

County Hunter News OnLine

May 2024
Volume 20 Issue 5

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). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M SSB runs usually after the run on 20M SSB . (21.336 and 28.336)

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

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

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

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

1) Sunspots – All days sunspot number over 100. Ten meters very good FT-8 but many days no joy on CW and SSB on 10M. Some days good, many days not. Solar flares this month wiped out a few days. Flux is up to over 200 and sunspot numbers often above 120. Some days are great. Lower bands, as usual, suffer in high sunspot years during the day. Lots of DX being worked on 15 to 10M, and often 6m. We're approaching the peak for this sunspot cycle.

2) Parks on the Air

The program keeps growing and growing. 13,000 parks in the US, and the bands on weekends are filled on SSB end to end. Good bit of CW activity and lots of QRP stations (1-20w) in various parks in counties all around the USA, including ND, ID, MT and the often less run counties. Over 55,000 have registered on the site, and by June, it will likely be 60,000 people involved in park chasing.

3) CQ Magazine

The assumption at this time is that CQ Magazine is 'defunct' and the CQ Awards program now in jeopardy. Brian, NX0X, is still processing USACA award levels for the time being. Haven't seen anything else on WPX (Prefixes) Award that CQ

Magazine issues. .

MARAC is working hard on options for continuation of USACA County Award Program. . See the latest from the monthly Road Runner.

4) AI5P Trip – and Prizes

Rick, AI5P, will run the entire state of AR and all 52 state parks and the one National Park during the May/June Time frame. More details forthcoming and more details later in this monthly issue. Maybe.

5) QSO Party Month

Hope you joined in. Lots of QSO Parties to report on this month. I include the mobile and portable reports, and several selected fixed station reports (especially the ones who talk about the mobiles) and those with the highest number of counties worked. Usually OM2VL, N8II, K4BAI, do nice job in this regard. Not all mobiles report on the 3830 contest reflector so that helps identify those 'missing mobiles' that deserve mentioning.

May starts off with some big ones, then it's the end of QSO Party season till late August.

6) Dual Park finder

If you upload to both the WWFF (world wide flora and fauna) site and the POTA site when you run parks, here's a nice listing that helps you identify parks that are in both systems. The WWFF program has stricter guidelines as to what qualifies – such as minimum area. In POTA, there are 50 acre 'state game areas' and similar and many building sites.

Handy Dandy 'dual park' finder refererence.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1jhBkGatQx9fTyR0XavyocWVD7-Tr4l0&ll=32.964200000000005%2C-96.6572&z=8>

7) Oops - - - Looks like we jumped the gun. KB6UF headed to MN to run the rest of the lower 48 counties. After that, he'll be headed to HI to finish up running all the counties in the USA. He's done AK but plans to go Second District to get the Mobile Diamond contact there

The MARAC board has decided to stick with the existing 'Connecticut Counties' for the time being, so folks won't have to re-run them. The upcoming NE QP will use the new area designation in CT.

Missouri QSO Party

Not much going on from TX – 20M too long other than NE tip of MO and not many heard on 40M and with conditions, only a few in log here at N4CD/m for a few hours over in park. Others probably had more success and later in eve, 40m picked up nicely for many. Lots of activity and half dozen mobiles out there!

There are 114 counties and one Independent City in MO. (115 possible mults). Looks like OM2VL snagged 96 of them. Nice.

From the 3830 reflector:

WØH mobile 438 cw 256 ssb

Operator(s): WBØSND WBØTUA

From WØH, tnx for the Q's! From our perspective, bands were poor and generally empty. We were setup expedition style in 3 different counties: BOL, MAD and WAY. How did everyone fare? 73 de Mime WBØSND and Derek WBØTUA

KØA mobile 1347 cw 542 ssb
K5CM OPR

This was a Saturday only operation. Conditions seemed poor for the first few hours, then improved later in the day/evening.

Some of the stations worked the most.

45 OM2VL
30 KA6BIM

21 AA3R WN4AFP
18 DL3DXX K0R NE8P W3LL
15 AF5J K3WJV KJ9C NS2N NW0M W0W WA2JQK WB9HFK
12 K0AP K3YP K4BAI K5TIA KD4S N0E VE5KS W0PI W2LC WX4G
9 K0MPH K0TRL K2YG K8ZT K9CW KE0TT KE8PX KF6NCX N0O N8II
NY9P VE3YT VE7ZO W0BH W1SSN W1TO W3WHK W4NZ W8KNO
WA0MHJ WB2FUV
73,
Connie / K5CM

N0M (N0MII operator) County Expedition Gasconde QRP 255 CW 9 SSB qso

Operated at top of the hill overlooking Hermann MO. Beautiful site - quiet! Sunday seemed slow mid-morning; shut down 4 hours early. Some nice DX surprises - and some SSB surprises too (thanks for your patience listening for my QRP sig). The Mobile APRS tracker really helped w/ mults - thanks KB5YZY!

KX3; OCFD(40-10)@40'

K0PC mobile 1300 CW qso

I haven't operated mobile in the MOQP since 2018 so it was good to get back at it again. I operated Saturday only and drove home on Sunday. For the most part things worked well and the weather/roads were in fine shape.

Thanks to all that rode along all day. Here is the Top Ten List:

34 - K0MPH, WA0MHJ
33 - OM2VL
31 - K0AP
30 - WB9HFK
29 - DL3DXX, W0ZQ
27 - KA6BIM, W0W
22 - NS2N

Thanks to the BEARS for organizing the MOQP again this year.

73, Pat K0PC

N0H (AB0RX Opr) mobile 412 SSB

no comments

KA6BIM - fixed - OR 176c cw 75 SSB 85 counties

Good conditions this year, with lots of activity. The contest goes late enough on Saturday for the low bands to be used from the West Coast. Many rovers did a great job in covering the state. I picked up about 15 new counties. Thanks for the qso's Dave ka6bim

OM2VL - fixed - DX 207 CW 118 SSB Mults 96

Thanks for the excellent activity of MO stations especially for the activity on 20/15m. 10m was also open some hours, but only few stations was here. The best band was 15m with FB signals and easy QSOs. 20m was sometimes very hard with very low signals. 40/80m during the night was also good. My only 80m SSB QSO was with Connie K0A/M!

From 1x1 stations I missed only K0H and W0U.

Most QSOs with:

W0BH 50/17

K0U 42/26

K0A 42/7

K0PC 32/24

N0O 19/14

N0H 14/12

N0E 14/2

N0R 4/2

NS2N Fixed NY - 119 cw 51 ssb Mults 66

thanks to the /M ... good ears in marginal condx

K4BAI - fixed - GA 104 cw 45 ssb

Mults 59

Had to re-figure the score. N1MM had Vernon (VRN) on the multiplier list, but would not allow me to log a QSO with that county. I had to force log it and it also did not count VRN as a multiplier. So I refigured the score with one more QSO point and one more multiplier and then added the 300 bonus points for QSOs with K0GQ and W0MA and for Cabrillo log. Hope I got it right. Someone should tell the N1MM group about this anomaly. W0MA seemed not to be very active for a bonus station and the club that sponsors the QSO party. I heard it only on Sunday and not at all on Saturday. Bands were difficult from GA because generally during the day, particularly Sunday, 20M was too long for a lot of MO and 40M was too short. 15 was always too long. The mobiles did a good job and the special event calls also. I assume W0BH was a one day operation this year as I did not hear Bob on Sunday. Thanks for all QSOs.

N0E portable ORE/SHA 868 cw 220 SSB
KI0I opr

Fun weekend but the wind was sure whipping my antennas around , at least no storms at my portable location in Southern MO. I set up on the Shannon/Oregon for an expedition run. My first time at this spot and luckily I caught the preacher at The Countyline Pentecostal Church mowing grass and asked for permission to setup on the property. He is a very nice man and gave the ok . I think he may have blessed my operation cuz it went quite well. I sat in the truck with antennas on it and a dipole hung from a portable mast .

The bands were fickle but with constant watching of the spotters I cud tell what bands were working and when.

Sunday morning when I returned to the church, I stepped in to thank Pastor Tim again and put a donation in the collection plate ,he invited me to return anytime and that just may happen ! The Ozarks region of Missouri is as pretty a country as anywhere in the USA.

Thanks to the mobiles who braved the extra busy traffic weekend ahead of the Eclipse on Monday. I stayed in Shannon county at a friends house to view the Eclipse myself and work the solar eclipse qso party..that didn't work out so well as I was busy looking up !

Thanks to all for QSO`s and for being patient when things froze up.

73

Mark KI0I/N0E [this year anyway]

Rig Icom 7300 100w thru an LDG-IT100 to a new carolina windom up 28' , also a tarheel 100hp and hamsticks 20m/15m also a big fat coil loaded CB trucker antenna found on the hiway. Re-tuned to 10m it seems to be very good .
N1MM+ logger and HP Probook laptop..And a big bag of snacks :)

WN4AFP fixed SC 106 cw 39 ssb Mults 72

I want to thank all the MOQP mobile ops who spent the weekend running around MO putting out all of those counties for US! You guys were great! I know that I worked W0BH/M 29 times! Also many Qs with K0A, N0O, K0U, K0PC, N0H, N0E and W0H.

Propagation was very poor from SC to MO on 40m except late on Saturday night. 20m was up and down all on both days. It was like I was only hearing half of MO on 20m.

I was pleased to work 72 mults. I'll try to improve my score next year! Thanks for a great QP weekend.

73

Dave WN4AFP

N8II fixed WV 90 CW 71 ssb Mults 68

After several years of very sparse mobile/rover activity, this year was a pleasant surprise. I was planning on only few hours. I ended up operating a good amount of time Saturday, but not enough to be competitive for winning LP. 40m was closed most of the daytime hours for mobile signals and I had enough noise to wipe out weak signals. 20M was excellent. I checked 15 several times, solar flux just too low for an opening. I discovered too late that the MOQP spotter page was actually working most of the time. I was checking RBN's some.

Sunday activity was a good reason to not have a two day party, very few rovers and mobiles, only 27 QSO's made, last was 1816Z before NCAA final at 19Z. Many thanks to mobiles/rovers: W0BH, K0A/K5CM, N0H (SSB), N0O, W0H, N0E/KI0I, and K0PC

for helping me set a personal best score.

Thanks and 73, Jeff

Sodium Ion Batteries I

Sodium-ion batteries (NIBs, SIBs, or Na-ion batteries) are several types of rechargeable batteries, which use sodium ions (Na^+) as its charge carriers. In some cases, its working principle and cell construction are similar to those of lithium-ion battery (LIB) types, but it replaces lithium with sodium as the intercalating ion. Sodium belongs to the same group in the periodic table as lithium and thus has similar chemical properties. Although, in some cases (such as aqueous Na-ion batteries) they are quite different from Li-ion batteries.

SIBs received academic and commercial interest in the 2010s and early 2020s, largely due to the uneven geographic distribution, high environmental impact, and high cost of lithium. An obvious advantage of sodium is its natural abundance, particularly in saltwater.

The development of Na^+ batteries started in the 1990s. After three decades of development, NIBs are at a critical moment of commercialization. Several companies such as HiNa and CATL in China, Faradion in the United Kingdom, Tiamat in France, Northvolt in Sweden, and Natron Energy in the US, are close to achieving the commercialization of NIBs, with the aim of employing sodium layered transition metal oxides (Na_xTMO_2),

Electric vehicles using sodium-ion battery packs are not yet commercially available. However, CATL, the world's biggest lithium-ion battery manufacturer, announced in 2022 the start of mass production of SIBs. In February 2023, the Chinese HiNA Battery Technology Company, Ltd. placed a 140 Wh/kg sodium-ion battery in an electric test car for the first time.

LA QSO Party

About a dozen or two fixed stations. Contacts hard to come by. Lack of mobiles and competing against MO QSO Party with much more activity. Heard one station on 20M from TX(not worked) and one on 40m during morning hours. Not many had more than dozen contacts either mode. There are 64 parishes in LA. Fixed stations in LA racked up several hundred contacts on SSB, one 150+ digital contacts, but a lot less CW action. With both CW and SSB multipliers, hard to tell exactly how many parishes were on the air, but certainly not more than half, and maybe only 1/3rd.

KA6BIM - fixed OR 7 CW 10 SSB 7 CW mults 9 SSB mults

LA Stations were pretty scarce during their State qso party. I was hoping to find some of the parishes I still need but was mostly disappointed. This is another qso party that needs some rover operators to activate more of the state. Thanks for the qsos, from those LA operators who did get on! Dave ka6bim

K4BAI - fixed - GA 8 cw 4 ssb 8 CW mults 4 SSB mults

Interesting that every QSO was a multiplier. Didn't work two stations in the same county on any band or mode. I still need 9 parishes in LA for all USA counties all time and had hoped to get one or two this year. But the LA QSO Party was not well attended by LA stations. Skip zone was generally too long for 20 and 15, but did work KZ5D on 15M. Thanks, Art. The time spent on the air was many times the time reported, which came from the computer. It means that only once did I find two LA stations within a half hour of each other. Conditions on 40 and 80M from GA to LA were quite good, but activity was almost NIL. Thanks for the QSOs that were made.

N8II fixed WV 9 cw 18 ssb 9 CW mults 15 SSB mults

Not a great situation when 27 Q's/1828 points is the highest out of state score on 3830. I was able to run a few on 20M SSB. Condx were good on 20 all day long as expected. If I worked a mobile it was only once. Thanks to those LA ops who operated for the effort.

73, Jeff

Mississippi QSO Party

There are 82 counties in MS. Less than 20 were on the air. Definitely needs a half dozen mobiles running around! Competes against MO and LA QP's same weekend.

WQ5L portable single op 202 CW 106 SSB

Portable in Hancock County, 100W + OCFD @30'. Mults were 20 counties, 41 states, 4 provinces, 4 DX. Thanks for the Qs! 73 de WQ5L

K4BAI - fixed - GA 15 CW 15 SSB Mults17

20 and higher bands were too long for skip from GA to MS, but did manage four QSOs on 20M. Guess they were either backscatter or groundwave. Thanks for all QSOs. Hope to work you all in the GA QSO Party next weekend. I hope to be K4BAI/M.

73, John, K4BAI

KA6BIM fixed OR 13 cw 16 ssb Mults15

MS Stations were few and far between. This state needs an influx of active rovers to activate many of the unrepresented counties. Thanks for the qso's

Dave ka6bim

OM2VL fixed DX 22 cw 18 ssb Mults19

I was very busy in the MO QP, so missed many MS stations...

Thanks for the QSOs!

Most QSO with:

K5RFL/M 4/4

(5): W5YD
(4): W5UE, WQ5L
(3): N5CW, NA5DX, W5XX

73, Laci

Sodium Ion Batteries II

Sodium Ion Batteries by: Mark Siegesmund, W9WMR

There is increased chatter about the new rage for battery technology....Sodium Ion (Na-Ion) batteries are the next level up! We recently bought a Sodium Ion battery and ran it through a series of tests to determine how suitable it would be for amateur radio. This was a test of just one battery and it is still early in the development for Sodium ion batteries. It is being promoted as having a life span in the range of a Lithium battery without the concerns of spontaneous thermal events. Note that the Lead Acid battery data in this article are for sealed type that are not AGM.

The charge voltage is higher than we are accustomed to, and more importantly, the discharge voltage is considerably lower than the competitive technologies.

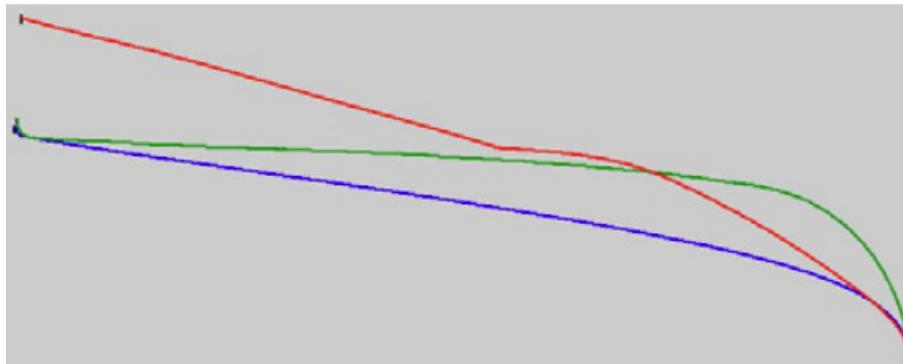
	Charge Voltage	Discharge Min Voltage
Lead Acid	13.8V	10.5V
LiFePO4	14.5V	10V
Na-Ion	15.4V	6V

Most radios need 11.5V to transmit, meaning about half the Amp Hours in the battery are not usable just as it is. A battery booster will help this situation. The West Mountain Radio N8XJK Super Booster works down to 9V, thus providing 82% of the Amp Hours.

Na-Ion batteries require a 15.4 charge voltage, so most radios will need to be disconnected during charging. The radio can stay connected while charging the battery is charged to 15V, however, there is a small reduction in AH. Note that even when charged

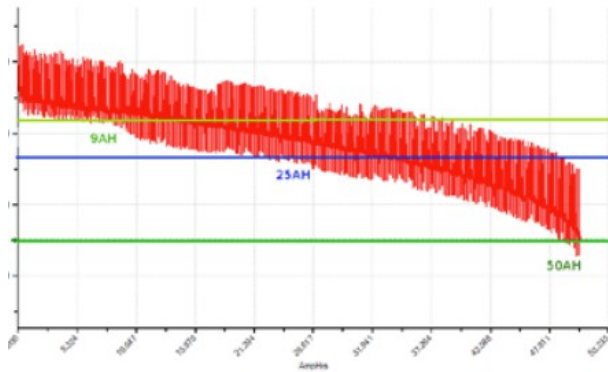
to 15.4V after charging the battery settles down to 14.8V.

In our tests we were only able to get 96% of the rated AH even when charging as instructed. The discharge curve is also unique. The following shows the typical discharge curves for Lead Acid

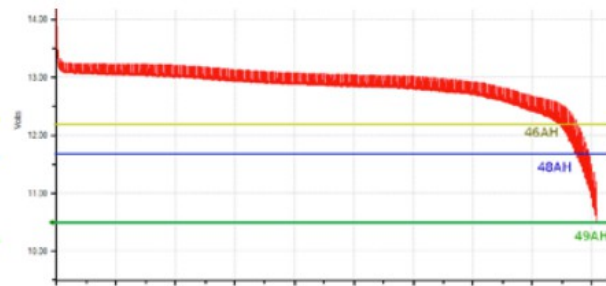


Lead Acid(Blue), LiFePO4 (Green) and the Sodium Ion (Red).

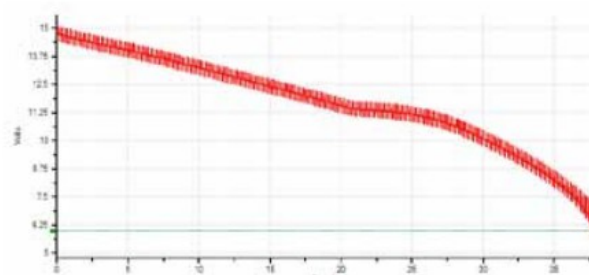
In order to simulate normal operating conditions we do a test that alternates between a 2A discharge (receive) and a 20A discharge (transmit), each for 30 seconds. The three technologies are shown below.



Lead Acid



LiFePO4



Sodium Ion

The internal resistance on this battery comes out to 0.003 ohms ignoring the spikes. It is impressive how there is not a lot of voltage drop when you transmit. Perhaps the most attractive feature of this battery was the price. The retail price was \$85 for a 40AH battery and the weight was 11.75 lbs. It did cost us twice that due to overseas shipping.

Here is a rough comparison chart.

	Dollars per AH	Pounds per AH	Deep Cycles
Lead Acid	\$4.80	0.7 lbs	600
LiFePO4	\$7	0.28 lbs	3000
Na-Ion	\$2.13	0.29 lbs	3000

In summary this battery will take some getting used to. The battery can be used as-is using a Li charger set to 14.8V (the Epic can do this) to get 46% of the rated capacity (down to 11.5V). The WMR Super booster will bring this to 81%. Still a lower cost than

a LiFePO₄ but then there is a hassle of actually buying one. The characteristics will likely change as these batteries are available from more manufactures and are in mass production. If you want to find the battery we tested google YC-NA-1240S.

First University Quantum Computer

— Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) recently held a massive ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration to unveil its fully operational quantum computer.

RPI is the first and so far only university in the world to own a quantum computer, another in a string of milestone events as the college celebrates its bicentennial. The IBM Quantum System One is housed in a specially designed room inside RPI's historic Voorhees Computing Center Chapel.

The quantum computer's storage area protects the highly delicate system, which must be kept still and at a temperature as close to absolute zero as possible, from many types of interference including dirt, static, heat, vibration, and — as the campus discovered firsthand — earthquakes.

The quantum computer is already online and fully operational. As part of its ongoing efforts to push the boundaries of computing, RPI has announced a partnership with SUNY Albany.

The partnership is unique, as it pairs a public university with a private one. Researchers at the state school — student and faculty alike — will have access to the IBM Quantum System One, and in return, researchers at RPI will have access to SUNY Albany's prototype IBM Artificial Intelligence Unit (AIU) computing cluster. Just like RPI's quantum computer, SUNY Albany's AIU cluster is the first of its kind on a university campus anywhere in the world.

"Since the day (RPI) President (Martin) Schmidt walked in the door, he said 'Let's form a partnership and collaborate.' It's all about initiatives for the public good," SUNY Albany President Havidán Rodríguez said. "We're very enthusiastic about the partnership."

"We like to think that this computer is going to solve problems that classic computers can't, but first we have to figure out what those problems are," Schmidt remarked.

"Having this computer on campus will give us a head start on that. It's a great platform for us to learn what quantum computing can do. It's our opportunity to educate our students (on) how to do that.

"We'll be 'quantum ready,' and the UAlbany faculty and students will be ready with us. They'll be able to learn along with us. We'll be developing that quantum computing curriculum together."

"The beauty of being on a campus means you have fresh thinking, you have minds that are open to new means of discovery," Tonko commented. "We have a good coming-together here of the public and private sectors. The pioneering that will go on here, having the workforce development here, is a golden opportunity. There's no denying we're one of the hottest centers in the country right now for semiconductors — we've got R&D, manufacturing, and workforce development all here in the Capital District. We're now in a position to be very well-poised to demand that we be the center point of the industry."

Quantum computing pairs with the semiconductor industry because the former helps the development and improvement of the latter. As SUNY Albany Vice President for Research Thenkurussi (Kesh) Kesavadas explained, "The semiconductor industry works with computing. Quantum computing does number crunching but works at a much higher level. It solves bigger problems that can improve the semiconductor technologies."

Jay Gambetta, the vice president of IBM Quantum, is excited to see where the RPI community goes with the machine IBM has placed in its care.

"The way I look at quantum computing, it's the next wave of computing," he said. "You first need to build the platform and prove it can be done. We've done that. Then you need to build the algorithms and the software and put it to use, and that's what's happening right now. I think that has to start with the student role. At IBM we want to build the best compute system, but that's only half the equation."

Curtis Priem, vice president of RPI's Board of Trustees, was instrumental in making a quantum computer at RPI a reality through generous philanthropic support and persistent dedication to the project. Looking back on the path to the groundbreaking event, he noted that it was one more step on the path he'd been following for decades.

"46 years ago, I made a decision to come to RPI because they had just installed an IBM 3033 computer," he remarked. "Having that computing power onsite is very very

important, and it's always been part of our culture. Then we brought over a supercomputer, and it's the fastest supercomputer on any campus. Now we've got the quantum computer. I'm seeing myself through these kids' eyes from 45 years ago.

"The difference is the turnaround time for researchers. The quantum computer can put out 10,000 "shots" (computing results) in about fifteen seconds. We're not standing around waiting for results, we're in constant motion, which is the only way you're going to innovate."

About halfway through the VIP speeches, the Capital Region experienced an earthquake Friday morning, whose epicenter was located a mile from Tewksbury, New Jersey. The earthquake measured 4.8 on the Richter Scale and was the third strongest in the state's history. The IBM Quantum System One was unaffected.

Priem noted that the quantum computer, which will be accessible to all RPI students, is a symbol of the college's culture from the beginning. Active, hands-on learning was one of the ten Orders decreed by RPI founder Stephen Van Rensselaer, and 200 years later it still holds true.

"It's been our culture from day one to have hands-on access," Priem said. "Go use the computer!"

Kelly, who was thrilled to see two of the "great institutions of his life now working together," concluded his speech by telling the RPI students, "This puts RPI at the forefront — the bleeding edge — of computer science. You have now been given a jewel. Take this opportunity and do things with it that have never been done in the world. Do good things with this system."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a large reception was held for the RPI community and all its guests on the café level of the EMPAC. In addition to food and beverages, employees from Stewart's Shops were there to hand out free scoops of Quantum Freeze, the new flavor of ice cream named in honor of the IBM Quantum System One and a nod to the computer's need to be stored at temperatures twenty times colder than outer space”.

source: 2024 The Record, Troy, N.Y. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

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The new IBM Quantum System One at RPI is powered by a 127-qubit IBM Quantum

'Eagle' processor, to offer RPI's network of researchers, students and partners dedicated access to a utility-scale quantum computer. In 2023, IBM demonstrated the ability of IBM Eagle to produce accurate calculations beyond classical, brute-force simulation methods. Known as quantum utility, this signaled the start of an era in which quantum systems can serve as scientific tools to explore problems in chemistry, physics, materials, and other fields in the search for quantum advantage: the point at which a quantum computer can solve a problem better than any known classical method.

The system now online at RPI is joining IBM's global fleet of utility-scale quantum computers available via the cloud and at dedicated client sites, including systems in the United States, Canada, Germany and Japan, and installations in progress in South Korea and Spain. As quantum computing hardware and software continues to advance, RPI's world-class academic body of students, researchers, and faculty will progress the global race to discover increasingly complex quantum.

"For the first time in history, an entirely new branch of computing is being developed with quantum technology. This is not something we can do alone," said Dario Gil, IBM Senior Vice President and Director of Research, and RPI board member. "It is fundamental that IBM works with our global ecosystem of partners, including world-renowned universities and research institutions such as RPI, to discover and map new algorithms to the most difficult challenges that quantum computers can solve. We will do this by fostering a quantum workforce of the future and ensuring that the next generation is equipped with the skills to use these systems to their fullest potential."

RPI and IBM have a long-standing and storied history of collaboration to advance technology. This includes RPI's current housing of the Artificial Intelligence Multiprocessing Optimized System (AiMOS). AiMOS is presently the most powerful classical supercomputer at a private university in the United States and is equipped with POWER9 CPU and NVIDIA GPU technology to enable users to explore new AI applications.

About Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

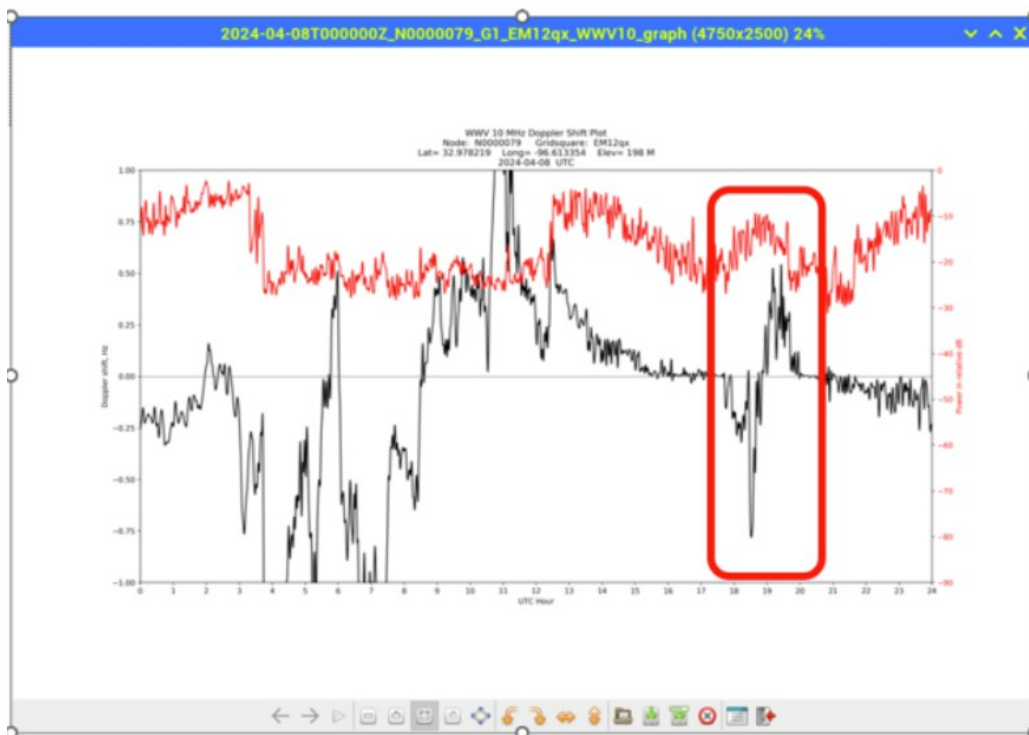
Founded in 1824 for the application of science to the common purposes of life, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is the first technological research university in the United States. Today, it is recognized as a premier university, noted for its robust and holistic learning community that connects creativity with science and technology. RPI is dedicated to inventing for the future, from shaping the scientists, engineers, technologists, architects, and entrepreneurs who will define what's next for humanity, to research that bridges disciplines to solve the world's toughest problems

One third of the student body is enrolled in 'computer science'.

Solar Eclipse Effects

from KM5GT - Dallas area

I run a Grape 1 Persona Space Weather Station (PSWS) that measures the doppler shift of the 10 MHz signal from Boulder, Colorado over time. The graph below shows the doppler shift during the full eclipse on Monday, April 8, 2024. The ionosphere responded like it was night during a brief time and the shifted back to a dusk-to-dawn pattern right after the eclipse. It is amazing how quickly the conditions change when the sun disappears, even for a short period of time.



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de N4CD

others noted that 15m died (and upper bands) then recovered after the eclipse.

There was a solar eclipse QSO Party – some participated – especially on digital modes. Others were busy watching the eclipse and put the radio aside if they were in viewing area.

At the N4CD QTH, I was busy enjoying the total eclipse on the porch deck with a friend. Nice. Clouds parted at the right time and good viewing. Will be about 350 years or so until Dallas sees another total eclipse. Hope you got to see some of it.

New Mexico QSO Party

There are 33 counties in New Mexico. Looks like top score got 27 of them worked during the contest. This was going on at same time as other QSO Parties as well. A couple of rovers and many fixed stations provided a good selection of counties.

from the 3830 reflector:

N5NA mobile 613 cw 111 ssb

Above score includes 55000 bonus points for activating 11 counties with at least 15 QSOs.

KK6MC mobile 433 cw 9 SSB

It is nice to have two ops, so there is essentially no down time operating. We activated seven counties, operating in motion and stopping at two county lines. Conditions were ho-hum, but we managed several Europeans and Japanese stations.

I could have done a better job of route planning, we spent a lot of time in Torrance and Guadalupe county.

Operation was mostly CW. The few forays into the phone segment were frustrating due to all the activity associated with several QSO parties on at the same time. Contest phone can be frustrating from a mobile even in the best of times.

I used a LiFePO battery. It worked fine; there was still 30% charge left at the end of the contest and I did not need to worry about it charging from the battery.

The trip was largely trouble free.

NS2N fixed NY 54 34 0 Mults 27

no comments

OM2VL - fixed DX 46 cw 16 ssb Mults 25

Till 18Z only 4 QSO with Alan N5NA from my needed counties for US County 2nd time (QTH was busy with young operator in the OKOM SSB contest).

After 18Z I was very busy with so many GA stations, I missed sure many NM stations. So pity that both QP was during the same weekend. Nice activity in NMQP, but except N5NA and N5M I made only 2-3 QSO with the mobiles.

Thanks for the QSOs -especially for the newones for my 2nd time Award.
Now I need "only" Grant, Lea, Los Alamos, McKinley, Rio Arriba, San Juan.

Most QSOs with:

N5NA/M 21/11

N5M 9/7

NM5DX 4/4

KE5AKL 3/3

KK6MC 2/2

NM5RC 2/2

73, Laci

LY5A fixed DX 42 CW 5 ssb Mults 25

Just for fun and new counties. 9 new counties worked!
Slowly going to mark #2500 USA-CA. Problem is what program doesn't accept LOTW.
It is too expensive, I'm forced to ask everyone new to send me a QSL.

Now I say TNX to them:

DEB - KE5AKL

GUA - KK6MC/M, NM5DX/M

HAR - N5NA

HID - K7ZOO

MOR - N5NA

QUA - N5NA

RIO - W0AMT

TOR - KK6MC/M, NM5DX/M

UNI - N5NA

Best 73 and hope to meet You next weekend.

Sam, LY5W

N8II fixed WV 32 CW 19 ssb

Mults24

I was in and out of the shack, had dinner out with family. I also started an attempt at GAQP SSB only that was doomed by poor activity and 40 nearly closed during the day. That considered, I did all right, competitive mult. 20 meter signals were pretty weak during the day and my line noise was high (high wind advisory). Thanks to all of the mobiles and rovers. Many thanks to N5NA/M who did a great job of working all available bands and hitting some very rare counties and also working SSB when CW got slow. Thanks also to KK6MC/M and NM5S/R.

Thanks for the Q's and 73, Jeff

N8KIE, Bob, Star XX Award #1

Bob, N8KIE, has earned the FIRST EVER Star XX Award - #1.

To get this award, you must work a total of 20 'stars' in each county in the US, including

Kalawao and Second AK.

You must first have your Five Star Award before you can start counting contacts for this award. 83 folks have their five star award.

The start date for this award is July 9, 2011.

After 2/15/2017, you can also go to the county, make a contact on HF, and claim 'self credit for the stars you hold. If you hold 4 stars, you get credit for 4 stars in that situation.

Georgia QSO Party

There are 159 counties in GA. Lots of smaller ones and lots of big ones. Second largest number of counties in a state. Easy to get lost as Ed, N4UJK (now SK) demonstrated by winding up in a bit of this or that county - earning the Master Navigator nickname of Magellan. Hi HI Lots of small roads you can easily get confused with while running counties and small pieces of counties you cross between others.

With both CW and SSB mults counted separately, no way to determine how many of the counties were worked by anyone – at least 120 on cw.....and about the same on phone – but no ability to figure out how many counties folks worked of the 159. Probably 140+ but we won't know.

From the 3830 reflector:

W4AN Multi OP Rover 1971 CW 78 SSB

Jeff, KU8E, got the rig/antenna/key/etc. set up in my 2017 Toyota Avalon, as usual. We had a tri-mount for 40, 15, and 10 on one mag mount and a 20M with top hat on another mag mount, both on the trunk. The rig, Jeff's TS590SG, was set up on a wooden platform that Jeff built for the back seat. The operator sits in the back with the rig and the driver (when we have one) and the other operator sit in the front. Jeff had everything working well on Saturday morning, but when we were getting ready to leave, one coax jumper seemed to be bad and then another one. So, we were 21 minutes left getting on

the air and then 1 hour and 38 minutes were spent with me operating while Jeff built new coax jumpers. That explains why we made 105 QSOs from Harris County where Jeff lives. Jeff's oldest son, Andrew, volunteered to drive us, so Jeff and I swapped off operating and Jeff and Andrew shared the driving.

We had to cut a few counties off the planned route, but did activate 42 GA counties. We often do QSO parties CW only, but this time we planned for CW and SSB, so we would go to SSB when we ran out of CW callers and when someone (usually OM2VL) asked us to. Unfortunately, the 40M antenna had too narrow a resonant point, but the 20, 15, and 10M antennas worked well on CW and on SSB. These were Hustler whips.

Apologies for my many keyboard errors. This was a dress rehearsal for the Florida QSO Party the last weekend in this month. After the slow start, it was off to the races. 20M was always open and almost always open to the US and Europe. 20M had a shorter skip zone the first day and longer on the second. 40M was virtually useless in the daytime, but pretty good at night to NA and to Europe. Thanks for all the QSOs. QSLs may be sent via the K4BAI address on QRZ.com and I try to answer them daily. We appreciate all the support for the GQP from inside and outside GA.

Of note is the continued support from members of the North Fulton Amateur Radio Society including their mobiles. We particularly appreciate the other mobile and portable operations. W4NZ and his club members were QRV from the far NW corner of GA in Dade County. AC6ZM was QRV mobile on Sunday as K4TCG. We are already looking forward to GQP next year, always the second full weekend in April.

73, John, K4BAI for the W4AN crew.

K4TCG (AC6ZM Op) rover 540 CW

Decided to operate on Sunday only on the way to FL for business. Pileups were good most of the time. 15 meters was booming into EU where OM2VL & DL3DXX always sounded loud. WX turned out to be pleasant the entire drive. W4CMG from TCG turned out to be my 1st TN mult (thanks Cathy) and several other TCG'ers followed in the log. Thanks for all the QSOs from everyone else. Catch you for the TN QSO Party in September 2024.

AA5JF portable 409 cw 349 SSB

My first portable operation in the GQP. Great fun. Lots of in-state and out-of-state

participation.

Six counties (Screven, Burke, Richmond, Columbia, Lincoln and McDuffie), with five of them POTA sites. POTA certainly drove some of the Qs, and helped with the mults for-sure. ND on phone! No Vermont though.

I had limited operating time, as I was committed to be at home for dinner both evenings, and had promised to watch the last hour+ of golf on Sunday with my dad and son. Only seven hours on the air.

The workhorse was the 40M dipole, which has a connector, so I can change it to a 20M resonant dipole (take 3 minutes), raised on a push-up pole. Just so much better than all my other portable antennas. But did mean that except for the Richmond operation, everything was 20M. Changing to 15 or 10 would have taken a long time, and I knew the bands were long, so didn't do it. Sorry Europe!

Operated mostly from inside my 2004 Lexus LX 470. Alternator has enough power to produce 100W (even with AC running). Sat on 3rd row "jump seat" with FT-991A and computer on folded-down second seat. Innovation this weekend was using a bluetooth keyboard to type (and using ESM on CW) to save my back, as I didn't have to lean forward to type on laptop. After few minutes of awkward operation from Screven, got the hang of it.

Also operated as N4G from home in the last hour. Big pile-ups on 20 and 40 CW. My skills were just barely adequate. Did some 15M from there. Separate entry of course.

Andy AA5JF

K4SBZ portable 149 SSB

This was my first time operating portable. I was also operating POTA. It was learning experience. It was a good dry-run for the Florida QSO Party.

N4N multi op Rover 2286 cw 434 SSB

Wow! Whew! Another GQP is in the books for the N4N Rover Group. Thanks to everyone for chasing us around GA. You make this all worthwhile. A new Q high for us, but didn't exceed last year's new point total. Managed to tickle 27 counties on Saturday and 30 (26 unique) on Sunday, 53 unique counties.

A new 20/15/10 Hustler tri-band stick made mode and band changing a dream that we've sorely needed to hand out "QSY" and "SSB" requests. The two reliable Hi-Q antennas did most of the Q's, as usual. The two Flex radios continued to deliver for us. Doing a Multi 2 Rover is a daunting task, hi hi. The 22 year old Yukon passed 295,000 miles during this GQP. This Yukon and I have been doing GQP in some form since 2011.

See everyone on the bands next year.

K5JR WK4U KX4MZ (2024 team)

DL3DXX fixed DX 297 CW 118 CW counties

This was my 18th participation in GA QSO party as always in CW only mode. Different from other years was that 20m was almost unusable during day times. 20m was closed on Sunday for at least 6 hours. Good that GA stations showed up on 10m and 15m instead otherwise I would have missed many counties.

Special thanks to the mobiles. N4N, W4AN, K4TCG and N4R worked many times. Best ears had N4N on 80m. While it was pretty hard to work the fixed stations on 80m it was so easy to contact N4N - thank you!

I used the special spotting network for GQP and also aprs.fi presented by N4N. APRS makes new county calculation more easy. Could not find any other GA mobiles in APRS. Congratulations to all organizers and participants for a great party. Hope cuagn next year again.

73 Dietmar DL3DXX

OM2VL fixed DX 287 cw 188 ssb CW Mults 120 Ph Mults 98

Thanks for the nice activity! The best band was here 15m with big signals - thanks everyone who was also on 15/10m. N4N I still hrd at 22:42z on 15m but he don't copy me. 10m was also good, but not many takers. My big thanks to N4N and W4AN for so many SSB QSY.

I worked 129 different counties.

Most QSOs:

N4N 140/52
W4AN 100/41
K4O 19/12
K4TCG 17/12
N4R 9/5
N4F 7/3
K4SBZ 2/2

(9): W4TM
(8): KM4DAY, N4L
(7): AA5JF
(6): AA4LR, N4A, N4LT
(5): WC4X

73, Laci

NS2N fixed NY 186 87 CW Mults 96 Ph Mults 44

about 4K better than last year but competition had full use of all bands - mostly stuck on 20m for most of both days.

Thanks to the /M for making the effort and having superb detectors between the ears.

Paul NS2N

AI5P Planned Trip

Need an AR county? Standby! Need an AR Park to fill up your state with them?
Standby. News from Rick, AI5P:

Rick, AI5P, plans to run all Arkansas counties (75) to include the 52 state parks and one National Park on CW (ONLY - 80 thru 15) in the May/June time frame.

Start date and further info will be announced on the K3IMC forum as well as other sites. All the detailed info (frequencies, how to follow, prizes, how to collect points, etc) will be on the AI5P QRZ page after 1 May.

There will be Prizes - DX Engineering gift certificates in several categories among others as detailed on the QRZ page. Hopefully that will create some extra interest for the county hunters! Dust off those paddles, bugs and keys!

If you have any questions, e-mail me.

73 Rick

North Dakota QSO Party

Looks like a major problem with ARRL listing this as occurring April 20, but it really was held April 13. Doesn't make for the best situation when folks aren't even aware it is happening! Oh well.

Looks like to scorers worked 11 ND counties. Rest had 6 or less. Top scorers worked 15 SSB stations, 8 on cw, but most folks worked under 5. There are 53 counties in that state. It was held at same time as other large state QP's. No rover this year.

Several fixed stations in ND (ND0TS on SSB, AE0Y on CW) worked several hundred contacts so you could get your 'minimum 2'. from them. Maybe 2 or 3 bands, too.

From the 3830 reflector:

VA6RCN fixed Alberta CA - 4cw 6 ssb Mults 6

Well, beat my last year's score of 24. ND stations are just NOT in my bounce zone...and didn't hear any on 160 where I usually work ND. Oh well, wanted to hand out the Alberta multiplier in case no one else got one.

Kevin VA6RCN (Royal Canadian Navy).

no comments

Sodium Ion Batteries III

Over the past couple of months, I've been noticing a lot of announcements about a new type of battery, one that could majorly shake things up if all the promises I'm hearing turn out to be true.

The new challenger? Sodium-ion batteries, which swap sodium for the lithium that powers most EVs and devices like cell phones and laptops today.

Sodium-ion batteries could squeeze their way into some corners of the battery market as soon as the end of this year, and they could be huge in cutting costs for EVs. I wrote a story about all the recent announcements, and you should give it a read if you're curious about what companies are jumping in on this trend and what their plans are. But for the newsletter this week, let's dig a little bit deeper into the chemistry and consider what the details could mean for the future of EV batteries.

Top dog

One of the reasons that lithium dominates batteries today is absolutely, maddeningly simple: it's small.

I mean that in the most literal, atomic sense. Lithium is the third-lightest element, heavier than only hydrogen and helium. When it comes down to it, it's hard to beat the lightest metal in existence if you're trying to make compact, lightweight batteries.

And cutting weight and size is the goal for making everything from iPhones to EVs: a lightweight, powerful battery means your phone can be smaller and your car can drive farther. So one of the primary ways we've measured progress for batteries is energy density—how much energy a battery can pack into a given size.

When you look at that chemical reality, it's almost no wonder that lithium-ion batteries have exploded in popularity since their commercial debut in the 1990s. There are

obviously other factors too, like lithium-ion's ability to reach high voltages in order to deliver a lot of power, but the benefit of being lightweight and portable is hard to overstate.

Lithium-ion batteries have also benefited from being the incumbent. There are countless researchers scouring the world for new materials and new ways to build lithium-ion cells, and plenty of companies making them in greater numbers—all of which adds up to greater efficiencies. As a result, costs have come down basically every year for decades (with the notable exception of 2022).

And at the same time, energy density is ticking up, a trend I'm personally grateful for because I often forget to charge my phone for days at a time, and it typically works out much better when that happens now than it did a few years ago.

Branching out

But just because lithium-ion dominates the battery world today doesn't mean it'll squash the competition forever.

I've written about the growing number of options in the battery industry before, mostly in the context of stationary storage on the electrical grid. This is especially important in the transition to intermittent renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

While backup systems tend to use lithium-ion batteries today since they're what's available, many companies are working to build batteries that could eventually be even cheaper and more robust. In other words, many researchers and companies want to design batteries specifically for stationary storage.

New batteries could be made with abundant materials like iron or plastic, for example, and they might use water instead of organic solvents to shuttle charge around, addressing lingering concerns about the safety of large-scale lithium-ion battery installations.

But compared to stationary storage, there are fewer candidates that could work in EV batteries, because of the steep demands we have for our vehicles. Today, most of the competition in the commercial market is between the different flavors of lithium-ion batteries, with some lower-cost versions that don't contain cobalt and nickel gaining ground in the last couple of years.

That could change soon too, though, because just below lithium on the periodic table, a challenger lurks: sodium. Sodium is similar to lithium in some ways, and cells made

with the material can reach similar voltages to lithium-ion cells (meaning the chemical reactions that power the battery will be nearly as powerful).

And crucially, sodium-based batteries have recently been cramming more energy into a smaller package. In 2022, the energy density of sodium-ion batteries was right around where some lower-end lithium-ion batteries were a decade ago—when early commercial EVs like the Tesla Roadster had already hit the road.

Projections from BNEF suggest that sodium-ion batteries could reach pack densities of nearly 150 watt-hours per kilogram by 2025. And some battery giants and automakers in China think the technology is already good enough for prime time. For more on those announcements and when we might see the first sodium-battery-powered cars on the road, check out my story on the technology.

Source: <https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/05/11/1072865/how-sodium-could-change-the-game-for-batteries/>

- - - from link

Move over, lithium—there’s a new battery chemistry in town.

Lithium is currently the ruler of the battery world, a key ingredient in the batteries that power phones, electric vehicles, and even store energy on the electrical grid.

But as concerns about the battery supply chain swell, scientists are looking for ways to cut down on battery technology’s most expensive, least readily available ingredients. There are already options that reduce the need for some, like cobalt and nickel, but there’s been little recourse for those looking to dethrone lithium.

Over the past several months, though, battery companies and automakers in China have announced forays into a new kind of battery chemistry that replaces lithium with sodium. These new sodium-ion batteries could help push costs down for both stationary storage and electric vehicles, if the technology can meet the high expectations that companies are setting

In March, JAC Motors, an automaker based in China, released photos of a chartreuse car that it said was the world’s first vehicle built with sodium-ion batteries. The compact vehicle was fitted with a 25-kilowatt-hour battery made by another Chinese company, HiNa Battery, and a press release claimed the car’s range was up to 250 kilometers (155

miles). In April, China's largest EV battery maker, CATL, announced it had developed a sodium-ion battery that it planned to release in a vehicle made by automaker Chery. None of the four companies responded to a request for comment.

“They’re making these quite interesting announcements. There’s also a lot of details missing,” says Andy Leach, an energy storage analyst at BNEF. Neither CATL nor HiNa has released production timelines or detailed performance metrics for the batteries, or even revealed what specific types of sodium-ion batteries they’re planning to use. The mystery isn’t surprising for these large companies, Leach says: “They tend to keep their cards close to their chests.” But it does leave questions about just how ready sodium-ion batteries might be for real vehicles.

Sodium-based batteries are not new, but technical shortcomings have previously kept them from taking on lithium. Sodium-ion batteries traditionally wear out quickly, and they still have a lower energy density than lithium-ion, says Shirley Meng, a battery researcher at the University of Chicago and Argonne National Laboratory.

A planned factory marks a major milestone in the US for new batteries that enable lower-cost, longer-lasting EVs.

That means in order to store the same amount of energy, a sodium-based battery will need to be bigger and heavier than the equivalent lithium-based one. For EVs, that means a shorter range for a battery the same size.

A heavier, cheaper battery might be preferable in some circumstances, like for the smaller, lower-range EVs common in China. JAC’s announced range is comparable to that of the Wuling Hongguang Mini, one of China’s most popular EVs, whose long-range version can drive up to 280 km (175 miles) on a single charge.

A somewhat easier market for sodium-ion batteries might be stationary storage installations, like those used to provide backup power for a home or business or on the electrical grid. Some companies, like US-based Natron, are developing the chemistry specifically for stationary applications, where size and weight aren’t as critical as they are in a moving car.

Sodium-ion batteries have been in development for over half a century, and their performance has improved consistently, with especially steep gains over the past decade, Meng says. Battery researchers have worked out earlier issues with lifetime, partly by finding more compatible electrolytes (the liquid that helps ferry charge around in a battery) for the electrode materials used in sodium-ion cells. Researchers have also

developed better electrode materials to boost the batteries' energy density.

But the real reason for sodium-ion's sudden surge in popularity is that lithium mines and processing facilities are straining to meet skyrocketing demand for EV batteries.

The world isn't going to run out of any materials needed for EVs or renewable energy infrastructure anytime soon. Estimated reserves suggest that Earth's crust has plenty of lithium for billions of EVs. But adding the infrastructure to pull lithium and other materials out of the ground and process it for use in batteries is proving to be a challenge. It can take the better part of a decade in most parts of the world to get a new mine built.

Demand for lithium has skyrocketed because of increased interest in electric vehicles, which made up about 13% of global vehicle sales in 2022. Higher demand has sent prices soaring: the price of lithium carbonate, a material used in batteries, roughly tripled between November 2021 and November 2022 before finally starting to come back down.

The volatility in lithium prices and the steadily increasing demand have opened the door for other chemistries, Meng says, adding: "I think sodium is considered a good alternative to relieve that pressure." Unlike lithium, sodium can be produced from an abundant material: salt. Because the raw ingredients are cheap and widely available, there's potential for sodium-ion batteries to be significantly less expensive than their lithium-ion counterparts if more companies start making more of them.

But if market conditions have opened the door for lithium alternatives, they could just as easily slam it shut. The fate of sodium-ion batteries will likely be "directly tied to the cost of lithium," says Jay Whitacre, a battery researcher at Carnegie Mellon University and previous founder of a sodium-ion battery company called Aquion.

If sodium-ion batteries are breaking into the market because of cost and material availability, declining lithium prices could put them in a tough position. It's hard enough to make new batteries and build them at large scale, Whitacre says. It's even harder to chase a moving target of ever-improving lithium-ion batteries that are getting cheaper.

Sodium could end up in EV batteries in China as early as the end of this year, but the technology probably won't overthrow lithium. Rather, the world of batteries will likely continue to branch out and diversify, with companies developing more battery options for different situations. There are "nooks and crannies" in the battery market, as Whitacre puts it, and soon, sodium-ion might finally find its place.

by Casey Crownhart

source: https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/05/09/1072738/this-abundant-material-could-unlock-cheaper-batteries-for-evs/?utm_source=the_spark&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=the_spark.unpaid.engagement&utm_content=%7Cdate:m-d-y%7C*

Michigan QSO Party

Looks like about 40 counties were on for CW and 41 for SSB. No way to tell how many counties total folks worked. There are 83 counties in MI. Seems like a few mobiles missing this year.

KD8FS mobile LP 531 CW

Operator(s): KØRC

I drove from Minnesota to Michigan to join my brother AL, KD8FS and operate the Michigan QSO Party again this year. Our mobile setup was in my RX350 SUV with MFJ Ham Sticks on the roof powered by an old Kenwood TS-690sat.

We chose to start on 15m but soon discovered it was not producing any callers so we QSYed to 20m and the action started. Apparently the propagation was not great so even that was a slow start. The rate picked up after a while and we ran most of the day on 20. The rate drifted down and prompted a QSY to 40m where we found the action hot and heavy. A lesson learned, check the other bands when things slow down. We finished off the last couple of hours on 80m where there was good (new) stations to work. My brother did all the navigating and I did all the operating. The highway system is pretty good where we traveled and this allows you to activate a lot of counties, 20 for us this year.

73 de Bob - KØRC from MN and Al - KD8FS in MI

NE9U mobile 24 CW 2 SSB

Operator(s): KK9K N9ISN NE9U

The three of us arrived at KK9K's cabin Friday night and went out for a northern

Wisconsin fish fry along with a couple Old Fashioneds!

Saturday at 1600z we were off to the races.

Things went well for 25 minutes, and then our computer shut off....and it would not turn back on!

WE had no back up computer, and we didn't even bring a key to send with, so we went QRT.

When I go home Saturday night, at someone's suggestion I took back cover off laptop so I could access battery. Once I disconnected it, the laptop booted up fine again. And it has been running fine for past 18 hours.

Did some RF confuse its brain and removing the battery cleared it?

It a win10 i7-6600 2.8Ghz Dell with 500G SSD

for years I'd been using old old XP laptops with zero problems. They have the spinning drives.

i switched out this year so i could run n1mm instead of tr4w.

anyway, sorry we didn't get to our 14 planned counties. we will try again next year!

W8RU rover 60 CW 90 SSB

Operator(s): KC8VGG W8RU

We got a late start and set up first in a small park in HILL. 40m was in good shape. Couldn't get anything going on 15m and 10m, so then moved to 20m and had better luck. We used another park in BRAN. The 40m dipole failed but Bill was able to make a field repair. Activity seemed to drop off in BRAN. The final setup was in STJO. We generated a huge pile-up on 40m SSB and were able to do well on 80m CW using a TarHeel antenna on the roof of the car.

The cold temperatures were wearing but we had great fun.

Thanks for the QSOs and 73,

Ron (W8RU) and Bill (KC8VGG).

W8JJ fixed 250 CW 570 SSB (former county hunter)

MIQP is one of my favorite radio sport events and this score is a personal best for me. Thank you to all who participated and the contest sponsors for their efforts.

73 Tim W8JJ

KA6BIM fixed OR 122 cw 24 ssb CW Mults 40 Ph Mults 18

Lots of activity despite poor band conditions Thanks for the qso's
Dave ka6bim

OM2VL fixed DX 34 CW 41 ssb CW Mults 20 Ph Mults 22

I was very busy in ONQP, missed many MI stations. Thanks for the QSOs especially on SSB who called me.

73, Laci

N8II fixed WV 71 CW 70 SSB CW Mults 34 Ph Mults 41

Well, in several ways it was a tough outing from here and there was a decrease in activity, especially from rovers/mobiles. I heard NE9U once only on 20 and there was a POTA or two. I had high enough line noise to take out scatter signals on 20, and the band barely opened to northern MI for maybe the first 90 minutes. The noise was also a problem on 40 until around 22Z when signals finally got nice and loud.

There was not much to do from 19-23Z from here, so I took off quite a bit of time. By 0230Z most MI ops had quit, so I quit too. I figured someone who had good conditions on 20 to MI would best my effort and that is exactly what happened. Skip was abnormally long the whole weekend with high K indexes.

Thanks for the QSO's (a few years back I made 320 or so), and hopefully the ship will right itself by next year.

On the Road with N4CD I

A half dozen mobiles were on the road headed to Midland MI for the Midland Mini. N4CD would leave from TX. K8II and W8OP headed in from WV. Don K3IMC was coming from GA. The longest trip was AB7RW from way out west in WA about 2,400 miles. K8ZZ was coming from MN - and planning to run down to KY, IN after the convention for more. He needs to run about 300 more to finish up running all USA.

Several things kept me at home but I worked out a 6-7 day trip up through OK, the west side of MO, across from St Joe to Hannibal, to Springfield IL then on to MI via IN.

I've run most of the parks on the short way, so I'd have to head out of the way for extra miles to find new parks to run. There are now 55,000 registered park hunters! (and activators) with probably 90% or more stuck on SSB. 13,000 parks. Almost none added in OK or TX or LA lately though. So have to go 500+ miles to find 'new ones'.

April 21

First day was up through OK on RT 69 to I-44 to Joplin MO – then heading further north to Nevada MO. No new parks along the way, but after checking into the Super 8 there, ran further north to hit two new added parks in the system. Put out calls many times as I went through the OK counties but few answers. It seems if you don't spot yourself, no one shows up on 20cw.

First up was **Cehas Ford Access State Conservation Area(SCA)** – US-10950. Vernon County MO. It's just 107 acres and has a concrete boat ramp for seasonal use on the Marmaton River. Easy to find. Got there `1900z and worked both county hunters and park chasers quickly on 20m cw. Caught a few Park to Park (P2P) stations and headed to next. Only need 10. Most of the MO State Conservation Areas have good directions to them

Second was **Gama Grass Prairie SCA** US-10584. Also Vernon County and just 80 acres. Caught a bunch on 20cw of park chasers.

Back to the Super 8 and dinner at a BBQ/Steakhouse. Good.

Monday April 22

I was headed north toward KC. Next up was **James R Harter Conservation Reserve US-7662** in Cass County.

This 456-acre area contains a mixture of crop fields, grassland, old fields, timber, and Osage orange hedgerows. Eight Mile Creek runs for three-fourths mile through the northwest corner of the area. These diverse habitats support a wide variety of wildlife, including many types of songbirds, quail, deer, and waterfowl. The Harter area is named after James R. Harter, who donated the land to the Conservation Department in 1993.

Headed through KC where we had the National not too long ago. Ran the parks years ago, nearby so had to head north to find new ones. Now north of Kansas City.

Platte Falls SCA US-5710 in Platte County MO.

The 2,366-acre area includes 1,320 acres of bottomland and upland timber, 295 acres of agricultural lands, 515 acres of grasslands and old fields, and 206 acres of wetlands.

Hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing, and birdwatching are popular here, and a 9.1-mile unchannelized stretch of the Platte River flowing through the area allows many river-oriented activities and recreations.

The portion of the area where the river forms the rough shape of a duck's head is very unique. The "neck" of the duck's head has a boat ramp on each side. Anglers/canoeists/kayakers can launch at the upstream ramp and enjoy a float of over 2-1/2 miles without the need to shuttle a vehicle.

The area also has an archery sight-in range.

Guy B Park SCA – US-6474 – still Platte County 380 acres



Guy B. Park Conservation Area received its name from Missouri's 38th governor, Guy Brasfield Park. Governor Park was born June 10, 1872, in Platte City. He was educated in the public schools and studied at Gaylord Institute in Platte City. In 1896, he graduated from the Law Department of the University of Missouri and later began practicing law in Platte City. He served as city attorney, prosecuting attorney, and as a district delegate to the State Constitutional Convention. He accepted the position of Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit in 1922. He was later elected as Governor of the State and served from 1933 until 1937. Upon expiration of his term as governor, he returned to Platte City and continued his law practice. Governor Guy B. Park died Oct. 1, 1946. The area holds a 16-acre impoundment, Tobacco Hills Lake. The lake is managed for trophy-sized bluegill and contains populations of large mouth bass and redear sunfish. There is a privy, a covered fishing dock, and concrete boat ramp available for the public to use.

Bee Creek SCA US-8237 in Buchanan County MO US 8237 109 acres

Bee Creek CA was donated in 2011 to the Missouri Department of Conservation. The area consists of forest, cropland, old field, and straddles Bee Creek.

Same county. Got 11 and left. A couple on 17m from here.

Burton Bridge Access SCA US-11228 - still Buchanan County

16 acres owned and managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Allows public access for fishing. Also bird watching. Spotted on POTA site and 20+ showed up. Heard AB7RW trekking east in MT.

Agency SCA US-7873 Would you believe still Buchanan? Yep. 94 acres

The land for this area was donated to the Conservation Department in 1991. The timbered property straddles Rock Creek Road. The north tract of the area offers walk-in access to the Platte River. A graveled parking lot is located south of the county road. Both tracts are prone to flooding.

Spotted on POTA site and a dozen showed up. Caught W4SIG on 20m SSB from here.

Pigeon Hill Conservation Reserve US-7677 - Still Buchanan County!!! 419 acres

The Conservation Department purchased land for this area in 1967 in part with Pittman-Robertson funds from the federal excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition. The area includes upland hardwood forest and old field habitat or cropland.

Target shooting is popular on the area. All ranges are unstaffed. The archery target area provides a sight-in range. The area also features a rifle range, a pistol range, and a shotgun range. The public firearms range offers a 25-, 50- and 100-yard target area.

20 or so park chasers in the log.

Headed east from St Joe now along route 36 to Hannibal MO

Pony Express Lake SCA – US-5711 DeKalb County 3300 acres

Approximately 25 miles west of the Pony Express Conservation Area on the Missouri

River is the original site of a settlement known as Blacksnake Hills, later to become the city of St. Joseph, where the Pony Express mail service began in 1860. In addition to providing public fishing and wildlife-based recreational opportunities near the St. Joseph and Kansas City metropolitan areas, Pony Express Conservation Area demonstrates the balanced relationship that can exist between agricultural operations and wildlife populations. Acquisition of land for Pony Express Conservation Area began in 1961. The Conservation Department has purchased additional tracts since then. The area includes 240-acre Pony Express Lake, which was opened to public fishing on January 1, 1966. In cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, construction of 45-acre Buffalo Bill Lake in the north part of the area was completed in 1987. The lake opened to public fishing in 1990 and features a concrete boat ramp, parking lot and facilities for visitors with disabilities.

De N4CD- other than name, there is no connection with the Pony Express that started in St Joe and ran west (for the less than 2 years it was in operation!)

- ---

Well, that was a good day's worth of parks. Stopped in Chillicothe MO at a Days Inn.. There was a former Golden Corral there – now run as Murray's Buffet – same as the former one – good food. Now 700 miles from leaving home.

Day 3 – Tuesday 4/23 55F and rain. Good breakfast at motel. Really strange room layout. Was redone but party A didn't talk to party B and epic fail on room layout. For example, there were two nice sinks on a granite like counter top – maybe 6-7 feet between– with a mirror on the wall, but the nice lighted mirror was 5 foot wide, so while at the sink, you looked at the wall. You had to step to left or right to see yourself in mirror! Duh! Second fail was a nice glass block window in bathroom. Great for daytime. Not so nice at night as bright lights in parking lot and there was no door between room and the two sink area. No way to shut the light out. Duh #2. All nice new furniture but a major design fail. Well, off in the rain headed east.

Locust Creek Covered Bridge State Historic Site US-3355 in Linn County.



Locust Creek Covered Bridge, built in 1868, became a link in one of the nation's earliest transcontinental roads. Today, it is the longest of Missouri's four remaining covered bridges, measuring 151 feet. The bridge was built out of white pine using the Howe-truss system, named for William Howe, who patented the design in 1840. The essential features of the design were its use of vertical iron rods to draw the diagonal wooden members tight against the top and bottom of the bridge. The bridge features arched entrances with ramps sloping away from both ends.

General John J Pershing Boyhood Home State Historic site US-3350 – Linn County



from the state site:

Explore a piece of America’s military history at Gen. John J. Pershing Boyhood Home State Historic Site and learn about the experiences that molded a Laclede country boy into one of the nation’s legendary generals. Pershing and his family moved into the nine-room Gothic-style house in Laclede when he was 6. Prairie Mound School, where Pershing taught prior to his admission to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, is also on the site and includes a unique exhibit that allows visitors to pass through many of the same doorways Pershing passed through on his journeys from Missouri to Mexico and France

On street parking (not valid for parl credot) except for handi-cap driveway where I ran the park. Have a handi-cap permit and it comes in use at times. Otherwise, you run this portable. Was there before the museum opened for the day so not worried about

hogging space for 20 minutes.

Mussel Forks SCA US-8502 still Linn County 2440 acres

This area fronts about two miles of Mussel Fork Creek.

The area's rolling topography is typical of this region of the state which is generally marked by southward draining, closely spaced, sub-parallel streams resulting in a general pattern of narrow, linear ridges and wooded stream valleys.

Historic conditions included plant communities that followed the elevational gradient with prairies occurring on the higher, drier sites blending with oak savannas on the ridges, and more densely forested areas along the steeper slopes. Low lands adjacent to Mussel Fork Creek were prone to flooding and included a complex pattern of wet prairie, marshes, oxbow lakes and river bank timber. These natural communities were home to a wide diversity of plants and animals.

Woodlands are a type of wooded community characterized as having a fairly open canopy cover, a poorly developed understory, and a diverse herbaceous layer of forbs, grasses, and sedges. Woodlands contain fire-tolerant trees, often with wide spreading crowns, and a diverse ground flora that may include species such as little bluestem, wild rye, bottle brush grass, blazing star, coneflower, and a variety of sedges.

In northern Missouri, most woodland communities have been degraded due to extensive logging, fire suppression, overgrazing, and other disturbances. Woodland restoration practices used on the area include thinning and prescribed fire. Thinning removes some of the existing trees which provides a more open canopy and allows sunlight to reach the ground. Prescribed fire is essential to restoring a diverse woodland community as it suppresses small diameter woody vegetation, removes leaf and woody litter, and stimulates herbaceous plant growth resulting in a rich ground flora of forbs, grasses, and sedges.

Well managed woodlands provide excellent habitat for wildlife. Species commonly associated with woodlands include white-tailed deer, wild turkey, bobwhite quail, red-headed woodpecker, Coopers' hawk, Indiana bat, three-toed box turtle, and eastern gray treefrog.

Long Branch State Park US-1771 Macon County

from the state site:

Looking for a place to get a watersports fix? Long Branch State Park's three boat ramps provide access to sprawling and picturesque Long Branch Lake. For more fun on the water, fishing is popular, and the marina store, swimming beach and day-use area next to the beach are a favorite for families. In addition, the park's modern campground is a perfect place for overnight stays. The park preserves some of the last savanna and prairie remnants in the Chariton River Hills. Trails through Chariton River Hills Natural Area provide a good way for hikers to see colorful prairie wildflowers and a variety of birds, including red-headed woodpeckers, brown thrashers and indigo buntings.

Hunnellwell Lake US-5703 Shelby County MO

Hunnewell Lake Conservation Area covers 1,905 acres and includes a 228-acre lake, and a fish hatchery. Construction of Hunnewell Lake began in 1952, shortly after the land was purchased by the Conservation Department. The lake was opened for fishing in 1956 and hatchery construction began in 1958. Fish production began the following year.

Today, the hatchery raises a variety of fish including channel catfish, largemouth bass and bluegill sunfish, walleye, and hybrid sunfish for stocking in Missouri public lakes. Total production is about 700,000 fish per year from 16.4 acres of hatchery ponds. Hunnewell Lake provides the water supply for the hatchery.

The land that is now Hunnewell Lake Conservation Area was originally a tall-grass prairie, sustained by rich glaciated soils. After settlement, the original prairie was gradually replaced by cultivated fields or planted to hay crops, such as fescue. Today, some remnant stands of prairie grasses remain on the area, but no true prairie exists. Limited cultivation of some fields continues. Most fields are managed for early succession plants or to encourage the growth of prairie grasses and other native plants. The landscape is broken up by small wooded drainages which contain mostly pin oaks and locust trees. On the south side of the lake is a unique stand of old-growth white oak forest.

Steyermark Woods SCA US-11067 in Marion County MO near Hannibal MO



from the state site:

The Conservation Department purchased this scenic, mostly wooded 73-acre tract, located within the city limits of Hannibal, from Mrs. H.J. Freiling in 1979. The area was named after Dr. Julian Steyermark, the noted botanist who wrote *Flora of Missouri*, the recognized guide of Missouri botanists and wildflower lovers. The area provides an excellent example of woodlands typically found in the River Hills bordering the west bank of the Mississippi River. The rich woodlands are dominated by mature sugar maple, basswood, blue ash, black walnut, Kentucky coffee-tree, northern red oak, and white oak trees. The understory contains a wide variety of small trees and shrubs, such as paw paw, bladdernut, and ironwood. The forest floor is rich with wildflowers and ferns. The area offers excellent opportunities for nature study, wildlife viewing and hiking. Visitors to the area can park at the pull-off along County Road 410. Because Steyermark Woods Conservation Area is located within the city limits of Hannibal, only archery hunting is permitted.

Made a quick 10 QSO then left

On to Illinois

Fall Creek Overlook State Natural Area – Adams IL US-4122

Nice parking lot – cell service very weak. Got by 10 from county hunters then moved on.

From the state site:

The Fall Creek Scenic Overlook in southwest Adams County, a unit of Siloam Springs State Park, was originally developed as a rest area that overlooks the Mississippi River valley. Although the area has a limited acreage, it contains high-quality forested habitat and provides quality archery deer hunting opportunities. Fall Creek Scenic Overlook is located three miles southwest of Payson and 12 miles south of Quincy in Adams County.

Ray Norbert Fish and wildlife Area US-4150 Pike IL

from the state site

This site provides exceptional habitat for a wide range of harvestable, non-harvestable, uncommon, threatened or endangered plants and animals. Examples are the bald eagle, a winter resident of the wooded bluffslands, and the jeweled shooting star, a rare pre-glacial relict wildflower species. To provide a refuge for the eagles, portions of the bluff areas are closed to the public seasonally.

Oak and hickory are the dominant tree species in a woodland that also contains red cedar, red and white oak, sugar maple, ironwood, blue beech and, in the bottomlands, abundant willow, cottonwood and silver maple. The oak/hickory community is the highest quality forest in the region and supports a diverse assemblage of wildlife.

Forests, bluffs and limestone outcroppings are rich in wildflowers and ferns. Among the wildflowers are hepatica, Dutchman's breeches, spring beauties, toothwort, yellow bellwort, trout lily, trillium, wild ginger, larkspur, phlox, wild petunia, Venus looking glass and Mayapple. The ferns include cliffbrake, Christmas and woolly lip species.

Although intended primarily for public hunting, the area also beckons hikers and nature enthusiasts with several undeveloped trails, one of which has a trailhead parking lot. Fishing is permitted, too, in the Illinois River and Blue Creek.

Made 15Q and left headed to Springfield IL. Not too many parks along this route

At Springfield there are two sites

Lincoln Tomb state Historic Site US-8320 Sangamon County



We invite you to join us in honoring and remembering the Lincoln family with a tour of the interior space of the Lincoln Tomb.

Constructed of granite, the tomb has a tall, story-and-a-half base in trapezoidal form, surmounted by an obelisk, with a semicircular receiving room entrance way on one end and a semicircular crypt or burial room opposite. On the exterior, four flights of balustraded stairs lead to a level terrace. The balustrade extends around the terrace to form a parapet, and there are several bronze statues, reliefs, and stone carvings located at the base of the obelisk. The obelisk rises 117 feet high.

I was there early in morning but CH were around for contacts. Ran 20 and 20m.

Nearby is the Lincoln Home National Historic Site US-0841 – Sangamon County

Run the the US Park Service, this is a busy attraction here.

In the heart of our country, on the edge of the city he called home, is the final resting place of President Abraham Lincoln, his wife, and three of their children. Built with donations from across America, the Lincoln Tomb honors the memory of our nation's greatest president and those who struggled with him toward a new birth of freedom.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln left his home of 17 years – the only home he ever owned – to serve as the 16th President of the United States. The Lincoln Home has been completely restored to its 1860 appearance and reveals much about Lincoln as husband, father, neighbor and politician. Tours of this national treasure are conducted by National Park Service Rangers. Free tickets are required for house tours and may be obtained at the Lincoln Home Visitors Center – which also houses a scaled model of 1860 Springfield. A variety of historic exhibits are located throughout the four-block neighborhood surrounding the Lincoln Home and can be viewed on a self-guided basis.

There's a car parking lot (opens at 9am) and a bus lot not busy so I parked there for 20 minutes to get a dozen QSOs. Regular lot and house tour not open yet. Didn't stick around. Lots of interesting things to do in immediate area for history buffs!

Now headed to FT Wayne IN area to northeast.

Kickapoo State Recreation Area – US-4097 Vermillion County IL

in most cases, when in a new county, ran for the county hunters. Didn't bother to spot for park chasers.

From the state site:

Once a turn-of-the-century surface mining operation, Kickapoo State Recreation Area's 2,842 acres now provide an outdoor playground with something to appeal to every member of the family. Twenty two deep-water ponds, ranging in size from 0.2 to 57 acres, provide a total of 221 acres of water for boaters, canoeists and anglers. Lushly forested uplands and bottomlands along the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River is habitat for birds, wildlife and wildflowers, while nature trails and running trails provide pathways to inspiration and physical fitness.

Kickapoo also features two major campgrounds for tent or trailer camping, with online reservations available

Kickapoo owes its crystal clear ponds and luxuriantly forested ridges and hillsides to the

regenerative powers of nature. During the past 50 years, trees and vegetation have reclaimed the former mined land. The state's 1939 purchase of 1,290 acres of mined lands from United Electric Coal Co. was largely underwritten with contributions collected from Danville area residents

Portland Arch State Natural Preserve – US-4222 Fountain IN



from the web:

Dedicated as a State Nature Preserve in 1972, Portland Arch in Fountain County is obviously beautiful with its dramatic sandstone gorge and the meandering creek that follows the well-worn path of the preserve. Also found are an assemblage of natural

communities and features including cliffs, forests, open prairies, spring-seep wetlands, and savannas—all offering an abundance of plants, wildflowers, and trees.



Portland Arch is owned and managed by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves.

Portland Arch is one of only a few natural arches in Indiana. The arch was created through the Mansfield Sandstone by Bear Creek, undercutting the bluff on both sides. The sandstone was strong enough that it did not collapse. The Mansfield Sandstone is from the Pennsylvanian Period, some 230 million years ago.

Got tangled up trying to find the detour route for 239 in Peru IN. The signs take you to road in city – then nothing more. Duh! Never gets there. . Spent an hour trying to find a way to the lake with 5 parks around it. Frustrating. Gave up and headed to Knights Inn motel in Peru. Not many motels here – this one, a Best Western at \$140/night. Was FB. Not many restaurants either – wound up at a Pizza Hut. Had one of their 'flips – basically a pizza folded upon itself. Half decent. No other 'sit down' places anywhere near!

Studied maps and could head on other road. Did. Whew. Had to be alternate way there.

Miami on Mississinewa Lake SRA US-4169

There early at 1119z (7:19am). Got 12 Q and left.

From web:

Mississinewa Lake, one of the three Upper Wabash flood-control reservoirs, offers excellent fishing, hunting and boating opportunities in the heart of north-central Indiana. In addition to featuring a 400-plus-site campground and family cabins, Mississinewa was the first state property in Indiana to introduce seasonal camping, where visitors can retain a campsite for the entire season in an all-new campground. The expanses of forests, prairies and farmland surrounding the lake provide attractive habitat to a wide variety of wildlife, exhibiting exceptional viewing opportunities for hikers, bird watchers and touring bicyclists.

It's 3200 acres of lake. Formed by National Gov't. . Miami SRA has 471 sites. It wasn't really open for the season for this, but wide open for visitors.

Francis Slocum SRA US-4168 Miami County

from web:

The park is named for Frances Slocum, a young girl who was kidnapped by American Indians. Frances was one of ten children of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Slocum. This Quaker family lived on what is now North Street in Wilkes-Barre.

On November 2, 1778, a small group of Delaware Indians entered the Slocum home and carried away Frances, who was five years old. The first night after her abduction was spent in a crude shelter under a rock ledge along Abraham Creek, believed to be within the state park boundary. She tried to escape during the first night but was quickly recaptured. Frances was taken along as the Delaware Indians moved westward and spent the rest of her life with them.

Her brothers never gave up the search. Fifty-nine years after her abduction, they found her living on a reservation near Peru, Indiana. She had been married twice and had borne four children. Frances refused the pleas of her brothers to return to Pennsylvania. The brothers wrote to her and learned many of the details of her abduction and life with American Indians.

Frances Slocum died in Indiana in 1847, at the age of 74. Mississinewa Lake in Indiana contains the Frances Slocum State Recreational Area and Lost Sister Trail.

Got 15Q and left to next one nearby

Francis Slocum State Forest US-7841

from the web:

It is approximately 5 miles southeast of Peru and north of the Mississinewa Lake dam. The state forest encompasses 515 acres of contiguous forested landscape along the northern bank of the Mississinewa River. While once a larger state forest, some acreage was used during construction of the reservoir.

Most of this land was purchased between 1938 and 1941. A 20-acre parcel was added in 1992.

Red Bridge SRA US 7842 Miami County

This the only camping area open all year. Rest open May 15th.

Ran on 30m for a dozen contacts.

Pearson Mill SRA US 7843 now Wabash County IN

Another area around the big lake.

New county so worked dozen CH and left. 20 and 40m cw.

There's another flood control lake not far away to east. Head that way for a handful more parks.

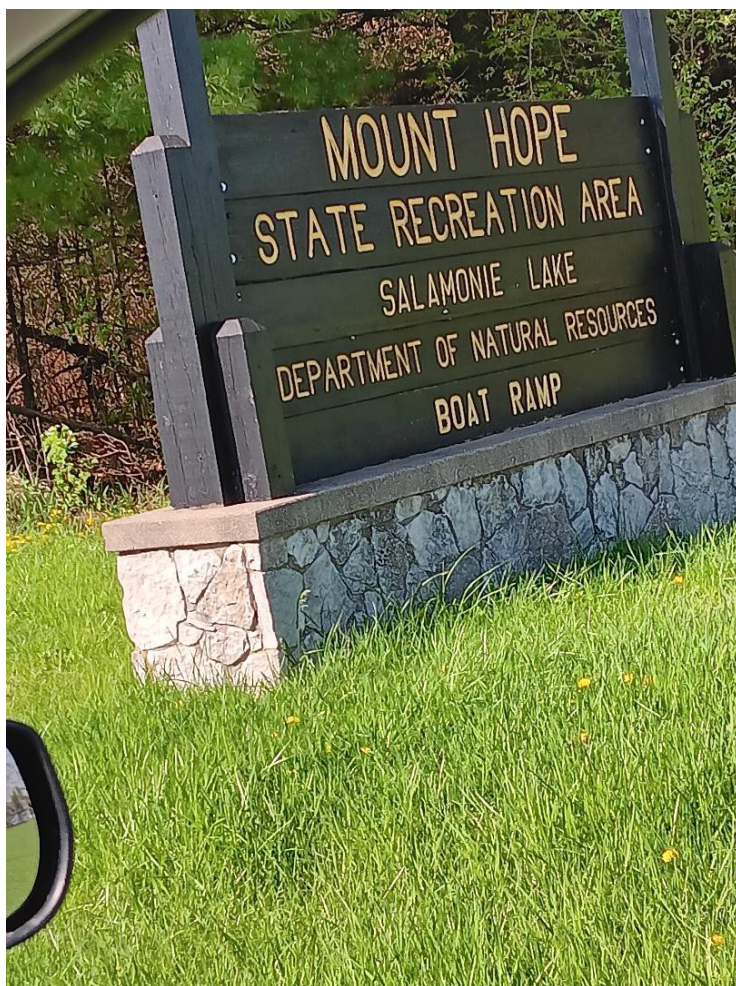
Salamonie Lake is located between the cities of Wabash, Hunting and Marion. The 12,554 land acres include the Lost Bridge West SRA, Lost Bridge East SRA, Dora New Holland SRA, Mount tna SRA and Mount Hope SRA. Didn't spend a whole lot of time at any of them! Wabash County. All look the same. Nice areas for recreation around the lake.

Salamonie River Forest US 4422 10Q



Dora SRA US 4177 – 10Q quick

Mt Hope SRA US-4180 11 Qs



Lost Bridges US 4178 15Q

Mt Etna SRA 4179 12Q

Now headed NE to MI. Tired of running parks. Skip the rest of trip of park and run direct to Midland with no new parks. Will get to MI a day ahead of planned time, but butt sore from too many days of sitting! It's 3.5 hours to MI and that's where I head!

Arrive Thursday PM in Midland at the Spring Hills Suites. Check in. Then go to Bob Evans restaurant for turkey dinner. Yum! Had extra of salad. Then to hospitality room where many already gathered.

Nebraska QSO Party

A few fixed stations put out a lot of NE QSOs but most folks could barely scrape up 5 counties worked in this QSO Party. There are 93 counties in NE. Competes against several other QSO Parties. No mobiles out.

KA6BIM fixed OR 8 CW 6 SSB 7 counties worked

Poor conditions, but very few Nebraska Stations on. I worked all I heard . None of them were new counties for me. Thanks for the Qso's Dave ka6bim

KN7Y fixed AZ 10 CW 5 SSB 5 counties

Thanks for the QSO's in the 2024 NEQP. 6 NE operators account for all of my QSO's and my hat is off to them for being on the air. This weekend was not void of opportunities, however, with 4 QP's to work from Arizona.

N4NTO in FL worked 8 counties on CW with 13 CW qso.

At the Mini Midland 2024

The hospitality room was up and running for yakking and working on the 1000 piece jig saw puzzle. Lots of snacks and drinks too. About 30 folks there. Not much in the way of planned events, but there were presentations. Don, K3IMC, talked about radar on Friday.

On Saturday, Kerry talked about MARAC and USA-CA possibilities. At this point, MARAC is considering taking over only the 'all 3077' award and there is some talk about levels of 500,1000, etc. The basic large certificate would cost about \$15 to print and mail. There would be no endorsement stickers like CQ but you would get a PDF to print for the next level. Lots of talk and it would take about six months to finalize everything.

Here's the group picture, courtesy of N8HAM – taken 5pm on Saturday. Banquet followed at 6pm.



2024 MI Mini Attendees:

- N8WTQ Dori, Midland, MI
- N0XYL Sandra, Blue Grass, IA
- N0XYL-Sister-in-Law Judy, Blue Grass, IA
- NM1G Chuck, North Kingstown, RI
- W9OP Mark, Neenah, WI
- W9PIP Joan, Neenah, WI
- W8OP Alan, Fairmont, WV
- N8HAM Jim, South Lyon, MI

K8OOK Mike, Grand Rapids, MI
N8IPG Nancy, Grand Rapids, MI
K8II Steve, Fairmont, WV
K3IMC Don, LaGrange, GA
KJ4NIT Jean, LaGrange, GA
KA9JAC Bob, Hortonville, WI
KB9YVT Ann, Hortonville, WI
W4SIG Kerry, Springdale, UT
AB7RW Phil, Vancouver, WA
AC7UH Barbara, Vancouver, WA
NN9K Pete, Colona, IL
N9DQS Nancy, Colona, IL
N8KIE Bob, Clarkston, MI
N8RLJ Jaci, Clarkston, MI
KJ8F Sharon, Elida, OH
WA9DLB Tony, Barrington, IL
WA9DLB-XYL Helen, Barrington, IL
N4CD Bob, Plano, TX
K8MW Dick, Lake, MI
K8AO Duane, Gladstone, MI

Well, not much goes on during the day, so I decided to take a loop from MI to the southeast to get some 'state game areas'. These can go from barely over 50 acres to several thousand acres.

The BEST WAY to get to them is to use GPS coordinates. The POTA site (and state map) give the lat/long for the park. Use it. It will save a lot of grief as many of the parks are SMALL and in the boonies. The state map is maybe ½ mile by ½ mile with only a road or two on it, and no idea how far from anywhere by map. Otherwise, you'll spend hours trying to find routes to them. GPS works well. Type in on smart phone, pull up the map, and away you go to those coordinates.

Not much to see but forests and fields. But they are parks – so I'll run a few.

Friday April 16

Denmark Township State Game Area US-6658 43.475 -83.6217 Tuscola County

Head to Bay City and then follow the lat/long route. Easy. Gets you on to the small map so you can find the parking areas. Most have no signs to it...or even when you get

there! Just 95 acres.

15Qs and gone

Vassar SGA US-6801 Tuscola 3500 acres

A dozen Qs then gone. Bands not great.

Tuscola State Game Land US-6799 9000 acres. Many spots to run

20Qs in log.

Almer Township SGA Tuscola County 160 acres

GPS coordinates missing a digit. Take you to the town dump 2 miles away. But easy to navigate from there to the park which is basically at a road intersection. Found it.

11Qs.

Crow Island US 6651 Saginaw County

The Crow Island State Game Area is situated along the Saginaw River and lies on either side of M-13. Crow Island straddles the Saginaw and Bay county lines and features 3,500 acres of marsh, forest land, and cropland. The marshlands provide important habitat for nesting and migrating ducks, geese, herons, terns and other wetland birds. The marshes are also home to muskrats, beavers, frogs, turtles, snakes, and plenty of other wetland critters. Crow Island is intensively managed for waterfowl and other wetland wildlife. Several habitat projects have been completed in the past few years, including a drawdown (removing the water) and prescribed burn in the East Marsh to reduce invasive Phragmites and to create a 50/50 hemi-marsh of cattail cover and open water. Ducks love this type of habitat for nesting and feeding and are plentiful at Crow Island.

A quick 10, then back to the hotel. Turkey Dinner at Bob Evans again. Added in the salad and dessert for \$4.49 extra. Wow – stuffed. Back to hotel for meet and greet for a few hours.

Saturday. Not much going on after the 11am presentation by W4SIG, Kerry. Headed out afterwards 15 miles north to KawKawlin Creek SGA US7611 in Midland County. Florida QSO Party going on. Worked a few, caught up with some Park to Parks, on

20M. Went to 15M and Florida pounding in. Added in more . Then spotted myself on POTA on 20M and wound up with 30+ Qs.

Stayed an hour then back to the hotel for picture time and banquet.

Jim, N8HAM took the group pic. Banquet good

Left Sunday morning and drove straight to TX. No parks, no detours. From Midland to southwest toward Chicago 300 miles away- then down through IL all the way to the bottom toward ST Louis - I-44 from there southwest. Drove down through MO, stopped in Rolla at Days in off I-44. Dinner at Colton Steak House. Next morning up early and on the road I-44 to OK then down 69 to 75 to home. Home at 3pm. Mapquest says its 1132 miles to home. 2016 Malibu LTD still doing OK at 162K miles. Got home and other car – 2007 Prius - dead battery – the 12v gel cell that fires up the computer. Special one only Toyota has so \$250 to get changed. Dies every 7 years. Always something to fix.

Good trip. Others taking longer to get home. K8II/W8OP home quickly. N0XYL and SIL back in IA quickly. AB7RW has long trek back west. K8ZZ will be zipping around for days in IN, KY, etc, before heading home.

Florida QSO Party

Held last weekend in April. There are 67 counties in FL. Several People reported working ALL of them.

Full report next month on other mobiles. From early reporters

W2FU County Expedition 771 CW

First time in-state FQP for me. Lottsa fun with my lil portable RV setup on my vacant lot. Crossed inv 'V' dipoles for 20 and 40 on a 32' mast.

K3 - battery power

I went a bit out of my way to work FL counties, not really paying attention that they

aren't mults!

Definitely will keep this on my calendar for next year.

KJ3Q County Expedition 56 CW 17 SSB

Enjoyed a brief POTA and FQP activation of Hendry county during Saturday of the FQP.

K4SBZ county expedition 103 SSB

I mixed POTA in with operating as Expedition. Mixing the two requires a lot of planning, which then has to be adjusted in the field. Expeditions lose a lot of operating time from traveling and setting up/tearing down at each park. In the future, I will plan fewer parks and try to cut down on distance between parks. Activating a new park can come up with a lot of surprises.

W4AN mobile 2267 cw 119 ssb

Operator(s): K4BAI KU8E

Another fun operation by SECC members and honorary FCG members KU8E and K4BAI.

Participation was excellent, but band conditions not nearly as good as during the GQP a few weeks ago. The high bands were often dead and, when open, were very spotty. We missed the first nine minutes getting set up on the second day.

Other than that and operator changes and gas stops, we were constantly QRV, mostly on CW because, as usual, we had a hard time holding a CQ frequency on SSB. We didn't try 40 SSB, but maybe we could have gotten a few more SSB mults if we had. I think we had all states except NM, HI, and WY. KL7SB called on both modes Sunday afternoon. For DX, of course, OM2VL was the standout. We worked him on 15, 20, and 40 CW and on 15 and 20 SSB numerous times. There were other Europeans, LA, DL, G, F, I, SP at least. Maybe a few others. Caribbean were NP2X all the time and a station in Dominican Republic. For South America, we had a QSO with Colombia. And the best DX of all was JO7WXN on 15 CW Sunday afternoon at 2047Z.

AD4EB mobile with driver 3517 CW

Everything went off without a hitch. Pileups were totally amazing. Melody did a perfect job driving and navigating. Propagation was not what we expected, but 20m and FB operators saved the day. Full report later

73 - Jim - AD4EB

K4A mobile 1469 CW 46 SSB

Operator(s): W44TMO

Over 1500 miles since I left home Thurs for my first FQP as a single op mobile no driver. All my previous FQP adventures had been primarily as driver/logistics manager with N4CW seated comfortably in the back at the custom made operating table. At most, I might spell him for a few hours during the 2 days. But this time I had the whole 20 hrs operating to myself.

Got to my starting point at the SAN/OKA county line with enough time to spare so I could check the antenna fittings up top before kickoff. Good thing cause the Bug Catcher connection needed a little snugging up. Sat there for the first 30 mins working 20M CW and then off I went.

Well, practice and reality weren't always the same experience the next few hours. How I envisioned the headset, laptop, antenna switch and Tar Heel switch all playing together soon became a tangled mess of wires on the passenger seat and console. There were a few early stops just to sort out the equipment flow.

And then there is the case of the fat index finger. More then one of you with a 5 in your call probably wondered about my "QSY" request to nowhere that was soon followed up by "TU". My index finger often overshot the 5 key and hit F5, which I had programmed with QSY with the idea I'd move people for mults. That turned out to be a little over ambitious for my first solo. Anyway, apologies.

So a big THANK YOU to ya'll for being on the receiving end and making this another fun FQP for me.

73 Jim W4TMO

K8MR mobile in 19 counties 1447 CW 143 SSB

This is only a partial score, from the time operating while parked. The QSOs while driving will need to be transcribed from the audio recording, which may take a week, as we're now in serious packing mode for the snowbird northerly migration which begins Wednesday. There is likely two hours of off time total, between the non-operating drive on I-275 through St.Pete/Tampa, and other smaller delays, such as towns, exit ramps, changing the car inside setup when stopping or starting, etc. I'll update the full numbers when I have them.

As noted, conditions not as good as hoped for. At the start the guys in the northeast who should have been loud on 20 weren't. It took them a bit to figure out that 15 was. 10 never opened to the northeast or EU. Things did seem better for me on Sunday.

But the weather was great, clear and enough breeze that rolled down windows kept me cool enough when parked, unlike last year when I encountered some severe thunderstorms with hail. On the way to my first stop on Saturday at Hardee/Desota I encountered a lovebug episode that I had forgotten to prepare for, but after that one time I had no further collisions with those guys and gals.

I gave SSB some attention when parked, but unless I got spotted I did not have much success. I could tell when I did get spotted. I guess I'll have to figure how to self-spot me on SSB going forward.

As always, a great grand finale to the snowbird season in Florida. Thanks to all who chased us around the state!

73 - Jim K8MR

N5RZ fixed 446 CW 66 counties

A good one. Took too much time off, costing me the sweep + more QSOs. Missed WAL. Got OKA and SAN in the last hour.

Thanks for the QSOs.

K4D + SPE 2K-FA Log Periodic at 50' for 10-15-20 4 el yagi @ 125' for 40M
N1MM+ Logging Software.

73, Gator

KA6BIM fixed OR 67 counties - ALL worked 419 CW qso

I finally managed to get the SWEEP!! Missed by 1 the last 2 years. Great contest with lots of activity. All the rovers kept me hopping. Only missed the K4Y 1x1 station for the spelling bee. Band conditions were very good on 15, but there were more stations on 20 even though it was a struggle to copy. Thanks for all the QSO's

Dave ka6bim

K9CT fixed IL 67 counties worked ALL - 499 CW qso

Thanks to the FCG for a great contest! Always well organized.

A BIG shout out to the mobiles that makes this contest superior!

AA4TI - 14

AD4EB - 52

AD4ES - 31

K4A - 32

K4OJ - 67

K8MR - 33

N4FP - 18

N4TO - 23

W4AN - 35

This was not one of the best propagation weekends as the signals were weak for long periods and almost non-existent on 15 and 10.

I left a couple hours early on Saturday night for a dinner with my wife. I found that I was behind K4SV Sunday morning and give him a good chase on the online scoreboard. It took several hours but was able to work by him in the end. I am sure he had the same prop challenges.

My last county was Collier thanks to K8MR for the QSO on 15m at 2307 the first day. This is always a relief to get that done!

Thanks for the fun!

73, Craig K9CT

WN4AFP fixed SC 213 cw 73 SSB

I started with a plan to place high in the SOABLP Assisted category. My goal was to put in 17-18 hours into this contest and hopefully between 40m and 20m, I felt good about reaching my goal. I had a very active Saturday on both bands, but Sunday was extremely slow. I'm located too close to FL to have the luxury of making this a one-band 20m marathon. I also found that 40m didn't quite work for me as well as I would have hoped that it would. So I had to dance between both bands. I could only work south Florida on 20m and during the day, I just waited on the mobiles to come to 40m. Many of them were too busy on the high bands, but I could count on K4OJ to be there. I tried to break 100k and almost did it.

I missed the sweep by 8 counties...BRA, GAD, GIL, HAM, HOL, MAD, UNI and WAG. My problem was that I knew that all of these counties were activated because I heard all of my QP friends working them on 20m, but it was impossible for me.

I want to thank all the mobile ops for helping me make 112 Qs. The mobiles ops were fantastic. K4OJ 35, AD4EB 20, AA4TI 17, K8MR 13, AD4ES 10, K4A 6, W4AN 4, N4FP 3, K1TN 3 and K4SBZ 1. I hope that I didn't miss anyone.

I also qualified many times for the spelling bee award. K-10, E-8, Y-9, S-8. So I spelled "KEYS" 8 times with some extra letter.

More next month. This issue has to go to press.....now....

Mobile Activity in April

Quiet for a few days at start of month

NU0Q mobiled over to MO to AR for a dozen there then more MO, into east TX for a dozen there. Then up through OK, KS to home.

NF0N was giving out counties in NE

N8KIE ran Honolulu HI (in the rain)

MO QP occurred with many mobiles including visitors W0BH, K0PC, Lots of activity

N9JF spotted in a few in IL

N5NA headed to NM for the QP there. Several mobiles

KB6UF ran some in MS and LA Then headed to MN to finish up running all the lower 48 states.

KA2LHO put out a few in FL

Had the MI QP with mobiles

Mobiles headed to the Mini – AB7RW trekked across MT, N4CD up thru OK to MO, IL, IN, MI. W4SIG flew to OH and busy there before heading to MI. K8ZZ hit the road from MN to MI. K3IMC headed to MI from GA. WA9DLB spotted on the way from IL to MI.

K5GE spotted in AR. Then up to IL

N5MLP spotted in TX counties into LA across to FL. Then back

K8ZZ headed to OH/KY after convention but aborted trip due to illness.

End date 4/30

Awards Issued

USA-CW & Nth Time Award.

K4YFH has completed all CW for the 2nd time and received #45

K8MW completed the award and received #446

Roadrunner Award:

K4YT attained 800 last counties and received #23

KB6UF attained 2325 last counties and received #2

K3IMC attained 675 last counties and received #29

W4SIG attained 1175 last counties and received #10

Mobile to Mobile Award:

AB7NK completed all M to M counties and received #25.

Native American Award:

K8MW Completed the award and received #68

Gemini Award:

NA8W completed the award and received #186

Polaris Award:

NA8W completed the award and received #489

Star XX Award:

N8KIE Completed 3077 Star XX and received #1

US Presidents Award:

K8MW completed the award and received #65

Ran All State:

NA8W Ran all Florida and received #45

KJ7OKW Ran all Rhode Island and received #52

County Challenge Award:

KX1W attained Level 2000 and received #4

Events for County Hunters

May 4 0001z to 5 2359z 28

10-10 International Spring Contest,CW

Name, mbr or “none,” SPC

www.ten-ten.org

May 4 1300z to 5 0700z

1.8-28

7th Call Area QSO Party CW,Ph,Dig

RS(T), 5-letter state/county code or SPC

7qp.org

May 4 1500z to 5 0300z

1.8-28 Indiana QSO Party CW,Ph

RS(T), IN county or SPC

www.hdxcc.org

May 4 1700z to 5 2359z

1.8-28, VHF

Delaware QSO Party CW,Ph,Dig RS(T),
DE county or SPC
www.fsarc.org

Note de N4CD – K0BAK will be roving between DE parks in the 'rarest' DE county.
Mostly SSB. Listen for him. Watch POTA spots.

May 4 2000z to 5 2359 3.5-28
New England QSO Party CW,Ph,Dig
RS(T), New England county/state or SPC
neqp.org/rules

Note de N4CD – the NEQP will use the new CT 'county designators' in this contest – 9
of them. Beware. See the rules.

May 18 1400z to 19 0200 1.8-144
Arkansas QSO Party CW,Ph,Dig
RS(T), AR county or SPC
www.arkqp.com

That's all folks. That's enough!

