

County Hunter News

October 1, 2017
Volume 13 Issue 10

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.

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CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.122.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. The cw folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

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

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

http://countyhunter.com/marac_information_package.htm

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

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

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

Want county lines on your Garmin GPS?

<http://pages.suddenlink.net/w4ydy/hamlinks.html#County>

Download the file to a flash card that fits in your GPS unit, turn it on, and the county lines should appear!

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

Email Distribution List – last month we had to reconstitute the list for email distribution of the notice of the availability of the County Hunter News OnLine. With a bunch of help from other county hunters, we've come up with a new list of folks who like to read the latest news. Several may have been accidentally dropped, several new folks added to the list we had before. If you got a notice and don't want one, please unsubscribe at

the link at the bottom of the email and you won't be bothered – then you can simply find it each month in the regular place: www.chnewsonline.com

QSO Parties – wow – good month for mobiles zipping here and there in the many QSO Parties. Around 500 counties were up for grab.

Propagation – wow! There were some days with 10, 12 and 15 meters open – with high solar flux. Then there were days with HF blackouts and A index of 38, K of 8 – with not so great propagation – and hours of NO propagation at all. At the sunspot minimum part of the cycle, you get more of this type of activity.

Parks on the Air vs Counties

The past 9 months, N4CD has been busy doing both putting out Parks on the Air (POTA) and counties. Seems I need a little bit of 'stimulus' to get the N4CD mobile moving these days – been at county hunting for over 20 years and been through every county twice – and filled up countless log books – many dozens – from the enjoyable trips around the country. It helps to have other things going on to keep up the enthusiasm. There isn't going to be running all the counties three times here. So it is off to other interesting parts of ham radio – with county hunting combined.

Last year I got really interested and involved in the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) – what a blast! It was even better than the old days of county hunting as far as contacts go – heck, you could often put 100 different calls in the log from a National Park. Back in the 'way back days' when MARAC had over 1,000 members, if you ran a county line in a rare state, you could easily put 30-40 contacts and sometimes 40-50-60 QSOs in the log in short order. Running over the 10 minute 'run limit' on the SSB net was common, and during busy times like summer, annual convention and the 3M and other mini-conventions, there could be more than 20 mobiles on the 'list' waiting to run on SSB. We kept multiple frequencies busy all day long on 20 and 40M. As you are likely aware, the 'peak years' of county hunting are a bit in the past.

In 2017, MARAC has less than half the members it had at the top – and there are very

few days when there is even a 'list of mobiles' ready to go. Some days we struggle to even have one mobile out and about. We get fewer and fewer new folks into our branch of ham radio each year it seems – but are thankful for the new folks as they are often the most enthusiastic. Now, some have come from park chasing to working counties.

The rise of the personal computer(PC), internet, video gaming, 200 channels of video, and social networks has filled up countless hours of time for millennial, and busier work schedules seem to have taken a toll on many hobbies and activities. Serious county hunting was often a 'retiree' playground – with loads of retirees out mobile headed here and there, and constantly on the air. We had mobiles – some 18 wheel Big Rigs – constantly on the road – coast to coast. Now, new rules by trucking companies about radio, plus new trucks full of very noisy electronics and fuel injection systems, have ended much of that. We don't have too many 'traveling salesmen' like as in the past – but happily a few folks like Jim, N9JF, and Kerry, W4SIG, are out there on business headed here and there.

For the past two years, MARAC has sponsored a booth at Dayton – and we've gotten a few new members and kept in touch via this with others that come in and out of the hobby occasionally. With DX waning as the sunspots go down, maybe we can get a few more old timers back on the CH frequencies.

The state QSO Parties seem to attract a good crowd – but many of them just work the state QSO parties and not chase counties in between. It seems that many calls you hear in the fray there have earned USACA in the past and aren't in the repeat mode of doing it again. Probably half the folks who earned USACA stop after the first time.

Enter NPOTA in 2016 – which for me and a few other CH, turned out to be a fantastic way to put out the counties – via running NPOTA parks – and of course, all the travel in between. I got hooked early on this – and it was a lot of fun. How often to you rack up 100 plus QSOs in a 'county' these days? The record for was an astounding 390 QSOs from Chimney Rock in NE! What fun. Many former CH jumped in as well – it was the most popular ARRL sponsored program in decades with easily over 1000 actively participating. You'd get credit via LoTW – no 'paper confirmations' required although a few collected 'paper' and some activators made up special QSLs for some of the activations.

You'd see listings on CH.W6RK.com for the parks with counties – fun for county hunters, too! Many joined it – heck, counties are counties no matter how you get them. Even better, just about every NPOTA operation was a 'mobile' or a 'portable' which could count for NO-STAR award or in your 'mobile' book. It even got me onto LoTW

for the first time. Kraig, KA2LHO, has put out a cross-list of the counties for each of the 4000 US parks.

Well, all good things come to an end, and NPOTA ended with over a million QSOs uploaded to LoTW by the various participants. Almost all of the 500 parks, trails, monuments, memorials, and other park service entities were 'activated' with just a few dozen hard to access units in Alaska, Guam, and 'off limit' places missing. Sadly, that all came to an end at 2359z on Dec 31, 2016.

As an alternative, the European centric "Parks on the Air" program was brought to the USA by several very enthusiastic and dedicated folks, including Jason, W3AAX, who spent hundreds and hundreds of hours setting up the USA version of WWFF – World Wide Flora and Fauna. WWFF is dedicated to getting ham radio operators out to the various 'entities' that preserve nature and provide a place for wildlife and flowers. It includes many 'wildlife refuges' as well as parks.

To set the program up, they started with the list of National Parks, Monuments, and Monuments from the previous year. WWFF requires an entity to be in 'one state', so the NPOTA units like 'trails' that cover multiple states, single building sites in urban areas, and similar were not included in WWFF. About 85% were moved over. Kraig, KA2LHO has worked with them to come up with a cross reference list of the POTA units to counties – so county hunters will know what the county is for each KFF park designator. They added in most state parks and many Nature Wildlife Areas/Preserves to the mix and it is slowly being expanded to include more entities.

In the US, all the 'entities' (now over 4000 of them) are assigned a number – starting at KFF-0001 and up. The prefix 'K' is for the USA. There are parks all around the world – and if you have a good station, you can often snag the Europeans putting out their parks. Many of them go full bore with beams and good setups – like mini-expeditions and IOTA type operation. You might here a GFF-0947 in Great Britain or a SMFF in Sweden. Unlike NPOTA, the 'chasers' do not need to upload logs to receive credit. Only the log from the activator is used to give credit for each of the parks worked.

I started to put out the POTA units at the beginning of the year to have more reason to go out on county hunting trips. Strangely, there are 100 state parks in TX alone and I've managed to not visit any of them despite being in TX for 27 years. Here, most of the state parks are at lakes or rivers and provide a great place for camping, river rafting, sightseeing, wild life observation and fun activities for kids. Some, like the National Parks, have special programs for kids as well – 'junior ranger' type activities. OK – I'd check them out. A few have geographic features like Palo Duro Canyon State Park out

in the panhandle of Texas – a very large canyon system longer than the Grand Canyon, or like Dinosaur State Park– which has preserved footprints of the 100 million year old creatures.

You'll find that many states do charge admission to the State Parks – here in TX – you pay typical a few bucks - \$4-7 per park for 'day use'. One can buy an annual pass for \$70 that gets you in no charge for a year. (Not as good as the National Parks Lifetime Senior Pass that was \$10 for seniors – going up to \$80 this year – that got you in free forever – and some of those National Parks have \$25 and \$35 entry fees! Many were free.). Each state is different and some limit passes to 'residents'. Some states like OK and AR are mostly free with just a few exceptions. NY is typically \$7 but up to \$10. (Free for residents over 62). VT is \$4/park. If you run a park or two a day - that's not too much 'overhead'. However, if you are burning \$30 a day in gas, \$60-80 a night in a motel, plus meals – it gets lost in the 'noise' of county hunting fun. Counties are free – (well, other than Nantucket, Dukes, Island WA, Hawaii – with ferry and airfare) – while many parks will charge you a few bucks to get in – depending upon the state. If you only do a few a day, it's not too bad. Some take credit cards (VT) – others are cash only.

TX parks are usually lakes and river access – same for OK. AR has a few historic parks and one – Crater of Diamonds – where you can actually go diamond hunting. KY has many 'lodges' at parks where you can stay. It varies. VT is mostly lake access – beaches, boating, picnicking, camping, etc. NY is mostly lake oriented – beaches, swimming, kayaking, etc. I haven't checkout out most in other states yet.

So is park activating worth it? There are about 25 weekday park chasers and maybe 50 will get on during weekends. More on SSB than CW for sure. When I run a park/county, about half the contacts will be for the 'county' (county hunters) and half for the park. At best, I might get 60-70 contacts, but average in the high 40s during good hours during the day. Early morning and late afternoon might only get a dozen or so – as 20M opens late and dies for the day early. It's not like the way back days with 30-40-50 county hunter contacts during most of the day, but with the sunspot minima upon us, and the lower number of active county hunters, it helps justify going out on trips. 30 CW and 40M (both cw and SSB) help a good bit, too, to add to the contact total.

If you put up a temporary mast – and something like a 40m inverted vee or 20m one, you might rack up 150 contacts in a couple hours. You'll probably work a lot of folks just passing by to give you a QSO. About half the park activators do that. On the other hand, some just run QRP with a temporary antenna. It spans the whole spectrum of possibilities.

MARAC has also changed the rules for many of the awards so you can get 'self credit' for running the counties. For many working on the various awards, that helps to get a bit more activity as folks take good trips to fill in their needs. That started recently so maybe it will trigger more trips and activity soon.

So....if you want to join in the fun of park chasing (other than for the county) check out the POTA Facebook Page. You'll find the cross reference to the park/counties at www.countyhunter.com - click on the link for KFF county. Then there is the main site, www.wvff.co that will fill you in on many of the details of the program.

Many of the county hunters (whether they know it or not) are high up on the list of chasers – since they've been working N4CD, KA2LHO, N9JF, KA9JAC, and others as they run the parks.

I'm not sure what we do to encourage more to 'chase counties'. There have been rumors that one day (maybe sooner than later) the ARRL LoTW will do 'counties'. Right now – it does nothing. CQ Magazine sponsors the USCA award and they currently do not accept LoTW confirmations. That change would likely help quite a bit. For many newcomers, the thought of getting 3077 confirmations via mail is too mind boggling for them to seriously start on 'the chase'. CQ will accept confirmations via eQSL – but you need to print them off – each and every one for a county.

This year, I've been uploading my park contacts with county to LoTW. It's easy to set up a 'new location' – for the state/county – upload the log – then delete the station location. Otherwise, I'd have 1000 different station locations to sort through in LoTW.. Only takes a minute to set up a new location. Will they ever count? Who knows?

Likely, we should continue the activities and the Dayton/Xenia hamfest – to attract newcomers and maybe get old timers back into county hunting. We have more new hams than ever – we have large numbers of mobiles out there – and we need to get a higher percentage of them involved in county hunting. Electronic confirmations would help. You can do it via E-QSL but still isn't 'county friendly' but CQ Magazine will accept them toward USCA. How many these days upload to eQSL?

Meanwhile, I'll be working on Parks on the Air – taking trips – occasionally doing the weekly CW-Open tests on Wednesday – and watching the spots of CH.W6RK plus listening in on the CW frequencies. Some are off on digital these days – those counties count, too! Ham radio can still be lots of fun. A good part of the fun of County Hunting is helping others get their awards – running counties for them, getting last

counties, going on trips together, etc. We need to be doing more of that!

See you on the air!

Maryland DC QSO Party - More

The MDC QSO Party occurred at the end of August. A late report from a mobile – apparently the only one to report:

W4GO mobile – 126 SSB QSO

Thanks for all the QSOs -- especially to those who stuck it out and completed the contact despite challenging conditions. The ambient noise floor was frustratingly high along much of my route due to power line RFI.

TX power was 200 W PEP. Antenna was a center-loaded, hatted inverted-L.

I did not operate on Saturday. The mobile route on Sunday went through Charles County, St Marys, Charles (again), Calvert, Anne Arundel, Prince Georges, Washington D.C., and Virginia.

Kansas QSO Party – More

Additional comments from the KS QSO Party that happened right at the end of August.

KB0LF mobile as N0E

Was able to visit most of the venues that I had scheduled for Sat. That included ROO/OSB, SHE/GRM, THO/SMN, CHY/RAW, and PHI/SMI. Had trouble with my rig overheating, and missed DEC/NOR, sorry. But at the end of the day did get to op from JEW/REP for a few minutes. Then back to NE. Kudos to the state of KS for great roads over that route! And good weather on Sat.

Was mostly on CW and only a few SSB QSOs. Thanks to all who were patient with my fist. A special thanks to Bob, W0BH, for inviting me to operate a 1x1, N0E, an appropriate call for someone from NE. And for the great job you do organizing the event Bob KUDOS KUDOS!!

K0AP fixed as K0W

This is my 7th year participating in the KSQP as K0W. Great fun as usual. This year between the CQ's I did spend some time chasing some of the rare KS counties for my USA-CA. Quite challenging due to the skip zone but I did work many new ones thanks to the mobiles who spent some time on 40m. Thanks to the mobiles for putting an excellent show. BIG thanks to W0BH for usual great organization and leadership.

Mobiles: Please submit logs to eQSL for QSO confirmation. It will save the county hunters lots of money.

Station setup: FT1000MP, ACOM1000, HEX Beam, Inv Vee dipoles, N1MM+...

K7IA - fixed AZ

Bob, W0BH, and his group continue to offer inducements for both in-state and out-of-state operators to work this active and very hospitable state QSO Party! Just look at the Rules as they evolve over recent years--nearly everyone gets some sort of prize in 2017...

Chasing mobiles is always fun, but the KSQP webpage included an online spot page where anyone could enter a spot to find the mobiles in nearly real time. Drat! I didn't discover the page until Sunday morning!

Many mobiles had surprisingly strong signals, but for those who didn't, they stuck with the QSO until both exchanges were made. FB ops!

It would be helpful if mobiles would add a county abbreviation on, say, every other CQ. I'm always reluctant to make a call if I think it might be a dupe and waste the other chap's time...

This QP has become my favorite single state Party, owing to the great organization, busy mobiles, and friendly ops who represent their state like gentlemen. I have wanted to operate the KSQP from Kansas sometime as a fixed portable from several sites during the weekend.

AD0DX as N0A

Each KSQP is different, and this one was no exception.

In June we moved from Kansas City to Colorado Springs, so I chose a KSQP route in Western Kansas. My wife is my driver and I operate from my Ford Ranger with a K3 and Hustler mag mount with resonators.

I looked at the map and decided to leave from Syracuse KS on Saturday morning so we could start at the 4 county line HAM / KEA / STN / GRT.

Driving to Syracuse KS from Colorado Springs, it looks like an easy drive from Colorado Springs; south to Pueblo, then east on CO 50 and we would arrive in Syracuse about 10:30.

We were driving through Lamar, CO about 10pm on a dark street. The road was two lanes each way with a median, and I was in the 'fast' lane going 35 mph. This car comes up behind me and stays there. I'm thinking the person wants to pass me, so I change lanes to the slow lane, and the car follows me, also changing lanes. I said to my wife well that's not good, it might be a police car. Sure enough, the blue lights for the police car come on and I pull over.

It turns out that the light bulbs on my rear license plate were burnt out and he has to be able to see the rear plate from 100 ft away. I asked the officer if he could give me a warning, and he smiled and left

without saying anything. After running my license etc to make sure I'm not wanted anywhere, he came back to the truck and gave me a warning. Thanks! (I'm guessing those light bulbs have been burnt out for years but I'm usually in the city at night).

I bought new rear license plate bulbs in Dodge City, KS on Saturday and installed them myself.

Before the KSQP I took my truck in to the local Firestone for an inspection; I thought my brakes were squeaking. \$1400 later I had a bunch of maintenance items completed, including a leaking oil pan. But it's money well spent so I don't have a problem between 2 corn fields in Kansas :-).

Unfortunately, the story doesn't end here... I'm not sure what happened, but somehow we took a wrong turn in Lamar and we ended up heading south... for 45 minutes. I didn't have my phone gps on because the route was so 'simple'. Ughh. So we ended up getting to Syracuse KS at 12:30 am, Mountain Time. We also kinda forgot about the time change, so it was 1:30am KS time.

Ok so back to the KSQP. We woke up a little late on Sat morning and made our way to HAM / KEA / STN / GRT. If you have ever looked for a county line in rural KS (or MO or OK) one thing you learn the hard way is that the more rural you get, what maps show as roads are often tractor paths or deer paths or something that might have been a road 50 years ago. So I studied the map closely, and used Google Maps to pick a good route to the 4 county line. We took county road 35 east from Hwy 27 south of Syracuse KS for about 10 miles to road B, and then south to the 4 county line. We had to stop for a farmers wife driving a combine through an intersection. We gave her a nice wave and she waved back at us. If you haven't driven through rural KS corn fields, a lot of intersections don't have stop signs so you have to watch carefully.

I don't know how he does it but my first qso at the 4 county line was John N6MU. Very impressive especially considering we were 30 minutes late. I only called CQ once, did not spot myself and John was right there. Great work John.

We had a good run at the 4 county line, mostly CW. I use the Hustler mag mount antenna with the triple attachment. I had 20m cw and 20m phone

resonators attached so that I could change quickly. I decided to leave 40m to the evening and that is what I did.

After the 4 county line I drove the truck back to the highway because my wife wasn't too comfortable driving on the dirt roads. We were both a little tired from our late arrival the night before, so I decided to drive and let my wife sleep in the passenger seat. I drove to the Morton / Stevens county line and operated from there.

Due to our late start I had to drop some counties. My wife is an avid bird watcher and so I had planned to stop at Quivera National Wildlife Refuge and also Cheyenne Bottoms Wetlands in Barton county. I made a decision to drop Quivera and just head to Cheyenne Bottoms. Birds that migrate between Mexico and Alaska stop at Cheyenne Bottoms in central Kansas so it's a great place to see migrating birds a few times a year.

Cheyenne Bottoms is also a great spot to operate because it is very quiet; no electrical noise. During the NPOTA last year one of my favorite spots was MP07 Pea Ridge Military Park in NW Arkansas; very quiet, and a lot of interesting history. Cheyenne Bottoms is also a great place to operate.

I stayed on 20m all day except for the last 30 minutes in Russell.

During the contest I was able to work Bob W0BH/m and Lorna K0WHY on 20mtrs which was surprising.

I ended up operating at 14.035.5 because there was a HI station on 14.035. 14.035.5 was quiet for me, and there didn't seem to be anyone else on the freq so I stayed there most of Saturday.

The highlight on Sunday was getting to meet Charles K0HNC / N0K. I've worked Charles many times in different qso parties and it was great to meet him during the KSQP at the Norton / Graham county line. Charles has a great setup with a large Tarheel screwdriver. Thanks for the eyeball QSO Charles!

I was hoping to get to Cheyenne / Rawlins / Sherman 3 county line to end the contest on Sunday but ran out of time. We had a 3 hour drive home after the contest and so we just headed to Goodland KS and finished

out the contest in Sherman. I wanted to stop in Colby KS to get Starbucks but just didn't have time for that. Need to plan better next year :-)

I didn't work much DX this year, only OM2VL and DL3DXX and also one station in France. There were some loud signals from HI on Saturday so it was nice to get the HI mult.

My rig is a K3/100 and it really does a nice job. The 500hz crystal filter really helps.

I use the cw memory bank to send CQ during the contest. Memory 1 is set to 'KSQP de N0A/M N0A/' and then memory 2 holds the county abbreviation. This allows me to chain the memory locations for sending cq throughout the contest. In memory 3 I have a short cq 'KSQP de N0A/' so I chain memory 3 + 2 for a short cq that gives the county. Then in memory 4 I put 'CQ DE N0A/m' for the reverse beacon network.

There were a few times when I switched from phone to CW and I did a 'CQ DE N0A/m' to get started and DL3DXX was the first station to call me, so it's great to see the RBN being used so well.

I made around 975 QSO's this year; if I was a little more organized and made fewer wrong turns I could have broken 1000. Next year.

Hats off to Bob W0BH for organizing another great KSQP. See you again next year.

Hope to work you in the COQP this weekend. My wife and I will be driving along the southern border of CO to Durango.

Thanks for all the q's!

Ron, N0A/m (AD0DX) and Cathy XYL driving

KN4Y - fixed - FL

Had a direct link to Kansas, or it seemed like I did. Plenty of mobiles to chase, not physically chase, but by dial tuning. Best band was 20 meters. Fun weekend.

N8II - fixed - WV

Wow, does KS know how to throw a QSO party! Thanks to Bob, W0B (W0BH) and whoever else helped put it together. Except for the early fade out of 20 Saturday (last Q's were Bob W0B at 2313Z and he was very weak on SSB, significant weakening of signals at 22Z), I would have well exceeded 600 Q's.

Saturday was the ecstasy in the morning and early afternoon with both 15 and 10 open on Es followed by the agony as 20 faded very early. I did a good job of maxing out the 15 and 10 meter Q's and seemed out of sync keeping up with the mobiles. Mobile activity seemed low at that time compared to past years, but it may have been me as the rest of the time was near other years or even better on Sunday. There were very very few KS CQ'ers on 15, none on 10! I ran up the Q totals by calling CQ on 20 and moving stations up or calling stations on 20 and asking for moves up especially W0B/N0Q/K0WHY/N0I, many thanks Bob!

I feel KS stations made a significant error not CQ'ing to 15 and 10 even though they might have been running high rates on 20, because sooner or later the runs will dry up or slow on 20. At this point in the solar cycle, the only hope of a good opening is Es which never lasts forever. My opening on 15 Saturday was from 1515Z-1900Z! If just 5-10 KS stations had CQ'ed they would have generated hundreds of total QSO's as the spotters would have found them and moved activity up there. W0K (Drew, K3PA) was louder on 15 than 20 when we worked at S9+ 30-40 db! W0B/M was S9 at times. There was also weak/moderate Es up to 15M for over an hour Sunday morning.

After 20 closed Saturday, it was quite slow the rest of the evening. I was considering quitting as I was feeling pretty fatigued at 22Z, but catching a few new counties and Q's kept me going. Special thanks to mobiles W0B/N0Q, K0A, N0W, K0O, N0R, N0A, and K0P for operating well into the evening and keeping me going!

There were stretches when almost none of them were on despite good 40 meter conditions and strong signals on 80 ans well. My CQ's on 40 were almost useless.

I was surprised that the QRN level from Harvey, etc. was not higher. QRN was low on 40 and moderate on 80.

Sunday, I kept my discipline and got much more in sync pretty well working the

great majority of mobiles and new band/mode fixed KS stations available. 40 remained productive to some extent despite some very weak mobile signals after the first hour. K5YAA, K0A, N0W, and N0U (loudest of mobiles most of the time) gave me several new ones and I was thrilled to catch K5YAA in BOU and K0A (Connie K5CM) in ELK/CHT on 40 for counties 103+104 with only 19 minutes to go! I missed the sweep by one again this year, but not that disappointed as I broke my QSO total last year by over 20 Q's with the moves to 15/10M. The mobiles had amazing ears on 40 hearing my 200W, almost no one could not hear me!

A special thanks to Butch, K0O/M who is on every year phone only and operates nearly the whole 18 hours. He usually hangs out around 14275/7245. He gave me several new counties on Sunday, despite missing him much more than last year especially on Saturday. And another special thanks to Bob, W0B and his team (Lorna and Aaron N0Q) for many quick QSY's providing 2-3 new Q's each time along with many mults! There was a bit more intense fixed station activity on 20 this year (not on 80/40/15/10!). Thanks to you all. And thanks to the mobiles for covering most counties 2-5 times in total. I worked portable/mobiles N0T, K0A, N0W, N0A, K0P (not a CW guy, but gets an A+ for effort), N0K, N0U, N0R, N0K, N0E, N0Y, N0T, and K0T; thanks so much for making it fun and busy and for all of your effort.

73, Jeff

N0NB as N0N

Band conditions weren't great but more Qs could have been made on 15 and 10m and despite repeated calls on those two bands and verification via RBN for CW, few answered my calls. 40 and 20m were the bread and butter bands. Fortunately, Saturday activity saw some activity on 80/75m. CW was the money mode as would be expected when operating as "a boy and his radio".

Many thanks to all the stations outside Kansas that come back year after year for this event. Conditions did not favor much DX to my station this year but regulars DK2OK and OM2VL did make into my log on 20 CW. I'm sure I was receiving them better than they were receiving me. Missed ME, VT, and WY for WAS this year. Was nice to have AK and HI come by without having to chase them down.

73, Nate

N5NA as N0R mobile

Covered a total of 35 counties, 23 on Saturday and 12 on Sunday. Murphy tried to shut me down on Sunday morning. My K3 quit transmitting or receiving. After checking everything and turning it off and on a couple of times with no success I gave it a good WHACK on the top and it started working again. Must have scared him because Murphy didn't show up the rest of the day.

At the end of the day on Saturday I had 339 QSOs on 20m and 411 QSOs on 40m. Looked like it was going to be a 40m QSO party. As you can see from my score that stat flipped on Sunday so by the end of the QSO party I had 701 QSOs on 20m and 589 on 40m.

With the poor conditions I was surprised at the DX I was able to work which included DK2OY, OM2VL, F4HEC, DL3DXX, DL7KL, and LY5W.

Thanks to the following stations for contributing more than half the QSOs:
N6MU(39), N8II(32), W3DYA(26), NW0M(21), WA8REI(20), W7GF(19), W8BZY(18), K0PV(18), K0CCM(18), K7TM(17), NY9P(16), W0ZQ(16), K4ZGB(15), K7SV(15), W5TM(15), K9CW(14), WB5JID(13), W0EAR(13), KS4X(13), W7TR(12), W1END(12), K7IA(11), VE5SDH(11), W2CVW(11), KF3EB(10), VE3AYR(10), K8NYG(10), DL3DXX(10), W7OM(10), WX4G(10), K7ULS(10), W5CW(9), K4BAI(9), AD0RW(9), VA3RKM(9), W1WBB(9), W6TDX(9), WB2PJH(9), K9DUR(9), K8FU(8), K5KDG(8), KN4Y(8), K3TW(8), K9GDF(8), K4LNN(8), N9BD(7), WB0PYF(7), K0FG(7), N4RS(7), N6GP(7), W4SIG(7), N0T(6), K1PQS(6), N5PR(6)

Station equipment: Elecraft K3, Scorpion SA-680, Dell Latitude D630, CQ/X logging program, and a Ford F250.

Thanks to everyone who called and a big thanks to my wife, K5AKS, for driving

AF5Q as K0P mobile

Thanks Bob for a well ran qso party. Great to see some beautiful KS scenery and

work the world! It was a pleasure to work everyone and help out with last minute counties.

K5CM mobile as K0A

I normally use a Tarheel Model 200A-HP on 80/40 and use Hamsticks for 20,15, and 10 meters. This makes for quick band switching. But Mr. Murphy had different plans for me this weekend. It was 10 minutes before the party started Saturday morning when I noticed the SWR was intermittent on the 20 meter Hamstick. Then I checked 15 meters and the SWR was way to high. Could not find any obvious problems so decided to go with the Tarheel on all bands. Murphy was after me again. When I hit the switch to move to 20 meters I could hear the motor trying to turn but was not moving the coil at all. I managed to resolve that problem in a few minutes and we were off to our first county line. Things were OK till I tried to go to 15 meters. I forgot the Tarheel would not tune to 15 meters with the 7 foot whip and the Capacitance Hat. I normally carry a shorter whip, but for got it for this trip. I could still get on 15 by using the antenna tuner in the K3, not the best work around but made a few Q's on 10 and 15 meters this way. Anyway we arrived at our first county line only a few minutes late. Conditions were so poor on Saturday, I thought I still must have something wrong with the Tarheel.

Special Thanks to Bob, W0BH for all the hard work putting this party together.

When we were at a county line on Sunday morning, John N6MU told me he only needed ELK AND CHT for a sweep. Those two counties were our last stop before the party ended. Fortunately we made it with time to give John his Sweep.

Pam put a little movie of the trip together.

http://k5cm.com/IMG_4380.MOV

Pam, N5KW did the SSB operating and the driving (975 miles) I did the CW. Was great fun as always.

K7HKR - fixed AZ - 100w and Mag Loop

Fun contest, best state party I've done so far! I can usually work KS fairly well on SSB, so I figured I would do okay with so many calls on the air, even though I could only participate on Saturday. In the last minute I finally managed to work the 100-point bonus station, which also gave me the wild card to sweep all four words for the stamp prizes! (I had all 17 letters, but only one of two needed letter A and s.) Mobile stations are always a big problem for my station to work, but I did get a few QSOs, and 28 out of 51 total 1x1 stations. Took as many as 24 calls over a 30 minute period to break a pileup (I log by hand exactly so I know stuff like this), but as long as I eventually get the log, I'm fine with that. Nominally I worked from 1600-0200UT, but there was a 2.5 hour period in the middle where I didn't work anyone, and I was also casually working OH and HI. Great, well organized contest, kudos!

N0AC as N0W mobile

Thanks to the sponsors for supporting this contest especially W0BH for his hard work. Thanks to all that QSOed with me and other in-state operators. And finally thanks to my XYL, Donna, for driving and putting up with the long hours. Without her this mobile operation wouldn't have happened.

THE N0W CREW

Obviously Bill, N0AC. Donna, the XYL and amateur photographer. And finally Abby, our Scottish Terrier who patiently snoozed in the back seat for hours on end.

THE STATION

2003 Dodge 2500 Ram diesel truck that turned over 200,000 miles at the end of Day 1. Elecraft K3, Tarheel M200-HP on left rear side of truck bed and Ameritron SDA-100 on rear right side, Honda EU2000 generator, K1EL keyer, and an old HP laptop running N1MM+. All this ran without problems.

THE CONTEST

Day 1: Saturday we started in CHY county at the Neb/Ks line on 40m. Rates were not too good and I wondered if that was going to be the conditions for the weekend. A short QSY to 20m seemed like a bad move. For the next three hours I

bounced back and forth between 20 and 40m finally settling on 20m for the higher rate. The only stations I worked in a QSY to 15m was N6MU and N8II. At the end of the day in PHI county and after checking the rest of the N0W crew into a motel I went out and activated the PHI/SMI county line. I had not planned on running SMI so that was a plus. In retrospect I should have changed the matching coil on the Tarheel for 80m but opted to QRT. That was a bad decision.

Day 2: Sunday we woke to rain and thunderstorms but by the time we checked out of the motel the storms had moved south leaving us with another beautiful day. Starting in NOR county the rates picked up and remained until the ending bell. We fell behind and ran out of time in LOG county leaving THO/RAW counties on the table. My last QSO was with N7ON at 19:59:59! Had we been better timekeepers another 150 QSOs might have gone in the log.

THE MOST QSO AND DX LIST

Stations that QSOed with me more than 10 times: N6MU/40, N8II/25, W7GF/18, W7TR/18, W7OM/16, KS4X/16, K0W/16, K7SV/14, NW0M/13, W2CVW/13, K9CW/13, WB2PJH/13, VA3RKM/12, WB5JID/12, WX4G/12, K0CCM/11, K3TW/11, K4BAI/11, KF3EB/11, KN4Y/11, W1END/11, WA8REI/11, K4LNN/10, NY9P/10. The DX list: DL, EA, D, G, KH6, LY, OM, and V31.

THE WHINING

The mobile operation including the operator is a work in progress. If you have never contested CW mobile it is more difficult than you might think. The 3/4 ton truck isn't the smoothest ride and the roads are normally not new asphalt. Bumps, turns, railroad tracks and all can make it difficult to hit the correct keys on the keyboard. Our routing still isn't smooth and I found myself having to operate the pileup, makes sure I'm in the right county, read the map, and operate the GPS all at the same time. The biggest problem is power line noise and the noise encountered driving through towns. I knew people were calling but only the loudest stations came through. Done whining now.

EPILOG

This was my second serious mobile QSO Party effort and the first time operating

from within Kansas. There are more in the plans. Thanks once again to all those who made this operation possible.

NU0Q as N0U mobile

Thanks to all who called me. And thanks to my XYL Karen for doing all of the driving. We had some fog early Saturday when we started, but otherwise Saturday was a nice warm day. We snapped a picture of the world's biggest ball of twine as we went through Cawker City, but otherwise didn't encounter any tourist sites. We were a bit ahead of schedule so we added Wabaunsee before stopping in Shawnee for the night. We quit about 6:30 since we were both tired and hungry. On Sunday morning, we tried to stay ahead of the rain as we moved south, but still went through a few showers, but no lightning. By lunchtime, the rain threat ended. QSO rates were higher on Sunday, with a surprisingly high rate in Sedgwick (where Wichita is) and the highest rate of all in Butler, which is also usually well represented by fixed stations. We spent the last 15 minutes in the hotel parking lot in Sedgwick.

Twenty meters was surprising short at times, with openings to Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. Forty meters was not as productive as I expected. I made two contacts on 15 meters as a result of requests from N6MU and N8II to QSY there. Each time, I tried calling CQ there, but never got any other contacts. I'm sure that self-spotting would have helped a lot, but it was not easy with the tiny cell phone browser. Thanks to all who took the time to spot me. Overall, we were pleased that I made more contacts that last year.

K5YAA mobile

Due to some lingering health issues I decided to forego a run in the 2017 Kansas QSO Party and had let Bob, W0BH know so he could find another operator to use W0L, the 1x1 I have used for several years now. All was taken care of but on Saturday of the party I drove to Joplin to return a tool (KI0I's Big Wheel Radial Implant Machine) via Slim, one of Mark's friends while he was at the hamfest.

Getting on the road for the hour to and then hour back from Joplin encouraged me to plan a Sunday run in the KSQP. Returning home I

sat and planned an easy 12 county route for the 6 hours of the party on Sunday. The weather was to be near perfect for late August so I decided a "road" trip would be good for the spirit and adding a few Qs to the fray would be a plus.

The attitude for the day was to not rush and just to enjoy mangling the Morse with my Bengali Sculpture. Six hours of transcribing the action would be a piece of cake next to a full 18 hours although I have found "reliving" contests to not only be fun but also to discover who had called that didn't get an answer from me in the heat of the battle.

It had been sometime since the mobile has seen much action so knocking off rust from both the fist and the mobile turned out to be quite enjoyable.

Arriving at the tri-county line of MGY/LAB/NEO about half an hour late I fired up on 20 meters. I took the half hour late arrival in stride because that was to be the watchword for the day - no worries no rushing allowed. Almost 200 Qs, Approaching half of my entire total, after that start I moved along from that tri-county line to see how many of the 9 other counties I could actually make before the 3PM end of the party. The schedule and county "load" was perfect because I entered Cherokee county, the last on my list with 30 minutes left.

The day was again near perfect for late August. Light rain fell up North in Osage county but let up as I entered Franklin county, one that N6MU needed for his quest to make a sweep of the 105 Kansas counties again this year. Many recognizable party goers called all day along with a multitude of County Hunters. Before noon several DX stations made the log. My thanks to all for a pleasant day on the road and on the airwaves.

An observation. As I drove the Kansas roads one thing stood out this year. The soybean fields had plants that were greener, taller and more robust than I had ever seen them. Surely a bumper crop this year caused by a cooler, wetter summer than the Midwest has had in years. We never hit 100 degrees in Claremore, Oklahoma this year and the term Green Country, which is what Northeast Oklahoma is called is certainly very suitable this year. Even the native pecan trees have only a few web worms on them. Squirrels around here will have a bumper crop of nuts for the winter.

I want to thank Bob, W0BH for his untiring efforts to make state QSO parties, of course Kansas in particular, some of the most enjoyable contests during the

year. Was a grand day on the radio for this OT.

73, Jerry K5YAA

W0BH as W0B mobile 744 cw 566 ssb qso

To fill some last minute "holes", I waited until the last minute to plan my 2017 KSQP route. With 14 mobiles out there (and Jerry/k5yaa/m surprising us on Sunday to make it 15), we already had excellent county coverage according to the proposed routes and maps. I decided to head up to the far northeastern county of Doniphan to pick up some less-covered counties, then head back via the top tier of counties and return home for the night. One of my goals not yet achieved is to have all counties activated on Sunday. I could have hit the remaining ones with a 12 hour route, but in 6 hours I settled for a group in west central Kansas.

This year, we had enough interest to add 6 more 1x1 calls (total of 51) for a new spelling word, BISON, to go along with KANSAS, SUNFLOWER and QSOPARTY. It turned out to be a little harder than usual this year. The Eclipse QSO Party happened the weekend before and some of the calls we needed ran into our weekend. Fortunately, everyone I asked was happy to drop a day or two to help us out. With several last minute cancellations, I was still three calls short, but that all changed at the Salina Hamfest when K0BJ, N0MXI, K0WA, AB0S and AB0TX got their heads together and solved the problem. You all are great!

Saturday

With plenty of time for the route, Lorna and I got off a few minutes late with our red lab, Roxxy, riding along in the back seat of the Chevy Astro van. I'm still using the IC7000 on dedicated batteries and power booster to two Hustler triples on triple mag mounts. Last year, I had forgotten to ground one of the batteries which led to my radio shutting down on 40m. This year, everything worked perfectly. I was able to use 15/20/40 and had a nice run on 80CW on Saturday evening.

XYL Lorna/k0why drove Saturday and even made a few contacts. Aaron/n0qd, my

Sunday driver, gave me permission to run his N0Q call as well so everyone had a chance to work the call. That makes for less contacts with my primary call (W0B), but it adds to the Q count for sure! The weather was fine, not too warm, but propagation left a lot to be desired.

The route was a good one. I planned to extend the route into Jewell county, but decided not to after ops reported good coverage there. We took our time and were able to work down the pileups as we moved along. 15 was wide open for several hours and a few ops like Jeff/N8II, took good advantage as we moved up for quick 15CW and 15SSB Qs. I made a handful of Qs by CQing there, but even spotting didn't seem to help on 15. I need to give a shout out to Richard/K0RCJ, Kent/KB0RWI, and cwfun.org for setting up the great spotting network. We've had it a few years already, but this year it really got used, especially after I put it front and center on the KSQP web site home page. Since self-spotting is allowed and encouraged, give it a try next year if you didn't find it this year! I left it up for the moment so you can check it out.

The only glitch we had the entire day was flashing red and blues in the rear view mirror as Lorna got pulled over in a small town up north somewhere (we couldn't find it on the map later). As we stopped, I asked Lorna if we were speeding and she said, "no." Apparently the officer disagreed with her, but after checking license, registration, and finding no tickets in Lorna's record, he just asked a bunch of questions about what we were up to and was quite impressed with what we were doing. No ticket, no warning. Just a gentle reminder to watch our speed and we were on our way. How does Lorna do that? The op who got ticketed twice in the same town last year is probably shaking his head about now :-)

We got back to the house early, dropped off Lorna and Roxxy, and I finished out the day with a nice 3 county line run a few miles from home. We ended the day with 1222 combined Qs in the log, about 50 down from last year.

Sunday

Sunday morning, I got an email from Evert/KC0FUE, that he wasn't feeling well. I volunteered to run his call (N0I) for him to put it on the air and we did just that. Aaron/N0QD arrived ready to roll, and he remembered to pick up his hat he left in the van a year ago! Heading out to our first stop, radar showed us running through a red thunderstorm line between Hesston and Salina. It also showed we would run out of it on the other side. We did, but it dumped enough

rain that the dirt road to the 3 county line would have been too interesting. I've learned my lesson in previous adventures! We settled for two counties instead and we were off. What a difference a day made. Great signals and a pileup almost immediately. It kept going that way the entire six hours. There was lightning in the storm now south of us, but signals were so loud, it really wasn't a problem.

Our scheduled furthest east county was Gove, then south to Lane county to give John/n6mu one of the few he needed for another Sweep. The first road we turned on to go south to Lane was gravel. The rain hadn't made it this far east, but the idea of 25 miles on dusty gravel wasn't very appealing, so we continued on to the highway 8 miles further east which headed to the town of Gove. Road closed. The detour continued east on the freeway to the next highway south which was just over the line into Logan county, then Scott, then finally Lane. Since these were rarer counties and good highways, we decided to go with it and continue the detour. John wondered why we gave him LOG instead of LAN, but once I got on SSB, everyone knew what was happening. LAN finally appeared for John to check off. As we eventually got back to the original highway, the detour sign pointed north to the town of Gove. That was an almost 100 mile detour had we wanted to get to Gove!

Aaron and I traded off driving so Aaron could work some nice SSB pileups and give out all three calls. It's harder to explain three calls on CW, so at one point, I put NOI/m on the air for the CW gang and got the biggest pileup of the weekend! Everyone really is spelling those words and collecting 1x1 calls. The only glitch was hitting what Aaron thought was a killdeer which flew up in front of the van. At least it wasn't a pheasant which took off one of my antennas a few years ago! We made it to Rush county with about 10 minutes to go. I spent about 5 minutes on 40m, then gave equal time to the 20m gang to finish out the run. The total Sunday mileage was 494 miles for six hours of operating compared to 495 miles for 12 hours on Saturday. But, and this is a big but, we almost doubled our QSO count in half the time, with an average rate of 192 Qs/hr over the six hours. That's fun, and that's what we live for. Aaron and I are still recovering!

Stats

We operated 16.7 hours, 989 miles, 2321 combined Qs, 428 unique calls (down 1 from last year), 7 dupes, one radio.

States not worked ----- : AK WY LA

DX worked (6 countries)- : HK OM ZF DL F V31 (down 5 from last year)

Special thanks to the following ops for 6 or (way) more contacts:

74: N8II

67: N6MU

44: W7GDK

22: KS4X

20: K7SV

18: WZ6ZZ

17: K7IA

16: W7TR WA8REI

15: W7GF

14: W0ZQ

13: K3WJV

12: VE4EA

11: K7TM WA1SAY

10: K3TW K7YMA K9CW W2CVW W6OUL

09: K0CCM N9BD NW0M

08: K4BAI K4VBM W0RIC WX4G

07: AD0RW K2HVN K2RYD K4LNN K8NYG N2ZN VE5SDH W1END W5TM
W6TDX W8BZY

06: AB9CA AC0CU N4EEV VE7CV W5CW W7OM WA6URY WD0T

05: 22 operators

W0BH Award Winners - First Place - Very Honorable Mention

Most overall Qs ---- N8II/72 ----- N6MU/66 ----- W7GDK/44
Most CW Qs ----- N8II/38 ----- N6MU/35 ----- KS4X/17
Most PH Qs ----- N8II/34 ----- N6MU/31 ----- W7GDK/28
Most counties ----- N6MU/31 ----- N8II/W7GDK/27 - KS4X/18

There are lots of people to thank for the 2017 Kansas QSO party success. The Santa Fe Trail ARC once again ran KS0KS as our BONUS station and "wild card" in the spelling competition. We had three Kansas school stations (Emporia State, K-State, KU) to thank as well as our non-1x1 Kansas stations,

many who have already turned in a log. Our mobiles and fixed stations covered all 105 counties (already on Saturday). Preliminary reporting has N6MU with his seventh sweep in a row, and N8II missed only one county. John reported working all but a handful of counties with at least two different ops which is terrific coverage. We also had a number of enthusiastic Kansas Rookies and five portable stations joining us who represented Kansas well. Even though it's not in the rules, I decided to offer a Kansas Portable plaque this year, then officially add the category to next year's rules. We hope you all return!

Special thanks to our out-of-state mobiles Ron/ad0dx (now from CO), Bill/nu0q (IA), Alan/n5na (TX), Connie/k5cm and Pam/n5kw (OK), Ron/af5q (TX), Don/k5db (AR), Fred/kb0lf (NE), Mike/w0mb (MO), Bill/n0ac (IA) and Jerry/k5yaa (OK). With our 5 intrepid in-state mobiles, that gave us fifteen mobiles this year and 18 mobile callsigns. Thanks to our portable stations: Rick/nj0p, Chuck/n0mxi and Greg/n0llc, Tanner/kd0irw, Rick/w0zap and Wayne/kd0wat and Barb/kd0wau, and of course our many 1x1 Fixed stations who poured out the Qs. As I mentioned in my article, we have Richard/k0rcj, Kent/kb0rwi, and the folks at cwfun.org to thank for the spotting network. And thanks to Bruce/ki5te for his continuing help with the stamps.

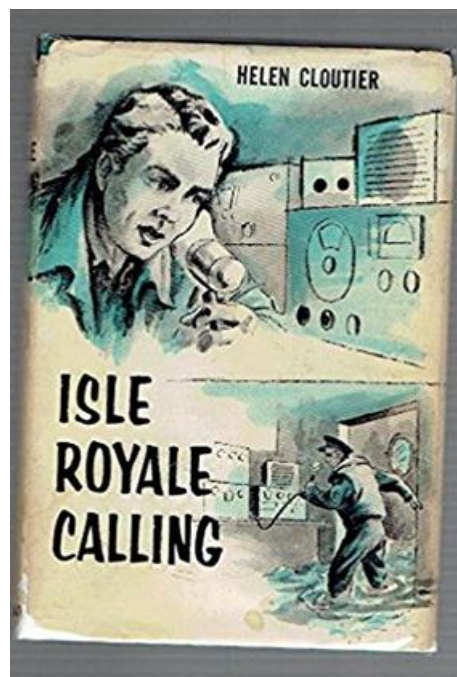
This year, our sponsors (see the KSQP Sponsors link on the KSQP web site) came through once again to provide the funding for our operations. If you win a plaque, be sure to thank your plaque sponsor, and thank our corporate sponsors with a shopping visit if you get the chance. Thanks in advance to Ron/ad0dx for his help in log-checking. Thanks to Lorna and Aaron for safely negotiating the Kansas roads for me. And finally, thanks Kent/kb0rwi, for your great job on the KSQP web site.

We also want to thank the Ohio and Hawaii QSO Parties for sharing the weekend with us. It was fun putting OH in the log, and when I worked one of the big gun Hawaii stations, he said "you must be from Kansas." I replied, "Yup, we have 51 1x1 callsigns this weekend," to which he responded, "I think I've worked at least half of them!" The Ohio stations for the most part respected our mobile window, and I gave instructions to our Kansas CW ops to stay low and out of the listed Ohio QSO Party frequencies.

As before, the best part of this was getting to meet or exchange emails with many of you as we all tried to make this work. With your help, we did. Keep in touch. Any suggestions for the 2018 Kansas QSO Party (our tenth anniversary KSQP), or comments about this one are always welcome ... !

73, Bob/w0bh/w0b with Aaron/n0qd/n0q and Lorna/k0why
2017 KSQP Coordinator

Book Review of the Month



Isle Royal Calling – by Helen Cloutier – W8GJX , published 1957 – is a good read with a fair amount of radio content and a great background on life on an isolated Island. The location for this adventure tale is the largest freshwater island in the world – Isle Royale – now a National Park in Lake Superior in MI – but it wasn't in the 1940s – the time frame of this book even though some of the ham gear used is 1950s vintage. We start with the St Cyr family living on the island along with a dozen other families. There are

3 kids (ages 6, 27, 17) in the family growing up with a one room school house on the island. The father is a Forest Ranger.

Through out the book, Jim, the eldest kid, is a ham radio operator – as well as licensed to operate the Ranger radio that keeps them officially in touch with the Coast Guard on Lake Superior. There's lots of the story concerned with the ham radio – he's always on the air – talking with friends on mostly 80M SSB but occasionally on 20M. Most of the story is fairly accurate as far as ham radio as the author was licensed with a Class A license in 1929 (later inducted into QCWA as the first YL member #1 the '50s) and operated her own ham station for many years.

There's lots of adventure - everything from trips around the island to various locations, finding all the native plants and wildlife to eat, the 'moose roundup' when 100 animals were transferred off the island, to 'Peter' a stranded orphan showing up one day. There's ship rescue by radio – when a howling blizzard sinks a freighter. You'll learn about 'sugaring' the syrup from the maples on the island and indigenous foods you can find and eat.

It will keep you entertained for a couple hours of good reading. There's a good ending too that wraps up all the loose ends.

I found a copy for a few bucks on the web.... sort of obscure but heck, that's what the web is all about! One can, with some effort, find the nuggets there out of a hundred million books for sale on line. Popularity? Number 8,236,416 most sought after book on the Amazon book site. This is one of the better books I've found recently.

Now, Isle Royale is a National Park (became one in the 1940s) – and when it became a National Park the residents got 'lifetime leases' on their property. Later, they allowed descendants of the owners permission to stay if they maintained the cabins/houses and allowed visitors to tour the cabin/house. That can end that arrangement at any time, but the park service doesn't have to funds to maintain the historic buildings. It's one of our 59 National Parks. If you plan to visit – plan on camping – as there are no motels or hotels! And of course, you'll take a ferry to the island most likely.

Ohio QSO Party

K8O Mobile (W8CAR, K8NZ ops) 669 cw 78 SSB

Beautiful day to be mobiling in Ohio. Lots of fun and only two minor antennas problems fixed in a few minutes. Tnx all the Qs!

Dan W8CAR
Ron K8NZ

K8MR mobile (K8MR, W8BG) 778 cw 35 SSB

A beautiful day to be out on the road. The contest started off great, with 92 QSOs in the first hour, including short in-state stuff on 40 and as close as NJ on 20. But the bands then returned to more normal low sunspot conditions, with less than exciting rates until 80 opened up after dark. 20 gave up the ghost before dark, sooner than I expected.

My partner this year was Bill, W8BG, a NODXA member and relatively new contester. His contest experience to date had been largely S&P in the CWOPs tests using N3FJP, and no computer generated CW. So running with N1MM+ was a completely new experience for him. He eventually started getting the hang of it, but it was still a major learning experience. He did admit to not being too good if more than one person was calling.

SSB was pretty unproductive, nearly all QSOs were moving for guys asking. I wasn't in total run up the score mode, and when rates were slow enough to take time to move, signals were often not strong enough to likely complete a SSB contact. When conditions were good enough, the rates were too good to move.

The 10 and 15 meter QSOs were with K1LT. When he hit S9+60, (<2 miles from his QTH) I figured we could run the bands, and then did the same again soon after I left Fairfield county into Franklin. VA2CZ (CW) and N8PR (SSB) were the other 15 meter QSOs.

In the last hour, driving up I-71 with new counties coming pretty quickly, I

had N1MM+ run statistic rates as high as 199/hr for 27 Qs, and 188/hr for 54 Qs. That was fun!

Thanks to all to took part in the 2017 OhQP!

73 - Jim K8MR

WN4AFP - fixed - SC - QRP

WOW! This was another awesome OHQP! Thanks to all the mobiles for keeping me near the shack for most of the contest - K8MR, K8O, K8RYU, K8RC and WJ8Y. Almost nothing on 20m, but 40m was good during the day and great at night to OH. 80m finally woke up for me late in the contest. This is my 5th OHQP and my 3rd QRP entry. Can't wait to do it again next year! Thanks to the MRRC for their work to make it happen. 73s Dave WN4AFP

N4PN - fixed - GA

Great OHQP once again...lots of activity and great to see so many friends. K8O led the Q way with 24, followed by K8MR, 19; K8RYU with 5, and K8CR with 3. Lots with 1 or 2 contacts.

Missed 11 counties on both modes...amazing how many people with great calls don't work CW...thanks to the many that moved for a new mult.

See ya next year!
73, Paul, N4PN

K1LT - fixed - OH

That was fun!

I put up an NVIS 40 meter dipole but I could not tell any difference in performance between that dipole and the full sized ground mounted vertical.

In previous years I was unaware that spotting was allowed. This year I used it to great advantage to track the mobiles which boosted the multiplier count, perhaps at the expense of the number of QSOs.

Worked K8MR 31 times in 20 different counties with 1 dupe; K8O 19 times in 18 counties; K8RYU 8 times in 8 counties; and K8CR 2 times in 2 counties. Several K8MR contacts on 40 during the daylight hours required ESP. NVIS dipoles, verticals, and Beverages all produced equivalent signals.

I worked quite a number of Kansas QSO party stations. Too bad there is no way to easily log their counties so that I could work each one multiple times without causing dupes in either contest. I am surprised that the contest logging gurus haven't solved this problem. I would write my own software to solve this problem if I had more time (and less laziness). Also we might consider amending the Ohio QSO Party rules to allow multiple Kansas and Hawaii QSOs in the spirit of promoting more QSO party operation. There is probably a chicken versus egg problem of rules versus logging ability.

I missed 21 Ohio counties and 6 US states.

On the Road with N4CD I

Hurricane Harvey hit south Texas with vengeance. Living about 250 miles north of Houston, there were no ill effects from it till a few days later when one news broadcaster mentioned 'a few stations' were short on gas. Dang. That got to be a big news item – they showed a few stations 'out of gas'. 10 hours later, every gas station in north Texas was out of gas as people panicked and filled up their cars, their spare gas cans, and everything else in a hoarding mode. Stations had lines 20 and 30 deep – until, of course, one by one they all ran out of gas. There really was no 'shortage' - other than one or two gas station 'chains' had a small delay in getting gas to their stations - but when just about everyone panics and decides to fill up their car, whether they need gas or not at that time, that's what happens. Just like the bread and bottled water vanishing from shelves in a super market right before a hurricane. There was no hurricane in

north TX, though. Just panic! Rush to the gas station! Oh well.

It was Labor Day weekend and probably not a good time to take a county hunting/park activation trip down this way due to the unknown gas situation. You could wind up getting somewhere and not being able to find gas to get back home for a day or two. So no big trip was planned.

By the weekend, all the gas stations were back to normal and had gas once again. The price was up 50c a gallon – and could spike higher before things settle back to normal when all the refineries get back on line. Some even project \$4 and \$5/gal gas coming up as the storage levels of finished gas drop and aren't replaced fast enough. One third of US refinery production is off line. The economy wouldn't like \$5/gal gas.

On Sunday of Labor Day weekend, I got bored sitting at home, so I took a 45 mile trip up to the nearby Ray Roberts Lake State Park KFF-3051 for a few hours. This is a multi-unit set of parks around a large flood control lake that can handle ten thousand visitors.

The TN QSO Party was going on – so I could likely get at least 10 QSOs in that for an activation. Down here it's still hot – 95 degrees and sun, which is good for the weekenders who want good, sunny warm weather for swimming and boating. It's not so good for sitting in the car for a couple hours, though! Arrived and found a partially shaded parking spot in the boat launch parking area. Fired up the radio and put two dozen TN stations in the log and another 35 county hunter/park chasers. Caught 9A3NM/9A7W for DX along with a SG3 and a VO2RAC special event. Two of the cw park chaser regulars - Jess, W6LEN, and Bob, VE6UX were in the log.

During the day, 40M was horrible – barely a station on - but seemed to get a bit better in the late afternoon. Still not good.

I was getting hungry so decided to head home after 90 minutes. Traffic was fairly heavy all around the area – lots on the road for the holiday weekend and out for the day. Home by 5pm.

60Q in the log from this repeat activation which now has over 200Q total. I'll likely be back here again some weekend.

Thanks for the Qs.

County Sign Database Project

For the past few years, County Hunters have taken pictures of the county line signs around the country and contributed them to the database. At this point, we're over 2900 in the database with 167 or so to go!

Here's the needs list to finish off all 3077 counties for the County Sign Database. Can you help add a few more in?

<http://www.charchive.com/cntyneed.asp>

CA - California (17 Counties Needed)

Amador, Butte, El Dorado, Fresno, Kings, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Sutter, Tuolumne, Ventura, Yuba

CT - Connecticut (8 Counties Needed)

Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London, Tolland, Windham

GA - Georgia (7 Counties Needed)

Atkinson, Catoosa, Coffee, Haralson, Lincoln, Richmond, Wilkes

IL - Illinois (9 Counties Needed)

Calhoun, Edgar, Fulton, Jasper, Marion, Mason, Menard, Stark, Washington

IN - Indiana (18 Counties Needed)

Brown, Carroll, Clay, Crawford, Delaware, Floyd, Franklin, Grant, Howard, Lawrence, Madison, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Putnam, Sullivan, Tipton, Vigo

KY - Kentucky (10 Counties Needed)

Boyd, Carter, Clark, Floyd, Jefferson, Mercer, Montgomery, Morgan, Nelson, Washington

MA - Massachusetts (6 Counties Needed)

Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Worcester

MD - Maryland (5 Counties Needed)

Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Carroll, Howard, Somerset

ME - Maine (4 Counties Needed)

Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, York

MN - Minnesota (3 Counties Needed)

Jackson, Winona, Wright

NC - North Carolina (8 Counties Needed)

Halifax, Iredell, Jackson, Onslow, Pamlico, Rowan, Surry, Wilson

ND - North Dakota (10 Counties Needed)

Burke, Cavalier, Dickey, Grand Forks, LaMoure, Mountrail, Richland, Sargent, Sioux, Walsh

NH - New Hampshire (3 Counties Needed)

Hillsborough, Merrimack, Sullivan

NJ - New Jersey (8 Counties Needed)

Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean

NV - Nevada (3 Counties Needed)

Douglas, Esmeralda, Washoe

NY - New York (8 Counties Needed)

Kings, Nassau, New York, Ontario, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, Westchester

OH - Ohio (5 Counties Needed)

Butler, Hamilton, Jefferson, Monroe, Pike

PA - Pennsylvania (15 Counties Needed)

Adams, Allegheny, Bedford, Blair, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Lawrence, Mc Kean, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Somerset

RI - Rhode Island (5 Counties Needed)

Bristol, Kent, Newport, Providence, Washington

TN - Tennessee (6 Counties Needed)

Campbell, Coffee, Perry, Robertson, Sumner, Trousdale

UT - Utah (1 County Needed)
Washington

VA - Virginia (3 Counties Needed)
Arlington, Clarke, Pulaski

WA - Washington (2 Counties Needed)
Ferry, Okanogan

On the Trail of Regens

This month a really rare National receiver from the late 1920s came into the N4CD collection. It was the earliest National shortwave regen produced – the SW-2 – and came from the estate of a large radio collector.



Short-wave reception in the 1920's was generally limited to simple regenerative receivers. The only tubes available early on were triodes and these made very poor amplifiers at higher frequencies. There were, of course, a few early superheterodynes for short-wave reception but they were not much better than the regenerative sets. The first AM band superhets came out about 1926, and remember they were using triode tubes! You had one function per tube. The early triodes had a filament – that was heated white hot to get electrons to go off into space – a 'grid' and a large plate to collect the electrons 'boiled off' the filament. The very first tubes used a 5v 1 amp filament – basically 5 watt lightbulbs! An improvement in technology reduced this to 0.25 amps for the filament a few years later – which really helped since most radios ran off battery power.

One problem with regenerative receivers, though, was that they acted as transmitters once beyond the point of oscillation and could create interference for other listeners – especially if the detector was the first stage – which it usually was. Many listeners had no clue how to properly adjust the sets – and many sets with triode tubes were unstable no matter what you did with them! It was a zoo!

The main problem was that the early triode tubes had large plates (back then they often referred to them as 'wings') with lots of surface area. It formed a nice capacitor to the grid – giving you a feedback path – which wasn't desired – and limited how much gain you could get from that circuit. Indeed, Armstrong's original circuit didn't include the normal 'tickler' feedback circuit – the tube itself provided the feedback path – and you could (usually) keep it out of oscillation by reducing the filament voltage to reduce the tube gain. You would have a large rheostat in series with the filament to reduce the voltage to it – and the circuit 'gain'.

In the early 20s, the 'tickler' coil became the way to provide feedback – even though many of the triodes would easily 'take off' by themselves without more feedback. At this point, tubes were still expensive and were more than half the component cost of the radio itself. Imagine yourself paying \$11.95 for a radio, then another \$11 for the two tubes to make it work! It would be like buying a Heathkit in the 1960s. \$180 for your SB-100 transceiver, plus another \$175 for a set of tubes to make it work! Tubes eventually came down in price as manufacturing ramped up. Over 100,000,000 of the ubiquitous UV-201A triode tube were made in the 1920s!

The advent of the screen-grid tube opened a new era in RF design. Here was a tube that would function at the higher frequencies and provide greater amplification than any of

the triode tubes. IT incorporated a grid between the first grid (control grid) and the plate and 'shielded' the first grid from the plate – reducing the feedback path capacity. It improved RF amplifier stability.

National introduced a short-wave kit which they called the "National Screen-Grid Short-Wave Tuner." This set came in two, three and four-tube versions, the additional tubes being audio stages after the detector. The basic model was often called the SW-2 - but this was not a factory designation. The two and three tube sets were just called "Thrill Box" but the three-tube version later changed into the famed SW-3 with major redesign. The four-tube version, strangely, was called the SW-4. Thrill Box. The SW-5, a five tube version, came out before the well known SW-3.

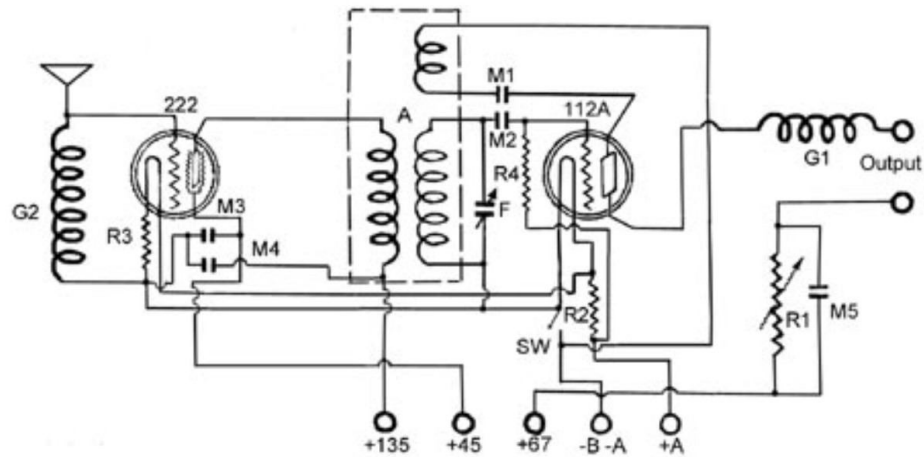


National SW-2 Thrill Box

This receiver was sold as a kit – including the base and front panel. Part of the reason was to escape the patent rights of the holder of the 'regenerative receiver'. You could sell a kit of parts to a 'hobbyist' for personal use – as long as you didn't 'manufacture' the radio. That happened all through the 1920s with the broadcast receivers. There was also a 'do it yourself' mentality back then – building your own radio was 'cool'. Patent holders wanted \$10/radio for their regen patents – when radios were selling as 'kits' for \$10 and \$20.

Here's the schematic – it's very simple. The first stage is an untuned RF amplifier – followed by the regen detector. You'd need a good long antenna up high, a good ground, and good headphones. National did sell an outboard power supply and speaker

for these radios but they were beyond the reach of most financially – and cost way more than the radio kit itself. I've never seen one either for sale or from a collector. Folks ran these off batteries. (6VDC wet cell and dry B+ battery).



You had a plug in coil for each 'range'(4) . It was very basic – but at the time, the shortwave craze was in full swing. Recall this is period before the internet. Before the TV. Before affordable transatlantic telephone service. News took a while to get from Europe to the USA. Hitler was on the rampage in Germany – and much of Europe was in turmoil. In the US, the depression had just started (1929) which would continue up to WW2 – 1940. The DOW Jones index didn't recover to the 1929 level till 1945! Folks just had to listen in to European broadcasts – that was the 'thing to do'. You could get your news (and propaganda) directly from major high power broadcasters in nearly every European country every evening.

I've seen the 3 tube variant – one is in the N4CD collection – and soon the two tube version will be added. Radios like this are rare and \$\$\$\$\$. If you ever see one at a hamfest for a few bucks – buy it! You can trade it for a new mobile rig– just about – depending upon condition and completeness. Even a 'junker' is worth \$\$\$\$.

A bit later, the National SW-3 came out – a well shielded 3 tube regen - always in a metal cabinet – initially designed mainly for commercial airline service – fairly lightweight – efficient battery operation – for those new long haul trips – especially over water where CW HF was the main means of keeping in touch. Over 10,000 of them were produced – and many used by amateurs. National would introduce 'bandsread' coils that allowed slow tuning across the ham bands. The radio offered shielded compartments for the RF and detector stage that gave you good stability and operation.

It's one of the best regen sets ever made, and with a regulated B+ power supply will easily tune in SSB signals.

You still see them (the SW-3) up for sale at antique radio auctions – but a pristine one with several sets of coils can command \$400 and up these days – with ones in 'fair' condition going for \$125 and up. There are several different variations produced over the 10 year run – including an A.C. Model (well, AC tube filaments – power supply still external) and at the very end – an octal tube based version. You needed 90-200v for the plates of the tubes. I've even seen them for sale at Dayton on occasion.

All during the 1930s and up to WW2, you'd see ads in the back of electronic and science magazines for 'shortwave radio kits' – these kit radios are incredibly rare – partly because no one later collected 'no name' receivers and most wound up in the junk pile. Folks want Collins, National, Hallicrafters, Johnson, and Hammarlund and similar name equipment in their collections. Most weren't that stable and built to last – they were good for shortwave listening where 'drift' and stability really didn't matter too much. Often they ran on batteries. (try buying a 67.5 or 90v battery these days – you can but they are \$25 or \$40 or \$50!). Of course, you can build a small DC power supply for them but few do.

Collectors do occasionally find the 'old radios' at hamfests – so I keep looking! Hoping to add something new every now and then.

Regens faded away as affordable superhets came along in the late 1930s – and it didn't take a lot more tubes to do it with pentode tubes – and 'crystal filters' came out. The key to mass produced superhets started with the creation of the 'pentagrid converter' tube – which combined the local oscillator/mixer/input functions in one tube – with five grids! With this tube, you could build a superhet receiver that provided speaker audio with just five tubes – 4 for the radio, one for a rectifier. (the All-American design consumer superhet – 100,000,000 million plus made over 30 years).

The transition was even faster with lots of war surplus after WW2 that was converted to ham use. Those old regens for the most part, if they hadn't been scrapped during WW2 metal drives, were relegated to the junk bin or scrap heap after WW2 other than long wave receivers (below 520 KHz) where they remained in service until the 1990 era. It's a lot easier to maintain a simple few tube regen at sea – compared to a complicated superhet with many more tubes and failure points. A few of the rare older HF ones survived in collections here and there.

However – in the 1950s, with a growing youth population and the raging 'cold war',

shortwave broadcasting and monitoring took on a new life. Tens of thousands of tube regen kits – from Knight Kit (Ocean Hopper, Space Spanner, Span Master) – and Heathkit (GR-81) – Radio Shack - and Lafayette Explor-Air and others were offered for sale. You could 'build your own radio' and listen in directly to Radio Moscow, the BBC, Radio Bucharest, Radio Prague, Radio Warsaw, the Swiss Broadcast Service, the DDR, West Germany, Sweden, Norway, and a dozen other European countries as well as 30 or 40 other countries around the world. Again, the do-it-yourself craze and electronics enthusiasm insured lots of kids built radios – from crystal sets to these Knight Kits and others. They were self contained with power supply and usually enough gain to run a speaker in most cases. Kids in the 1950s did the electronics bit by the tens of thousands. (And model trains, chemistry sets, and erector sets!) You'll see those Knight Kits for sale at many large hamfest if you look hard. Of course, other manufacturers joined in – and you had the low cost Hallicrafters S-38 type factory made radios – and similar. Better yet, many of these Short Wave Listeners (SWLs) transitioned to ham radio! It was an interesting time. Now – the shortwave bands are going quiet – each year another few broadcasters give up – moving to the internet for their news distributions. There's still stations on – but the numbers gets less and less each year for international broadcasters. Those multi-megawatt stations (ERP) take a good chunk of change to keep running – between electricity bills and the manpower to provide programming and maintenance with fewer and fewer listeners tuning in.

Even with the old regens, you'll find a few loud broadcasters still on the air – and in Africa and Asia – and the Mid East – many low power stations are still on – but challenging to hear them from the US. For the SWL types, it's all about the chase to log new ones!

Or you can listen in on the BC band to your favorite talk radio or sports station with your 80 year old regen – Hi Hi.

Now, most new hams never used a 'tube radio' in their life – and have no clue how vacuum tubes work – other than maybe 'they light up'. The 'senior' hams grew up with them – they were the only way to get on the air.

Colorado QSO Party

AD0DX mobile 184 cw 100 ssb

This was my first COQP and it was a lot of fun. We moved to Colo Springs in June and were looking forward to this.

My wife is my driver and we decided to drive from Colo Springs to Durango.

There were a few times where we were driving down roads where we were surrounded by mountain wall on both sides and just seemed no RF was getting out too far, or maybe just going straight up.

Thanks for all the qso's and hope to work you next year.

73's

Ron AD0DX/m and Cathy (XYL) driver

N6MU - fixed - CA 76 CW QSO 34 mults

Another year of basically waiting for the mobiles to change counties. At least there were four of them. Thanks W0ETT, W0ZA, AD0DX and N0KV. Very little action after 02Z. 73...

The Solar Eclipse QSO Party

Not a 'county' but still an interesting event. Did you participate?

K1LT

For the Great American Eclipse 2017 and the Solar Eclipse QSO Party, I traveled with Bill, WD8AMX and my daughter, Sunni, to Cerulean, Kentucky, EM66dx (transmitted EM66cw, see below). Bill and I started planning this trip more than a year ago. We found an acceptably priced hotel room in Clarksville, TN about 44 (normal) minutes away from eclipse ground zero (point of "greatest eclipse"), latitude 36.9664° N, longitude 87.6709° W. Then we arbitrarily picked a "public viewing area" in the Amish community outside of Hopkinsville, KY (Eclipseville, USA per their web site) which turned out to be 1200 meters from the point of greatest eclipse. This was the first happy accident.

Originally, the trip was exclusively for total eclipse viewing. When the SEQP was announced, we added the ham radio content.

The Saturday before the eclipse I manufactured a full sized 40 meter vertical. I already have a full sized "portable" 40 meter vertical that I use for Field Day, but that one is based on a 10-foot wooden 4x4 and 12-foot lengths of tubing. The "new" antenna used 6 5-foot military surplus aluminum mast sections and associated accessory hardware (tilt base, insulator, guy ring, etc.). These parts have been kicking around my barn since my ARES days in the 80s and 90s. I made 13 34-foot radials out of "obsolete" 18-gauge Beverage wire and a do-hickey to fit my battery powered drill to wind up the radial wires. The final specialized part was a 3-inch square of copper clad G10 with 4 5-position screw terminals to which to attach the radials. I completed the ensemble with a 100-foot piece of RG8.

The antenna parts and mast sections, K3 and old HP laptop (with serial port), 2 folding chairs and a shade canopy all fit in the back of the Prius with enough room for the kid to spread out in the back seat.

Saturday evening I perused the Writelog reflector to catch the latest wisdom about configuring the logging program for the SEQP. I also looked up the grid square we planned to visit and came up with EM66cw, which is cool because of the "cw".

Since there were dire predictions of traffic apocalypse we departed Carroll, Ohio at 7am Sunday morning for the nominal 7 hour trip to Clarksville. The entire trip to Clarksville was uneventful with light traffic everywhere except the last mile in Clarksville which had minor congestion (normal congestion, per the hotel check-in lady).

Once checked in, we elected to visit the Cerulean site and explore potential traffic issues. We found the site on Cornelius Road without much difficulty and talked to the proprietor. Erecting an antenna did not seem to be an issue. Then we cruised through Hopkinsville to see how many people might be there. Hopkinsville is a town of 35,000 people, and the center of town had been made over into a town festival. We didn't see 200,000 people so we had no worries of traffic apocalypse.

Sunday evening Bill and I visited the "Twisted Kilt" (hard to spell that word without digits) for some food and a beer. I resisted lecturing the ladies about callsigns.

Eclipse day, Monday morning we left the hotel at 7am and arrived at the Cornelius road site before 8am. See saw only light (but speedy) traffic. It took about 30 minutes to get checked in and then we picked a location at the edge of the designated area so that our antenna would be out of the way of other people. The proprietor said they expected about 1500 cars.

The weather forecast called for a heat index of 103 degrees. When we erected the sun shade canopy we could not find the central hub that bind the spindly frame tubes. After some improvising we managed to put up about 6 square feet of shading hang from the hatch on the back of the car. The 40-meter vertical went together easily and greatly impressed our visitors who were also impressed by our mission to investigate low-frequency propagation during an eclipse.

The ambiance of the whole site reminded me of what Woodstock or Burning Man must be like without the nudity. I have never been to either of those events.

I didn't bring a table. But the cooler with plenty of ice water and cold pop made a great stand for the K3 and the plastic box that had transported the K3 made a great stand for the circa 2003 Compaq laptop (with serial port!). The vertical exhibited an SWR of 1.4:1 on the first attempt, so no further effort was made to tweak the antenna although Bill periodically straightened the radials that people were determined to wade through.

Operation commenced at 1421Z. The first three contacts were quite difficult with extremely weak signals even though the other stations reported 579. After the third contact, I switched the RX antenna from "Beverage" to "main" which helped immensely.

Several people stopped by to observe the operation. One guy was curious about how Morse code worked these days, so I showed him the laptop keyboard but I also dug the Bencher paddle out of the car and plugged that into the K3. He was very impressed by the "2-way" motion of the paddle versus the 1-way movement of a straight key. I made a contact for him using the paddle. After that I used the paddle for several contacts and I was amazed that I could actually make myself understood.

When the eclipse began I began to look for signs of anomalous propagation. Contacts came from only the EM/EN and FM/FN grids. Nearby stations were particularly weak, probably because a vertical makes a lousy NVIS antenna. Signals generally seemed weaker as the day aged.

At 1534Z I worked N7S in DN72. He was CQing and came back easily. I heard him a couple more times while tuning.

At 1743Z W6YX called me with a no-QSB 579 signal. I didn't hear him again after that. About 10 minutes later, I heard 2 7-land stations exchange DM grid squares. I heard another 7 (call already forgotten, no pencil or paper for notes) CQing, but he didn't answer my calls. The 3 7s were heard over about 2 minutes and then there

was no further DX.

After the anomalous propagation, the eclipse started to get interesting. The light was noticeably weaker, and oppressive heat diminished and the breeze picked up slightly. Of course the people around me started to get excited and that was infectious.

Totality was awesome.

It was both night and day at the same time. The solar corona was plainly visible. We saw the diamond ring but no Bailey's beads. A big 4-engine jet flew by at a relatively low altitude just at totality. He was probably at 10,000 feet judging from his apparent size. This description is utterly inadequate to describe the experience. You just have to be there.

After totality ended, my enthusiasm for the radio stuff was greatly attenuated. I made a few more contacts including the zippity NO3M. My last contact was at 1833Z for a total of 118 QSOs.

Many people started to leave a few minutes after totality. We hung around until after C4 (the very end of the entire event). Then we took down the vertical and packed it up while sipping cold Cokes.

We exchanged greetings and email addresses with our neighbors and departed the Cornelius road site around 3:30 pm local time, about an hour after the end of the event. There were few cars to be seen at that time. We promptly got lost on the back roads and both smart-phones were being problematic about navigation. Ultimately we circumnavigated Hopkinsville and congratulated ourselves on escaping without traffic issues.

Once we reached the Western Kentucky Parkway, traffic apocalypse began. The return trip was city rush-hour style traffic for 11 hours. The big bottle neck was all traffic exiting western Kentucky heading northeast had to fit onto a single tightly curving on-ramp to I-65 in a major construction zone. But slowdowns continued until we reached Ohio. We stopped at a rest area next to the Miami River bridge at 4:30am. The stop was packed with travelers. When we resumed the trip we still had on more 40 minute delay waiting for a

repaving project near Wilmington on I-71. The trip that took 6.5 hours on Sunday (1 hour removed from Clarksville) took 14 hours on Monday. We arrived back at my house at 6:30 am after traveling all night. I have never before traveled by car non-stop for 11 hours.

After my own 2-hour nap, I typed this report while slowly unpacking the car. I hope I generated useful data for the HAMsci people. I had fun doing a "real" Field Day, especially at the event of the century (so far). I found the anomalous propagation I hoped to observe

Tennessee QSO Party

W4NZ mobile - 1037 cw QSO

This run almost didn't happen. Mark K0EJ and daughter Maegan had other obligations this weekend so I was without a team. But previous mobile QSO partner, Gary K4VIG was able to free up some time and we enlisted the help of first-time multi-op mobiler K1GU. Ned had planned a solo set up/operate/tear down operation across a few nearby counties but opted to join us for a different type of adventure. So we were set. A route was laid out to cover up to 26 counties if things fell into place. Our setup this year consisted of an Icom 756proIII at 100w, laptop, Winkeyer and two hustler antennas mounted on the roof of my 2016 Dodge Durango. The operating position in the Durango was comfortably snug but entrance and egress was not quick, especially for us seasoned ops. This made operator changes a bit slow but the pileups didn't seem to mind. We did manage to cover 25 counties opting near the end to go to rare Polk county before Bradley. Time expired on us about 2 miles from the Polk/Bradley county line. An unforeseen traffic jam in Monroe County may have delayed us just enough to miss Bradley. Next year. This route was a bit over 500 miles which is pretty ambitious for a 9-hour contest.

The pileups - amazing and almost non-stop. Many of our Thursday night NS Sprinters called in, most notably:

WD0T,K7SS,N6ZFO,W6SX,W7OM,N6RO,W9RE,K4BAI,N8EA,N4DW and K8MR.
Many other friends also followed us such as:
VE3KZ,N9CK,K6MR,K1GQ,W1WBB,WN4AFP,DL3DXX,K9YC,N8BJQ and
NW0M.

Thanks to everyone for the QSO's and making this so much fun. See you in the next one.

73, Ted W4NZ for Gary K4VIG and Ned K1GU

KN4Y - fixed - FL 62 cw QSO

This is a 40 meter CW QSO party with a few 80 meter QSO's for good luck. Rode with the three mobiles with good signals. Wife had a problem and I missed the last two hours. It was fun on a hot day in the panhandle.

K4BAI - fixed - GA 84 cw 61 ssb

No signals from TN audible at the beginning. Skipping over us on 40 and 20. All five QSOs on 20M including one with W4NZ/M were backscatter with the beam west. Good job by all, particularly the three mobiles. No activity on 75 phone until the last 90 minutes or so. Thanks for all QSOs. Hope I can get back to TN for /M operation again in the future. Right now, it comes too soon after CWOpen. 73, John, K4BAI.

K9YC - fixed - CA - 74 cw qso

I really enjoy the better state QSO parties, and TNQP has been one of them for quite a while. A big part of the run is chasing the mobiles from county to county. This time around there were only two, at least on CW, and after only a few hours, one of them started skipping 20M for several counties, and then,

long before 20 closed (the other mobile was loud for hours afterwards), abandoned 20M completely. I made up my mind then not to send in a log.

When there are no mobiles to work, it becomes no fun, and it was several hours before I could even hear fixed stations on 40M. So I quit for several hours, returned to work the guys I could hear on 80 and 40, including K4ZGB, the mobile who didn't abandon 20M. I worked Tom in two counties on 40M and two on 80M. I heard the other team on 40 and 80, but didn't call them.

Thanks to all the guys who did try to work west of the MS river.

73, Jim K9YC

K4ZGB mobile – reported 554 QSOs. Made No comments

Solar Activity

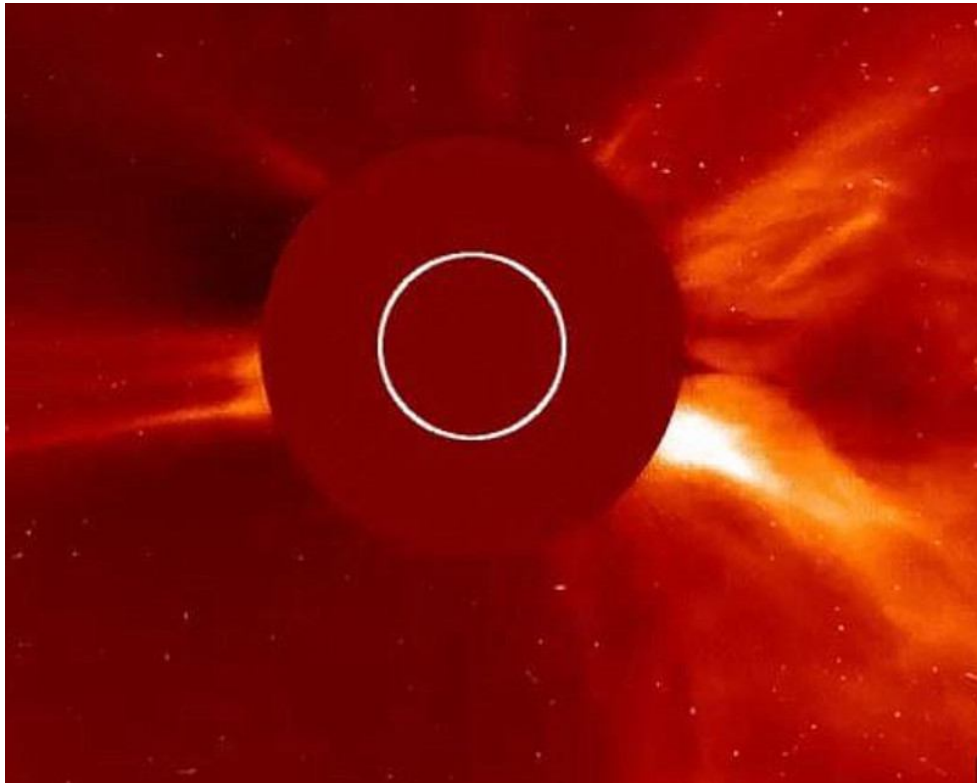
9/7/2017

The biggest solar flare seen for 12 YEARS erupts from the sun causing radio blackouts on Earth

Two high-intensity category X solar flares were emitted in yesterday
The second of these flares was the most powerful recorded since 2005
The eruptions knocked out high-frequency radio communications for one hour
They also disrupted low-frequency communications used in navigation

The biggest solar flare seen for 12 years erupted from the sun yesterday causing radio blackouts on Earth. Two high-intensity solar flares were emitted, the second of which was the most intense recorded since 2005, the Space Weather Prediction Centre (SWPC) said. The flares knocked out radio communications for one hour on the Earth's side facing the sun, as well as low-frequency communications used in navigation. Experts say that a coronal mass ejection (CME) triggered by the flares will likely arrive

in the next 1-2 days, and that this could damage satellites, communications and power systems on Earth.



The CME could also trigger a series of stunning Northern Lights appearances across Earth's northern hemisphere. At 10:10 am BST (5:10 am ET) on Wednesday an X-class solar flare - the most-powerful sun flare category - erupted from a large sunspot on the solar surface. The flare, an X2.2, was the strongest since 2015, but just three hours later it was dwarfed by an X9.3 flare, the largest since 2006, at X9.0.

The second of the two flares is the largest in 12 years, after an X17 that erupted from the solar surface in 2005. These radiation flares, which can disrupt communications satellites, GPS and power grids, were detected and captured by Nasa's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) satellite.

The two eruptions occurred in an active region of the sun where an eruption of mid-level intensity occurred on September 4. The current cycle of the sun, which began in

December 2008, saw the intensity of solar activity decline sharply, opening the way to a 'solar minimum.'

Solar cycles last on average eleven years, and at the end of the active phase, these eruptions become increasingly rare - but they still can be powerful.

Solar flares result from an accumulation of magnetic energy in some places.

A hole in the outermost layer of the sun opens the magnetic field up to stretch further than usual, which results in a gradual increase in solar wind

The wind fires out jets of ionized matter that are projected hundreds of thousands of kilometres outward at high speed. During larger solar flares, the sun can also fire out a cloud of energetic plasma in an event called a coronal mass ejection (CME).

Yesterday's category X eruptions triggered a massive coronal mass ejection, which was also captured by SDO.

'It was accompanied by radio emissions that suggest there's a potential for a CME,' SWPC space scientist Rob Steenburgh told Space.com. 'However, we have to wait until we get some coronagraph imagery that would capture that event for a definitive answer.' The biggest flares are known as 'X-class flares' based on a classification system that divides solar flares according to their strength. The smallest ones are A-class - near background levels - followed by B, C, M and X. Similar to the Richter scale for earthquakes, each letter represents a 10-fold increase in energy output, so an X is ten times an M and 100 times a C. Within each letter class there is a finer scale from one to nine.

If it reaches our planet, radiation ejected by solar flares can knock out radio and GPS communications because it disrupts Earth's magnetic field.

Very large flares can even create currents within electricity grids and knock out energy supplies.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4860480/NASA-captures-images-strong-solar-flares.html#ixzz4rzzo4yXh>

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N4CD was on the road on Sept 8 – the day after. Really weird conditions with A=38, K=8 but the SFI was way above 120 – and contacts were being made on 15, 12 and 10m – mostly to DX.

Another massive flare hit on 9/10/2017 – an X8.2 – that caused multi-hour HF blackout – no signals at all to anywhere from anywhere for a couple hours!

Iowa QSO Party

N9JF mobile 118 cw 48 ssb

Just messed around for a few hours as a mobile in the neighboring state. I heard only two other IA stations, but I didn't stick around after dark. Too many deer.

KB0LF mobile 140 cw

Did four C/L locations in very SW of the state. A little rain at one venue at noon, but fortunately no big T-Storms as predicted. On 20m CW, lot of QRM from the 'rs' QP folks

KE0TT - rover - 53 cw

K3/10 at 5 watts to a 66' long inverted vee up 24 to 30' at the apex, fed with ladder line and tuner. Not your typical IAQP outing for this op, this year. Started as a rainy day until I arrived at Allamakee county, where it was sunny and warm on the other side of the weather front. That location went well, on a slight hill with ground sloping down in all directions. 80M was quiet, 40M was long at 11 AM, and 20M was wispy. Not a peep on 15 or 10M. Never heard anyone in IA or adjoining states due to long 40M band. Had eyeball QSO with N0FN, who stopped by with his family. Enjoyed the eyeball Q with him.

A canoe outfitter stopped by, just curious what the 30' pole and wires were about, so we had a ham radio intro session on the spot, and I learned a bit about his canoeing business. Made 15 Q's in an hour. Then moved to Winneshiek. It rained all the way there. At one point, there was a convoy of about 10 tractors traveling the same direction as me, through a hilly, winding section with lots of "no passing" zones, so settled back for a slow ride at 20 mph. Since it was raining, maybe there's no hurry anyway. Well, that turned out to be true. When I got to a favorite radio spot, again on higher ground, I waited for the rain to let up enough to put up the pole and inv vee. While doing that, I had gloves on, but thought I felt the pricks of thorns or sand burrs a couple times, but shrugged it off and kept hurrying. When connecting the feedline inside the SUV, now without gloves, I finally got the message ZAP! Static charges from rain clouds passing overhead!

My pole was only configured to 24' high, how could this be happening? I grounded the lines to the car body and the charges dissipated through the frame and tires to the ground. OK, good time for lunch, but total lost time for this county now up to 45 minutes before the static let up and I could get on the air. There was no lightning or thunder at any time, but was an unexpected lesson on electric fields! Only about a dozen Q's, and felt it was time to go. The sun came out! So stayed longer for minimal Q's.

Drove on to four more counties planned, but now 1.5 hours behind schedule. And drove into rain again, awww. Decided to drive NW to move out from under the rain clouds.... well, not so much the rain as concerns over more static charges. So headed NW until the weather once again changed to sunshine, breezes, and cooler temps. Now I was way off schedule and had by-passed 3 counties I'd hoped to activate, and stopped the wheels in Mitchell county for a decent run of about 30 Q's to round out IAQP 2017. Thanks for your copy of my QRP sigs, I always appreciate that. Also got a couple calls from John, k4bai, and was able to ask him if his antennas survived Hurricane Irma, since it passed over his QTH as a tropical storm. Thankfully all is well there, his antennas are intact. See you next time! 73, Dan ke0tt

WN4AFP - fixed - SC QRP 6 cw

In a QP, every contact is important... I had limited time, but made a few IAQP contacts. Bands were not cooperating with us this weekend

K4BAI - fixed - GA 12 cw 13 ssb

Fair activity this year. Thanks for QSOs, especially NE0TT/M and N9JF/M. Did not hear any of the six IA counties I still need all time. They are: Lyon, Dickinson, Sioux, Shelby, Auduburn, Keokuk. Maybe next year. 73, John, K4BAI

KN4Y - fixed -- FL 17 cw

Did not hear much CW activity, I worked all stations I heard even worked a mobile every once in awhile. Conditions not the greatest from this location.

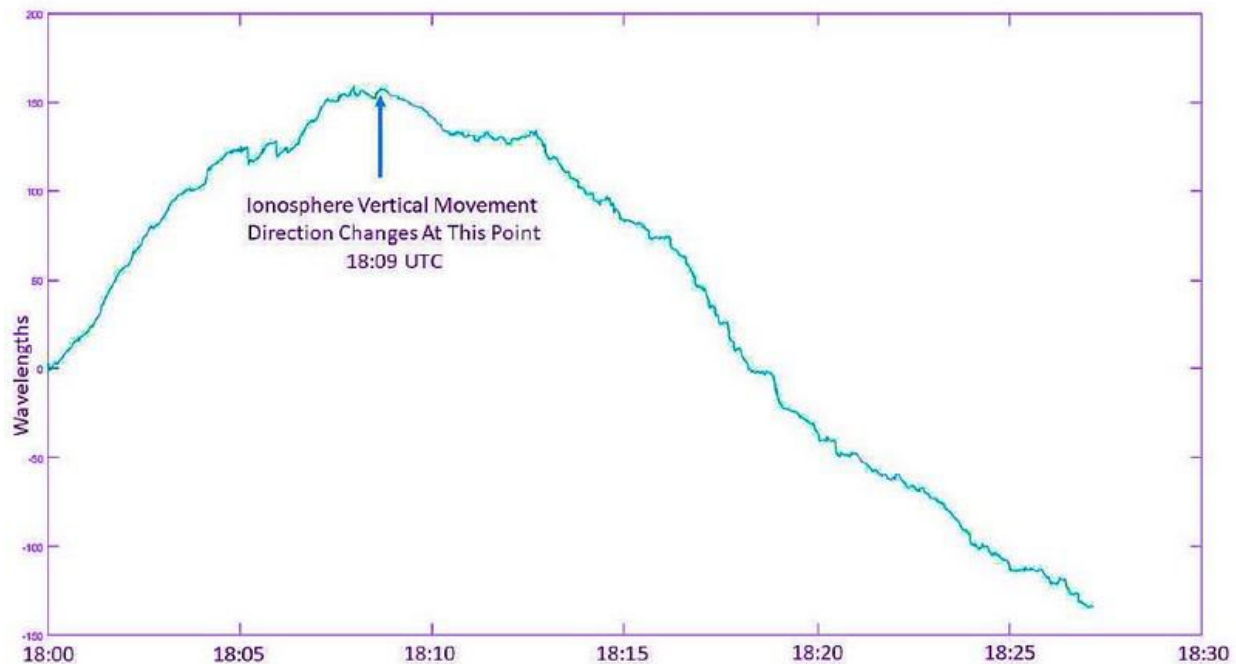
Solar Eclipse II

Professional ionospheric researcher Dr. Phil Erickson, W1PJE, head of the Atmospheric Sciences Group at MIT's Haystack Observatory, said he can say categorically that there was a definite, large, and measurable effect in the ionosphere from the eclipse. "We saw a 2X reduction in electron density during the eclipse for at least 45 minutes to 1 hour," Erickson told ARRL. "This reduction had direct impacts on HF propagation along the bottom side." Erickson said many models and observations exist from previous eclipses that demonstrate these effects. Erickson said MIT researchers used a "megawatt-class Thomson scatter radar," which can directly measure the plasma state of the ionosphere, including electron density, across a huge area in the eastern US. "Scientists in the worldwide space physics community will be using these and many other eclipse observations to learn more about our ionosphere, space weather, and its effects on navigation and communication signals including Amateur Radio," Erickson said. He has shared his data with the HamSCI team.

Bob Reif, W1XP, was in southeastern North Carolina where the eclipse totality was about 97% with two radios running multiple bands of WSPR. "Lots of data to look at,"

he said, "but what jumped out was that at almost the exact time of maximum coverage of the sun at this location, 160 meters opened for about 30 minutes and then closed down again until the normal gray line. So, the D layer responded to the shadow of the Moon to some extent."

Gene Greneker, K4MOG, in Georgia told ARRL that his own eclipse experiment "worked out rather well." He set up an RFSpace NetSDR receiver at his location, locked to a 10 MHz GPS standard and tuned to WWV on 15 MHz. "The NetSDR provides in-phase and quadrature components of the WWV signal, which allows relative signal phase to be reconstructed from recorded data," Greneker explained in a more-detailed account. "Signal phase-vector rotation change was chosen to indicate totality arrival, because phase is very sensitive to any change in propagation path length, possibly caused by ionospheric movement, up or down. Solar presence or absence can cause vertical ionospheric movement."



Greneker recording the phase of the 15-MHz WWV signal from 1800 UTC until 1900 UTC on August 21. "Each time the path length changes by 1 wavelength, there is a 360° change in the phase of the signal," he said. Greneker offset the path of totality to the south, running parallel to the path between WWV in Fort Collins, Colorado, and his location in Atlanta.

Greener assumed that the reflection point off the ionosphere was south of Kansas City, and, he said, the minimum dip in the phase record occurred very close to totality at that location. "At 1809 hours UTC, when the totality point was parallel to the midpoint of the propagation path, the path length increased from zero wavelengths to 157 wavelengths, or 3,140 meters, during the intervening 9 minutes," he reported. As totality moved southeast, solar radiation began to increase and the path length decreases as the ionospheric reflecting point moves downward.

Courtesy of ARRL Weekly Newsletter, ARRL, Inc, Newington CT – 06111

New Hampshire QSO Party

As usual, this was not much of anything. Most of the activity for contests takes place during the New England QSO Party – with mobiles and fixed stations

from the 3830 reflector:

K4BAI - fixed - GA - 3 qso

Most of the weekend spent listening for stations in the various QSO parties, etc. and only heard three from NH. Thanks for the QSOs. 73, John, K4BAI

WN4AFP - fixed SC

I've had some triple digit scores in the past... Activity this year was lower than previous years. N1FD was very strong on 40m and 20m, but didn't hear anyone else except K1RX on 40m cw. Hopefully more activity next time. I'd love to see this contest move to a one-day experience.

73s Dave WN4AFP

Mobile Activity Report - September

At the beginning of the month:

Bob, KA9JAC was out giving out state parks and state forests. He would be out many times during the month

Ray, WG6X, was out mobile in FL

During the CO QP, Bill, K8TE and AD0DX were giving out outies

W5MIG noted out in TX state parks.

W4NZ and K4ZGB were out mobile in the TN QP

N9JF, Jim, was mobile in WI, IL, IA, MN, and other states.

Kraig, KA2LHO was observed out running FL parks and counties

Don, K3IMC, made a trip from GA over to AL

Norm, N9MM, was noted out in MT and points west.

N5PHT operated from AR parks – 80 through 15m – runs an RV and sits for a few days in each park – usually 7-10 days

Kerry, W4SIG made a trip from TN down to LA.

Phil, AB7RW, headed out on a long cross country trip- through NV to AZ and points east.

Bill, K2HVN noted up in New England and then into NY state, PA, OH headed west.

Bob, K7TM, spotted in MT and ID counties

K0ATZ activated many MO parks during the month

Mike, NF0N, was giving out NE counties

Ron, N5MLP started out on a long trip – up through TX, into KS, NE, SD, into CO

Bill, NU0Q was spotted mobile in IA during the QP

N4UP noted out in WV, IN, OH and KY

Jerry W0GXQ, noted out in NE and CO

Gene, K5GE, headed west from TX – far west -

End date 9/18

On the Road with N4CD II

I had to urge to go mobile. I checked the ARRL Hamfest schedule page. Duh! The Mena AR hamfest was coming up – in a day! Ooops....forgot to put this on the calendar. It's not worth going to just for the hamfest – only a few hundred show up and maybe 30 tables of swap meet. There are some nice boat anchor type radios that show up – old Hallicrafters and similar from the 1960s and 70s, some older ICOMs. With Parks on the Air going, I could do a two-fer – run some parks and hit the hamfest – which conveniently was being held in a state park in AR! You can't do much better than that!

So despite rotten propagation predictions, the N4CD mobile headed out on Friday to head the 225 miles to Queen Wilhemina State Park. Along the way I could run a park I missed the last time I was in McCurtain County OK. The route was up through Fannin, Lamar and Red River into McCurtain – and the town of Broken Bow. Just north of there is the multi-unit Beavers Bend State Park – with half a dozen locations, marinas, beach areas, lodges and camp grounds. You'll see sign after sign for it. Try and find a sign for Hochatown State Park and you are out of luck. It took a while to actually find it - Garmin had it in one place. Mapquest another. Finally found a park service map that showed where it was! It's almost like it doesn't exist! Well, even though I found it,

conditions were miserable, there was no internet coverage – so I fell short of the magic 44 number of contacts. I'll have to go back someday to qualify it.

Didn't have time to stick around – time to get to the hamfest another couple hundred miles north. Took the scenic route along the Talemina Parkway – windy – but the fastest way to get there – the park is at the end when it reaches OK. I arrive at the hamfest in the state park (KFF-1114) around 3pm. If you were hunting for a mobile, an IC-706 in nice shape (no cw filter) was up for sale at \$375. Good price – maybe you could get it for less.

Folks come to this in RV's, tent camp, or stay in the State Park Lodge at the site for the most part. A few, like N4CD, head 15 miles further into the small town of Mena, AR, population about 5000. There are half a dozen motels there (but no Super 8) – so I stay at the Limetree Inn. In the past, the AR QSO Party was held the same weekend – but they changed it for the 2 or 3 people who participate in both and didn't want a conflict. Those folks would rather stay and yak all day, not put out their counties for the AR QP. So I skipped a few years – no two-fers any longer. Back then, I'd visit the hamfest (it's over as far as the swap meet) by 9am on Saturday, then go run counties in the AR QP and head toward home in late afternoon. Now, I'd hit it for the park. Probably won't do it again next year. By 4:30 pm, had seen everything and had run the park successfully (Polk County AR) so headed on into the motel. There's a good restaurant at the motel, too. Friday night was seafood buffet (\$10). Decent. Hit the hay early.

Up at 6am – hit the breakfast buffet (\$10) then headed on up Rich Mountain to the hamfest. Put a few more contacts in the log. Met up with one of the big park activators – Gary, N5PHT. He camps at a park for 10-14 days in his RV. Makes several hundred contacts – sometimes more – running all the cw bands including lately trying 60m cw. Around 9am, it was time to head out.

Went west along the parkway (scenic – but windy – goes back 70 or 80 years – along the ridge top for 50 miles) – over to Talemina State Park. Nice park – had a good run. Lake, beach, campgrounds, hiking, etc, are there in the hills of OK. Successfully activated it and Latimer County. After about 1.5 hours, headed on out to Robbers Cave State Park.

Much of Oklahoma is Native American Reservations – half the state – and there are wide areas of no towns for miles and miles, and when you do hit a small town, not much is there other than a Dollar General store and a few other small businesses. Very few have motels. Eastern OK is very hilly – small 'mountains' of a couple thousand feet – lots of forest land, too – and lots of open land. At the higher elevations – trees were

showing signs of leaves turning – mostly brown, though.

Robbers Cave SP and the surrounding wildlife area has 3 lakes, miles and miles of hiking and equestrian paths, rock climbing/rappelling, an ATV area, lots of camp sites – and a bit of notoriety. 8,000 acres of park lands. After the Civil War, this was a hideout area for the Dalton Gang.....Jesse James....Belle Star.....Rufus Buck. It was wilderness far from the cities/towns. It still is for the most part!

In the 1930s, the CCC folks build dams for the lakes – expanding them, built campgrounds and other facilities, roads, etc. I pulled in and did my 44 plus QSOs. Bands OK – not great but not too bad. Spent 1.5 hours making contacts then headed out.

Well, the next park was 50 miles north and N4CD eaded that way hoping to get one more in. I soon realized it would be about 4:30pm to start – and by then 20m dies usually – so headed directly into Muskogee to a Super 8 Motel instead. It takes 1.5 hours typically to run a park – and it would be getting late by the time I reached the motel around 6:30 or 7pm. Dinner that night at the restaurant walking distance from the motel – Catfish Ranch. They had a seafood buffet for \$15. Filled up. Decent salad bar.

Next morning, Sunday, had breakfast at the motel then headed out to Greenleaf State Park about 30 minutes away. Bands cooperated and 50 went into the log in 1.5 hours. Three contacts on 17m. Called for 5 minutes there but no more QSOs. Probably wasted to much time working the piles to zero then calling for more minutes. Internet faded away at the end – went to 14336 and called and called – no takers at all! Oh well. No spots- no takers it seems.

The plan was to hit one more park – then head on home with a short stop at one park along the route to add another 4 to the previous trip there where I only got 40 QSOs. Four more were needed. That was the plan. Little did I realize a solar flare was about to happen shortly.

I arrived at TenKiller State Park after 40 minute drive on two lane back roads. Garmin didn't know it existed. Nor the nearby town. So I navigated there the 'old fashioned way' using the paper map which I always carry on trips and use all the time. Garmin is good in some states, pretty bad in other states. OK is not so good for the most part. Then again, maybe almost no one wants to ever go to those small towns – hi hi.

As you got close to the State Park, there were road direction signs for it getting you there. Run started out good – hit the county hunter frequencies first – ran them dry on 20 and 30m– tried 17m and got a couple. Went over to the POTA frequencies -14.041 10121 and put another bunch in the log – getting up to 37. Time for 40m at 7041. Spotted myself - and work just one – real weak – AE5B – who is usually loud. Then nothing. Lots of nothing. Hmm...what is going on? Where are the regulars on 40M?

Check the other bands. Not a signal to be found – 20m dead end to end – CW - SSB – not even digital stuff heard. Same on 30M and 40m end to end. Check again. Nothing on 17m either. Help! I need 6 more QSO. Not even a net control station anywhere or the bunch on 14.280 always there. Nada. Getting to 44Qs is not going to happen. What did happen was an X8.2 major major flare that wiped out HF – total and complete blackout. From my previous experience, it takes at least an hour – maybe 2 or 3 – before you hear much again. I didn't have hours to wait – had to get on home. So reluctantly left the park with 38Q. Dang! I hate that. Missed by 6. Oh well. Those HF blackouts can be really bad if you are putting out counties in a far away state and can't even scare up a single contact for 'transmitted county' credit if you are by yourself!

N4CD headed home. Drove by Lake Eufala SP about an hour later. Checked bands. Zilch. I needed just 4 more QSOs here to get to the magic number 44. Not today! Not a signal to be found. So I kept on driving the 250 miles to home. That was a different drive with only one radio contact two hours later – W8TZA on 30m from Pittsburg OK. Checked from every county with a call on 20,30,and 40cw CHN frequencies. . . Gave up as I entered TX the last 60 miles and turned the radio off. There is no joy in listening to white noise hour after hour.

Overall – good trip – but two failed activations not reaching 44 – those will have to get revisited to get the overall QSO count above 44 – and didn't get to hit one other that needed a few more Qs. Can't win them all. The weather was great – sunny – cool mornings. No goodies found in the hamfest flea market but you need to go just 'in case'. There are a lot more parks to run in OK! The hamfest is held every year, too!

See you next trip!

New Jersey QSO Party

From the 3830 contest reflector:

K0BAK mobile 229 SSB

20m was disappointing, but 80m after dark in SALE was on fire. As usual, did not find many NJ stations in the NJQP. Could only operate on Saturday, I wish I could have pushed my score into 5 digits on Sunday.

Thank you to the organizers and volunteers

N2MM - fixed NJ 216 cw 966 ssb

Interesting contest. Worked all sections but KL7. Actually, I worked 3 KL7's, but none were in AK...lol I had several KH6's dupe me. Activity from NJ still remains sparse. Missed 5 NJ counties that didn't seem to be active.

This was just a fun contest for me. I will NOT be submitting my log!

Thanks for the qsos...

WN4AFP - fixed - SC QRP 8cw 8ssb

Due to RFI issues, I decided to run QRP for the weekend. My only hope for this contest was 40m. I didn't hear any NJ stations on 20m and no one could hear me on 80m. I missed most of Saturday. I did experiencing surprising 40m prop because NJ stations were very strong into SC during the entire contest period. The problem I had was that not many could hear me. There was more phone ops than cw ops and that doesn't work week for me and QRP. I did manage to work 16 stations - 14 on Saturday and 2 on Sunday. Pete, K)BAK was the only mobile that I heard/worked. I did not hear K2TD on 40m during the contest. I would like

commend Ken, N2CQ on his contest operating approach. Ken was calling CQ at 25 wpm or so and a non-contester called him at probably 10 wpm. Ken turned-off his contesting mode and slowed down and worked the station in normal mode and went back to running...thanks Ken! Based upon the NJ activity, it may be time to consider making the NJQP a one-day QP... just an idea. We'll try it again next year and hopefully with RFI problems solved.

73s Dave WN4AFP

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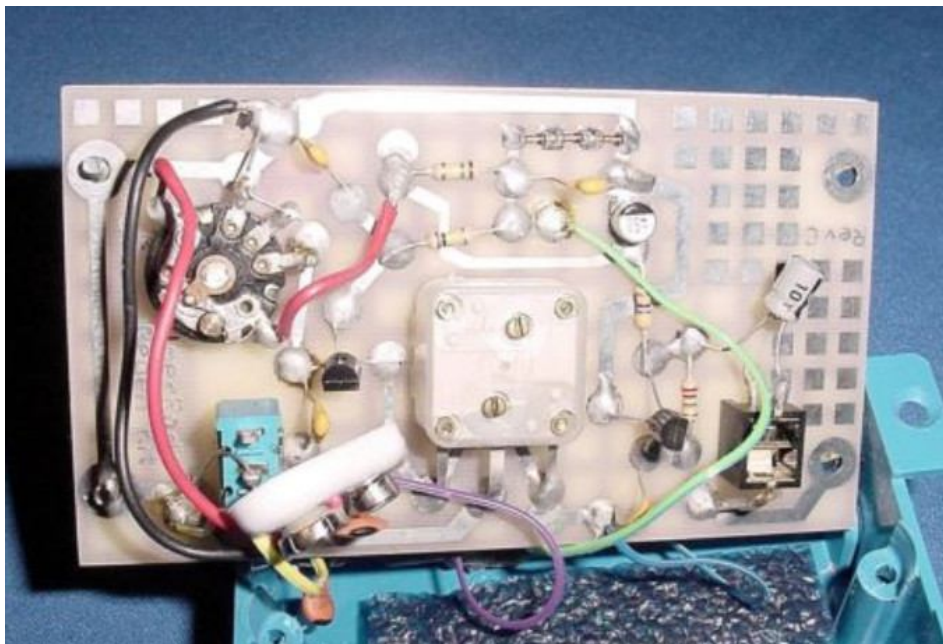
AA2R/m was not active this year so many NJ counties never made it on the air.

On the Trail of Regens II

An interesting item appeared on Ebay – something new for the first time in months in the way of regen receivers. It's about a 15 year old kit radio that was sold in small quantities by a fellow who went by the name of ElmerDude. He made radio kits up until 2009 when there just wasn't enough interest by buyers to keep the kits going. During a 10-15 year period, he offered kits for old fashioned crystal and regen radios like this – probably a hundred or two total. Had a few other kits for sale as well like a straight key/oscillator. It's not something you see every day.



Lower left hand side knob is the 'regeneration control'. It tunes the BC band in two overlapping segments using a ferrite core coil.



On the Ebay listing, it noted: “Regenerative radio. There are two active devices, a PN2222 and a TL431C. the Regenerative receiver based on designs of Charles Kitchin and Charles Wenzel. This receiver is capable of receiving many local AM stations without an external antenna. “

This set runs off a 9v battery – drives an earphone – and has a self contained ferrite antenna that picks up loud local stations.

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Washington State Salmon Run

There were at least 2 mobiles out there – conditions seemed to be poor for this year's contest with the A index over 30 when the contest started

K7TQ Mobile

Jay, WA0WWW, and I put 20 WA counties on the air. We had good participation from several regulars who grabbed us in nearly every county. Our QSO count was up from our last time in 2015, but the mults were not there so the score was down. Only non-NA DX was JA.



K7TQ mobile – Kittatas Chelan County Line

As we sat on the Pend Oreille - Spokane County line with 10 minutes left in the Salmon Run, Jay had ten minutes to make nine Qs to reach 600 QSOs. We had started in Whitman County with me at the key on 20 m. After three hours which added Asotin, Garfield, and Columbia Counties we had a dismal 50 Qs compared to 70 Qs in 2015, the last time Jay and I did the Salmon Run. Twenty meters wasn't going well and we had nothing on 40. Jay took over for the next four hours and ran the QSO count up to 194. The "regulars", AE5GT, K2SSS, and K9CW plus a few more, were catching us in every county. We ended Saturday operating in the dark from the Grant - Lincoln County line on a dirt road with very few lights visible for about as far as you could see. Eighty meters was good to us from there.

Sunday morning saw good runs in Lincoln, 92 Qs, where we entered twice in order to catch Adams County, and Ferry County with 49 Qs. As we left Stevens County with about an hour left in the contest, I told Jay who was at the key, we would be hard pressed to make 600 Qs. A short stop at the Stevens - Spokane County line moved us closer to 600 Qs. We arrived at the Pend Oreille - Spokane County line with 20 minutes needing about 30 more Qs. Several regulars caught us on 20 and a quick look at 40 gathered four more Qs. Finally, at ten minutes left we needed nine Qs, ten to make nine. Sitting on a county line makes for two Qs if you haven't already worked that station in

one of the two counties. A Q from a station we had worked in Spokane County made it nine to make nine. At five minutes left it was five to make six. Possible, but Jay would have to gather them in quickly. A flurry of activity and it was four to make two. With two minutes left, Jay got a double to make the QSO count 601 so I changed the goal to 605 or two to make four. Jay came close to the revised goal with 604 Qs and 52 mults plus the W7DX bonus for 95,224 points. Conditions were tough, our QSO count was up from 2015, and our final score was down, but we had a great time.

Regulars with ten or more band-counties were AE5GT (19), K2SSS (18), K9CW (17), KI0I (16), WA6KHK (15), N7IR (15), W5TM (13), K5CM (11), and N8II (10). No one got us in all 20 of the counties we activated. There was only one DX, JA1YNE, who caught us just as we entered the mountains of Kitittas County. Thanks to all who worked us, tried to work us, and a specially big Thank You to the regulars!

Our best counties were Lincoln (92), Ferry (40), Douglas (45), Yakima (37), and Benton (35). The worst ones were Asotin (6) and Whitman (11).

N8II - Fixed - WV 113 cw 79 SSB

Conditions were certainly no picnic with noticeably poor signals from WA around 21Z Saturday and even a bit earlier on Sunday. By 2220Z, signals on 20 were almost gone! But, thanks to some sporadic E which also provided a few IAQP QSO's things improved with poor activity around 0015-0045Z. Most all of my QSO's after a dinner break at 2103Z Saturday were on 40 and 80. I worked several stations on 40 CW starting at 2351Z and by 01Z signals some stations were loud on 40. At midnight here, 40 was deserted and WA stations were busy working each other on 80 CW. Signals were all near the QRN level which was not that high for this season. I did get one answer on 80 to a few CQ's. Finding the mobiles/rovers (K7TQ and WW7D) was a very daunting task on 20 Saturday even when signals peaked worsened by disturbed conditions. The sun has been extremely flare prone the past 2 weeks. 15 did open well from 1945Z-2031Z, but few ops took advantage of it which hurt their score as all day Sunday nothing was heard from WA or even CA and they ran out of new 20M Q's.

Activity pretty much collapsed Sunday around 19Z and the mobiles were weak from 20Z onward, but they still were in there trying to make QSO's with K7TQ hitting Pend Oreille county for my last multiplier. Finding new Q's was quite a challenge all day, but I did have some small SSB runs and the mobiles kept moving and were much easier to find than on Saturday thanks to lower

absorption, them sticking to the same CW frequencies, and fewer other stations to sort through.

Thanks so much to WW7D and K7TQ for their efforts driving many miles all weekend and they provided many mults along with a surprising number of new mults answering my CQ's on 20 phone. WW7D found me several times on 20 phone Sunday. But, the number of causal ops seemed way down compared to last year when they were out in big numbers. The serious guys were all there.

Despite taking fairly generous time off, this was close to as well as I could with the generally poor conditions with little on 15 and very early band closings on 20. Many hours, running on 20 was just not possible or barely possible. Thanks for all of the QSO's and most WA ops were efficient especially on CW. I was heard pretty well.

73, Jeff

K4BAI - fixed GA 89 cw 39 ssb

Conditions poor and I didn't stay up late enough Sat night to hear any WA stations on 80 or 160M. 20M was the big band and 40M was OK after dark, but not much SSB activity on that band. 15M had a few quite strong CW signals on Saturday afternoon. Most WA stations didn't see to know 15 was open. No SSB stations heard on 15 for some reason. The contest seemed to outlast the WA station activity this year, with usually one band open at a time Thanks for all QSOs especially for K7TQ/m and WW7D/m.

73, John, K4BAI.

Convention

Around 72 people are headed to the County Hunter Convention in Colorado Springs.
Full report next month!

Convention attendees announced

Frank, AA9JJ and Kay, N9QPQ, Yohe, Mesa, AZ
Jerry Mertz , W0GXQ, Park Rapids MN
Jerry Haislip, K1SO, Roanoke VA
David Kinsey, KS4BO, Roanoke VA
Jim Curtis, N8HAM, South Lyon MI
Terry, WQ7A and Boni Dummler, Yelm WA
Kerry Long, W4SIG, Collierville TN
Ron, N5MLP and Evelyn Clift, Magnolia TX
Bob Voss, N4CD, Plano TX
Phil, AB7RW and Barbara, AC7UH Yasson, Vancouver, WA
Rick Harris, AI5P, Albuquerque NM
Ed Eklin, K8ZZ, Topeka, KS
Elwood , AE5EA and Marleta, W5MAR, Anderson, Placitas, NM
Bill, NU0Q, and Karen Claypool, Ankeny, IA
Mike, NF0N and Dianne Nickolaus, South Sioux City, NE
Mark, W9OP, and Joan, W9PIP, Michel, Neenah WI
Gene, K5GE and Mary Ida Barnes, Seguin TX
Robert, W0NAC, and Sharon, N0LXJ, Matthew, Parker CO
John, K0PFV, and Marian, WA0VDO, Lord, Omaha, NE
Ray, WB0PYF and Debbie Myers, St. Louis MO
Fred, K0FG and Vee Jay Groce, Sunrise Beach MO
Mike Fatchett, W0MU, Castle Rock CO

Bill, WG9A and Sandy Grew, Batavia IL
Troy Warren, K5OH, Lawton OK
Flo, K5FLO, friend of K5OH
Paul Nelson, N7JPF, The Dalles, OR
Donna Hinshaw, AG6V, Oak Harbor WA
Jim Robb, W6OUL, Lompoc CA
Bob, K7TM and Vonnie, WA7YEI Hallock, Coeur d' Alene ID
Wayne, WE7G, and Arlene Glover, Kingman AZ
Larry, W0QE, and Beth, K0EAC, Benko, Broomfield CO
Don, K3IMC and Jean Flynn, LaGrange GA
Bob Gedemer, KA9JAC and Ann Heimann, KB9YVT, Hortonville WI
Tony, WA9DLB, and Helen Mazzocco, Barrington IL
Peter, NN9K, and Nancy, N9DQS, Beedlow, Colona IL
Roy/Silver , N9SQ, and Bonnie Glascock, Collinsville, IL
Robert, N8KIE and Jaci, N8RLJ Woody, Clarkston MI
Barry, N0KV and Pat, N0DXE, Mitchell, Parker CO
Lowell, KB0BA and Sandra, N0XYL, Tennyson, Blue Grass, IA

Full report next month – not enough time to get it in this month!

Awards Issued

USCA #1261

Jesse. KA7ICF

September 18, 2017

MARAC awards were suspended until a new Awards Chairman is appointed. No new awards were issued.

Operating Events for County Hunters

7 1600z to 8 2200z
California QSO Party
Serial, county or SPC
www.cqp.org/Rules.html

14 1600z to 15 2200z
Pennsylvania QSO Party
Serial, county or SPC
www.nittany-arc.net

14 1600z to 15 2359z
Arizona QSO Party
Serial, county or SPC
www.azqsoparty.org

21 1400z to 22 0200z
New York QSO Party
RS(T), county or SPC
www.nyqp.org

21 1800z to 22 1800z
South Dakota QSO Party
RS(T), county or SPC
www.kb0wsw.com/SDQP

22 1700z to 23 0100z
Illinois QSO Party
RS(T), county or SPC
www.w9awe.org/ILQP.html

That's all folks! See you next month.

