

County Hunter News

January 2019
Volume 15 Issue 01

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

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

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

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

CW County Hunter Nets run on 14.0565, 10.124.5, and 7056.5, with activity occasionally on 3556.5 KHz. Also, there is SSB activity now is on 'friendly net' 7188 KHz. The CW folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 when sunspots better). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB. (21.336 and 28.336)

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

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

MARAC sponsors an award program for many other county hunting awards. You can find information on these awards and the rules at:

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

The CW net procedure is written up at:

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

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

- 1) Turns out that Camp Nelson in Jessamine County, KY, the new National Monument, is already in the WWFF system as KFF-4708. Time for someone to go activate it! Also in POTA.
- 2) Bob, N200, sent a note that Ted, K1BV is stepping down as CQ Magazine Award Chairman at the end of 2018. He's done a great job of running the County Hunter Award program at CQ – the place to go to get USACA first time.
- 3) We've reached the Winter Solstice (Dec 21) and days will have more light as the year goes on. Less than a minute more of sun for a while – leading to the max daylight on the Summer Solstice in June in six months. It's now officially 'winter'.
- 4) It's a short newsletter this month. I've gone on no big trips – staying close to home for the month – so no long trip reports. None from others either. Just haven't gotten inspired to out running counties/parks this month. Got lots of other things got done that needed doing, though.
- 5) It's 2019. How long will it take till I remember to write 2019 on the few checks a month I send out? Or get it right in the log book – hi hi. Time flies. I wish I could tell

you this is the year of the sunspot minimum and things will head back up soon. Who knows but it's likely to be another 'blah' year for propagation.

6) The ARRL Grid Chase is over. It wasn't much of a program for those not on FT-8 digital willing to sit for thousands of hours of time 'working' the same stations over and over again each month for points. If you participated, for about \$15 each you can get certificates for what you did work – grid wise- during the year. Like the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA), the Grid Chase ends after one year and there will be no continuation. HF grids, other than for 160m Stew Perry Challenge points, will become a useless relic. For VHF'ers, grids are still of interest.

7) The WWFF and POTA (Parks on the Air) continue with fair activity. In Europe, there's an amazing amount of WWFF activity, but those parks are hard for work from most of the US. In the US, there's at least a few activations every weekend, and they're all in counties. Check the Facebook page for each, and DX Summit for spots.

On the Road with N4CD I

The Wednesday CWT was about to happen so I went over the 25 miles to the Spring Creek Forest Preserve (Dallas County) to run it there. 50Q went in the log in an hour. Listened around and worked 3 Park to Park (P2P) contacts as well, spotted myself on W6RK for a few contacts, then came back home. Nice fall day. The weekly CWT happens 3 times a day each Wednesday – early, mid day, and late evening/night.

Anyone can participate – but the code zips along at 20+ wpm. Send your name and state if you have no CW number. Listen in.....CW band pops alive on 20 and 40m at 1900Z on Wednesdays for an hour.

I'd go over to the Forest Preserve several more times during the month for the CWT. On a good day, you can put 50-55 QSOs in the log from stations around the country on 20 and some on 40M. Keeps the dust out of the rig and the brain copying cw.

Science Tidbit

The World Has A New Largest-Known Prime Number

There's a new behemoth in the ongoing search for ever-larger prime numbers — and it's nearly 25 million digits long.

A prime is a number that can be divided only by two whole numbers: itself and 1. The newly discovered number is what's known as a Mersenne prime, named for a French monk named Marin Mersenne who studied primes some 350 years ago.

Mersenne primes have a simple formula: $2^n - 1$. In this case, "n" is equal to 82, 589, 933, which is itself a prime number. If you do the math, the new largest-known prime is a whopping 24, 862, 048 digits long.

We would write the number out for you, but it would fill up thousands of pages, give or take, and look like this gigantic zip file.

The latest Mersenne prime comes courtesy of a project started in 1996 called the Great Internet Mersenne Prime Search, in which people download special software that runs in the background on their computers. A computer owned by Patrick Laroche of Ocala, Fla., discovered the number on Dec. 7, and mathematicians have spent the past two weeks verifying the calculations. It's more than a million and a half digits longer than the previous largest known prime, discovered about a year ago by a computer in Germantown, Tenn.

Why should you care about Mersenne primes? They've proven useful in generating reasonably random numbers, but the best answer might be simply because they're there — and they're majestic.

Chris Caldwell, a mathematician at the University of Tennessee, Martin, talked to NPR in 2009 about these large primes.

"Mersennes, in a way, are kind of like a large diamond," Caldwell said back in 2009. Think about the Hope Diamond, a 45.52-carat diamond that sits in a special case in the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, usually with crowds around it.

"Nobody there looking at the Hope Diamond ever asks, 'Why did they bother to dig it up?' or 'What is it good for?' — even though it really isn't good for much other than to just hang there and people to look at," Caldwell said. "And in many ways, the Mersennes play that same role — that they really are the jewels of number theory."

On the Road with N4CD II

Dec 8 2018

Saturday was the day for the Annual Vintage Radio Club Holiday Dinner Party held down in Irving TX at the usual meeting site at 1PM. I loaded up the car for a quick visit to Cedar Hill State Park despite the rain. It had been raining for 3 days already – steady light rain but likely totaling a couple inches all together. Only 41 degrees outside, too. Not a fun, warm, sunny fall day for sure. It was all 6 and 8 and 10 lane busy urban 'tollroad' and 'interstate' to get down that way to the park, then the VPRS dinner, then home. Fair amount of traffic on the roads, too.

Just for the heck of it, I threw in an old 10m base loaded single magnet antenna that was sitting in the closet. Since this was the annual ARRL 10M contest weekend, and maybe I'd hear a local or two from the highest point around – where all the TV stations are located – at Cedar Hill. I didn't expect much with the low sunspot number/SFI which was hovering around at 70 for the last day. A bit over an hour later, in the rain, I arrived there. Not much competition for a space in the boat launch ramp area – I was the only car in the 300 car lot. I fired up on 20M SSB and caught 25 stations there around the country – giving them KFF-2996 park. One of the folks I enjoy talking with is Clarence, VE5XU in Saskatchewan, Canada – we exchange weather info each time. It was zero up there and sunny while it was light rain and 41F in TX.

I put the small base loaded 10m 4 foot whip on the roof of the car. That antenna has been sitting in the closet for at least 10-15 years. Think I got it along with a Radio Shack 10M rig cheap as part of a package deal a while back – sold the 10m rig and kept the antenna. I wasn't even sure it would work, but it loaded up fine on 28.400. Tuned around there but not much going on....no wait...there's LU5VV in Argentina coming in about S5. Give a couple calls on SSB and, my gosh, he comes back. Hmmm... Tune the SSB band and not much else heard. Zip. The IC-706 could use a bit more gain on 10m. Well, let's try CW.

Well, that's a bummer....at 28020, the SWR is high. Ah, the CW clip. Doesn't do much at the base.....so put it on the top adding an inch or so to the length, and serendipity – full power out down there in the cw band. I use the cw clip to get the 20m antenna down to 14.020 or so for the CWT – and down to the low end of 40m cw as well. Most of the CWT action is from .025 to .047 on 20 and 40m.

A base loaded antenna is the least efficient mobile antenna you can use. If I were going to be on 10M more often, I'd stick a resonator up on the main mast for 10m.

Ah...piles ups.....hear LW7DX. He's working all the big US contesters...there's N5NA...K5UO....K9UIY.....AA6PW..... but not me. I hear many of them on backscatter. Probably they are running six element beams and KW's so my little 100w and base loaded antenna on a 3 inch mag mount isn't going to get through pile ups very easily. Tune around and there is CE2ML – with a big pileup but only giving out QSO number 25 – just showed up with huge mess of people calling him. Try for a while, but he is slowly working folks right on frequency so no chance of calling slightly off and getting through. Hear an HK, several more LU's, , a PY..... well, give up after a while – did catch WW3K in TX – a local on cw, then when back down to 20cw and 40cw for park hunters.

Finished with 42Q and had to leave to get to the VRPS Dinner at 1PM. Just 2 QSOs on 10m. Otherwise, who knows? Could have worked a few more mobile countries perhaps. Dinner was good and home by 5PM. Lots of accidents on the rainy road along the way all day, though. Traffic back ups in my direction of travel not too bad other than gawker slowdowns for accidents on the other side of the highway.

As to the DX stations in this contest – ARRL 10M contest - they give out QSO number instead of 'state' for the exchange. Several were up over 100Qs by noon on Saturday so it should be an interesting contest. W0AIH in WI was coming in S3 on backscatter and working W3s.....and heard in TX. That's a big contest station of the recent SK – now a club operation with the BIG antennas. I heard just a few others on backscatter but no hope of working them. I know there was some E-Skip out of TX Friday night, and some worked stations on meteor scatter so it will be interesting seeing the results. The east coast got some nice E-skip. Ed, KN4Y, is usually on every year trying to round up contacts. However, during my short time, I didn't hear very many US stations working each other. Skip was real long, or very weak on backscatter.

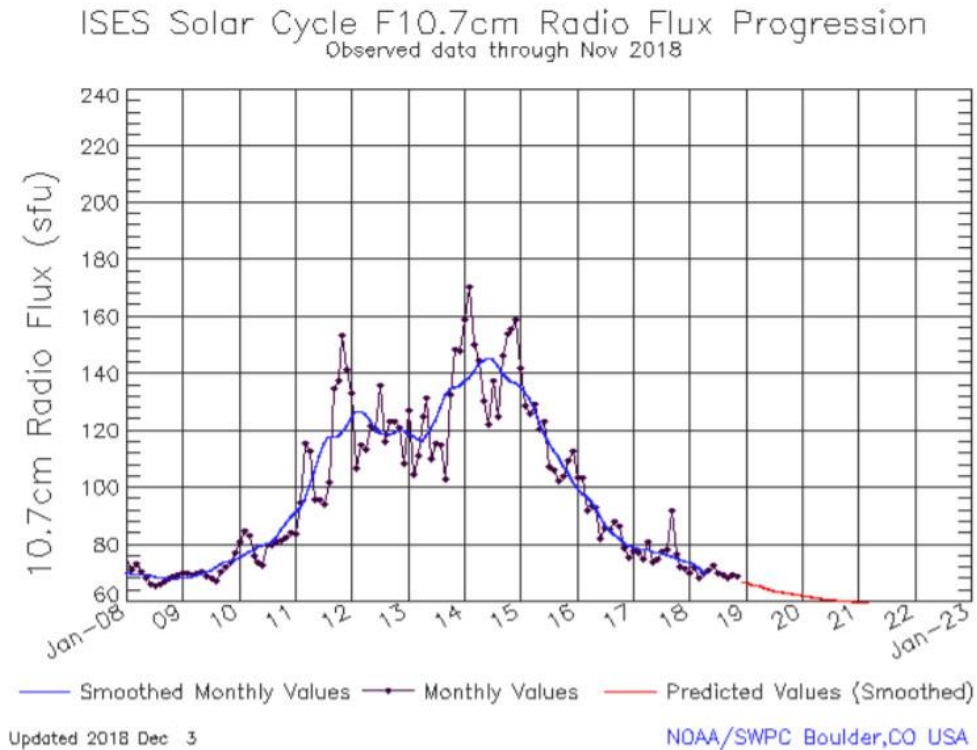
NASA Solar Update

NASA publishes a weekly solar update – you can read them online. The latest news isn't especially good – although there is some concern the model the use may be a bit suspect. First, the news

Here's the current and projected solar cycle forecast. You'll note the future 'red line' goes

down to the bottom '60 line' as we head to 2022. Right now we are seeing solar flux numbers around 68-70. At 70, 20m is often 'decent' while at 67 and 68, 20m does a lot of struggling.

What would happen if we headed on down to the level of '60'? Wow.....you'd probably see very little propagation at all on 20M!



Here's their table – which shows the solar flux forecast in numbers. Down to '59' by 2022 area.

Smoothed F10.7cm Radio Flux Prediction

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	76 (***)	77 (***)	78 (***)	78 (***)	79 (***)	80 (***)	80 (***)	81 (***)	82 (***)	85 (***)	88 (***)	90 (***)
2011	91 (***)	93 (***)	96 (***)	100 (***)	106 (***)	111 (***)	115 (***)	118 (***)	118 (***)	118 (***)	120 (***)	122 (***)
2012	124 (***)	127 (***)	127 (***)	126 (***)	124 (***)	121 (***)	120 (***)	119 (***)	119 (***)	119 (***)	120 (***)	120 (***)
2013	119 (***)	118 (***)	117 (***)	117 (***)	118 (***)	121 (***)	124 (***)	128 (***)	132 (***)	135 (***)	135 (***)	136 (***)
2014	137 (***)	139 (***)	141 (***)	144 (***)	145 (***)	146 (***)	145 (***)	143 (***)	140 (***)	138 (***)	137 (***)	137 (***)
2015	136 (***)	134 (***)	131 (***)	127 (***)	123 (***)	120 (***)	116 (***)	113 (***)	111 (***)	108 (***)	105 (***)	103 (***)
2016	100 (***)	98 (***)	97 (***)	95 (***)	93 (***)	90 (***)	88 (***)	86 (***)	84 (***)	83 (***)	81 (***)	80 (***)
2017	79 (***)	79 (***)	79 (***)	78 (***)	78 (***)	77 (***)	77 (***)	76 (***)	76 (***)	75 (***)	75 (***)	74 (***)
2018	74 (***)	73 (***)	72 (***)	71 (***)	70 (***)	70 (1)	70 (1)	69 (2)	69 (3)	69 (4)	68 (4)	68 (5)
2019	67 (6)	67 (7)	66 (8)	66 (8)	65 (9)	65 (9)	64 (9)	64 (9)	63 (9)	63 (9)	63 (9)	63 (9)
2020	62 (9)	62 (9)	62 (9)	62 (9)	61 (9)	61 (9)	61 (9)	61 (9)	61 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)
2021	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	60 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)
2022	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)	59 (9)



SWPC PRE 0257 0340 December 5 2018

Now – there is at least one problem with this model. No one in the last 100 years has seen the flux level drop to 59. That's not to say it is impossible. We're coming off one of the most active sunspot cycles in history and we're at the tail end. Could it be true?

If you follow Tamitha Skov on YouTube and her weekly solar news – worth looking at – she tends to doubt that forecast and the levels down around 60. It would be unprecedented and she has asked NASA to review the model and comment.

She commented:

“These seemed to show predicted activity headed for extremely low numbers out to the year 2022, with most of that year having no sunspots. But I believe these numbers are suspect, because if you look at solar flux numbers they go to some low values that have not been seen ever before.

These smoothed numbers are a moving average over a whole year. It

shows the smoothed solar flux going down to 59, which has not been seen ever before. I inspected daily solar flux during the last minimum, and decided to look at the six months on both sides of 7/17/2008. If I average the flux values for a year centered on that date, I get a value of 68.68. Around that time in 2008-2009 there were extended periods with no sunspots.

So, I suspect there are errors in these predictions, and will wait for NOAA to clarify this forecast and probably correct them.”

Links

NASA forecast: <ftp://ftp.swpc.noaa.gov/pub/warehouse/2018/WeeklyPDF/prf2257.pdf>

Tamitha Skov on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcrsMDS5CkY>

She recently did a special on Space Weather index numbers

“, I recently did a live mini-course on Space Weather indices. This is a really complicated topic that you can't find well explained anywhere. It has turned out to be one of my most popular courses and I've gotten amazing feedback about how helpful it has been to everyone. So, just in case you missed it but want to see it, I am including a link here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVgZQqUYemc>

Now what would an SFI of only 59 bring? Probably 20M as dead as 10m most days. Maybe even 30m with poor propagation. Even fewer rare openings on the higher bands other than E-skip type deals. It would not be good for ham radio.

From the Wayback Machine

Recently I had the opportunity to review some logs from the way-back era of year 2000 and 2014. In both those years, I headed off to HI to run the counties there. Things were a lot different back then – really!

Of course, in 2000, the sunspot numbers were pretty good. Around Thanksgiving time, I ran Hawaii' HI – the Big Island. I think if you headed there today, you'd be lucky to put 40 or 50 QSOs in the log. Maybe less. Or if you picked a good day, maybe 75? Well, back then, I put over 275 QSOs in the log over 3 days from there. Contacts were made on 20, 15 and 10m. Not so many on 10m, but lots on 15 and 20m. Others who ventured there did well, too.

Here's a few of the folks in the log. Sadly, many are SK these days but for the old timers who were on the air then, I'm sure most of the calls will ring a bell.

On 20M SSB:

AB4OI, VE4AGT, KN6ZB, W0RRY, KF8K, AC4XL, N8STF, W5DMH, WA2AKB, KC2FPW, K9DCJ, KS4Q, KC4UG, kK1DFO, K0EG, KI0JD, KJ8V, K0ARS, WB4FFV, W0NAN, W1WKP, W0DFK
WW0G, AD6Z, KC3X, WB6LRI, WA5OPO, W6TPC, KC8IJ, , KC0IA, W4LTF, N3LP
WG9A, KQ4B, WA9DLB, KG7GV, KC4GTO, K4HBH, KK6MR, K9MOT
K5CWR, W4IGW, K7VAY, KG7GV, VE4BS, W6XJN, K1DFO, AA6JR, KD6BIT
KK7LX, K6HZI, W6YLJ, KB6HW, K6OHM, K7TED, K7DZE, W0ULU, WB0CQO
WB8JZN, WB9STT, N1API, W5ILR, W4GFN, NA7W, KZ2P, KD4PY, K0EVE
WA4WQG, W0IM, NV4Z, N3ISH, KC0JG, WB2HXZ, KF5AT, W5CVD, K7VY
WA0LMK, KA1JPR, W3CR, K0GEN, N1API, KB2ZL, KD4HXM, W8ILC, N4UJK
KA1NX, KC0GMZ, N0ZA, K8GPC, AA6JR, N5UVI, N7OTR, W0KZZ, KM4W,
N0LN, N9JLT, WA9LKD, K0ZT, DL9YC, WG6X, WB4FFV, N4CCJ, W4IGW, AA8R,
AA9JJ N9QPQWA4WQG, W0NAC, KC5DSP, N7IFG, AB7PX, K0AYO, W0RRY,
N6NZ, N9STL, K8GPC, KB9ER, VA7BM, K2LFG, N8OYY, WB4CCT, W9MY, Y,
WE8D, AI5P, N9VRZ, K5GEY, KE2FZ, WA7JHQ, K5VYT, WD4OIN, WA6OCI,
AD4DR, N7OTR, KE1CT, W8TVT, W1NHJ, KL1V, F6CUK

On 15M SSB:

K5CWR, KD4HXM, W4IGW, KC3X, W5DMH, WA0JCE, N8STF, KC0FXL
W6TPCWA5OPO, KI0JD, W0RRY, N8LXQ, WA3QNT, N8CIJ, WA9LKD, N9STL
KC0JG, N9STL

10M SSB

K5CWR, KC3X, W0RRY, WA5OPO, W6TPC, W9SUQ, KD4HXM, K6JN

N1API, W4LTF, WB8JZN, WD4RCO, WA0EBZ, AE3Z, KA5AGM, KD5XCO
WD9HAW, W3CR, K7TED, W6YLJ, KB6HW, K8CW, K7VAY, W0NAN,
W6XJN, N8LXQVK3CB, KC0JG, N9STL, WA3QNT, K4QFK

20M CW

W4VQ, W0RRY, N4HIM, KA3MMM, K5CWR, KS4Q, WU3H, K8ZW, K0EVE
K7INA, WB4FFV, WU9F, WA3GNW, WU3H, KD8HB, K8CW, KN4Y, VE3KZE
K7TED, KA3OGL, NF9A, K8I, OH3JF, K0LF, K0ZT, W7BD, K7GJZ, N9STL

15M CW

WU9F, KA3MMM, W3DYA/m, VE3KZE, K8CW, KN4Y, VE4BS, K8IW, WD3P,
K0EVE, N9STL

Plus even more on 10m cw and other scattered contacts in the log. Kalawao had even more contacts – 325 of them! (A few dupes with people working me on different days in that total, though). Still well over 180 unique calls in the log. Those were the days.

I headed back to HI in 2014 to run all the counties for Second Time transmit. Five years ago.....Now it's 2019.....I made 208 QSOs from Kalawao, some dupes, in 2 days. A lot of the calls from 2000 were already SK by then, and the number of county hunters declined seriously in those 14 intervening years. Ran 20, 17 and 15M this time – SSB and CW in 2 days. First time there was 3 days. Didn't bother with 10M as it was already dying. A good percentage of contacts were same people working me different bands/modes. Not even 100 different unique calls.

Mobile Activity in December

Starting Dec 1 – and there were several days with zero spots – not necessarily zero activity, but zero spots.

Ed, KN4Y spotted in FL

Jim, N9JF was in south TX running counties/parks

Kerry, KB3WAV was in PA and MD - running parks

WB6AGE was spotted on FT-8 in OR, CA and WA counties

Hollis, KC3X, noted in NC

Kraig, KA2LHO, noted in FL parks on several days during the month

Ed, N8OYY, out several times in WV. Later in month on trip up through PA

AB4WL/KF4INA spotted in AL and FL –

KU4YM noted in SC

Gene, WB4KZW spotted on trip to MS

Team KB0BA/N0XYL spotted in IA

Seth, N3MRA running counties in TX and FL

Jerry, W0GXQ headed NE from CO and ran dozens of counties in NE then back home.

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There were at least a half dozen days with zero county hunting spots – maybe a SOTA or Park on the Air – but there was not a whole lot of county hunter trips this month. Let's hope it gets better!

Check into Parks on the Air/WWFF. That gives you a reason to get more contacts and justify burning gas on trips. Or if you're a physical fitness type, there are many 'summits' you can (and have to) walk up and operate portable for Summits on the Air (SOTA). No mobile operation allowed for that.

On the Trail of Regens

A Hallicrafters S-1 Receiver came up for bid on Ebay. Starting price \$1700. This was the first receiver Bill Halligan produced in 1934, with the units made by the Silver

Marshall factory for \$39.95. Only 300 or so were ever made. It's relatively rare – I know of about 4 other units in collectors hands, and one or two go up for sale every couple years at high prices. It's a regenerative receiver design using a handful of tubes. So why didn't he design and sell a 'superhet'? To do that, you had to have a patent license from the 'gang of four' that would cost you \$100,000 up front, and a \$10/radio royalty. Well, just starting out, he didn't have that sort of money in 1934 at the worst of the depression.



There was also a 'buy it now' option and someone snapped it up for \$2700....plus shipping. Ouch. I'd love to have one of those for the collection but not at those sky high prices! 4 tubes plus a rectifier tube is all! Maybe I'll find one at Dayton Hamfest? You never know!

Fortunately for him, companies were going bust during the depression, and he wound up buying the bankrupt assets of Silver Marshall – who did have a superhet patent license – and he quickly shifted to superhet designs.



Most of the early S-1s were scrapped for poor performance compared to superhets so they didn't stay around. Even more were scrapped during WW2 metal drives. Maybe 20 or so at best survive today out of the 300 made. If you are a Hallicrafters collector, you've got to have one so the prices stay sky high.

This receiver covered 1.6 to 22 MHz in 4 bands and was one of the first 'bandswitched' radios.

Tidbit of the Month

Cimarron County, OK is the only county in the United States that borders four states: Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas. As a result, Cimarron County is the only county in the United States to border at least five counties from five different states (one from each of the four aforementioned states, plus one in Oklahoma and a second county in Texas).

ARRL 10M Contest

Here are some scores filtered from the 3830 contest reflector. Several hundred logs were submitted for this event which turned out to be good for many people. It just depended where you were in the country – the east coast seems to have done well as well as way up north in MN, etc. Didn't see too many county hunters sending in scores to 3830, though.

N4BP - fixed - FL 926 QSOs - 69 mults

Friday night 11:30PM - 208 QSOs, 30 W/VE, 3 DX.
OA4SS answered CQ Saturday morning with his #2.
Saturday afternoon worked all states in 7th call area but AK.
Sunday morning worked all six New England states in short order.
Worked all states but AK. Even picked up DC.
I was one of the deaf Floridians with more than enough power line noise.
Brief rain Sunday morning eased the pain for a few minutes.

K8MR - fixed - OH 300Q 62 mults - ssb/cw

This year I'm in Ohio when it was the year to be in Florida. (New granddaughter in town is keeping us here through Christmas). Still even here it greatly exceeded expectations, especially after the huge 10 meter bust in CQWW CW.

I thought I was doing really well to have worked 39 states, until I realized that four of them were in Mexico :-). But still lots of action Friday night and Saturday until 2030Z when the propagation plug got pulled. Sunday morning was Florida's time in the sun, but I had worked most of the serious guys down there on Friday night. The rest of Sunday was spent playing in a local bridge tournament (we won our class!)

As is the case with Es, lots of spotlights. Minnesota was big early Friday, with some Maritimes mixed in, followed by Florida. Nice opening for an hour to California on Saturday afternoon. I had about 10 Alabama stations on SSB with only a couple of locals interrupting. First DX worked was VP8NO, which is always a cool multiplier.

NS2N - ex WB2ABD - fixed - NY 131 q 58 mults

Some surprisingly good openings, leading to lots of dead time. Thanks everyone. Special thanks to MWA gang for the nice run Fri. nite.

K6YK - fixed - CA - 125 q 36 mults

Reminded me of 6 meters on a good day!

N8II - fixed - WV - 488q 105 mults - cw/ssb

Well narrated by Nate, N4YDU, a blast Friday night and Saturday, typical almost dead band grind at bottom of cycle most of Sunday. The start was much better than last year, just as I thought it was going to be a dead band night around 0050Z (only one lone QC on Es), sporadic E appeared to MN/WI/SD. then it spread to ME,NS,NB. Then later from FL across the Gulf Coast to TX. At 0220Z there was brief but strong double hop into CO. FL stations were still in at 0420Z but fading when I quit for the night with 133 Q's went into the log.

Saturday started slow, not much but weak FL and AL plus a few big guns on meteor and/or ionospheric scatter. W0AIH win the awards for being there many hours on scatter. Then sporadic E popped in from MN and WI with the opening moving southward to IA/MO/NE/AR/TN/KY/TX and across to FL. A few northern SA stations appeared followed by deep SA later and then just as I was thinking lunch break, AZ appeared at 1833Z and activity erupted on F2. I worked TX & OK (Es?), NM, CO, NV, and CA (southern). I had some good runs on CW, not so good on phone. But, I made sure to move all the mults I could while the band was open which hurt the rate, but improved the score. The K index was at least 3 and conditions were just disturbed enough to raise the MUF, but not a peep was heard in 7 land north of AZ/NV. A local worked UT. The immaculate reception highlight was a VK2 finding me on CW at 1851Z, very early! By 2035Z, the band was pretty much closed. Several Mexican stations on each mode had good signals here. I was also able to pretty easily work the big guns on backscatter around 19-20Z including ON,IL,IN,MA, and NH. Saturday evening was mostly FL stations, often weak and weak scatter. Miraculously, around 02Z (4 hours after sunset) a ZL6 appeared on CW, worked first call. This was a much better day than I thought would be possible, for sure ending with a total of about 375 Q's in the log.

Sunday started with promise, very loud FL right up to Jacksonville, but barely worked a GA on phone, and no GA on CW until later after FL had faded. Activity on phone from FL was disappointing, plenty of CW activity, but most already in log. I caught a CO2 on Es. Finally around 16Z, YV, P4, and PJ2 appeared for 3 new mults. They faded fairly fast. All day long, signals from southern SA were never very strong (considerably weaker than Saturday); best signals were in the 19Z hour. SA was gone by about 20Z. After that it was locals and scatter only.

Overall, phone activity was much lower than CW; many more phone Q's could have

been made if ops just tried harder. The scoring structure discourages phone. 10 put on quite a show for the bottom of the cycle at least until Sunday. Many thanks for all of the calls and digging me out of the noise. Glad to help with the WV mult; I worked several WV locals and 2 on the other side of the Alleghenies.

WN4AFP - fixed - SC - 55Q 21 mults

10m has always been one of my favorite bands even in the bottom of the cycle. For the few hours I worked it, it was a blast! I love those very short 30 second openings, almost like meteor scatter or something. I worked the contest on Friday evening and some on Saturday. The Friday night openings were a ton of fun. NE, TX, FL etc. I even heard KH7M, but never could connect with him. This is the band that every one says is dead until every gets on it... My 10m beacon was Bob, N4BP. I knew that the band was about to open when I heard Bob on 28.023.

I live in the upstate of South Carolina and we got hit with our first snowstorm of the winter. The snow fell on Saturday night the power went off on Sunday morning at 11:30 am and it didn't come back on until Monday at 2 pm. I missed all of Sunday. My antennas became 4-5 feet lower, so my ants were almost on the 'ground.

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Lots more scores and listings at the 3830 contest reflector:

<https://www.3830scores.com/currecscores.php?arg=B6cgfTzPisfio>

Straight Key Night/Bug Event

January 1 Hosts Events for Legacy Keys

Every day is a good day to send CW, but January 1 is reserved for Straight Key Night (SKN), sponsored by ARRL. Enjoy CW as it has been sent and enjoyed since the earliest days of Amateur Radio. The 24-hour event begins at 0000 UTC on January 1 (New Year's Eve in US time zones) is not a contest but a day dedicated to celebrating Amateur

Radio's Morse heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on the air and enjoy conversational CW contacts, preferably while using a straight key or a semi-automatic key ("bug"). No points -- everyone's a winner. Submit your votes for best fist and most interesting QSO.

The First-Class CW Operators' Club sponsors a concurrent event, FOC Bug Day. FOC asks participants to send a description of the bug or bugs used, a list of stations worked, and a vote for best bug fist heard, to FOC Bug Day Manager Benny Owens, K5KV. AMSAT will sponsor its second-annual satellite CW Activity Day on January 1. This year's event is dedicated to the memory of Pat Gowen, G3IOR. No rules -- just have fun. Operate CW through any ham radio satellite. The use of straight keys and bugs is encouraged, but not required. -- Thanks to Ray Soifer, W2RS, and Benny Owen, K5KV

courtesy of ARRL weekly Newsletter

MICHIGAN MINI DATES

The 2018 Michigan Mini is hosted by Ed, K8ZZ and Joe, W8TVT and will be held at the West Bay Beach – Holiday Inn Resort 615 East Front Street • Traverse City, Michigan 49686 Phone: (231) 947-3700 • Fax: (231) 947-0361 Toll Free: (800) 888-8020)

Room rates of: \$95.95 plus tax per night if reserved by March 25th, 2019.

Date for 2019 MICHIGAN MINI is April 25 – 26 & 27th..

Registration is open now.

Awards Issued

N8OYY Ed	175 Last Counties #146	12 November 2018
K7SEN, Neil	Third Time #257	10 October 2018
KC6AWX Bob	Ran All California 2nd Time #28	16 May 2018
N8OYY , Ed,	#57 for the US Presidents Award	10/25/2018 AB
N8OYY , Ed	#59 Native American Counties Award	3/4/2002
N8OYY , Ed	#177 completing 251 Contacts in the Jack Scroggins Award.	
N8OYY, Ed	ALL SSB #2	10/3/2018

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

Jan 12 1800z to 13 0559z
1.8-28 North American QSO Party, CW
 Name, SPC
www.ncjweb.com

Jan 19 1800z to 20 0559z
1.8-28 North American QSO Party, SSB Ph
 Name, SPC
www.ncjweb.com

Jan 26 1900z to 27 1900z
 All, no WARC
Winter Field Day
 CW Ph Dig Category,
 ARRL section (or “DX”)
www.winterfieldday.com

In addition, there's a CQ 160M contest and a few DX contests, many QRP Sprint and other events, and lots of misc going on.

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Contest%20Corral/2019/January%202019%20Corral.pdf>

That's all folks! 73 de N4CD