indoor table. There's outdoor spots for \$10 each but you never know about the weather. It can be 100F and blistering sun, or 45 degrees, chill and drizzle. Over the past 30 years, I've seen it all. With the indoor table, you can drive in right next to your table to unload - then you've got to park outside. There are indoor spots where you can sell out of the back of your car or your own table – but you usually need 2 spots for that. If you park inside, you've got to

disconnect your battery! Convention rules for the site.

I set up my table then looked around – mostly outside. Loads of HF rigs for sale along with a lot of Hallicrafters gear – mostly receivers, National, Lafayette, a few Collins rigs, Heathkits like SB-series. No regens spied. There's about six isles of flea market each a couple hundred feet long. Lots of yakking going on as many know each other from this activity or that one. The 3805 net folks are in one spot, the trader net in another. This club sets up here – that one there. Hi hi.

Maybe there was a dozen mobile homes there - used to be 20-30 of them in the past. One group cooks up BBQ and for \$5 or \$7 donation you can enjoy some BBQ if you want plus sides/drink.

Half the flea market sellers were there on Friday. More would show up tomorrow-Saturday.

The indoors is restricted to sellers only for setup on Friday. Outdoor flea market was going strong but nothing tugged at my heartstrings saying "buy me, buy me". I've got too much junk – a common problem. Around 5pm, after covering up my table, I headed back to the motel then dinner at the Golden Corral, a mile away.

The indoor area is closed and locked for the night at 6pm. Spent \$14 for dinner plus a tip. \$80 for the motel.

Saturday Oct 5

The Super 8 has early breakfast – and I was there at 5:45 am. Had a bowl of oatmeal, one hard boiled egg, one orange, decaf coffee then headed out about 6:15 to head to the Bell County Fairgrounds and the hamfest - about 20 minutes away. Sun not up yet. The hamfest opens to the public at 7am so you want to be at your table before 7am. The outdoor flea market was in full swing with folks using flashlights to see what was for sale.

This year seemed a bit slower than last year with fewer and fewer folks showing up and fewer bucks changing hands. Only a few bucks to get in but over 3 hour drive from Dallas area, an hour or so from Austin and 3-4 hours from Houston. A few folks seriously looked at the stuff on my table. Sold 2 books and managed to finally sell the IC-706 Mark II from W0RRY's estate. No interest in the Kenwood TS-940 SAT.

There probably were 50 HF rigs for sale there that day - from Kenwood TS-520/820, 530/830s, and newer , a dozen Icom HF rigs, a dozen Yaesu HF rigs. Most just sat there

all day. Some had power and had them running – but very little interest in 20-30 year old radios. I think all the boatanchor radios like Hallicrafters and Nationals, Hammurlund, Johnson, Heathkits – just sat there. Dozens and dozens of them. Older folks are downsizing and selling out and not buying. Newer folks want all 'digital' and DSP radios with computer interfaces, spectrum displays, waterfalls, etc. To top it off, newer rigs are lower in price so that also competes with 'used' gear. Even new mobiles are well under \$1000 new – IC-701 not much more than \$700. Plus, you don't need a 'CW filter' that used to be a \$100 option.

By 10am it was essentially over for me. Decided to pack up, head on out and run some parks on the way home.

By 11 am I had reached Mother Neff State Park – KFF-3042. Seems only one other ham beside N4CD on several visits had been here. That's true of many TX state parks – some with only one activation or 2 or 3 activations for half of them! Go back east and it's a different story! Put a couple dozen QSO's in the log. The CQP started up so put a dozen or so in the log as well, then headed out.

Next up was Waco Mammoth KFF-0975 again – I could get a 'quickie' activation here. Not much was happening with Parks on the Air this way – and out west as the CQP filled the SSB and CW bands end to end with loud signals. Back east 40m was fine for POTA and most POTA activity there is on 40M and on SSB. Put a dozen CQP QSOs in the log then headed toward home a couple hours away. For repeat visits, anything of 10 or more gives you credit.

After I got through the Dallas Metroplex traffic, I could take a five mile detour to KFF-4423 and run it for a 'quickie activation'. Put a dozen more CQP stations in the log and then headed home.

That was primarily the trip to the Belton Hamfest. Barely worth it for just the hamfest. In 20 years of attendance, only found a goodie about twice there. Combining it with some repeat parks for 'activation credit' made it worth it – just barely. There were some dealers there so if you wanted new stuff of accessories, that's a good reason to go....otherwise, this like many other hamfests are fading away. Thank goodness Dayton just keeps rocking along! I'm already planning on that one! See you there!

California QSO Party

K6M County Expedition- MODOC 933 CW 558 SSB

AA5TL AE7EU K4XU KK7YC W6RA WB7WHG WN7K ops

Two k3/kpa500 stations field day style on mountain a fire lookout in the Modoc National Forest. Weather was beautiful, the band conditions were crap.

Worked all the tough mults in the first two hours but it took ten hours to find an Alberta for the sweep.

Our two Buckmaster "high power" OCF antennas planned for 40/80m coverage were non-functional on 80m right out of the box. They will be returned. We could only use 100W on 80m because the KAT tuners could not withstand the variable load presented. The 4 Q's on 160m were within 100mi with the K3 folded back on SWR to 10W. The gang had fun. This was the 21st consecutive time we have lit up Modoc county for the CQP. We are happy to provide the multiplier to the deserving. Thanks for the Q's.

73,

Dick K4XU

W6IA County Expedition 322 CW 207 SSB

W6IA W7EEE ops

For the second year in a row we operated from just outside the City of Colusa in Colusa (COLU) County near the Sacramento River. Our goals were to a) have fun b) try to meet our 500 QSO commitment to NCCC and c) improve on our score from last year. We achieved all three so, overall, it was a successful weekend! Our LP operation struggled on 20 meters phone but things were better on CW. The low bands were good on both modes. We worked 49 of 50 states (missed ND) and our VE mults were lower than last year... missing AB, MB and NT. Thanks to all who worked to pull our our LP operation! 73, Mark W6IA

K6T - County Expedition - Tehama - 1072 CW 1048 SSB

AA1ON K0BEE W1RH W1SRD ops

Great location! Great antennas! Great fun! TU all for working us and making this an awesome CQP.

N6M County Expedition - Imperial 976 CW 826 SSB
AE7DW K6LL W6RW ops

A group of Yuma, AZ area contesters operated from the "Official Center of the World" in Felicity in Imperial (IMPE) County, CA. This was the first time this location was used for CQP and plans are already underway to make this a regular county expedition site.

N6GK County Expedition - Glenn - 170 CW 89 SSB
KD6WY op

Activated Glenn County from the Blue Gum Motel on the east side of Willows off the old Hwy 99. Good quite location overall, lots of trucks hauling walnuts during harvest this time of year rolling by the motel. Worked east of the Rockies on 20m CW and west of the Mississippi on 40m and 80m during the evening. Always fun to work a county expedition, this year had the added adventure of working a new location. Motel owner was cooperative and interested in what I was doing. Lots of room for antennas on the side and behind the motel; large property with open space. Good open views in all directions. Though the Blue Gum Motel is a two star motel on a good day, it was the right place for my county expedition to Glenn County.

N6WT - County Expedition - Mendicino - 159 CW 49 SSB

This was an expedition to MEND, I was told I was the only one in the county. I had many problems.

First I was in a canyon. Never having been to this RV park I had no idea what to expect. If I had known what I know now I would have picked a spot out in the open.

The vertical antenna I wanted to use did not work as expected. I had tested it at home but something was not right when I set it up. I had to scramble to put up the dipole I use for SOTA. Stations were very hard to hear. I had planned to work a lot more SSB but this was very difficult. Thank goodness for CW!

At the start of the contest, I had a pipeline into the Northeast on 20m, but that was it.

Things opened up after that.

My Flex 6500 started to die. When I started on Sunday I turned on the radio. I could hear a fan making noise. Then I got a CPU fan error. I guess the radio bouncing around in the motor home for 4 weeks did not help. I was able to turn the radio upside down and it would work. I'm sure taking the weight off the bearings in the fan.

I had to quit a bit early for personal reasons.

Thanks

73

Kent N6WT

K0EJ/6 County Expedition 478 CW 36 SSB Tuolumne County

another trip to Groveland to visit long-time friends from my submarine days and a chance to hand out TUOL. Setup was similar to last year - FT857D->80M OCF with center in tree @~30' - oriented E/W due to location so added a 20M delta loop favoring E/W for some "diversity"! OCF seemed to win hands down everywhere. Found local QRN extremely loud on 80/40. Tried to locate source but no luck. If you made it on 40M, you were LOUD as noise was almost always S8-9. Apologies to any who called but who I seemed to ignore. Lots of fills needed so am expecting to take some hits in log-checking. The delta loop actually helped on 40CW listening as SNR was certainly better. Missing mults different than last year. Missed IA, ND, DE, WY, WV, and VE4. I got called by K3WA (WV?) Sunday morning but could not complete QSO and heard ND S&Ping on 20M SSB Sunday afternoon but never connected. 15M better on Saturday for me with only a few TX and FL stations making it on Sunday. Briefly heard N6O on 10M weakly but no luck connecting. Op time approximate. Had a few stretches with BIC but nothing in log for >15minutes. Score down from last year but still had fun. Even worked a few local TUOL stations! Apologies to W2VJN who called me during the last minute. Hit the wrong key on laptop resulting in QSY to bottom of the band. Scrambled to get close to original freq and sent exchange but then realized that time was up. George I hope you didn't need TUOL for sweep! Had fun but may have to try a serious effort from a well-equipped station out there sometime. Thanks to all who called in.

73, Mark K0EJ

N6YEU - county expedition - Madera - 374 CW 151 SSB

Not sure what happened but conditions seemed to be very poor. I was /portable in Madera county with low power and tribander with wires but I really had to work hard for every QSO. I took several breaks as one can all CQ only so long with no to few callers. I have operated CQP /portable for over 20 years and this had to be the worst year ever. It still is fun to give out one of the rarer counties but the cost/benefit ratio could have been better this year! Every year I say this is my last county expedition but you never know....73,Fred

NQ6X/AG6AY - 283 SSB

Great time with CQP 2019! I operated under new call (was AG6AY) and was a California County Expedition located at Reyes Peak at 7100' elevation. Great place to camp. Used a 15-20-40 fan dipole at ~60' with barefoot K3/P3 on solar power. Much thanks to W6NCT for help setting everything up.

W6BX (at W6BX) - county expedition - Merced - 1024 CW 701 SSB

ops: K6EU K6SRZ K9YC N3ZZ N6RNO W6GJB

Our seven member team again split up on Sunday, with K6SRZ, K9YC, and W6GJB moving W6GJB's contesting trailer to activate Merced county as KU6W. Saturday we were all at a horse ranch in a very isolated part of San Benito county. A good time was had by all, but we were disappointed to see activity die very early (we had no one to work after 9 PM local time).

KU6W (at KU6W) County Expedition - 530 CW

Our entire team spent Saturday in San Benito County. Sunday morning, we broke down the CW antennas, packed up, and K6SRZ, K9YC, and W6GJB moved up to a lovely site overlooking the San Luis reservoir in Merced County. The rest of the team (K6EU, K6YL, N3ZZ, and N6RNO) remained at the San Benito site and finished the contest there.

We swept in San Benito, missed VY1, MR, VE4, and ND from Merced county.

K6T - county expedition 1072 CW 1048 SSB

ops: AA1ON KØBEE W1RH W1SRD

Great location! Great antennas! Great fun! TU all for working us and making this an awesome CQP.

Special thanks to N6DE for analysis, support and strategy. Next time Dean.
73,

K6T Team Tehama

K0BAK Canadian Park Rove

K0BAK Oct. 1-4 rove report (long)

Thanks again to everyone who contacted me or tried to during my rove to the Niagara area of Ontario and northwest Pennsylvania from October 1 to 4. Logs have been sent to my POTA coordinator.

The idea of going to Niagara for CNPOTA and POTA started when my wife was considering running a 5k in the general area (Dunnville ON I think), so we were talking about a combined run/ham / fit/fat trip. I noticed there was a good concentration of POTA parks on both sides of the Niagara River, which is great for activating a bunch of parks in short period of time. While my wife discovered a calendar conflict that canceled plans for the 5k, I continued to research parks on the Canadian side to activate in both the CNPOTA and POTA programs (CNPOTA is only for this year).

Parks Canada generally does not publicly document the borders of their Historic Sites, so I had to rely on guidance from CNPOTA officials, previous activator VE2GT, and in one case writing to Parks Canada. I did the best I could reasonably do to find legitimate activation locations on property, but without good documentation (on the level of state parks in the northeast U.S. for instance) some guesswork and common sense was needed.

Though my detailed rove plan was pretty complete as early as July, I found the hotel rooms in the area were too expensive in the peak summer vacation season, which also implies crowded border crossings, roads, and parks. I put aside the plan for a while, and revisited it initially with a possible combination rove with the PA QSO Party in the 2nd

weekend in October. However, I decided to concentrate just on the PA QP since disaster prevented my participation last year. Instead, I'd activate Niagara ON parks, then swing southwestward to activate POTA parks in extreme northwest PA, for a 5-day international rove. This would cross off my list the PA parks which are farthest from my home, serving my long-term quest to activate all parks in PA. The plan was shelved for later execution.

Closer to home, I planned to activate all New Jersey state forests the weekend of Sept. 21-22. That rove was documented in another post, but the headline was a fuel pump failure about halfway through the first rove day. My mechanic had difficulty with parts, and then couldn't mount the fuel tank back on with existing straps. Then he received the wrong straps from his supplier. In the meantime, I was given completion estimates that lead me to believe I'd have the van back before the weekend of 28-29, and I noticed that Niagara hotel prices suddenly and dramatically dropped starting Oct. 1, so I made hotel reservations to execute the 5-day Niagara/PA rove plan starting on Tuesday Oct. 1. The van continued to not be ready through the weekend before Oct. 1, but explaining my planned trip (and that I'd be charged two hotel days if I canceled), my mechanic generously stayed for hours after his scheduled closing to complete the van work by around 8pm Monday Sept. 30. I brought the van home with generous help from my wife, then my eldest daughter helped me to mount the screwdriver antenna and to "waterproof" the connections. I was as ready as I could be around 11pm the night before I was to leave. That is definitely cutting too close, but I was determined to get back on the road after waiting more than a week for my van.

The day of the rove I got up around 6AM. This is later than I usually wake, which is good and bad: Bad for driving some distance in low traffic times, but good for getting an unusually good rest. Since I was headed away from northeast population centers, as opposed to my May rove to Canada that went through several crowded northeast cities, getting on the road early was not nearly as important. North from Philly to Syracuse NY, then west to Buffalo NY, the route was easy on interstates because I didn't try to go diagonally partly on state roads. I had some white-knuckle driving on the older narrow elevated highways through Buffalo, but that wasn't surprising.



K0BAK's side magnetic banner on van

I crossed the Niagara River into Canada on the Peace Bridge, the southernmost crossing and only a few minutes away from the first park to be activated. There was no waiting at the Canadian border booth, where I got quite a few reasonable questions but no search. Heading on to Ridgeway Battlefield NHS, I found a gravel semi-circle in a small park where I got 33 contacts in 36 minutes on 40-80-20m, which would turn out to be one of the lowest rates of the rove. Continuing westward to the more isolated and smaller Battle of Cook's Mills NHS, I had very similar results with 36 Qs in 36 minutes on 3 bands.

After finishing at Cook's Mills, I checked my weather app. Substantial rain followed by severe thunderstorms were predicted that afternoon toward the northeast where most Niagara parks were located, and the next day around 60% chance of rain was forecast the entire day. While my plan called for activating Navy Island NHS and maybe one more followed by checking into the hotel, I decided to try to save the one activation that required dry weather. Fort Mississauga and Mississauga Point Lighthouse are co-located NHSs on the shore of Lake Ontario that can only be activated pedestrian portable. My original plan was to activate these the next day within in a logical sequence that started at the northernmost park and worked southward. I brought along my "famous" Stoooper Station for that job, but I was not going to use it in any rain. I had operated under inadequate cover in cold rain across from the New York Stock Exchange on Christmas Eve in 2016, and it cost me around \$800 to get my IC-7100 fixed months later as corrosion slowly made the radio inoperable. (And now you can buy a whole new 7100 for about the same price as the repair bill. Grrrr.)

I headed to the nearest on-street parking near the Mississauga parks, trying to beat the rain. I found a series of open spots a block away from the path which allowed me to avoid parallel parking my beast of a van without a rear window view ... I've done it under pressure in Washington DC, but it's not fun. As if on cue, as I was walking to the inconveniently located parking fee kiosk, it started sprinkling. Opening up my weather

app's radar map, I saw that the rain was only going to get worse and possibly terrible. I skipped paying for parking, updated my POTA friends on FB, and shut down the station. Although I had hoped for a miracle to allow me to activate the Mississauga parks the next day, it turned out there was too much uncertainty in the forecast so I lost the opportunity to activate two POTA parks back-to-back in the same location, and more significantly I would miss out on the only two-fer CNPOTA opportunity in my plan. After checking into the hotel, I went back out to hunt for food, and was greeted by a serious thunderstorm; it was a good decision to cancel the pedestrian parks.

Getting up the next day, I adjusted my plan to accommodate the skipped parks so that I'd attempt five parks operating from the van. Only a few hundred meters from the Mississauga parks is Battlefield of Fort George NHS, basically a tiny park with a few rows of parking and an historic marker. This location is on Lake Ontario, and despite the high humidity caused by on-and-off showers, I could barely see the skyline of Toronto across the lake including the iconic CN Tower. FWIW, this site is more than 2 km from Fort George itself. For a 9AM activation, results were decent at 24 contacts in 27 minutes on 40m and 80m.

Butler's Barracks NHS is on The Commons and is one of those Historic Sites without published borders defined, though I did find the official standard Parks Canada sign for that NHS reasonably close to the small parking lot I picked. Operating with increasing rain and with S5 noise, results were a bit worse than the previous park at only 20 contacts in 27 minutes. During the short ride to my planned operating location for Fort George NHS, I found a sign for the actual main parking lot so I pulled in where I found bus parking with only a single row of trees to the west but no buses on that cool rainy day. Not sure why I didn't find the main parking during planning, or maybe I thought there were too many trees. I had a much higher rate here with lower noise compared to Butler's—36 Qs in 24 minutes for a good rate of 90 per hour.

The 30-minute ride to Queenston Heights NHS was slow but pretty, past homes overlooking the River and a number of small vineyards. I visited this area with my parents as a kid; I remember the Floral Clock and being dragged through the Botanical Gardens when I really wanted to visit a hydro power plant instead. 9 Though it was just spritzing when I first arrived, by the time I took the antenna whip down I was in a downpour—though luckily no lightning. Between the border station I could see from my operating location a couple hundred meters away, and nearby hydro power plants, I was pretty worried about noise at this location, but only found manageable S3-4 noise. I had a similar result to the last park at 36 contacts in 28 minutes.



The last site of the day was almost an hour away, taking me through the tourist heart of Niagara Ontario. Though I was being punished for not activating that site on my original plan yesterday, which would have avoided these congested roads, some of the sights along the route ignited my fuzzy memory. We visited this area in 2002 when my daughter (the same daughter that helped me prepare for this rove) was part of a children's choir that competed in a choral festival here. The exchange rate was extremely favorable for Americans at that moment, enabling our family-of-five's first and last luxury hotel suite with a high view over to the Horseshoe Falls. Truly spectacular to have that view all the time we were there. Driving through the main drag I saw many of the places we visited or ate back then. Continuing past the congested tourist area to a pleasant parkway along the river, I stopped to take a selfie at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace, where my mother successfully prayed for my conception. Further down the road through a little tourist town that time has not been kind to, I finally arrived at a little parking area at the historic marker for Navy Island NHS, similar to the little area at the first park of the day. It was colder and raining harder, so I was anxious to get this one activated on 40m and 80m only, and not wanting to get wetter in the rain to shorten the whip for 20m. It was harder to tune the screwdriver, almost certainly due to the constant rain, and chasers had a harder time hearing me. I was grateful for 23 contacts in 26 minutes, and headed back to the hotel to dry off and warm up.

I got on the road around 6:30am October 3 to get back across the Peace Bridge before

the height of rush hour. The “free” hotel breakfast didn’t start till 6:30, but not to worry, I bought a genuine Canadian breakfast in the form of a Tim Horton’s sandwich eaten on the road. Approaching the bridge I was glad I managed to get through my time in Ontario without having to buy their expensive gasoline. Although there was a pretty long line of trailer trucks waiting to cross, the “car” lane moved along and there was no one ahead of me at the RV lane of the border station. The U.S. agent had few questions and again didn’t search the van, making the quickest border crossing yet. Highways through Buffalo were getting a little congested, but nothing terrible. I was relieved to get onto I90 toward Erie PA unscathed, though stretches of I90 were in awful condition; I asked rhetorically on Facebook where I can apply for a refund of the toll I paid. Rush hour congestion on the interstates routed me onto surface roads in Erie along the lake shore, where I saw some nice waterfront reuse of what I assume were heavy industrial works before.

Presque Isle SP looked like a popular summer destination, but even on this grey wet weekday morning there were more cars parked in the first of several parking lots than I had imagined I’d see. Starting a little after 9am, I was happy to get 29 contacts in 27 minutes on 40m and 80m in the moderate rain. 40 minutes later I was at somewhat muddy gravel trail access parking lot for Erie Bluffs SP; unlike most trail parking this one was in a meadow allowing a good RF launch area. I had fewer Qs here at 22 contacts in 22 minutes.

Almost an hour away was Pymatuning SP. Judging by the large parking lot it’s another popular summer swimming location. Even though there were only 3 vehicles here, I was glad that the restrooms were unlocked. I had a decent mini-pileup on 40m, netting 43 contacts total on 40m & 80m in 30 minutes, for a respectable rate of 84 Qs/hr. During the 50-minute trip to the next park, I drove on long fairly flat roads through farmland dotted with (I assume) oil production tanks, many of which were very rusty. I don’t think that will end well for us PA taxpayers. A few minutes after arriving at Maurice K. Goddard SP, I had a special rare treat for this rove: about 10 minutes of humid sunshine. Although I had almost the same contact rate as the previous park, I “only” had 29 Qs in 21 minutes. I physically felt pretty good by the end of that activation, so I thought there was a good chance I’d be able to activate the two optional parks on my plan after checking into my hotel in Meadville—another familiar location where my middle daughter went to college for a while.

After checking into a somewhat rundown room, I went right back out to activate the first of two optional parks. Erie NWR has a handful of tracts; I had picked a location that was fairly open and near a road to maximize RF and cell coverage. After I posted a picture later, K8VOX remarked that she had independently picked the same location months

earlier to activate her first PA park—confirming the wisdom of that location. Arriving 50 minutes after leaving the hotel and traveling over rolling hills, parking was easy so I oriented with max signal toward the west. The rate wasn't great at 29 Qs in 25 minutes, but good enough. About a half hour away was the muddy tight tree-ringed lot for Cornplanter SF, where a pickup truck was already parked leaving not much room for my TV van. Despite the seemingly lousy location, evening propagation apparently helped to boost the number of contacts to 43 in 39 minutes. My rate was somewhat low due to a typically-unproductive session on 20m yielding only 2 contacts, but I went to that band on request of prolific Florida activator KK1TLS with whom I indeed made contact. I returned to the hotel and kept the van running for two hours to give the batteries a charge boost via the van's engine-powered AC generator and my 30-amp charger.

The last rove day October 4 started with great expectations. Because I was able to activate the last two parks yesterday instead of the default plan of Oct. 4, I thought there was a good chance I could similarly activate up to 3 bonus parks after checking into this night's hotel. These were not on my original plan at all, but I figured out operating locations that morning hoping I'd feel strong enough as I had the day before.

The site of Oil Creek SP I picked featured a replica wooden oil derrick at the entrance. After arriving at a gravel circle near the Creek, I pointed the back of the van toward the only opening out of this fairly deep valley. I was pleasantly surprised by having an open restroom, cell data, and good rate considering I started a little before 10am. 43 contacts in 33 minutes far exceeded my expectations. The next location at a visitors' center for the huge Allegheny National Forest was almost an hour way, taking me first through old towns dating back to the start of commercial oil drilling and processing in the 19th century. The Forest's visitors' center location was marred by a high noise floor, causing me to bare get 20 contacts in 18 minutes.

The confusingly named Cook Forest State Park was a half-hour drive to my originally-planned location, but with cell coverage coming in and out along the heavily wooded rolling forest road, I put a premium on finding a location with some cell signal. First finding the pool and playhouse location I had considered during planning in an area with 1 to 2 signal bars, I pulled in to that unoccupied oval parking lot and was able to have Internet connectivity. Although noise was lower here than at the previous location, I still only got 20 contacts in 20 minutes. Maybe it was the thick pine trees. The next two planned operating locations were 40 minutes away, literally across the street from each other. It looked like Clear Creek SP was carved out of the much larger Clear Creek SF. Alas, I did not activate the two parks in quick succession like I had thought I would.

Arriving first at the visitors' center for the SP, I was highly disappointed to find no cell

service. During the trip to the center, I passed through a forest tourist trap with cabins, eateries, and entertainment on both sides of the road where there was cell service. I thought if I could backtrack up the road, I might find an unplanned location within the border of the SF that was close enough to that “civilization” to have some of its cell signal. Indeed, I spotted a gated service trail on the SF side of the main road only 50-100 yards from the end of the SF property. After making a U-turn, I parked in front of the gate with a sign saying “do not block gate”: an activator reads such a sign as: “here is just enough land on park property for you to operate”. ♪ With big QSB, this site yielded an all-or-nothing high rate of contacts with a short pileup on 40m and 80m, totaling 27 Qs in just 15 minutes.

Still in front of the gate, I reviewed the paper map I took during my brief time at the closed State Park visitors’ center. I saw a ‘P’ indicating parking on the left side of the road a few hundred yards past the center. Driving back down the hill, past the center, and back up the other side of the valley, I didn’t see the marked parking till I was past a (sadly) clear sign marking the boundary between the State Park and State Forest. Sigh. Looking again at the map, the parking is marked in the Forest not the Park, I just misread it the first time. Back down the hill to the Park’s visitor center, I tried an Internet-free activation. How primitive! ♪ Really, I’ve been quite lucky in my activations this year to not encounter this, so I’ve been spoiled, especially since my style to do a bunch of activations as quickly as possible. Anyway, I started calling on my best band 40m around the same frequency as the last operation. The first two contacts seemed to be random dial-spinners (bless their hearts) but the contact was too light to have a useful conversation. The third contact was much stronger, but when I asked him to spot me, he said he didn’t know what I meant. I explained I was asking him to put me on the DX Cluster. He seemed to know what that was, but didn’t know how to do that. Sigh again. My fourth contact saved me; WIFYG is a regular park chaser and spotted me. A few moments later, I had mini pileup with 17 contacts total. Not wanting to go through that again and tired from all the anxious driving, I headed for the hotel; I regret the closer stations didn’t get a chance on 80m.

Again going back up the hill westward toward that forest tourist trap, I heard whining sounds and experienced a lack of power, especially in first steep mile or so. I continued hearing that noise when having to apply power, which I had started to hear a bit earlier in the day too, but the seeming struggle up the hills was new. The whining sounds abated later, and I arrived at my DuBois hotel (pronounced due-boys around there) about 40 minutes after leaving the final park. With the sound lessened and a modest rebound in personal energy, I posted on Facebook that I would try for the three bonus parks—but would cancel the trip if either the engine struggle came back or if I didn’t have cell signal at the parks. I was surprised and quite disappointed that the van complained

loudly as I climbed the fairly minor hill from the hotel intersection to the I80 highway. I turned around back to the hotel, disappointed I couldn't activate at least some of those three bonus parks.

The trip home Saturday Oct. 5 didn't have issues or significant whining sounds, despite the fairly hilly route eastward on I80 that causes tractor trailers to slow from 70 to 40mph up some hills. After charging the van's radio station batteries overnight at home, I brought it back to my mechanic again. As of Tuesday I haven't heard back from him. The biggest contest of year for me is this coming weekend in the PA QSO Party, and I will be a sad ham if I can't participate in that for the second year in a row.

Thanks again to everyone who virtually followed me around and tried to make contacts during my rove. Despite the possible van issue near the end, and rain that canceled a backpack activation, it was largely successful against plan, and should put me over 300 unique parks activated since 2016.

=== Stats ===

18 parks activated: VE-4883, VE-4854, VE-4856, VE-4861, VE-4863, VE-4881, VE-4878, K-1402, K-1350, K-1407, K-1381, K-0511, K-5465, K-1393, K-0619, K-1345, K-5464, K-1341

529 total contacts: 465 American, 64 Canadian, no DX; 198 unique callsigns
1,186 miles driven

\$962 out of pocket: \$553 hotels, \$235 fuel, \$82 food, \$54 tolls, \$38 fees

Nevada QSO Party

KN4Y - fixed - FL - 2 CW QSO

Went up and down the bands, worked a station when heard. Did not hear many Nevada stations on CW. But not skunked.

K4BAI - fixed - GA - 3 CW QSO

Worked all NV stations I heard. Thanks for the QSOs. 73, John, K4BAI.

W7RN - fixed - Storey County NV 36 CW 971 SSB

Most operators were casual or in other state QSO Parties. Very few knew the exchange was ARRL Sections. Really problematic on CW

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI 3 CW 9 SSB - 5 counties worked

Beat my 2018 Q total (9) with 12 this year! Was actively working the AZ QSO party, and since they're neighboring states, enjoyed getting a few NV Q's also. Seemed as if the NV stations, for the most part, were stronger than a majority of the AZ ones. Fun to play in this one, the AZ one and even the South Dakota one, if not participating in the PA QP. A lot of QP's on the same weekend. Thanks for the Q's

K7XC - fixed - NV 371 SSB

The NV QSO Party is a fun event as we Nevadans are the DX for a change, Great pileups on 20M and 40M! Improved my score from last year by 35k which is more than I hope in the sorta OK conditions we had. Was missing WV all weekend till the last 10 minutes when 2 WV stations showed up making my weekend. Missed NH otherwise I would have had WAS.

Arizona QSO Party

W7A - Bonus Station - fixed AZ - 494 CW 378 SSB

W7A was the Arizona QSO Party 2019 Bonus Station. CW operation was at K6WSC, and Phone operation was at W9FI. I hope everyone had fun in the AZQP.

Many thanks to Jim W9FI for handling the W7A Bonus Station SSB.

CU next year in the AZQP!

73, Bill K6WSC
Arizona QSO Party Chairman

KN4Y - fixed - FL - 15 CW 10 counties

Going up down the bands all day long working stations as heard. Did not get any late night operation.

K7L (op K6LL) - fixed - AZ - 362 CW 1474 SSB 175 digital

Solar flux was only 68, but A was 5 and K was 0, so there was a good opening to Europe on Sunday morning. It was a lot of fun. SSB was all automated except saying the other op's call sign, which made it pretty easy on the throat. 2062 QSO's in 21 hours kept things moving right along!

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI 40 CW 30 SSB

This contest probably should be limited to one day. The second day, I could only muster about 8 contacts with a lot of hours listening. Nearly everyone I heard on Sunday, I had already worked. This year I had 70Q's compared to last year with 71. A few less mults this year also. This was due to only having 3 contacts this year on 15M. Listened both Saturday and Sunday but 15 either wasn't open to AZ or next to no one was trying it. The Nevada and South Dakota QSO parties, along with the Oceania one helped keep my activity on the radio and not the football games. But, this was pretty fun if one decides not to participate in the PA QP. Thanks for all the Q's!

K4BAI- fixed - GA 21 CW 12 SSB

Band conditions not bad on 80, 40, and 20M. Very disappointing not to find an opening on 15M. This contest needs more participation by single op and low power stations. Great to work the strong high power stations on every band though. Thanks for all QSOs. 73, John, K4BAI

NASA Space News

NASA Spacecraft Launches on Mission to Explore Frontier of Space

NASA's Ionospheric Connection Explorer (ICON) spacecraft is in orbit for a first-of-its-kind mission to study a region of space where changes can disrupt communications and satellite orbits, and even increase radiation risks to astronauts. ICON was launched on October 11 after a Stargazer L-1011 aircraft from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida carried it to about 39,000 feet. Then, a Pegasus rocket fired the roughly refrigerator-sized ICON into space.

The spacecraft's solar panels successfully deployed, indicating it has power with all systems operating, NASA reported. ICON will start sending back its first science data in November.

ICON will study changes in the ionosphere, where, in addition to affecting radio signal propagation, space weather can prematurely decay spacecraft orbits and expose astronauts to radiation-borne health risks. "Historically, this critical region of near-Earth space has been difficult to observe," NASA explained. "Spacecraft can't travel through the low parts of the ionosphere and balloons can't travel high enough." ICON's orbit around Earth places it at a 27° inclination at an altitude of about 360 miles, from which it can observe the ionosphere around the equator.

Nicola Fox, Director for Heliophysics at NASA Headquarters in Washington, said that ICON will be the first mission to simultaneously track what's happening in Earth's upper atmosphere and in space to see how the two interact, causing the kinds of changes that can disrupt radio communication. ICON will employ four instruments to explore the connections between the neutral atmosphere and the electrically charged ionosphere. Three of these rely on the phenomenon called airglow, which is created by a process similar to that which causes aurora -- gas is excited by radiation from the sun and emits light. By way of airglow, ICON can observe how particles throughout the upper atmosphere are moving. ICON's fourth instrument provides direct measurements of the ionosphere around it.

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) veteran Will Marchant, KW4WZ (ex-KC6ROL), is part of the ICON team.

Source: ARRL Weekly Newsletter, ARRL, Newington CT 07661

South Dakota QSO Party

K4BAI - fixed - GA - 3 CW 3 SSB 4 mults

Worked every SD station I could hear. Still need a lot of counties in SD. Heard a Rover station once working another SD station, but never heard the rover CQ and he didn't answer my CQs. Thanks for the QSOs.

Need in SD all time: Aurora, Bennett, Brule, Dewey, Fall River, Haakon, Hanson, Hutchinson, Hyde, Jerauld, Marshall.

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI - 4 CW 1 SSB

Just heard a few SD stations (mainly N0SNN on 3 bands)

N0SNN (ops K7BG and WD0T) 305 CW - Hughes County

Matt decided to throw together a quick operation, so I jumped in after having fun helping set up.. It was pretty casual, CW only, LP, Multi-op, 1 radio, an OCF down low, and a vertical on the camper..

We just had fun, so it was totally worth it! Thanks for all the Q's and mults, congrats to Nick at W0SD for a great score!

73 God Bless, Todd WD0T for the N0SNN team at K7BG.

K0AP - fixed - KS - 13 SSB

Thanks to K0HW's mobile operation... I worked 9 new SD counties.

N7MZW - fixed - WY - 13 SSB QSO

I worked K0HW/mobile in the counties of:

UNION,LINCOLN,CLAY,TURNER,YANKTON,HAMLIN,BROOKINS, and Deuel.He had a 5/9,Q5 mobile signal,and comprised 8 of my total 13 South Dakota counties in this not so busy contest. Sad that other S.D. stations could not find the time to be as intrepid!

73, November Seven Many Zebras Walking-Cheyenne,WY.

KN4Y - fixed - FL - 1 CW QSO

Listened and heard only one South Dakota station on CW. Well, no be skunked.

PA QSO Party

K8MR mobile - 638 CW 27 SSB

A nice Saturday run around my home state - I was born and raised in Sharon/Hermitage in Mercer county, before heading off to college in Ohio.

As noted by others, propagation was less than stellar, as expected at this part of the sunspot cycle. Fortunately 80 meters worked, even during midday. Thanks to those who helped keep the mobile window at 3535 clear. I had 80 meter QSOs from every county. We had a respectable 110 QSOs in the first two hours, but only 55 in the next two. The score was down from 173K last year, nearly all the difference being on 40 meters.

Best QSO: an eyeball QSO with Pete, K0BAK, in Somerset county. This was not the first time I've met Pete for a random eyeball QSO. A few years ago in the New York QSO Party, we worked each other at opposite ends of a parking lot in Queens before realizing where we were both were, and then meeting up in person.

Big thanks to Gary, AF8A, who did 100% of the contest driving while I did 95% of the operating, allowing Gary a few chances at the radio during bathroom breaks and the like.

73 - Jim K8MR

K0BAK/rover - 592 SSB

Activated CMB, BLA, BED, FUL, HUN, FRA, MIF, JUN, PER, DAU.

Was so burned out by pileups, I had to stop a few hours earlier than planned. A good problem to have. Improved from last outing in 2017 by a factor of 3, amazing. Very gratifying since I had an equipment failure at the very start of last year's contest, preventing me from participating at all after driving almost four hours to the first location. Had a great time this year.

KE2D/rover 126 CW 30 SSB

My score includes 2500 points for my 5 county rover.

I tried for 6 counties but I got to Lehigh too late.

I made 3 QSOs in Lehigh before it ended but lost track of time.

I had stations answering my CQs right away and actually made 4 more just over the deadline but I did not include them in my log. I didn't realize 2200 had passed till someone sent OVER a couple of times and then I looked at the clock. Next time I'll shave a few minutes off something else and get there a little earlier.

KE3EEO portable (KA3EEO, N3RN ops) 237 CW 273 SSB

We got our county sweep! First since 2014. All in all, not bad for a single wire antenna.

Our goal was for no one to say they missed their sweep because of Bradford county.

It was a great weekend to be camping.

N3VZ portable - 651 CW 849 SSB

N3VZ was low power portable operations from Flint Hill and Wimmer roads near Coopersburg, Pa. Equipment did well with only minor challenges.

Swept the 67 counties. Missed mults: NNY/VI/PR/AK/AB/NT/SK

Ops: Stepansky brothers KC3WX/KQ3F/N3VZ

N2CU/mobile 502 CW 227 SSB

Fun time, even though conditions were really bad on Sunday. I activated 10 counties in total; some of them I ran twice. Bonus points in each for getting >10 QSOs, although my start in ERI was slow with only 31. Sunday in ELK, nobody was interested in working me (26 QSOs). My usual pileup in CRN didn't materialize because another station (or two?) activated it before me. My two best counties were FOR (163) and WAR (147) followed by VEN (76), CRN (70), CLA (66), CRA (64), POT (44), JEF(42), ERI (31) and ELK (26). If you missed any of those counties you weren't looking for me! I spent at least an hour in each, CW and SSB, 80-20m. I missed CLI, CMB, CRN, FOR, INN, WAR and WYO.

The mobile window is nice (but too wide) and for the most part observed. However, one home station comes to mind that worked me, moved up maybe 100 Hz (still in the window) and began running. I had to QSY from my spotted frequency. SSB? Couldn't find a place on 75m to call CQ between all the power houses. 80/75m was definitely the place to be for PA stations; not so much for the rest of the country. Only worked 76 QSOs on 20m, although I gave it an effort. Finally worked bonus station K3SMT at 21:41 on 75m while I was in POT. Can't believe I didn't get them anywhere before, but I guess they were running all the time and didn't S&P. I had enough of the bad conditions and pulled the plug to head home (2 hour drive). Did not activate MCK, which was on my list.

A BIG thank you to the double-digit QSO leaders: NS2N 27, OM2VL 17, AA3B 12, AA3LX and WN4AFP 11. Many thanks to all that took the time to look for mobiles and who gave me at least one QSO.

73, Tom N2CU

(note de N4CD - 90% of contacts on 40 and 80m)

K0BAK/R rove report

[This was written to describe my rove in the PA QSO Party, but includes POTA information and stats too.]

The PA QP was my first-ever mobile contest in 2014, having read about mobiles in this QP and being attracted by the idea of driving around Pennsylvania counties during the contest. I loved it that first time and have since spent significant effort participating mobile in QSO Parties and VHF contests, and in trying to improve my station and operating practices.

I enjoy mobile contesting so much that I've made it the focus of my retirement activities since leaving work in 2017. I've been slowly converting an old TV station van (a.k.a. ENG truck) to ham radio use. With a temporary radio setup I first tried to use it in the PA QP last year. After outfitting and testing the station, then driving 4 hours to my first activation spot in Cambria, my screwdriver antenna cable failed so I didn't get even one contact. You can bet I have a spare cable and a better set of field tools now!

Having had that failure last year, I was determined to have a good outing this year. In the year between, I "finished" the HF capabilities in the van so I now had a better radio, PC, and power system ... all mounted securely in the van's built-in racks. Also I wanted to make better use of the Internet, so I now have a cell signal booster with external antenna as well as a 4k monitor, the better to spot myself and find rare multipliers. Arriving Saturday at the same 2700' Cambria location as last year, I was relieved that my screwdriver was operable this time, and made a couple warm-up contacts before the contest started. Being able to spot myself easily helped to generate a decent pileup on 40m and 80m, with 68 contacts in an hour. If I had a bit more time in my schedule, I probably could have made a dozen or so more, though I didn't knowingly leave anyone hanging.

My next operating spot in Blair that I've been using for 4 years now is only a few minutes down the mountain. However, I found higher noise than I remembered in previous years and no reliable cell service, so next year I will go somewhere else. Few stations found my CQ, and I made most of my contacts S&P. Cutting my losses after getting 17 contacts, I decided to get a little ahead in my schedule to get to my next location in Somerset.

In other years my next operating location would be on top of Blue Knob State Park in Bedford County, perhaps the highest open point in PA you can easily drive to ... a favorite spot of mine for HF and especially VHF contests. But this year I wanted to also activate new-to-me sites in the Parks On The Air program (POTA), so I drove through Blue Knob then past my usual SOM operating location on the Eastern Continental Divide, downhill to a decently open parking lot for the Gallitzin State Forest. There was no cell service here as well, so I had a pretty slow start as expected. Luckily one of my

fellow activators in POTA found me, and I suspect VE2GT's spots in multiple online communities got me off to the races on 40m with 56 contacts in 36 minutes. One of those contacts was another PA QP mobile, multiop K8MR/M. He asked me on-air where I was parked, and eventually showed up to my location just after I started calling CQ on 80m. I had also run into him two years ago in the NY QP while he was operating an impressively large antenna in a Bronx beach parking lot (bet you didn't know the Bronx has a huge beach park), so it was fun to have a reunion of sorts. We talked about our respective stations and he took some pictures of the three of us, before we went our separate ways to continue in the contest.

My Bedford location was at another POTA site, Shawnee State Park, a long 45 minutes down the road. This is mostly a camping park, but I set up at a decently open gravel parking lot just before the gate of the camping area. Arriving at 4pm, 40m was just starting to get even longer and the typical madhouse at the start of the contest was dying down. I could spot myself here, and netted a good rate of 30 contacts on 40m in just 22 minutes, including first mults to FL, MI, and WI. Soon after spotting myself on 80m, I got an impressive pileup to log 52 contacts in just 32 minutes. As usual with big pileups, when it was over, it was over, and I started driving the longest leg of my rove.

The next planned location was only a few minutes from my hotel at the truck stop town of Breezewood, so I decided to check into the hotel first. Unfortunately I arrived just after a half-bus dropped off its load of autumn tourists, so it took some time to get checked in. After dropping my bag in the room, I went right back out to the van. This next operating location in sprawling Buchanan State Forest was chosen when I was looking for new POTA sites to activate. I had inadvertently operated in Fulton County from a high point in this section of the Forest before, but that location would have been a more difficult drive down narrow dirt roads with the TV van. Instead I operated just off famous Route 30 within the Forest borders, close to a 2200' peak. I was uncomfortably close to the main road with traffic buzzing by from dusk to dark; a little inattention from one of the frequent tractor trailer trucks would have them go straight into me instead of following the curve of the road. I spent my standard hour there on 80m, about half the time CQing with a good rate, and the other half S&P since I had done little of that so far. I was happy to hear from Ed AB3AH, a fellow PA QP enthusiast from my club who was again this year operating a FUL/FRA county line station fairly nearby at another park. 74 contacts in an hour including an inefficient S&P session was a satisfactory rate.

In the previous few years I pulled over on Route 522 in a flat-ish area of Huntington a few miles north of the border. I never liked the past HUN locations because they were either just off the fast road at night or on gravel lots that were probably private property. This year I noticed that a safe-looking breakdown area on the Pennsylvania Turnpike

was available in Huntington on the eastbound side approaching the Tuscarora Mountain Tunnel, which was on the way to my planned location in Franklin. Doubling back westward from my Fulton operating location down the mountain to Breezewood to get on the Turnpike was inefficient distance-wise, but safer and easier than taking the winding mountain roads at night to the next entrance east. The breakdown area was about 10 yards away from the travel lane so I felt pretty safe there; I parked near the end of the lane to give plenty of room behind me if another vehicle wanted to use it, and setup my traffic cones well behind me. I had a good rate on 80m here too, though the pileup and S&P was shorter for 34 contacts in 22 minutes with 80m getting longer as expected after sunset.

The Franklin operating location was at an ice cream stand close to the next exit of the Turnpike past the Tunnel. Last year I pulled into the shop just as they were closing and got permission to operate there, but this year I arrived well after closing time a few minutes after 9pm but still decided to operate. I don't remember having a high noise floor there last year, but it was certainly noisy this year so I'll have to find another FRA location next year. Expecting a similar level of success at this stop on 80m as I had had the rest of the day, I was surprised and disappointed that 80m was practically shut down for me. The noise floor certainly didn't help, but I expected a lot more stations to get through to my spotted CQ. Tired and well behind schedule, I gave up after 10 minutes of calling and only getting AB3AH again (thanks Ed). Searching 80m I could only contact one station, but it was my first contact with SD so at least I got a new and distant multiplier, also indicating 80m was quite long now. I decided to S&P on 40m hoping for some more distant stations. 40m was transcontinental, getting two in AZ in their own QSO party and four in Europe, including the PA QP's friend László Végh OM2VL in Slovakia. After getting the 10 contacts I needed for 500 activation bonus points, I shut down and headed west on the Turnpike toward my hotel in Breezewood.

My van's ham station is powered by two large AGM batteries, and includes a charging circuit I can engage to automatically connect the station batteries to the vehicle voltage only when the van is running and powered from the van's alternator. I was disappointed during the day that the station batteries didn't seem to be recharging as well as they had on other roves. (After getting home, it appears the reason is that my idle station equipment and desktop-class PC was taking roughly the same current as the station batteries would have taken recharging from the alternator, so I have to be more diligent to turn off the station on longer legs of my roves.) I brought with me a small light quiet AC generator to run overnight at the hotel. I stopped at a Turnpike service plaza to fill the generator's tiny tank (and to top off the van's tank), then continued to the hotel where I set up the generator to run during the night till its fuel was exhausted, giving my station batteries a good but not full bulk charge.

As is my pattern, I got back on the road Sunday 7:30am for the 1.5-hour trip to Mifflin after clearing light ice from the van's windshield. It was a gorgeous crisp morning in the mountains of south central Pennsylvania, with leaves turning colors and morning mist hugging the valleys like a blanket. In previous years I had operated from the family minivan at a high location in MIF, but getting to that location would take more time in the heavy van, and I was getting wiser about not making such an effort to get to high locations for HF as I had done earlier in my ham "career". My new Mifflin location this year was a tiny gravel parking spot just off the county's main road through Mifflin's most populated valley. When I arrived I found a sketchy RV parked there with a "for sale" sign, but it was not clear if anyone was occupying it. I had just enough room to pull in nose-to-nose, and I operated there hoping an armed paranoid wouldn't pop out of the RV. The tight location meant my whip was uncomfortably close to high voltage electric utility lines overhead, though it didn't seem possible for the whip to be pushed into them no matter the wind. Starting on 40m, I was very pleased to get a good pileup almost from the start of the Sunday 9am portion of the contest. Responding stations were medium to long distance, including first multipliers from CO, NM, and MT. I was happy to receive a number of calls from POTA regulars too, even though I wasn't operating from a park. After a little S&P on 80m looking for new mults, another pileup was generated when I switched to calling CQ and spotting myself, with most contacts made in-state but a few from medium-distant states. It was gratifying to make 82 contacts here in 75 minutes, after the disappointment in Franklin the previous night and having been disappointed at slow Sunday starts in past years.

Juniata is usually my most popular activation since there isn't a fixed PA QP station here AFAIK. I keep changing locations in this county, and this year I was headed to a township park close to the Juniata-river-hugging highway that connects Penn State main campus to Harrisburg. The park operating location seems so favorable on the map I'm not sure why I didn't find it before. There were no significant downsides to that location, and the availability of a civilized comfort station was a bonus, so I think this will be a permanent part of my standard rove plan in the future. There was moderate RF noise, but nothing out of the ordinary this close to commercial areas. The pileup here on 80m was much smaller than in MIF, but still pretty good. 40m was much less successful but far from a bust. 52 contacts in about 40 minutes is a good 2-band rate, but I'm guessing I generated less interest here because another station activated JUN about an hour before (with whom I also made contact from MIF).

Little Buffalo State Park in Perry County isn't too far from the border so taking a little extra time to activate a POTA site at the same time as activating PER makes as much sense this year as it did the first time in 2017. More vehicles were using the boat launch

parking lot than I remember the previous year, but I still found a good open area to operate pointing the van in a favorable direction perpendicular to the lot markings. A boost from POTA park chasers and a lack of a strong PER activation up to that point in the contest helped me to get my third-best QSO count of 79.

The next location in Dauphin is also in a POTA site from 2017, Boyd Big Tree Preserve. DAU is well represented by fixed PA QP participants, so I wasn't going to get multiplier-seekers here. POTA chasers as always were reliable contacts, as well as getting some in-state point-seekers on 80m. Still I had a pileup here albeit shorter than my earlier Sunday activations; 36 contacts in just 20 minutes is an excellent overall rate. When the contacts dried up, I just sat in the chair unable to do the next logical move to S&P a bit before packing up. I was mentally burned out, and after a few minutes unable to think, I decided to end the contest about 3 hours early and use whatever brain power I had left for the 100-mile drive home. My plan called for quick stops at three counties along the way, mostly to get 10 contacts for the activation bonuses, but I had enough points now that those additional points were not going to make nearly the percentage impact on my overall score as they had made in much less successful past outings. Also in other years I might have considered running down to Adams County that was still needed by many QPers working for the PA county sweep, but I was too burned out. I made it home without incident, exhausted though very happy with my highest score yet by a wide margin.

== Stats ==

-- 11 PA QP counties activated: CMB, BLA, SOM, BED, FUL, HUN, FRA, MIF, JUN, PER, DAU

-- 5 POTA sites activated: K-5469, K-1420, K-5463, K-1376, K-4356

-- 603 miles driven

-- \$372 spent out-of-pocket: \$174 hotel, \$153 fuel, \$45 tolls

-- 592 contacts: 80m 350, 40m 242, all SSB; 358 unique callsigns; 331 contacts in POTA sites

-- 108 mults: 59 counties, 49 sections + DX

== Top 10 Stations (* frequent POTA chasers) ==

Special thanks to all POTA chasers who made an effort to contact me outside of parks, especially the starred chasers below:

-- 9 contacts each: W8ZST*, KA3E*, AB1A

-- 7 each: VE3ZN*, W3ON

-- 6 each: NE1D*, WB9OWN*, K3HCR, W9QL, WA3HAE

N3WD - mobile - 104 SSB

Interesting time do all operational functions including driving. As a single op it definitely takes away a lot from operating time driving from county to county. Anyway I was able to activate York, Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lebanon, Schuylkill, Lancaster, and made a couple from Chester. At least more people are getting the fact that mobiles may not be dupes. I only got two this year that insisted I was a dupe even know I was in a different county, There lost not mine. I later heard that same station say they needed Adams. All I can say you had the chance to work Adam but hey to you I was a dupe. I also had one person insist I was in Maryland. All I can say to that person was I live in MD BUT mobile means I move around and last time I checked there was not a wall at the Mason Dixon line.

(note de N4CD- never went to 20M)

NS2N - fixed - NY 135 CW 108 SSB

thanks for a fun time PAers ... see ya next week for NYQP.

Missed 3.5 hrs due to "hitting the wall" and visitors. 28 Qs with N2CU
Missed JEF and LYC for the sweep. Nil on 10 or 6 despite spots for same.

Paul NS2N

K4BAI - fixed - GA 109 CW 41 SSB

20M was mostly too long for QSOs from GA to PA except for some high power stations which were worked backscatter. 40, 80, and 160M were pretty good. Thanks for all QSOs. 73, John, K4BAI.

WN4AFP - fixed - SC 116 CW 78 SSB

My best low power score in the PAQP! I missed the sweep by five counties... ARM, ELK, GRE, JUA AND LAC. Special thanks to the mobile ops who kept us going. 73s

Dave WN4AFP

Mobile Activity this Month

K0MAF spotted leaving MO, heading down to AR. Later was in SC.

N9AC spotted leaving IL headed to FL running the counties along the way on a multi-day trip

WY0A spotted in NE on a long trip – to CO, WY, MT, ID, back around through WY and to KS and headed home.

KB6UF headed east from LA through MS and AL, lots of TN,

K0DEQ headed east and spotted running counties in IN

N9JF headed out from IL, into SD and points north. Had some 20m antenna issues but was busy on 30 and 40m.

NF0N noted in headed into KS and back

K8ZZ headed south to OK and LA – running much of that state – then headed back home through AR.

NU0Q ran counties in IA - also participated in the IL QSO Party

K0FG spotted down in AR

K3IMC ran a bunch of counties in GA for several days.

AI5P mobile was out in CO

New York QSO Party

K0BAK – rover - 308 SSB QSO

K0BAK New York City Oct. 19 rove report

I activated the five counties of New York City as a mobile station in the New York State QSO Party on October 19. My operating locations for the last three of those counties were in the same sprawling POTA park, K-0680 Gateway National Recreation Area. Thank you to everyone who contacted me or tried to.

My first location in Manhattan (New York County) is the highest location you can drive to on the island, at The Cloisters in the Upper West Side. Getting here relatively early, not long after 9am, is the key to finding a favorable parking spot overlooking the Hudson River and pointing the best signal northward toward the rest of the state.



As usual in this contest, as opposed to bigger QPs like PA and VA, it was a slow start. Noise is always high as you'd expect in Manhattan, but at least it's not overwhelming. After getting only 23 contacts in 45 minutes, I packed up for my slow cross-town drive on surface streets to cross the East River and merge onto the infamous Cross Bronx Expressway.

I have tried a couple locations in the Bronx in past contests, and now would try yet another one. Ferry Point Park at the foot of the Bronx side of the Whitestone Bridge has a fairly large potholed gravel parking lot. I was pleasantly surprised at the fairly low RF noise here, and the location is on the way to the rest of my operating locations on the other side of the Whitestone, so I think I've finally found a permanent location for future Bronx County activations. The pace picked up here too, getting 49 contacts in an hour about evenly split between 40m and 80m.



Bronx at Floyd Bennett Field

Doubling back a bit to cross over the highway and get back onto the Whitestone Bridge took more time than expected because of lights and traffic. This leg of the rove to the next operating location is longest in terms of time; crossing most of Long Island north to south on the Van Wyck “Expressway” is **always** slow due to traffic and construction. However, I could revel in nostalgia, seeing the Unisphere along the way and remembering my family trips as a kid from our home near New Haven to the New York World’s Fair (’64-’65) and to see the NY Mets play in Shea Stadium (R.I.P.). Back then, crossing the Whitestone Bridge meant we were getting close to the fun. At the end of the southward trip I had to turn westward. The travel time to famous Flatbush Avenue was about three times faster on the Belt Parkway, which I entered despite the “Passenger Cars Only” signs. I’m not a total rebel though, because I had researched the actual restrictions and having only 4 wheels and not being a commercial vehicle seemed to qualify me. I passed a NY City Police car in the median, so I must have been OK. I just had to look out for low bridges, which were almost all over 12 feet except for one pedestrian arch where I had to be sure to take the center lane for clearance for my 9’-10” van; watching out for bridge heights kept me alert.

Flatbush Avenue brought me to Floyd Bennett Field, New York’s first major commercial and military airport, and now a multiuse unit of the National Park Service’s Gateway

National Recreation Area in Brooklyn (Kings County). I parked in the same small lot I used to activate it for NPOTA in my 2016 NY QP rove. Noise on 20m then 40m was acceptable, netting a good rate of 41 Qs in just 26 minutes roughly equal between the two bands. 80m noise made it unusable though, but luckily unlike the PA QP only a week before, 80m was not a key band this week.

Crossing over Jamaica Bay on the Marine Parkway drawbridge (and hitting yet another toll), it was only a 10 minute trip to another site of Gateway NRA but this one was in Queens. Jacob Riis Park is an Atlantic Ocean beach park in Rockaway with a humongous parking lot that of course was almost unoccupied on this chilly day. Not surprisingly I had similar results here as the last park with 38 contacts in 30 minutes, but only on 40m. At this point I was getting a bit tired and anxious to get across to Staten Island before it gets dark and the traffic builds. Backtracking to the Belt Parkway, the traffic was congested but moving OK so it was a more pleasant trip to the Verrazzano Bridge than when I crossed in the dark in 2016. Crossing this bridge reminded me of my 2015 crossing by bicycle at 2-3 mph on the half-mile upslope.

A long straight beach and boardwalk runs southwest almost from the Bridge, which is also a unit of Gateway NRA on Staten Island (Richmond County). Several public NPS parking lots serve these beaches. One of these lots was the first stop in my first NPOTA rove on 1/3/16. This year I had decided on a particular reconstructed lot with demolished buildings on the inland side, hoping it would marginally improve RF noise. I was not disappointed, finding surprisingly good noise levels even on 80m. Having gotten across the last NYC traffic choke point, I was more relaxed about taking my time at this location and trying to increase my QSO count as well as hoping for a few more multipliers. I started on 40m, which apparently was now working well both in-state and at medium distances, because I had perhaps my longest sustained pileup in the POTA era, 105 contacts in just 68 minutes. 80m was not quite as productive, but still had a good rate of 24 Qs in just 20 minutes. Lastly, I had a good run also on 20m for the first time in a while, gaining distant multipliers like Idaho, Arizona, and Manitoba; and also P2P contacts with Iowa.



Richmond County NY (Staten Island)

My drive home was expensive but problem-free. I was very tired but thrilled for the second week in a row with having a score that far exceeded my best previous contest effort. Since everyone is still saying the bands were bad, and the rest of my station is basically the same, I can only give credit to the biggest change ... using a Flex 6500 instead of my Flex 3000. They're both excellent SDR radios, but I can't explain my recent contest improvements any other way. Never thought a replacement radio could have such an impact, especially what I thought was a somewhat lateral move within the Flex line from the previous generation to the current FPGA models. Thanks to a fellow club member who sold it to me for a generous price, I wouldn't have bought it new.

P.S. Logs were sent to my POTA coordinator. I will upload to LotW later both with and without the “/M” I had to use in the contest, as is my normal practice in these cases.

== Stats ==

- One park activated, K-0680, in three different NYC counties
- Five NY counties activated: NEW, BRX, KIN, QUE, RIC
- \$120 estimated out-of-pocket cost, inflated by a high toll bill
- 297 miles driven
- 311 contacts overall in the contest
- 239 contacts from the POTA park

== Park-to-Park ==

I spent a little time trying to contact spotted parks before calling CQ on each band at

each location, and park activators found me too, so I felt I had a higher percentage of P2P contacts than usual when my main focus is a contest.

N2ZN mobile 170 CW QSO

Very brief mobile operation. Set up station that morning and left around 1700z for the first county. Wrapped up by 2300z, so no big effort.

Activated ORL, GEN, WYO, LIV, and MON. Fortunately, I live fairly close to a bunch of county lines, so it worked out fairly well.

Have not done any maintenance or upgrades on the mobile station in 5 years, and it shows. Had RF problems on 40 with one antenna, and ended up having to switch to a much less efficient antenna for 40.

20 was better than expected. Conditions seemed OK for the most part.

Thanks to all who called, and hope I was able to provide a new multiplier for some.

73, Ken N2ZN

KX2NY - portable in Delaware NY 369 CW 254 SSB

This was a totally portable operation from the QTH of NG2D's brother-in-law (a non ham) Our goal was to provide rare Delaware Co. to lots of stations, I think we succeeded. Equipment: 2 IC-7610 transceivers, 2 multiband dipoles up in the trees about 40 ft. Thanks to all for the Q's, 73, Bob, Bob and Bill.

N2CU mobile - 394 CW 167 SSB

I had a great time operating mobile two weekends in a row (PA and NY) but conditions were definitely better this time. However, NYers need to take a lesson from PA and check 80m during the day for in-state stations. 40m was the money band until dusk.

I ran (?) through six counties but thought I could do more. Probably spent too much time milking 80m during the daylight hours and driving between operating spots.

QSO leader board: NS2N (31), OM2VL (20) and K3WJV (10). I had 3 QSOs with OM2VL on 80m! Thanks Laci, you're a machine!

Thanks to all who participated in our party. It was very much appreciated.

K3/100, KA8KIP screwdriver, 40m hamstick on roof, N1MM+.

73, Tom N2CU

WB8WKQ - fixed - MI 136 CW QSO

It was a very fun contest. I always try to compare scores from previous years, and I did beat my 2018 score by about 20% which I'm very happy about. My total Q's were very close (136 this year compared to 131 last year). But, the big change was 43 mults this year compared to only 35 last year. Either there was more counties activated on CW, or I was just luckier with the mobiles. I also spent more time calling "CQ NY" and picking up mults that I didn't get by S&P. Thanks to the mobiles including KV2X, WJ2O, N2CU, N2ZN. This is, and has been, a "first class" QSO party. Thanks to all involved.

NS2N - fixed - NY - 358 CW 168 SSB

hi bands didn't pan out but it seemed like they should have

Thanks to all who stopped by for a QSO ... reconnected with some old friends bettered last years score by 13k

IC-7610 KPA500 3el stepper 45ft 40invv 45ft 80 full sloper west apex 60ft
N1MM+

N4ARO - fixed TN - 70 CW 34 SSB

No recommended frequencies were listed in the rules which is an oversight that should be corrected. Recommended frequencies are especially helpful for SSB. Thanks to only mobile worked N2CU/M with 7 counties worked. Heard several counties that I needed but the operators were only calling other NY stations and not responding to calls from out of state ! I have seen this behavior in other state contests and wonder why they don't understand everyone in the world is wanting to work them. Strange. Enjoyed the

contest.

Interesting Olde Olde Items

From Schulman Auctions this Month – items up for bid

IF you were a VHF'er in the 1930s, you'd be on the five meter band likely using a super regenerative receiver and a modulated oscillator. This unit, a rather rare one, showed up for bid on an auction site this month.



It has 7 tubes in it – two 6A6 or 53, a 78, two 76, and a 45 or 2A3 audio power tube. Tunes from 56 to 60 MHz. The Radio Transceiver Laboratories TR-6A6 De-Luxe is a transceiver, operating on the 5 and 10 meter bands on phone or CW. Output is 10 watts. It uses plug-in coils for bands. External power supply delivering 300 volts at 200 ma, 6.3 volts at 3.4 amps or 2.5 volts at 10.75 amps is needed. Back then it sold for \$40, a considerable sum. 1935 vintage.



On the Road with N4CD II

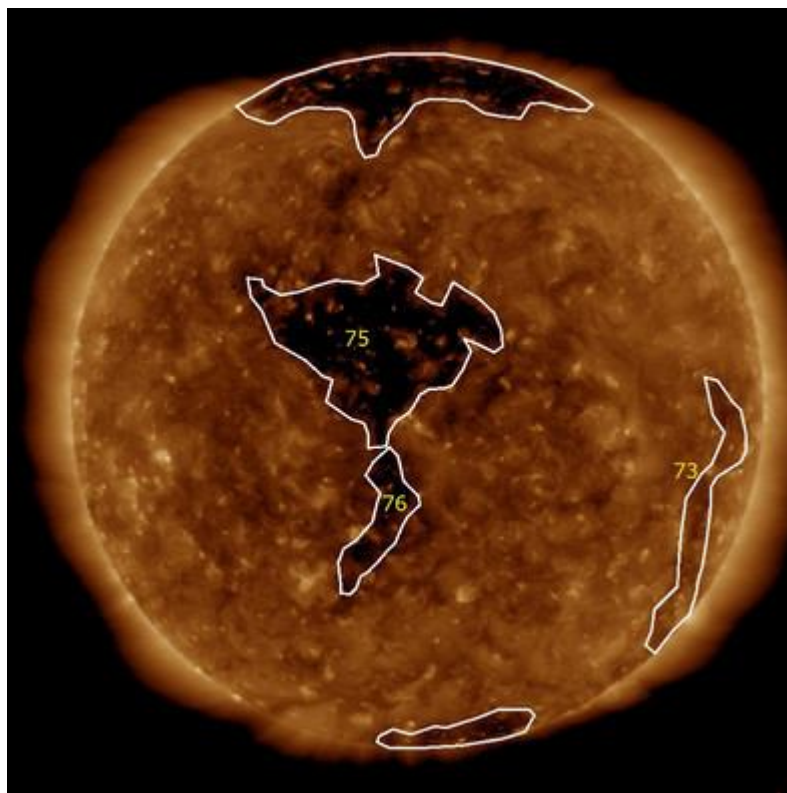
The time had come for another short road trip. The trusty Malibu had the oil changed and then the 'check engine' light came on from the way home from the dealer. Oops....well, at 107K miles the car needed an oxygen sensor. I think the car has several of these to keep the tail pipe emissions down. \$250 to fix. Soon, I'll need two new rear tires soon – within 5K miles. Those miles driven catch up with you eventually!

The Lake Texoma Hamfest, now in Ardmore, OK, was coming up with another opportunity to sell the two W0RRY (SK) radios. Both had problems so we'd see how it goes. This is a fairly small hamfest located a two hour drive north of Dallas TX up I-35. I went the long way.

The weather had been 'not so great' in TX. The last weekend saw 5 tornadoes come across the populated Dallas area and cause an estimated 2 billion dollars in damage. Several hundred homes wiped out or severely damaged by the EF-3 one that also got six schools. The weather forecast for the weekend was rain on Friday, rain on Saturday

and temps down to the 40s and not much above 50 on Friday. The hamfest starts Friday evening at 5pm-10pm, and then again on Saturday from 7am to 1pm. Several hundred show up, but like many hamfests, attendance seems to be declining. You can set up after noon on Friday if you are selling and a lot of goodies change hands among sellers before the flea market ever opens to the public.

The band conditions were horrible! On the sun, two giant coronal holes had ejections of charged particles (Solar wind increases) that were scheduled to hit the Earth on Friday 10/25 and did. A index went up to 18 and the K index spiked up to 5, then settled at 3. Near record low SFI of 65 was what we had to deal with.



Coronal Hole 75 and 76

So I figured I could run a few parks and take the long way to the hamfest and pull out at least 10 QSOs under the current conditions. I put the antenna on the car in the rain at 10am Friday and set out heading north on US75 up toward Bryan County OK. On the way, I took a 5 mile detour to Eisenhower State Park. KFF-3005 in Grayson County – not rare.

Whoa...I had to work to get a bunch of contacts. K3IMC was mobile in GA and could work him. N9JF was spotted in ND, but zero copy – heard one or two calling him. He had some rig problems on 20M. KB6UF was in northern LA and I should have heard him on 40M but NIL copy. Worked what I could with county hunters and park chasers and headed on. This is not a rare park as it has 24 'activations' and 800 QSOs including several visits from N4CD. So it was off to the next – Lake Texoma State Park in OK.

It was a steady light rain. I headed west on US-70 and pulled into an EZ-Mart to grab some lunch. Came out and there was a big oil tanker truck now blocking part of the driveway so I carefully pulled around to the west exit. Puddles everywhere and I hit one had a hidden several inch drop off. Came out of the drop off and got about 200 feet before the car screamed 'low tire pressure'. Dang.....got out and looked and front left tire was flatter than a pancake. In the side wall was a gash. Tire gone and it had about 40,000 more life to it. Luckily, the Malibu is one of a few with an actual spare tire. Paid \$300 extra when I bought it to get a donut tire, jack and handle when I bought it. Otherwise, they give you a 'fix a flat' can and compressor which might work for a nail puncture but is useless for a gashed sidewall.

Called AAA and they got there in about 25 minutes, changed the tire, and I was underway. Of course, the trunk was full of stuff, so it all had to come out, get put in the back and front seat area so I could get to the spare at the bottom of the trunk. Used my new little tire inflator to pump it up to 60 PSI again – it was down a bit – while waiting for the tow truck in the rain. No fun! Put the ruined tire in the trunk.

I had called around for a tire replacement place as I don't like running on the donut (alleged good for up to 3000 miles total at max speed of 50 mph) – especially in the rain and where the speed limits are 60-65, 70 or even 75 mph on TX Interstates. So it was off to a local Discount Tire and Battery Store in Durant – five miles backtrack. The only tire they had for my car was a 65,000 mile rated Nexen (a 215 60 16 tire). \$120. So I bought it and they installed it in 40 minutes. Then I was underway again several hours behind schedule. It could have been a lot worse.

If you don't have a spare in a situation like this, they haul your car into town on a flat bed truck. If every tire store is closed or it's a Sunday, there you sit. And sit. And sit till Monday! Two days in a motel twiddling your thumbs.

Next up was Lake Texoma State Park – KFF-2791 in Marshall County OK – a bit more rare but I'd been there several times. It had 21 prior activations and over 900 QSOs from there so again not so rare. Had to work at it to get my 10+ QSOs. I'd hate to be in new places needing 44Q for a first time visit to a park! Ouch! Well, that's part of the

reason I'm not zipping here and there. Got my contacts and moved on. It was also a Friday and there's more activity on weekends.

I headed west, cutting one planned park from the trip and made a short visit to Lake Murray State Park, KFF-2790 in Carter County. Again, had to work at it to just get over 10. This park has only 7 prior activations and 200 QSOs so you'd think there would be more activity. Probably would be if people could hear things! At one point, W0GXQ, who usually has a decent signal, was barely above the noise. K7SEN was weak! Band conditions!

Time to head to the Super 8 in Ardmore. Bargain rate of \$47 a night plus 8 bucks tax. Checked in and drove the mile to the convention center where the hamfest is held. Unloaded the car, parked it and went inside to set up (and browse around for other goodies).

I had W0RRY's TS-940-S that had issues. Also had his IC-736 that had a broken dial plastic display strip, a missing on/off switch (wired on), and a meter that sat at half scale. His problem radios he didn't sell off before that so Mary, his XYL, asked me to sell if possible. Also a Microwave Modules 2M transverter (10M in, 10W out at 144, and 144 RX in, 28 Mhz out to receiver). Excellent in the 1960s for getting on 2m with your HF rigs – but many now come with 2M in them (Mobile rigs) and it's days are over. But I'd put a \$10 price on it and see if any nibbles. I had a couple other items to sell as well. Not much happened Friday evening. Maybe 50-60 people showed up after 5pm. Weather didn't help with rain and barely 50F temps. Most come on Saturday and there are forums and programs then, too.

Packed up about 6pm – and headed to the Sirloin Stockade nearby and ate heartily. It had been a rough day.

Saturday October 26

Nice breakfast at this Super 8, too. Eggs, sausage, oatmeal and cereal, coffee, juice, yogurt, pastries.....there at 6:15 am.

Totally dark outside but wandered the mile over the convention center to be there before 8 am opening time for visitors. Not a whole lot streaming through, though. This hamfest is about 2 hours south of OK City, 2 hours north of Dallas, but isn't large enough to attract much of that visiting crowd. It had been well promoted, though.

I did manage to sell both radios – but primarily as 'parts radios' or radios to be used for

donor parts. Not great but that's about all I could do with 40 year old radios. Most folks want much newer radios if they are buying second hand, and the new radios are competitively priced. Plus, now parts for some of the 40 year old radios are tough to come by other than 'donor parts radios'. Sort of like the final transistors in IC-706 Mark II early version radios – where if they go bad, and they have a tendency to do so, there are no spare transistors anywhere. It's \$250 or more to put in a different set with modifications to be able to use them. Heck, then you have a \$300 or \$350 35 year old radio afterwards and at some point, it is more effective to bite the bullet and buy a new IC-701 for \$700 or so on sale. People still ask \$400 and up for the IC-706s but they are dreaming.

Sold two Heathkit QRP tuner/SWR bridge units for low \$\$....didn't need them and they've been sitting around for 20 years. Now, if they were never built, they'd be worth \$100 each! That was it. Half a dozen other items didn't sell. The foot traffic slowed down around 10am and I decided it was time to head on out. No nibbles on what remained.

I took the long way home – headed east to **Tishomingo NWR – KFF-0491** in Johnston County OK. This park had only 2 previous activations (one by N4CD) and 49 QSOs before! I had only made 25 QSO the first time, so this time's 27 got me over the magic 44 number now for a valid activation for WWFF credit! Hurrah. Still had to work at getting those 27Qs with county hunters and park chasers helping out. Worked one SOTA station (AC0PR) on a summit somewhere, on 20M, one contest SSB station in the big DX contest – tried a few others but too many calling them and my mobile signal wasn't going to hack it. 40 and 30M had more Qs than 20M CW by far. Conditions still 'geomagnetic storm' with A=18, K=3, SFI=65. K9FD in HI was loud will many others were weak, weak, weak or not even there.

After a frustrating visit where the log should have been full, I drove over to Lake Texoma SP KFF-2791 again for a short visit. Sun came out, rain stopped. Put 25Q in the log including some 'weekenders', one 20M SSB contest station, one park-to-park contact with W8MSC, and that was it.

The weather was getting better. The sun came out, the rain moved east, so one could not complain too much. Now down into TX and a quick repeat at Eisenhower State Park KFF-3005 for a 'quickie'. Pulled in, whipped off 13 Q, including 5 DX stations on 20M SSB (VY2TT, VP2MYL, VE7BAC, ZF1A, CS2C). Forget EU stations – buried under the QRM which was horrible with everyone on top of everyone where you couldn't copy anyone through it across the band. Hmm....tried a bit but gave up in frustration. I do OK in CW contests with decent conditions. One Park to Park contact – I check for

those on the park spotting sites.

Left after 30 minutes and headed home. It was an 'adventure' this trip and if I didn't have the W0RRY radios to sell, probably would have skipped this one with the rain and band conditions. Barely worth the gas to justify things. 300 miles (double the short way) and not even 300 contacts. Barely 100 contacts after six park runs.

Thanks to the county hunters who worked me regardless of whether they needed the county/park! It helps a lot!

Illinois QSO Party

K4AMC fixed - TN 137 CW

This might be my best ILQP record score. Lots of activity despite band condx. Thanks to all for having the contest. 73 Jim K4AMC

OM2VL - fixed - DX 158 CW 14 SSB 77 counties

The day before the IL QP I ran NY QP and bands was good at the beginning 15m was open also to the NY. I thought there would be the same good condx also on Sunday Before the QP I did some 15m DXing with nice pileup including some West Coast.

At 17 Z began the ILQP and I stay on my run frequency and CQed for IL stations but only 2 stations back only (what a different as last year 47 SSB QSO on 20m SSB). On CW was better, but also 20 QSO less than last year.

40m opened fortunately so early, but SSB disappointed me also on this band... only 11 QSO (last year 32!) 80m was excellent. I heard many stations, and 27 is in my LOG (last year only 13). Paul K9PG moved me on SSB and he is my only QSO on 80m SSB - thanks Paul!

Counties worked 18 less than last year. . Thanks for the mobiles for his EXCELLENT job - especially Jim AD4EB! 31 times in my LOG from 20 county (missed only 3 of his counties)

Most QSOs:

mobiles:

AD4EB/M 31/20

N0I/M 28/11

N9JF/M 14/12

NU0Q/M 7/7

N9IA/M 4/4

W9YES/M 3/3

portable:

W9IAU 8/4

K9BGL 6/3

W9WE 4/2

Thanks for the FB QSOs + nice QP! CU in 2020!

AD4EB mobile - 872 CW QSO

This was the 5th time Melody and I operated mobile in the ILQP. We traveled thru 23 counties, starting in Champaign and working our way down to Pope County. Melody did a great job driving, keeping us right on schedule and even a little bit ahead at the end. The weather was very cooperative, it was a nice day in Illinois.

Our score was a bit lower than last year, down by about 60 QSOs and 1 multipliers. I swapped out the 20m to 80m antenna early, at 2100z (4 pm local), because rates on 20m dropped even though the band still seemed quite open. That turned out to be good move because there was already considerable activity on 80m.

The most worked stations were:

OM2VL (31), KQ3F (29), KV8Q (28), K3IE (25), N4ARO (22)
KE0L (18), W8TM (18), WA3HAE (18) K3WJV (17) W8PI (17)

And the DX stations were:

OM2VL (31), DL8USA (3), CO2UE (1), DK2OY (1), K9FD (1) (HI)

Way to go OM2VL Laci! I have never been in a state QSO party when a DX station ends up with my most contacts. Laci typically is one of the first people worked when entering a new county. But what was different this year is how powerful his signal was, easily breaking thru many of the big pileups. Even worked him 5 times on 80m. Great job to both KQ3F Joe and KV8Q Tom, they often found me at the exact same time. Also hats off to 2 of my fellow TCGers, K3IE Hunter and N4ARO Dick. I found it easy to pick out Hunter's "IE", and Dick always calls a tiny bit off freq, but just right for my ears.

This was the second contest where I used APRS, NO5W Chuck encouraged me to do it first in this year's TXQP. On my QRZ.com page I have our estimated county line crossing times, and a link to APRS.fi which dynamically displays our position, planned route, and county lines. I am sure it was helpful to those who used it.

Thanks to everyone that took the time to work us, and to the ILQP folks that make this contest happen. And thanks again to Melody for expertly driving and navigating our 4th QSO party this year (FL, TN, TX, and IL). She wants to thank those operators that have expressed appreciation for her efforts in their QSLs and other notes.

73 - Jim (AD4EB) and Melody (KI4HVY)

W9YES mobile with KD9LSV 119 CW 23 SSB

This was our first time going mobile. Connor (KD9LSV) and myself decided two weeks before the contest that we wanted to do this. We learned a lot in those two weeks trying to prepare to go mobile. I didn't want to permanently install my HF rig in my van, or permanently attach an antenna. I got a 40m hamstick and mag-mount, and then Jim, N9JF, loaned me a 20m hamstick. Special thanks to Jim for that.

We had planned out a route we wanted to follow, but then ended up not sticking to it. We spent more time in some of the Northern counties (even the ones we did not plan to go into: Rock Island, Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Winnebago, & Boone) than I would have liked, but for the northern-central counties we did not get to, we did manage to get a northern one to make up for it.

We mostly tried to avoid interstates, but around seven hours into the contest, I was driving on I39 while Connor was operating CW, and I get alerted to the fact that the mag-mount is no longer on the roof and was dangling by the coax. Both the 40m

hamstick and the mag-mount were fine, and when stuck back on the roof, we could still make contacts using the antenna. That wasn't the first time the 40m hamstick had to come off during the contest. As we driving out of Jo Daviess county, we encountered a bridge only had 10 feet of clearance and took it down to drive under it.

We had fun operating during the contest, and we definitely learned how we could do this better in the future with less stress. (A big thing is not to wait until 2 weeks before the start of the contest to decide to go mobile for the first time.)

Comment from KD9LSV:

Thanks to all who had patience with me operating. I have been operating CW for around 9 months. I hope to improve CW and become aware of the code. Thanks for pushing my skills to the limit.

Hope to see you in many other contests.

N0I Rover - (opr N0AC) - 798 CW QSO

The high QSO count goes to OM2VL with 24. My two ham friends from home, KD0ZV and WW0Z, came in with 20 each along with K3WJV and KQ3F also with 20 QSOs. This wouldn't be fun without all those who took time to get on the air to participate in the QSO party and the sponsors for organizing the event.

My operations would never happen if it wasn't for my non-ham wife driving. I think I wore her out this trip.

Thanks for your QSO, Bill

Those with more than 15 QSOs were, K4XU, KV8Q, W6OAT, W8PI, WA3HAE

Awards Issued

None issued as of publication date of 10/27/19

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

QSO Party season is OVER! Hope you had a good one this year. It will be a few months until things resume again in the spring. Meanwhile, there are some major contests to participate or avoid as the situation may be for you.

From the ARRL Contest Corral for November:

Nov 2 2100z to Nov 4 0259z

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW CW Serial, Precedence (Q/A/B/U/M/S), your call, check, section

<http://www.arrl.org/sweepstakes>

Nov 16 2100z to Nov 18 0259z

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB Ph Serial, Precedence (Q/A/B/U/M/S), your call, check, section

www.arrl.org/sweepstakes

Nov 23 0000z to Nov 24 2359z

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW CW RST, CQ Zone

www.cqww.com

That's all folks!