County Hunter News

August 2021 Volume 17 Issue 8

Welcome to the On-Line County Hunter News, a monthly publication for those interested in ham radio county hunting, with an orientation toward CW operation. We also cover some park chasing activities these days. Contributions of articles, stories, letters, and pictures to the editor are welcomed, and may be included in future issues at the editor's discretion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

http://countyhunter.com/cq.htm

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

http://countyhunter.com/whatis.htm

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

http://marac.org/awards.pdf

There is a lot more information at <u>www.countyhunter.com</u>. Please check it out.

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

De N4CD, Bob Voss, Editor (email: <u>telegraphy@verizon.net</u>)

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) Sunspots — We got them...but we also have lots of 'solar wind' — negating the effects of sunspots for a a while. Peaked with SFI up around 90 for a few days — then back to the low 70s for SFI. Had a few days of good 17 and 15m propagation...then pffft....around the 22nd, sunspot number up to the mid 80s, SFI in the 90s, with 'fair' propagation on 17 and 15! Yeah! We're on the right track now!

2) NY Times update snippet

America is at a crossroads as the nation confronts a new surge of the coronavirus, but only slowly embraces the vaccines that could stop it. With about only half of the population fully vaccinated, the country is facing what federal health officials have called a "pivotal point" in the pandemic. Some Americans who have been hesitant to roll up their sleeves for a shot — not because they oppose vaccinations, but because they are reluctant, anxious or procrastinators — are finally doing so. How many people ultimately join this group, and how quickly, could determine the course of the pandemic in the U.S.

One of the hurdles to vaccination efforts has been the spread of misinformation. An osteopathic physician in Florida spreads more coronavirus misinformation online than

anyone, researchers say. He makes millions doing it.

Vaccines remain effective against the worst outcomes of Covid-19, including from the highly contagious Delta variant. But Biden administration health officials increasingly think people who are 65 and older or who have compromised immune systems will need booster shots.

3) Weather

It's summer. It's blazing hot over much of the western US with record highs and a persistent 'Heat Wave' in the western half, temps up to well over 100 in many places. 120+F temps in Death Valley, and 110+ temps in OR and northern CA. Not the time for trips to the 'desert' out west. Despite the hot weather, mobiles have been out and running. Hundreds of parks (and their counties) have been on the air around the country including AK. (mostly 3rd district in AK). Here in TX, we've just seen 100F temps again after a cool spell of 'only 95' for a while. Rest of state has been sizzling hot for the summer. Record droughts, too, and bad forest fires out west – often with smoky skies for a thousand miles around. At this point, we're about half way through the summer. Won't be long before the folks way up north are worrying about getting firewood for the winter stashed away, raking millions of leaves falling off the trees.

Lots of mobile activity this summer season – some for 'vacations' and others just out and about, on planned trips, etc. No snow to worry about, hi hi! Good time for those northern counties that turn chilly come October with snow flying not long after. Mobiles putting out lots of MI, MN, ND, WY, MT – with lots of company.

Rental cars are hard to come by in many locations. National Parks are 'booked' and other attractions are full up. If you're off on a trip, plan well and avoid the most popular spots seeking the secondary but good spots to visit.

2021 MARAC AWARD WINNERS

2021 Annual Mobile and Mobile Assist Award Winners Announcement from Ron, N5MLP ...

2021 winners of the Annual Mobile and Mobile Assist awards reflect county hunting

activity during an 12 month activity period which began on June 1, 2020 and ended on May 31, 2021. Four different electronic ballot elections were held by the Election Coordinator for each of the quarters during this time period. The Election Coordinator determined the top three winners in each category by adding the votes received during each of the four quarters.

The winners of each category are shown below and will also be published on the club website and in the Awards Committee section of the August, 2021 RoadRunner.

Winners for Mobile of the Year – SSB

1st Place: KB6UF – Ron Jones

2nd Place: W4SIG – Kerry Long

3rd Place: N8OYY – Edward Messenger

Winners for Mobile of the Year – CW

1st Place: K8ZZ – Ed Eklin

2nd Place: W4SIG – Kerry Long

3rd Place: W0GXQ – Jerry Mertz

Winners for Mobile Team of the Year

1st Place: AB7NK/K7SEN – Mary/Neil Vince

 $2nd\ Place:\ KB0BA/N0XYL-Lowell/Sandra\ Tennyson$

3rd Place: K8ZZ/W0GXQ –Ed Eklin/Jerry Mertz

Winners for Mobile Assist of the Year – SSB

1st Place: K0DEQ – Bill Morgan

2nd Place: KC3X – Hollis Thigpen

3rd Place: AJ5ZX – Randy Camron

Winners for Mobile Assist of the Year – CW

1st Place: K0DEQ – Bill Morgan

2nd Place: KC3X – Hollis Thigpen

3rd Place: N0KV – Barry Mitchell

The first place winner in each category receives a plaque for their achievement while the second and third place winners will each receive a certificate. The awards will be mailed directly to the winners when they are available.

Congratulations to each of these 2021 winners! (de N5MLP)

CQ Magazine

Seems the folks at CQ Magazine are still having 'issues'. The June and July issues are 'on line only' (no print edition) and the print editions will resume in August. Subscriptions are being extended two months.

June issue here:

https://cq-amateur-radio.com/06-CQ%20June%202021-D.pdf

Story of the Month

Getting old is a bitch.....made it to about age 75 years old with few major problems along the way other than declining ability to do a lot due to post polio problems. However, this time it went really, really wrong. Normally, I just pop a blood pressure pill every morning and that keeps things steady. And, can do less and less physical activity as time goes on. Way back I could walk a mile or two in the Dayton flea market. Recently it's been a few thousand feet.....with stops... hi hi. Not now for sure. The days of trying to see all the goodies at Dayton are over. However, I still find a few interesting finds now and then. Often, I just take a picture of something that tugs at my heart – maybe something I really wanted as a new ham – and drooled over. Hi hi. Don't need any more boatanchors.

After the last 4 day trip to MO and KS, the blood pressure starting spiking up....and up. So called by heart doc to say it seems my current meds aren't doing the job. Hitting 175/130 type area – when normally I'm 130/75 or so. So he put me on additional meds including Omesartin and a diuretic. Omesartin gave me instant total insomnia after 3 days. Stopped it immediately. The total insomnia didn't. Doesn't take much to trigger that. Diuretic did nothing. Went downhill quickly - really weak, super high BP. Getting no sleep, too. Had neighbor take me to emergency room at Baylor Heart Center.

Found out quickly I had super super low blood sodium level. Probably drinking too much water on trips, plus usual two cups coffee and maybe some juice for breakfast. Quart of water during day. The more I drank, the more I peed, the worse it got. Was thirsty all the time. When home, diuretic had made it a lot worse and put me in hospital. Routine blood work would have found problem but not done. Usually get done as part of annual Medicare "wellness" check around December.

Run I'm typically at low end blood sodium which normal is 135 to 145 each year but doc doesn't fret over that. At the hospital, it was at critical stage at 118. Much lower and would have been in coma/heart attack area and maybe severely dead.

So they gave me saline infusion.....water restriction and measured pee output. Confined to bed or the chair with alarms if you tried to get out yourself. Hospital doesn't want you out of bed 'unassisted'. Period. There for a week as they slowly try to raise sodium level. Too fast is dangerous. OK...so I left at level130 - not normal but stuck there at that level for a few days. Taking salt pills. Salting everything for food. (good food at hospital).

After week in hospital now home. Adding lots of salt to diet. Normally I follow a 'heart healthy' diet with little salt – maybe 200-300 mg a day. Good for folks with heart

problems or previous heart attacks, etc. Best to get at least 500 mg/day and up to 2300 mg a day is fine. For me – lots of salt, watch water intake. (now only 1500 mL or about 50 oz of fluids (water, juice, coffee) a day. 500 milliliters or about 16 oz a meal. Taking salt tablet. Normal BP med gives me 120-130/70-80 type blood pressure. Good. Slowly trying to urge up my sodium level toward normal. Get it checked again next week. Salt intake does not necessarily result in higher blood sodium level. That is controlled by kidneys for the most part. After a week at home up to 133. Yeah....on the right track. Still not sleeping much.

Guess I'm one that really needs more than 200-300mg salt intake a day. Had a lot of water when traveling – but sort of sweated that out but likely too much and not enough salt intake. Didn't salt anything. Same at home. (Hard to salt salads....) . Which could eventually trigger the problem.

So....it's been interesting...... in the wrong sense. Keeping at home for a while till things hopefully stabilize now.

Now having the problem of post polio muscle weakness. For those born after 1950 or so, the vaccine was available in 1954/1955 time frame. Probably no one in the US got polio after that because they were vaccinated. There were ZERO anti-vaxxers back then. It's been totally eliminated in the US and most of the world now (Thanks to Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) other than some hot spots in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Sadly a bunch of county hunters along the way got dinged by polio – some severely like the first USA-CA holder Cliff Corne K9EAB – Number 1. He was confined to an iron lung to assist breathing. Died in his 20s. Polio attacks the motor neurons that control the muscles. If too many die off, you're in an iron lung (if you survive at all), or often wear braces on legs to be able to walk. Other folks seem to recover, only later going downhill quickly as they age. You might have lost 50% of your muscles. Doesn't matter too much, you'll get by likely. Then as you age, each decade 10% of your muscles die off. You'll note there are no Olympic weight lifters over 30....they are over the hill by then. Starting at age 20, about 10% of your muscles die off each decade. If you start at 100%, then by age 70 or 80, you might have lost 40% of what you had. If you start at 50% due to polio, then by age 70, you're down to maybe 25% or 30%......which might put you in a wheel chair at that point. So it goes.

We can add in a bunch more with long term problems, including Don, K5CKQ (SK), Carol KI0JD (SK), and likely others before I jumped into county hunting. If you're under 70, you probably benefited by having the polio vaccine available in 1955. So you got the vax and escaped the epidemic.

Now we have the COVID problem and some county hunters almost dying, and one or two actually dying from it. Some touch and go – but lived. Now that the vaccine is available, I'm amazed that hundreds are still dying each week and 25,000 people a day are contracting the virus/illness – including younger folks by the drove. It, too, can leave you with long term COVID, damage to heart/lungs and other organs, and who knows what problems in a decade or more!

You've got to be a real idiot now with the Delta variant ramping up and hospitals filling up again mostly with YOUNG folks in their 30s.....and rampant infections in unvaccinated hot spots.

Now 80+ percent of new cases are among unvaccinated and 99% of all people entering the hospital are unvaxxed. Among those vaccinated, most have mild or no symptoms but test 'positive' and possibly can infect others.

Around Dallas, the Delta variant is rampant. Hospitals are filling up once again. If not contained quickly, we'll reach the peak seen last fall and maybe as bad as Jan 2021 with tens of thousands in hospitals gasping for breath, and thousands more needlessly dying. Now is NOT the time to be 'indecisive' about getting vaccinated.

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There are many out there with this or that problem. Comes along with 'living long time'. Hopefully many will be county hunting from home or get out on trips occasionally – as we county hunters age – and sadly the list of SK grows by 10 or so a year. Not planning on joining that yet.....if I can help it. Hi Hi. Managed to get out on a few trips to the local parks but nothing else as of yet this month. Maybe more coming up. Getting a bit better every day it seems.

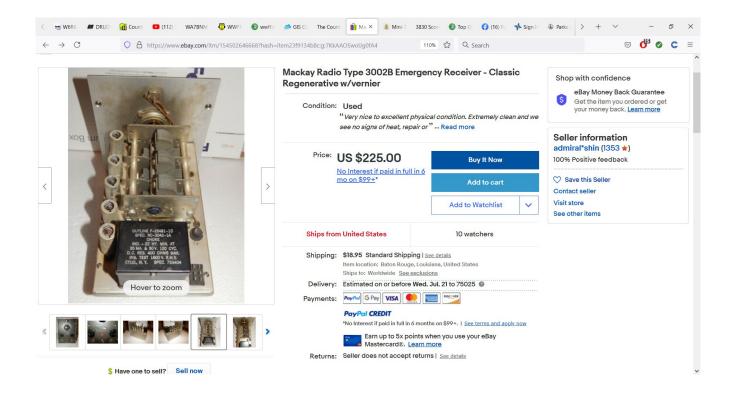
On the Trail of Regens

Something new popped up on Ebay. First time in 15 years of searching that I found this receiver – didn't even know it existed but there are likely loads more like it.

Here is a MacKay 3002B Emergency Receiver used aboard ship. It went in a large set up – floor to 8 feet high with main transmitter and receiver, power supplies, clock,

inverters/converters, etc. It was an option. I guess when your main MacKay receiver died for some reason, including battle damage, rare failure, etc, this was a simple regen receiver for long wave from 300-600 KHz. Looks like mostly 4 stages TRF with regen in one. Front panel selection of xtal detector for closer work or tube detector.





From the ad:

"One Mackay Radio model 3002B VLF receiver whose dial is centered on 500 KC. Unit runs off 12 VDC and requires an antenna & a headset (both user supplied). These were part of the MRU-19 Mackay console installation. In the picture section you will see a typical MRU-19 setup. The 3002B is the last unit on the right of the operators desk. As you can see, it is the same height and style of the other pieces and a good compliment to either the full featured 3001A or 3007A HF radios.

This is a very rare unit and offers great collector value to the savy buyer who stumbles across this ad. The unit is approximately 10" by 8" by 7" and unpacked it weighs 6 lbs. It's tube compliment starting from the rear and going towards the front panel is: 6AK6, 9001, 9003, 9001, and 6C4. The dial features classic vernier tuning over the range 300 - 650 kc. All electrolytics are clearly marked and, as stated in the condition statement, the unit is quite clean and ready for servicing.

If you are considering collecting Mackay Radios of this period, we have at this time both the 3001A and 3007A receivers with cabinets & shock mounts. We also have an all caps typewriter used at Mackay complete with a new fabric dust cover. QSO W5JV for more information.

Condition: Untested, sold strictly as is. Very nice to excellent physical condition and very clean insides. We see no modifications, no heat marks, no tell tale servicing signs. The radio is very nice. We have enough sense not to throw power on this unit because it must be benched and properly checked (electrolytics, etc.).

Mobile Activity in July

Lots of activity with several super mobiles out and about running hundreds of counties here and there.

Starting June 26th

Ed, K8ZZ was in KS, headed to CO and NE, and WY, where he met up with Jerry, W0GXQ. Then they were running MT. Lots of MT, then more WY, then NE. Trip over a week. K8ZZ headed back to KS, W0GXQ to CO.

Later K8ZZ headed out through KS to IA, to MO. To OK, to AR,

Fred, K0FG was out and about in MO, then into KS. Showed up in NM, into AZ, later back through TX, OK to home.

AB4WL/NM4JM ran counties/parks in ND into MT, later in WA state,

WY0A showed up running counties in TX for over a week. Dozens and dozens of counties run.

AB7NK, K7SEN out and about in AZ and NM, into TX to Wise, TX. Then into AR for many there. Back through OK

Seth, N3MRA spotted in KS counties. Also later in IN. OH,

Gene, K5GE spotted in KS and IA

Kerry, W4SIG, popped up in UT and put out counties there. Then into ID for more counties,

KG5GOG noted running counties in MS on 7188. Then AR

Alan, W8OP, noted out in VA counties

W7FLZ/KK7NXS put out several counties in WA.

Ed,N8OYY,noted out in VA in more than a dozen there

Rick, AI5P headed out on trip to NE, and others.

Randy, K7TQ, spotted out and about in OR

NU0Q headed out on nice trip with dozens of counties to MN, ND, MT. Still going as of press time.

Ron, KB6UF headed out on the delayed trip north to MI, up through IL, lots of MI, Still busy putting them out at press time.

end date 7/25

ON COVID-19

A matter of perspective

Breakthrough infections — in which vaccinated people nonetheless get the Covid-19 virus — are one of those vexing topics that can be difficult to put in perspective. On the one hand, breakthrough infections are obviously occurring. They've happened to the New York Yankees and to White House officials, as well at summer gatherings in Massachusetts, Oklahoma and elsewhere.

On the other hand, the scale of breakthrough infections remains unclear. Are they a significant reason that cases are now surging in the U.S. — and a reason for vaccinated people to be concerned? Or are breakthrough infections rare exceptions that receive outsize attention?

Those are two very different scenarios. If breakthrough infections are an important source of Covid spread, it would suggest that vaccinated people should resume some of their previous precautions, like avoiding crowded places. If Covid is instead spreading overwhelmingly among the unvaccinated, it would suggest that the behavior of the vaccinated doesn't matter very much; the only reliable way to reduce caseloads would

involve more vaccinations.

I'm going to warn you up front that I don't have a definitive answer for you. "There's a lot of uncertainty right now," as Natalie Dean, a biostatistician at Emory University, told me. But there is some evidence that can help you think through the situation while scientists collect more data.

What we know

Let's start with a few facts that are clear:

- Vaccinated people are nearly guaranteed not to be hospitalized or killed by Covid.
- Among children under 12, who remain ineligible for the vaccine, serious forms of Covid are also extremely rare. Children face bigger risks when they ride in a car.
- The Delta variant does not appear to change either of those facts.
- Millions of unvaccinated American adults are vulnerable to hospitalization or death from Covid.

Given all of this, the most effective Covid-fighting strategy has not changed, experts say: "Shots in arms," as my colleague Apoorva Mandavilli writes. Or as Dean says, "The biggest problem is that there are a lot of people with no protection."

And there are measures that would almost certainly increase vaccinations: Full F.D.A. approval (which hasn't happened despite public endorsements of the vaccines by the F.D.A.'s leaders); vaccine mandates from employers and local governments; and provaccination messages from Republican politicians, professional athletes and other people who have credibility among vaccine skeptics. Any of these steps would almost certainly have a bigger effect than behavioral changes among the vaccinated.

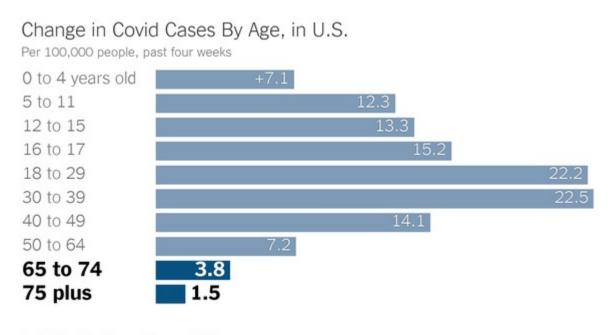
Still, I understand why many vaccinated people are wondering if they should change their behavior. I feel the same way. I don't want to contribute to the spread of the virus, and I would rather not contract even a modest version of Covid.

Among other reasons, the risks of "long Covid" remain uncertain. Yes, those risks get exaggerated sometimes: Many viruses, like influenza, cause long-term symptoms, and some of the focus on long Covid stems from society's current obsession with all things Covid. There is still no rigorous study that compares long Covid with "long flu." But long Covid is probably worse, which argues for caution.

What we don't know

How common, then, are breakthrough infections?

One reason for optimism is the recent trend among the most vaccinated segments of society: older people. About 80 percent of Americans over age 65 have been fully vaccinated. This chart looks at the U.S. since late June, when cases began rising:



By The New York Times | Source: C.D.C.

As you can see, new cases have risen only modestly among people over 65, suggesting that breakthrough infections are rare. "I think people who are vaccinated are not, on a population level, major contributors to the transmission of the disease," Dr. David Dowdy, a Johns Hopkins University epidemiologist, told me.

Part of the reason is that vaccinated people are both less likely to get infected and less likely to pass on the virus even if they do get infected, scientists say. A vaccinated person without Covid symptoms seems especially unlikely to infect somebody else.

"What is clear is that people who are vaccinated and have symptomatic breakthrough infections can transmit it to other people," Dr. Ashish Jha of Brown University said.

"What is not at all clear is whether vaccinated asymptomatic people can transmit it. And my best guess is no — or not very often."

He added: "I'm not worried about an asymptomatic vaccinated person spreading it to me."

Of course, a vaccinated person can still get the virus from somebody who has symptoms or hasn't been vaccinated. Liam Stack, a Times reporter who covers religion, was fully vaccinated by April but nonetheless caught the virus in June, probably socializing with friends, either at a bar or a beach house, he says.

"It was not the sickest I've ever been, but it was very disruptive," he told me. He was sick for a full week, with flulike symptoms, including congestion, muscle aches and fatigue. One day, he took a three-hour nap around lunchtime, followed by a two-hour nap before dinner.

Liam is feeling better now, and, as far as he knows, none of his friends or family members contracted the virus from him. But he does not recommend the experience. "It was unpleasant," he said.

The bottom line

Different vaccinated people are going to make different decisions, and that's OK. I find the risk of breakthrough infections to be small enough that I'm not going to make major changes to my behavior.

I would feel differently if I lived in a community with a lower vaccination rate — or if I lived with somebody who was vulnerable to Covid because of an immunodeficiency. And the current surge in cases has changed my thinking. I will again wear a mask sometimes when in close contact with strangers, even if it has little tangible effect. The main reason to do so, as Dowdy said, is to contribute to a shared sense that we have entered a worrisome new phase of the pandemic.

It's also important that the country not respond in ways that would do more harm than good — say, by delaying the full reopening of schools, Dowdy added. For vaccinated people, Covid still represents a very small risk, and the cost of our response should not exceed the benefits.

But when cases are surging, as they are now, our approach to Covid should be different

than when they are plunging.

Source: NY Times Newsletter 7 26 2021

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Note de N4CD: There is talk of a 3rd booster shot for those over 65 or with compromised immune systems. Pfizer. We'll see going into fall how this works out. Of course, get your yearly flu shot this fall/winter, too.

Awards Issued

Worked all Counties: KM6HB Completed his 4th time on 6/15/2021. He received #172

USA-CA Award: N0KV Completed his 5th time on 6/21/21/ He was assigned #121

Master Platinum Award: KA9JAC completed MP on 6/7/2021. He received #32

Bingo Award: N1API attained Bingo III on 7/1/2021. He received #44

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Roadrunner Awards:

NF0N #54 for 375 Last Counties on 6/16/21

N0KV #15 for 950 Last Counties on 6/19/21

N0DXE #55 for 375 Last Counties on 6/20/21

K8ZZ #13 for 1025 Last Counties on 6/21/21

KB6UF #2 for 1775 Last Counties on 6/27/21

W0GXQ Attained 1350 Last Counties on 6/30/2021. He is assigned #4

W4SIG Attained 725 Last counties on 19 July 2021. He received #23 K8ZZ attained 1050 Last counties on 7/4/2021. He received #9 County Challenge: N8OYY attained Level 10 on 6/5/21. He received #7 Ran all State: K7TQ Completed Idaho on 6/28/21. He received #35 **Ran all State: KB6UF Collection** SC 10/22/2006 #35 VT 6/5/2010 #39 WV 4/23/2010 #27 TX 6/28/1993 #34 VA 9/14/2004 #22 TN 10/17/2002 #30 RI 6/4/2005 #51 UT 11/3/1994 #29 WA 11/22/2011 #33 PA 6/8/2008 #27

Single Band Award: K2MF Completed all 20 meters on 10/20/2015. He is assigned #26

Single Band Award: K2MF Attained Level 1000 on 80 meters on 11/6/2011. He is assigned #9

Single Band Award: K2MF Attained Level 2000 on 40 meters on 4/18/2017. He is assigned #4

Single Band Award: K2MF Attained Level 2000 On 30 meters on 2/26/2018. He is assigned #5

Single Band Award: K2MF Attained Level 3000/40 meters on 19 July 2021. He received #1

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Ran All State Award: N8KIE completed Arizona on 2/20/2009. He received #44

Ran All State Award: W0GXQ completed Montana on 7/3/2021. He received #29

Ran All State Award: N8OYY Completed all Virginia on 17 July 2021. He received #23

Upcoming Events for County Hunters

Back to QSO Party Season for the Fall! Some contests, then into the State QSO Parties for the next couple months!

Jul 31 1400z to Aug 1 2000 and Aug 1400z to 200z

Missouri QSO Party

RST and S/P/County

https://w0ma.org/images/MOQP2021/MO-QSO-Party-Rules-2021.pdf

County line operation for mobiles/portables allowed and self spotting allowed

This QSO Party normally in April but delayed this year due to COVID. Will resume in April 2022 date.

Aug 7 0001z to 8 2359z

10-10 International Summer Contest, SSB Ph
Name, mbr or "0," SPC

www.ten-ten.org

Aug 7 1800z to 8 0559z

1.8-28 North American QSO Party, CW
Name, state/DC/province/country
www.ncjweb.com

Aug 14 1400z to 14 2200z
3.5-28 Kentucky State Parks on the Air
CW Ph Dig
KY park abbreviation or SPC
k4msu.com/kypota

Aug 14 1400z to 15 0400z 1.8-432 **Maryland-DC QSO Party CW Ph Dig** Entry class, county or SPC w3vpr.org/mdcqsop

Aug 28 1400z to 29 2000z 3.5-50 **Kansas QSO Party** CW Ph Dig RS(T), KS county or SPC k sqsoparty.org

Aug 28 1600z to 29 0400z 1.8-28 **Ohio QSO Party** CW Ph RS(T), OH county or SPC http://www.ohqp.org/

That's all folks. No big N4CD trip reports this month to fill up the news letter.