

County Hunter News

June 2022
Volume 18 Issue 6

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.

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

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

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

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

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

For general information FAQ on County Hunting, check out:

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

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

find information on these awards and the rules at:

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

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

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

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

Notes from the Editor

N4CD Rumblings

1) Sunspots – We got them. Conditions good most days on 17m and up but skip tends to be long. If you're in the center of the country – well, hard to work counties on 15m and up! Otherwise, lots of 'fair days' on 80 and 40m. Some days with radio blackouts as CMEs hit earth. Lots of solar activity! Sunspot numbers increasing. 10 and 12m busy with FT-8. 15M open some time, other times with high A and K, not much there on CW and SSB.

2) Gas prices. Ouch. Thanks to Joe Biden. On the trip north, was paying just under \$4/gal most places. A bit more in IL. The trip was 3,314 miles at an average of 28 mpg needing 118.35 gallons of fuel. At \$4/gal, that's \$473 into the gas tank for the trip. His party's left wing rage against 'fossil fuels', the party's arm twisting to 'defund' the industry through left wing tactics of punishing banks and pension plans for 'investing' or 'making loans' to the industry, his withdrawal of most permitting for new wells on federal land, both in Alaska and off shore Gulf of Mexico along with federal land in most states, his push for all EV's despite the cost penalty now – results in – duh – higher prices. It ripples through the economy. Shipping goods and food costs more. So does farm products (food) because farm diesel to run all the machinery, natural gas to produce the fertilizers and dry the crops at harvest time, are all way up. Transportation prices up with diesel at \$5 and up. You pay more at the pump and the food store. Sure, the pandemic and supply chain problems don't help, but it doesn't take a genius to realize

that everything grows by fossil fuels, everything is transported by fossil fuels, most likely your house is heated by fossil fuels (home heating oil now \$5/gal!), your transportation – whether by car, truck, bus, plane, is way up. Double gas prices in just two years! Thank Joe Biden again. And you can thank him again for rampant inflation – now years of 8% or more.

Now, the latest tactic of Biden is to allow 15% contamination of fuel with ethanol, up from 10%. It increases summer SMOG, but I guess they don't worry about killing off some voters as long as a few think that maybe, just maybe, the price of 'fuel' will drop a dime. Of course, your fuel mileage will go down 5%, but who tracks their exact MPG each month? Almost no one. Just fill up. Probably take a bit more, but who will notice? The cost per gal might be the only thing folks watch. So far, only 300 stations sell E15 along with E10 but he is pushing for ALL gas stations to go to E15. Normally, ethanol percentage is cut back in the summer time. Of course, if you take more corn to make ethanol – what will happen the price of corn? Yup! It will increase and so will your food bill! But he'll claim the 'lowered the price of fuel'.

Now the latest out of Biden is that we are in a 'tough transition' away from fossil fuels and must bear the cost of 'this transition'. You check EV prices lately? \$40K and up, if you can find one to buy! Come election time, remember this.

The average age of cars is up to 12.7 years! Folks are hanging on.

Running Counties

There are dozens of reasons for running counties

1) Some start out and seek to run 25 different counties. Then it goes to 50 and 75 and 100 and before you know it up to a couple hundred. Maybe a thousand or more if they head to Minis and Nationals and put out counties along the way.

2) Some are working on awards that require you to run so many counties or accumulate points toward an award. For example, Master Gold requires 1500 points – which you can get by serving as an Officer or other position in MARAC, or by running counties – often the same county repeated. Other awards such as Master Platinum, Mobile Diamond, Double Diamond, require you to run 500 different counties and make

qualifying contacts from each. That's roughly 1/6th the total number of counties. For each new award, you've got to start over and run 500 counties again.

3) Some are seeking to run all 3077 US counties. So far, only 18 people have done that, the last being K3IMC in 2016. Before that, it was N4JT in 2015. Now, there are at least 3 contenders working to get to them all. K8ZZ, KB6UF and W4SIG are closing in. Kerry is headed to HI this fall if things work out.

There's some interesting counties to run to finish all 3077. Who can complain about being in AK and putting out the 4 districts there? Or heading to HI to run the ones there. You won't forget being in Kalawao. On the other hand, there are lots of very dull counties in the middle of the country in IA, KS, SD, IL, ND, TX and other states – that just take time to get to. Not many 'scenic' views, mountain ranges, National Parks or other items of interest in thousands of them. Or the congestion of the NY boroughs around NYC and Hudson NJ. Or going to Suffolk, MA (Boston) for that one. You won't forget your trip to Nantucket. Or San Juan, WA. It's easy to forget most of CA other than a few scenic spots. You'll be busy fighting traffic for a good percentage of them there.

It just takes lots of road trips and miles to get to them all. And years and years. You won't do it all in a year or two unless you never stop driving.

You can drive to AK – probably most have so far and hit the districts there. Or you can take the plane to the various districts – rent a car – and put them out. You've got to do airplane trips to HI to get to the different islands.

So far, I've run them all twice. Won't be a third time but I'm keeping track. The 'drive' to do it again isn't there. Oh, I'm up over 1500 the second time but I'll likely never finish a 3rd time. Twice was enough. Now, I tend to plan routes to get to the different POTA (Parks on the Air) parks. On a good day, the parks are all in different counties along a reasonable route without too much zig-zagging. Sometimes there are multiple parks in a county. To get credit for the park, you've got to make 10 QSOs for a POTA park. If it is also in the WWFF system, you need 44 for get full credit. So I do both – seeking to run a string of counties and a bunch of parks. Makes life more interesting other than counties along the way.

In 2016, the ARRL launched the National Parks on the Air program to celebrate the 100th Birthday of the National Park System. There were roughly 800 parks listed including the 30 National Parks, hundreds of 'historic sites', National Wildlife Refuges, some Associated Areas such as the Oklahoma Memorial (for the Murrah Building US terrorist

bombing in OK City), National Trails such as the Appalachian, Pony Express, Mormon, Oregon, California, etc, and a few odds and ends. 30 of them were never 'activated' with most in AK requiring float planes or long snow mobile trips to get there! The program was tremendously popular.

That ended in Dec 2016. Folks looked for alternatives and the Parks on the Air program was created. In Europe, the WWFF program (World Wide Flora and Fauna) had been going for 10+ years. The POTA folks first worked with them, but the rules of WWFF were inflexible, and after some head bashing, the POTA folks decided to start their own program. It's now tremendously popular with thousands and thousands now having joined, and 50+ activations on a weekend at various parks around the country.

The number of park entities has been expanded to over 9000 now. They include state wildlife areas, state game areas, just about all the state parks, state historic sites (run by the state government), and all the NPOTA ones. Some states have 600 entities, some less than 50.

The POTA web site is quite good with details, stats on parks and your activations, etc. There's maps of the entities and their approximate locations. With a bit of Googling, you can get the county for the park. Some parks span multiple counties so you've got to be a bit careful and some trails go through dozens of counties and a dozen states. There's a cross reference of WWFF parks to counties.

We've got a few new county hunters – but the main thing holding back thousands from joining county hunting are the requirements for paper confirmations of contacts. Now, the majority of new hams are all 'electronic' getting awards on the web through ARRL Log Book of the World (LoTW) for DX and states worked. You can track your band states, your DX entities per band or overall, etc. POTA has hundreds of awards automatically issued when you reach the next level and there are 50 levels starting with 10 parks! Activators upload logs and others receive credit for the park contacts. Some have worked over 4000 parks so far! (that's gotta be a lot of counties, too). If we could convert some of them to county hunters, that would be great.

Probably half of new hams use digital modes. FT-8 is popular – a few on FT-4. With LoTW, they get their confirmations. About half the park activations these days are on digital FT-8. Makes getting through with 10-20w portable setups a lot easier than SSB.

Well, running parks is often less thrilling as counties around the country. Many of the state parks are cookie cutter repeats of the last. A lake, camping around it, and hiking trails. Nothing scenic but nice 'green space' usually. In TX, the majority of parks were

built by the CCC in the 1930s Depression. All similar. Make lake or expand one, add roads, camp sites, maybe a lodge building. See one, see the same elsewhere. A few are different.

Many of the wildlife refuges and state game areas – same thing. See one, the next is usually not much different!. You just check them off, like running counties , as your trip progresses. You can't run as many parks a day as counties as you've got to get to it and sit for a bit making contacts from the park. No county lines in park work other than trails or a very few. (well, rarely if you can get to it). I poke along these days, even stopping to run most counties.

Some go out and participate in state QSO parties. Multi-ops are common in many – going the entire time period zipping around the state – like FL or OK or TX running 25 or 30 or more counties in the contest period. Some only show up in state QSO parties. You can work a LOT of counties in many. All in FL. Usually all in New England if within 40m range. 200+ in TX. Much of the 7th call area. All of AZ, OK, KS, and most of MI, IL, OH, etc. I try to run a couple QSO parties each year – KS, OK, TX, AR. Done LA. Lots of fixed stations show up – and some 'rovers' or 'portables' good for the no-star award. If you're chasing 1x1 prefixes – it's the place to be!

So there are lots of reasons for running counties – or parks in counties- or state QSO parties. Take what comes along

Sometimes it's a trip to get a 'last county' for another county hunter. Been there – done that dozens of times. So have many others helping others finish up.

County hunting and county-running can be a lot of fun, plus you're helping others out get their awards. So.....carry on! Run some counties! Work the mobiles, state QSO parties – keep activity up!

MARAC Annual Convention

Sunday October 2nd, 2022 to Thursday October 6th, 2022

Best Western Gran Tree Inn, Bozeman, MT
1325 North 7th Ave. Bozeman, MT 59715
(406) 587-5261

BOOK BEFORE AUG. 1 2022 to guarantee the rates

DO IT NOW - no fee cancellations!

We have 40 rooms reserved, by contract.

details on hotel page

Confirmed Speaker: Brian Bird, NX0X who will speak on the Past, Present and Future of the CQ USA-Counties Award

Banquet Wednesday evening

Hospitality Room from 3 pm to 11 pm Sunday, 9 am to 11 pm Monday-Wednesday

- special prizes for early registrants - before July 4th (form and payment received) (prize TBD)
-

We're BAAACK !

I'm planning to go! Haven't been out west lately and need to run parks in WA, ND, and MT to finish up that area of the country!

Florida QSO Party

Wow...the bands were full. 1X1 prefixes everywhere on 20M CW. Conditions weren't the greatest with an X class flare aftermath on Saturday and A index of 18 on Sunday. Hundreds and hundreds of QSOs were made and mobiles were zipping around the state. This is one of the most active QSO parties in the country. Conditions rated 'Fair' on 80-40m and good on 20M. Didn't hear anyone on 15M but skip too long for the FL-TX path. Heard some DX calling CQ FL on 15M. Just rated 'Fair' on 15M.

20M was the band. 40 meters was 'dead' most of the day but 20M stayed open late.

From 3830 scores:

AA4TI - County Expedition 1702 cw 370 ssb

Lots of interesting challenges this year. Operation from my first county line on Saturday was fair, but not great. The second county line was going quite well until I had to stop in the middle of a run to anchor my antenna when the wind picked up to over 25mph. Then, there was another interruption when overhead lightning dictated that I disconnect the antenna and hunker down while it stormed all around me. I didn't get home from the Saturday operations until after 12:30am. Then, I had to get up early for the Sunday operations. I got to my first county line on Sunday morning, got set up and waited for the party to resume at 10am...Yep, I said 10am. Apparently, somewhere in my operating plan I had a senior moment and decided to change the start time. So, right off the bat on Sunday I was two hours late getting out of the gate. Since I was unassisted, I did not see any spots for FQP stations. If I had been assisted, I would likely have noticed all the spots and band map and figured out the error in my ways. My first county line on Sunday was a struggle for contacts. I was located in a field next to a water melon processing facility and bees/lovebugs were thick. Sweating like crazy in the hot sun/vehicle attracts bees, and after several gentle swipes to scare off the bees, one of them found success on my left leg and stung me. This created a major issue since many of you know that I use my left foot to send CW. On the plus side, the owner of the water melon facility told me to help myself to a few melons. My second county line operation went much better until my radio decided to refuse to operate correctly on 15M SSB. I rebooted everything a couple times, but for some reason, the radio would lock up in TX as soon as I said the first syllable into the mic. I'm hoping that a reboot to factory defaults will fix the issue. Finally, at 6PM, I was thinking I still had two more hours of contest because of my 10am start. I switched over to SSB and after quite a few CQ's with only a few contacts, a Wisconsin station advised me that the contest was over...Duh. So, I dutifully scrubbed the last few contacts from my log, kicked myself in the butt for being careless and called it a day. All in all, it was exhausting, but still a great SQP.

N4CW mobile 2058 cw

things don't always go as planned! Duhhhh... Our intent was for Jim to operate phone and I'd operate CW. Well, first off, there was some interaction between rigs causing a high noise level in the phone rig. After a brief attempt at fixing the problem, we decided not to do SSB and chose to do CW only.

We both took turns during the days working the pileups and driving. Jim planned the route very well and the GPS didn't let us down. We didn't cover as many counties as last year, but were effective in our execution.

This year's weather wasn't very pleasant; it rained both days, intermittently on Saturday, but most of Sunday! And speaking of Sunday, propagation was just awful for the first five hours! By afternoon, it was as good as Saturday's!

There were many many stations that worked us regularly. THANK YOU!!! And another big THANK YOU for your fine manners...great job, guys and gals!

73, Bert N4CW and Jim W4TMO

W4AN mobile 2240 cw 71 ssb (KU8E K4BAI)

Our original plan was to do CW only but the week before FQP NX4N asked if we could activate FRA and GUL on SSB since no one else was planning to operate from those counties. Chris even said we could just still submit as CW Only and not count those QSO's in our score. We just opted to just enter Mixed-Mode and made some SSB contacts from some other counties as well.

SSB was a real struggle just like back in 2019 when I did Mixed Mode. Couldn't really get any rate going. I think I tried calling KV0I in NE on at least five different occasions and he couldn't hear me even though he had a loud signal. What's so puzzling is when I was calling CQ on 20 SSB from STJ late Saturday afternoon 9K2HM called me with a very loud signal (that was a shocker!) and had no problem hearing me. I see K8MR and K4FCG made lots of SSB contacts as mobiles. I don't know if our antenna is broken? I don't think so because we made over 2000 contacts on 20 CW alone. Maybe the propagation in south Florida is just better. We didn't do any 40 meter SSB because that would've involved stopping each time and changing the 40 meter resonator. We had one tuned for CW and another for SSB. 15 meters wasn't as good for us than it was for the guys in south Florida.

Speaking of 40 meters... It was very unusual this year. It was basically dead during the daylight hours and no one was really there until after it was dark. Last year we made 672 QSO's on 40 meters but only 138 this year. That turned out to be a moot point because 20 meters was open pretty well for the whole 10 hours both days!

We apologize for not spending more time in LIB. We cut thru a corner of it on Sunday afternoon for about 5 mins and had planned to return but ran out of time. I remember seeing that was the only county K0RC missed. We opted to spend more time in FRA and GUL instead. Both K1XX and N4CW activated LIB on Saturday so we figured most people had worked it. We did work a few stations on SSB from FRA/GUL so NX4N should be pleased with that.

For those of you not familiar with the geography of the Florida panhandle the Apalachicola River basically cuts the FL panhandle in half. There are only about four bridges that cross it from the Gulf of Mexico to the FL/GA border. Most of those bridges are in the northern part of FL . On the eastern half of LIB is the Ochlockonee River. There are only two places to cross from WAK to LIB. One is a forest service road that crosses the river into LIB. Unfortunately it's a dirt road and we were having a big downpour of rain at that time and didn't want to risk getting stuck. So we proceeded to US 98 along the Gulf. That's what makes activating FRA and GUL so difficult as a rover. It involves some extra driving.

I'm not sure if we will be rover in the future. As John ages he has a hard time navigating when driving and I have to tell him where to go when he's driving and I'm operating. That's very hard. Ideally we could use a 3rd person to do some driving (and some operating) so I'm not so distracted when I'm operating. I'm trying to talk him in just doing the Expedition/Portable category next year. The FRA/GUL/LIB/WAK area of the panhandle would be an ideal spot. Everyone would have no problem working those counties if we opted to do that.

Thanks everyone for the contacts. The CW pileups were crazy as usual.

73, Jeff KU8E

K4OJ multi-op multi 3193 cw QSO

Hi FQP Fans-

This year, our 8th running K4OJ Multi-Multi-Mobile, was a roller coaster of highs and lows - but in the end we had much fun and learned a lot for next year! New routes, new home in SFL for our overnight stay, first Multi-3 since 2015 and a new 15m op made this a year for experimenting and learning. And man, did we get our share of challenges beyond all the newness.

Our team set out in my 2017 Toyota Sequoia with 78K miles. Three stations and four bands. All four antennas are mounted on a 4ft x 4ft roof mounted aluminum plate with Breedlove delrin mounts, homegrown impedance matching coils with four ground straps soldered to the vehicle's roof. We certainly get our share of stares!

Tnx to everyone for the QSO's! I've pasted our TOP100 Most Worked "Road Buddies" who worked us 9 or more times at the bottom!

First the numbers:

Band	QSOs	Pts	Mul	Pt/Q
7	574	2296	3	4.0
14	2092	8368	41	4.0
21	526	2104	32	4.0
28	1	4	0	4.0
Total	3193	12772	76	4.0

On to our Road Tales/Tails!

THE GOOD, BAD AND UGLY:

GOOD:

NEW 15M OP - WELCOME NK4O!

AJ did a terrific job during his first FQP mobile adventure and brought with him plenty of experience, enthusiasm and a willingness to help the team in any way. Welcome aboard AJ! He even drove the last 45 minutes or so on Sunday so I could take a turn in his chair. Kevin and Red have also kindly offered their chairs over the years but events quickly made this a 'learning year' so we mixed things up. It was educational to actually use the 15m 'shack on a tray' station I designed in a contest environment, quickly reminding me that engineers should be forced to taste their own medicine prior to project completion.

AND THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT...:

Just after AJ started driving along a country road, two of the cutest wee-little piglets were seen on the side of the road munching on freshly-dew grass. "Wilbur" and "Porky" were both black with darling curly tails. I felt a twinge of guilt since Lili and I had earlier served applewood smoked bacon as part of the team breakfast. The things you see as a FQP mobile...

BAD:

GETTING ROUTED:

The K4OJ/m team used similar routes from previous years but we quickly found out that it is not just where you go, but when! For example, going through HIL/PIN/MTE/SAR during a Sunday morning (our old plan) is *much* quicker than going through them on a Saturday afternoon. Huge traffic jams and accidents, even before the rain started (see UGLY below). We have already devised route changes for next year based on these lessons learned.

TEAM OJ MOBILE INCENTIVES AND METRICS:
FQP 401-S(nack) INCENTIVE PLAN:

The team-OJ operators (and driver!) are provided snack bags each day to help raise morale and sugar/caffeine-driven QSO rates. Not long after hitting the road, each operator realizes that the others got some really good stuff that they don't have and some serious horse trading ensues. You would not believe what a good deal one can get for a Nutter Butter, Oreo or Captain's Wafers pack!

RATE-O-METER:

Related to the 401-Snack incentive plan, all of us noticed that snack bag usage is inversely proportional to QSO rate. Red rarely had time away from the pileups to even open his bag (i.e.- the 20m diet plan). However, when I heard Kevin or AJ rooting around their bags, I knew 40m and/or 15m had tanked and gone belly-up for a while til senior Flare decides to recede. This early-warning-rate-alert system can be weaponized by withholding snacks (or lunch) until QSO goals are met, but several human/animal rights organizations have issued formal warnings that Observers may be sent on future K4OJ/m outings...even though all vehicle occupants are (kinda) cage-free.

RED LOVES HIS SPECIAL K:

For some reason every time Red typed a callsign with the letter "K", the computer would give him a BOGO (or Buy One and Get FIVE!) discount. Having "W4KFC" turn into "W4KKKKKFC" quickly lost it's amusement value. During our overnight we exchanged keyboards, resulting in temporary relief only to see the issue raise its yuckkkkkky head again. Only after the contest did we find a faulty USB hub (into the trash it went).

UGLY:

NATURE-BOY RIC FLARE':

A class X flare occurred early Saturday and brought with it the worst band conditions we had ever observed in an FQP. The team was hugely disappointed since the previous entire week saw tremendous propagation and us salivating for many QSO's on all four bands. The first day 40m was averaging about 10 QSO's/hour, and 15m was equally slow. 10m - hah! Vanishing signals, no signals, deep QSB and zero spots for hours on end - anywhere and for anyone. It was somewhat better Sunday but not much. For example, in 2021 Kevin made a whopping record 1780+ 40m QSO's. This year we couldn't even achieve a 3rd of that. AJ had an equally tough 15m signal drip and Red struggled with big QSB on 20m. Our scores took a nose dive. Speaking of which...

BUTT-UGLY:

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA:

Not only did we witness our worst FQP propagation ever, but we took two direct torpedo hits from a horrible combination of traffic jams and torrential thunderstorms. Our team experienced simply vicious weather (monster rain and wind, incredible lightning and thunder and even one huge funnel cloud!) along with miles-long heavy traffic of accidents, clogs and slogs. No exaggeration - this was a nearly continuous experience as we traveled south from Tampa, St. Pete, Sarasota, Ft. Myers, Naples and even half of 'alligator alley' (I-75 E-W in south FL) over a period of hours. We felt like the bad weather following our Addams Family vehicle.

This driver was glued on one mission only - keeping alert and us out of an accident. Visibility was near zero for literally hours. We were the speed demons doing 25mph. Many vehicles just pulled over and others with flashers on driving onward (illegal in FL). No looking at maps, GPS, directions, etc; the weather and traffic reports took priority. Fortunately(!?!?) 15m was so poor that AJ had plenty of time between repeating CQ's to help navigate. We discussed route options to get us out of this dangerous weather but there just was no path to avoid it.

The operators had a terrible time too, fighting a sour mix of super-weak sigs, lightning crashes and of course our own man-made interstation RFI (weak signals of course exacerbate the impact). Clearly the giant squid (Squidious Murphious) grabbed our vessel and pulled it into the dark fathoms below.

We lost all hope of maintaining our route and felt especially bad to miss giving out Monroe. The game changer was when Kevin turned his head and commented that it was

'raining' in the back of the cabin where our power supply and spare radio gear were stored. The rain was just so hard that it forced its way into the cabin. It didn't help that the brilliant station engineer forgot a basic coax concept - drip loops.

With the hull breach and ensuing water intrusion we made the decision to just cut short our contest day by 3 hours and get home asap to:

- a) Bale out the cabin and wipe up the mess,
- b) Check for electronics water damage (none!) and
- c) Rebuild our coax ingress/egress system.

The decision was a wise one - Red's K3 (our spare) was wrapped in a towel which had just started to get damp (yikes!). The team fixed the problems, rested up and enjoyed a hot dinner dinner and "FQP-Rotor" FL keylime pie for dessert with my wonderful wife Lili.

All of us were ready to hit it hard on Sunday and we rebounded nicely:

Saturday QSO's = 1343

Sunday QSO's = 1849

TOTAL QSO's = 3192

Not bad considering we missed all the 40m fun after dark!

That about wraps it up on this end - hope you enjoyed hearing the joys and trials of our 17 hour journey.

We'd like to offer special thanks to FCG past president and VP FQP Dan Street K1TO, who has been the foundation of and leader of FQP since 1998 - tnx Dan for all you've done for us including providing such amazing scoring results and analyses! You are the heart and soul of all things FQP.

Thanks also to our FCG president Chris W4WF, who each year creates an outstanding two-dozen page FQP write up/report using Dan's data/analysis. Chris is a truly gifted leader who motivates all of us to give our best for FQP and FCG - tnx Chris.

Jeff KU8E is our super FB FQP and FCG Webmaster and it's just a pleasure to work with him; sure appreciate it Jeff!

Sincere appreciation to Bob K0RC and Chuck NO5W for their super-duper county tracking tools - these are indispensable for working the sweeps, planning routes and more. Bob/Chuck - you guys are the best! Big thumbs up also to Chip N3IW for developing the new FQP spotting website. Thank you all for your major support.

Huge kudos to our terrific Fixed and 25(!) 1x1 Spelling Bee partners - you all are the foundation of our way-cool QSO Party - thank you for standing strong on all the bands representing our Sunshine State.

A big salute as well to our talented road warriors, many of whom changed their routes to ensure VFB county coverage - great teamwork folks! They do an amazing job of getting the cobwebs off antennas, rigs, pc's, power plants and performing station(s), vehicle and routing set up just to make the first contact. I sincerely am in awe of your enthusiasm for hitting the road and am proud to call you fellow FQP mobiler/expeditioner. Please come back next year and let's bring some new Roadie recruits along for the fun!

Red, Kevin and now AJ - let's do this craziness next year! It was a blast and your friendship makes all the difference.

Finally - Our biggest, loudest applause is for all of you out-of-state operators who are the real heroes. Whether you make a half dozen or several hundred QSO's, your enthusiastic participation and support help make the FQP fun for all. We can throw the party, but it is you that keeps coming back every year -

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

See you in FQP 2023!

73/OJ,
Chris, NX4N - K4OJ MM/m Team Lead

TOP100 Most Worked Stations:

K9CT 67 K3WW 49 VE3NNT 43 OM2VL 41 VA3DF 41 W1AJT 36 N8II 35 KY7M 34
N7IR 34 WI9WI 34 W8MJ 33 AA7V 32 K1LT 31 K0HC 30 W5TM 30 W1NN 29
WN4AFP 29 W3LL 28 K4OAQ 27 K9CW 26 KY4GS 26 W1TO 26 W4NZ 26 AA6AA
25 K8QKY 25 VE3RZ 25 WA6KHK 25 DL3DXX 24 K5XS 23 KG4IGC 23 I4VEQ 22
KM5G 22 W6DMW 22 W8PI 22 K5KPE 21 NE9U 21 NW0M 21 K0RC 20 K9NW 19
K9OM 19 KA6BIM 18 N8NA 18 VE5MX 18 W3HDH 18 WA3AER 18 K5CM 17
NN3W 17 NP2X 17 NU1O 17 VE3KZ 17 W1FJ 17 HI3AA 16 VE3YT 16 K5TIA 15
N3RD 15 N9CK 15 NS2N 15 K1EBY 14 W1END 14 W1QK 14 WA5SOG 14 K1JB 13
KB3AAY 13 KO4VW 13 AA8CA 12 N1CGP 12 N2RC 12 VE3KP 12 W9RE 12
WA9LEY 12 WB2TQE 12 K2NV 11 K2QB 11 K2QO 11 K4FT 11 K5UV 11 K7IA 11
N4HB 11 N4KGL 11 N8KR 11 N9RV 11 NM2A 11 VE3BR 11 W9PA 11 WB9HFK 11

K7RL 10 K8RGI 10 KM4FO 10 N0EO 10 W1GD 10 W7GKF 10 WA3FAE 10 HI8A 9
N1SOH 9 N4UC 9 NN6DX 9 VE3TM 9 VE4GV 9 WQ5L 9

K4FP Multi Mobile 1507 cw

Flex 6400 to Hustler 40, 20, 15 meter resonators, all horizontally mounted atop 3 ft mag mounted mast. Instant band switching was great. Early on we blew the 20 amp fuse in the 12 volt line from the battery, twice. Replaced with 30 amp fuse and no further problems there. Thereafter all went well until an antenna problem developed that resulted in only being able to operate while not in motion, and finally not at all. The problem seemed to be a short or open in the base. Finally gave up at 1425 local time in Seminole County when we determined the antenna was not functional or fixable. I dropped Pete, K2PS off at his QTH in The Villages and proceeded to my QTH in Ocala. Connected a 20 meter Ham Stick to a different mag mounted base and managed 31 contacts from Marion County in the last 16 minutes. Conditions were generally pretty good except when encountering S7-9 line noise from power lines along major highways that made it difficult to copy callers. We worked in 28 of the 34 counties we originally planned to cover. 20 was by far the best band. This was my 9th FQP mobile, with 6 years being driven by my xyl Marty, N4GL, and 3 years sharing operating and driving with Pete, K2PS. Marty really appreciates Pete

N4DAB County Expedition - multi-op - 349 cw 225 ssb (K8SR KB4T KI4LOF WAØAOD WB4OMM)

Flagler, Putnum, Marion, Lake, Brevard, Volusia. Great conditions, great weather! Had a blast! Best Qs/Score in our 10 years of participating!!
73! Steve WB4OMM

K4QD County Expedition 292 cw 122 ssb

Due to other commitments I could not do a full expedition mode this year. Got home Sat morning. Operated four hours Saturday evening with PCARS at N4F. Got up early Sunday and went down to the Brevard/Indian River County Line in ST Sebastian River Preserve State Park. Set up my 40M EFHW antenna with 33' mast in my truck hitch mount. Operated in the truck using IC-7300 with 20AH LiPo battery and laptop.

K3LT - fixed - OH 330 cw 12 ssb 67 cw mults 12 ssb mults

This event was my first ever Florida QSO Party. Jim, K8MR, has been plugging this contest for the last several club Zoom meetings, so I thought I'd give it a try. The rules mentioned getting noticed for working all the 1x1 calls, so that was my goal.

My plan was not to spend 20 hours in front of the radio, especially since there were antennas to repair, grass to mow, and last-minute boss demands. Nevertheless, the logger says 15 hours, which can;t be completely accurate because I spent part of the time writing a Python script (the boss demand) while listening for one of the mobiles to change counties. I also took about an hour Saturday during some rare nice weather to get the tree off my north/south Beverage.

I was very impressed by the number of mobiles and even the number of stations that changed location occasionally. 172 of my 342 QSOs were with stations that operated from more than one location during the party.

Mobiles and rovers versus number of counties:

- K1XX 31
- K4OJ 28
- N4CW 26
- W4AN 24
- N4FP 20
- K8MR 17
- AD4ES 15
- AA4TI 4
- N4DAB 3
- NN2T 2
- K4NYM 2

Especially impressive is the fact that K1XX operated from at least 31 of the 67 counties. Visiting half the counties in any state in a weekend is quite a drive, and Florida is a large state.

W4AN made me particularly nervous by disappearing for a while just before entering Gulf county, which was the last county I needed for a

CW county sweep. The presumably most populous county, Dade, was next to last to reveal itself.

I worked 24 Nx1s and W4D and not N4D by early Saturday afternoon. Since that goal was met early, I didn't think about it any more. Sunday I saw just one spot for N4D on phone, so now I am wondering if not chasing after N4D was a mistake. After wondering for a few minutes I started watching for more N4D spots but saw none. Reading comprehension alert: I went back and looked again at the Silver Spelling Bee web page, and FCG told me which callsigns to look for, so I fail by stupidity. Oh well.

Missed K8MR in his first Sunday county because when I pressed "F4" my amplifier hissed instead of amplifying and Jim promptly left the frequency. There was a smell of ozone but the amp seemed to work just fine after that. Silly Alpha.

Called many mobiles on 15 meters but very few were able to hear me. Quite frequently the Europeans calling Florida were quite loud while the 4s were very weak. I made 3 contacts on 10 meters on Saturday. 40 meters seemed to be better Sunday than Saturday. 40 was completely dead to Florida for the first 6 hours Saturday.

All QSOs were search and pounce. I never touched the F1 key.

Equipment: K3S/100, P3, 8410, K3/100, P3, ETO91B, homebrew SO2R stuff, tribanders and verticals.

CQ Magazine

Wow...a print issue of CQ Magazine showed up in the mail. May 2022. Inside you read:

“We're Back in Print!

After six long months of digital-only purgatory, we are very excited – and greatly relieved – to have our print editions back again. It's a very long story, but a federal 'economic disaster' loan that we needed to kickstart everything after Covid-related setbacks was repeatedly delayed until nearly the end of March. With that funding now in hand, we can restart the presses, get printed products back out to our non-digital readers and go back to the usual struggles to break even faced by most small businesses most of the time.

All subscribers will get the number of issues that they've paid for – all print subscriptions have been extended by the number of missed issues, and digital copies of those missed issues are available for free download at <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/NdX2BByxbQ> We're glad to finally be back in print and plan to stay there for a very long time to come. Your patience, support and understanding through these past several months mean more to us than you can imagine. Thank you! “

--

Note de N4CD - I subscribe to CQ Magazine. They sponsor the USCA Award. Without their sponsorship, the award would fade into oblivion as not sponsored by a name entity like CQ or ARRL – the only recognized sponsors of awards in the USA other than 'state awards' or POTA awards.

Brian, NX0X, is the current CQ Magazine Awards person.

(Of course, also subscribe to QST – well, actually have a life subscription there going back to 1970 or so).

New England QSO Party

Wow – lots of stations to chase including several on Nantucket. K2LEK, W1UAA on cw heard/worked. Several mobiles out. Lots of fixed stations in MA, RI, CT, NH, VT to work. Some activity on 15m good, caught one on 10M.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

W1VE multi-op mobile 804 cw qso

Operator(s): K1EP KC1KUG W1VE

"Excellent mobile prep by Ed K1EP made the trip pretty flawless! Bray, Ed and I had a blast. We just ran out of time.

Elecraft K4, Tar Heal Jr and Hamsticks.

Thanks for the Qs!!

Gerty W1VE for the team."

W1DX multi-op mobile 750 cw qso

Operator(s): K1XA W1AN W1XX

Planning included strategically picking locations on or very near state and county lines for swift rover changes. This year we used a new antenna that could be mounted in a few minutes on or off the rear ball hitch. It could raise easily to over 20 feet for 40 and 20M. Might try 80M next year.

In SUFMA we were not sent packing as we were last year by the BPD from the streets of Boston. This year we set up adjacent to a quiet cemetery. We stayed on CW with headsets so as not to disturb the neighbors and them not us.

Our K3 was powered off a marine type of battery with a solid state booster that allowed us the many hours of run time independent of the vehicle. Sadly this limiting as near the end voltage dropped below the critical 9 volts losing us 45 minutes of operating time. The final planned stop in NEWRI then had to be aborted without ability to plug direct to the vehicle. Lesson learned.

Good pizza and beverage at W1XX ended our long day Sunday.
Congrats to W1VE/M ops for fine score!

Worked:

W1AJT from 10 Counties

OM2VL, K4PS, AA5JF from 8 Counties

BRIRI 65

BRIMA 47

KENRI 78

NLNCT 72

NORMA 80

PLYMA 107

PRORI 45

SUFMA 135

WASRI 41

WINCT 80

73, John W1AN

NZ1U mobile W1UJ opr 1031 cw

Through the twists and turns that life presents, sometimes coming back to what you know is not only important, but required.

Not a single step or thought towards planning for the NEQP was done before ~1600z on Saturday- With a start time of 2000z, N1WK had a couple hours of prep in to mounting the (New, Untested) antenna systems on his F-150 truck. The summary; We were on the road and opened up the contest at the start time.. ****AND**** This was one of the best, low pressure, fun, successful NEQP events we could not have planned. No strategy, no maps.... nada. We didn't even give K1KI the heads-up we were operating!

Thanks to Tom, K1KI for organizing and promoting this event, it is renewed as one of my favorites for sure.

For routes we reused some past event's maps where we based Saturday's trip off of the 'NZ1U/m Sunday 2018' planned route and Sunday's trip off of the 'NZ1U/m Sunday 2017' route. Used Google Maps to guide N1WK to the 'next waypoint' which was a county line. Would pull over briefly to set up the next waypoint within the new county.

Fired up the laptop we have used in past NEQPs' and updated N1MM+ - Was little configuration required. Found the WinKey, found the USB<>serial cable... Configured ports and made some sweet, sweet CW. Used a K3 that performed remarkably well. The noise blanker removed noise completely that would have made this event impossible without it. There is some noise from the Ford that we will need to work out some time (maybe? possibly?) but the K3 was absolutely amazing, remarkable. We pumped the audio in to the AUX channel of the vehicle's car stereo and chatted throughout the ride.

Antennas were a pair of High-Sierra 'screwdriver' type antennas mounted (the morning of the contest) to the Back-Rack utility rack that was right behind the truck's cabin. They worked great. Having 2 was perfect since we were bouncing between 20m and 40m. N1WK has multiple tuned, insulated 'elevated radials' wrapped within the truck's bed for multiple bands and from each antenna. (Shhhhh! This is the secret to our performance maybe!?!) Only a few QSOs on 80m, it worked, but stayed with the 'money bands'. 80m was causing the antenna to whack trees with the coil near completely extended. Checked 15m at some point where it would be open- The RF took out the WinKey. 15m Was a very short, abandoned experiment.

Well, that was fun, and awesome to work many friends and familiar calls. Looking forward to the next one!

73 Jay W1UJ @ NZ1U/m with N1WK designing, constructing and piloting the ship!

K1EP mobile 155 cw

Did a quick shakedown run in EMA on Saturday evening to check out the mobile installation. Had K4 to a selection of hamsticks and a mini-tarheel screwdriver. Has some good runs and discovered some strange bugs (of course). We did W1VE/m on Sunday as multi op. Thanks for the Qs.

12M Frequency

What's the 12M CW frequency. The consensus seems to be 24913.5. There's a lot of digital just above that so you pick a clear frequency. So far not too much activity but put it in your radio. With increasing sunspots, you never know. 24936 for SSB. The digital 'creep' keeps moving down the band as different modes show up.

(While we're at it - hey, can we agree that 10124.5 is the 30M freq?)

Indiana QSO Party

Looks like top guy worked 29 Indiana Counties on SSB, 11 on cw. No way to tell if more than 29 counties worked. Most worked in the low 20 range. This was going on at same time as 3 other QSO parties so lots of contest QRM

from the 3830 reflector:

WA9LEY – mobile 88 cw 34 ssb qso

Ventured out to activate some POTA parks and participate in the INQP. I made stops in Starke, Pulaski and Jasper counties. My mobile setup is not too effective on 40 but I managed to work some Indiana stations but many with good signals didn't hear me. If I do this next year, I'll probably be a Rover and string up a wire for 40 where I can. Still, it was fun and a nice day to be out on the road.

FT891 to an ATAS120A on a mag mount.

N8KR County Line Portabe 478 cw 948 ssb

Inlag/inste

no comments

KJ9C mobile 773 cw 67 ssb

Kind of a half hearted effort this year. Got cataract surgery a week ago and still haloes at night, so rate died after dark. Laptop kept crashing and its battery gave up the ghost. All in all, better than I expected. Thank God the weather was good

K9WX mobile 590 cw 34 ssb

no comment

N9TTK portable Spencer County 546 cw 143 ssb

no comment

N9UNX portable 59 cw

A disappointing and short INQP today. I made arrangements to setup on a property in Dearborn county (1.5 hrs from the QTH). Left home at 8am, got to the site, and took my time putting up a 130 ft end-fed. Turned everything on, and discovered S9+ noise on 40m, and S7+ on 20m. Desperate, I eventually tried a dipole to see if it made a difference, but it did not (I didn't think it would, but I felt like I had to try).

I had intended to operate for at least 10 hours, but in the end I only operated for about 3.75 hours, managing only 59 QSOs (all CW). Granted, I was QRP, and I didn't think I'd be logging 100 an hour. With all the noise though, I just couldn't hear well at all. There were some that were logged fairly easily, but most of the time I was asking for repeats. I sent a lot of "?". To those of you who hung in there, thanks and I'm glad you got the mult. To those who, even after trying for a while, heard "SRI NIL", my apologies. I really tried, but just couldn't hear well at the operating location.

The wind and cool temperature, noise, and 15 Qs/hr rate made it easy to decide to end the day early.

I guess if I want to do portable again next year, I'll have to go to the site beforehand to know whether or not it will be viable. Lesson learned.

COVID Brain

From the UK Daily Mail 5 2 2022

Being hospitalised with Covid ages your brain by 20 YEARS - and shaves off 10 IQ points, study finds

Being hospitalized with Covid could age your brain by two decades, a Government-funded study warned today. Cambridge University experts say the effect is the equivalent of losing roughly 10 IQ points.

Dozens of studies have found Covid damages brain function, but the scientists claim this is first of its kind to rigorously assess the impact. Researchers tested the cognitive skills of 46 patients with an average age of 51 who were hospitalised with the virus in 2020. A third had been hooked up to ventilators.

They underwent a range of memory, attention and reasoning tests six months after their illness. These test results were then compared against the scores done by 66,000 members of the general public.

Some 460 were selected for direct comparison based on patient demographics. Results showed the Covid survivors were on average less accurate and had slower response times than the public. Covid survivors scored particularly poorly on tasks in which they had to find appropriate words for a problem, called 'verbal analogies' in the test.

This, the authors said, was a commonly reported problem among those experiencing 'brain fog' after recovering from Covid. The results also showed patients who needed mechanical ventilation scored the worst in the tests, indicating severity of illness is a driving factor in the cognitive decline involved in long Covid.

The study, which also involved researchers from Imperial College London, said the cognitive impairment in Covid survivors was similar to that seen normally as people age from 50 to 70. While the patients had shown some 'gradual' cognitive improvement 10 months after their illness, the authors said some may never fully recover their prior

intelligence.

They also warned that millions who suffered a milder version of Covid could also be impacted, although to a lesser extent.

Neuroscientist Professor David Menon, study author, said while some of the patients had shown improvement over time, it was slow, and some may never recover their prior cognitive abilities. 'We followed some patients up as late as ten months after their acute infection, so were able to see a very slow improvement,' he said.

Fellow researcher Professor Adam Hampshire said a large number of Britons could be hit by this Covid driven pre-mature brain ageing. He added: 'Around 40,000 people have been through intensive care with Covid in England alone and many more will have been very sick, but not admitted to hospital.

'This means there is a large number of people out there still experiencing problems with cognition many months later. 'We urgently need to look at what can be done to help these people.'

Echoing previous studies, the scientists said this premature aging could be due to the the virus reducing oxygen to the brain, or due to inflammation of brain tissues occurring as the body attempts to fight off Covid. This study was partly funded by National Institute for Health Research, a body which directs Government funded health research from the Department of Health. Published in eClinicalMedicine, it's the latest to warn about Covid's long-term health problems.

Previous research has attributed a host of long term problems to Covid, from mental health problems, ongoing fatigue, to a loss in libido.

- - -

Note de N4CD – a simple vaccination and boosters decreases significantly your odds of winding up in the hospital with a bad case of COVID. Of course, risk factors include obesity, diabetes, smoking, and being a 'senior'. Take care. Moderna announced it will have an Omicron specific virus protection booster shot come fall. Don't miss it.

Delaware QSO Party

All counties (all 3 of them) were on the air with fixed stations. Many worked all three.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

WG3J fixed – DE - 265 cw 1 ssb

Operated in a storm here all weekend very high winds took down my 50 meter antenna for about 10 hours I was portable at my Delaware qth

N6AR fixed FL 9 cw 2 ssb

What a bang-up job the 5 guys in Delaware did!

W3PP (AA1K opr) fixed - Kent DE 377 cw 73 ssb

7 Land QSO Party

This was a good one. Lots of activity, several mobiles (4) out and about, many 'county expeditions. 15M cooperated with many contacts there. Some worked over 80 counties – many in the 70s and lots in the 40s.

From the 3830 contest reflector:

N7XU mobile - (K4XU oper) 782 cw

A long day in the saddle. Richard, my driver, W7AM, showed up at 0545 local and we were on the road at 6 (13Z). Did the 520 mile route by 5:15PM. Richard went home and I went back out solo to favorite rf-quiet stops in Jefferson and Crook counties before finishing in Deschutes. I ran out of steam with an hour to go.

Conditions were better than last year. I maxed out my 10 allowed DX mults and made

44 QSOs on 15m.

Hope you had fun, I did.

73,
Dick

KK6MC mobile 584 cw

Arizona has large counties and few of them. I managed to operate from 11 out of 15 AZ counties. Conditions were good and 15M was productive. I think that this is my highest single op all CW score in the 7QP.

K7TQ mobile 500 cw

A fun day starting in eastern ID, heading west across the Snake River Plain, and ending in western ID. We dodged a few storms, endured a few strong ones, and ended the day happy with our results under a full arc, double rainbow. Pictures and full story at <https://sites.google.com/site/randyk7tq/home/2022-7th-call-area-qso-party>

K7JSG mobile 413 SSB QSO

I did the mobile category this year. I went to seven counties in Utah and had a great time.
Bands were up and down for most of the day.

N7WA Mobile 637 cw qso

I enjoy going out mobile for the 7QP. My EWA route has developed over the years for efficiency, interesting scenery, and accommodation for possible non-Ham ride-a-longs. (They want to eat and go home at a reasonable hour for some odd reason.)

Equipment-wise I swapped out the KX3/KXPA100 combo for a full K3 secured in the back jump seat this year. Not for any performance reasons but for simplicity and ease of setup since the KX3 has been out of the truck for the past year and I just wasn't up to setting up the KX3/KXPA100 combination with it's myriad cables.

I also reconfigured the antennas as far away from the truck cab as possible. Both were

just in front of the tailgate. I think that was a good decision as I really had no RFI issues in the cab this trip. Every trip out teaches me something.

The trip map is here if you are interested.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tze41zXCsvSTZEBgHHZCrvDw17bxnVnD/view?usp=sharing>

It starts at the Okanagon/Ferry county line just north of Grand Coulee Dam and winds through the central desert, the Palouse, and finally along the south side of EWA. The OKA/FER county line is a very pleasant location and I enjoy the view. Unfortunately, the effects of last summer's wildfires were apparent. It must have been pretty scary for the few houses in the area watching the hills burn around them. Operationally, the 7QP started off with a bang and I had 80 Q's in the bag before it was time to leave. It became a continuous routine of traveling about an hour, then contesting for about 50 minutes. It hurts to stop in the middle for food but that's the price of company.

We had animal encounters as usual. This year, it was cows in the middle of the road and a ring-necked pheasant (a first!) watching us go by. The weather was interesting. Usually it's just hot. This year we had rain squalls alternating with bright sunshine. I would open a window because the sun was beating on the truck and the next second, there was a hard rain coming through horizontally. Frequently, the rain was accompanied by pretty nasty rain static. Fortunately, it was usually short, about 10-15 seconds before dying off. We were on a ridge in Garfield County watching the power windmills as I operated. We would get blasted by high winds that just rocked the truck. It's interesting that the windmills continue rotating at their leisurely rate.

As we got to the end of the route, the day was taking its toll on me and my passenger. Like last year, I took the last three counties (2 stopping points), dropped the least interesting one (sorry YAK), and sat on the BEN/KLI line instead. Even then it was still a 3 hour drive home. I have never been able to complete the full 18 hours of this test.

One and a half equipment failures. I lost my GPS at the start. Not a big deal, I know the route but it is useful for the arrival time info and keeping on schedule. (I don't like the GPS apps on smartphones). Also, the computer I use for logging is pretty long in the tooth. The display has been coming apart for years. At the last two stops, the one hinge simply came off. I was worried about a cable getting damaged and losing my display. Time to find a new mobile computer.

I worked way more DX than expected. I think I limited out my DX mults. Japan to Europe and more variety in Europe than usual. Go cycle 25! It amazes me that people

can hear my 100 watts into a short inefficient vertical. Looking at the 7QP reporting, it looks like I should have tried 15M. It was my intent to do so but I was kept pretty busy with 40M/20M. Next year, it might be time for a dedicated 15M whip. Over the years, I have moved away from adjustable antennas to fixed ones.

The mobile window seemed decent this year. The past couple, it's been wall to wall with fixed stations calling CQ. I rarely had to move this year. Thank you if that was part of your operational plan.

In the final accounting, my ON time was only 5 hours 43 minutes. Someone needs to invent the transporter. Even then, I had my fun. Hope you did too. See you next year!

K7KC County Expedition 1573 cw 675 SSB

Operator(s): K7MZ K7UT N7RXL

Operation was setup on Friday in the Utah desert on the Juab and Millard county lines. Stations included two each Elecraft K3/P3. Antennas were Force 12 C3 at 72 ft. on an Aluma Mobile Tower and an 80/40 meter inverted V fan dipole at 70 ft. We ran low power and used a Low Band Systems Multiplexer, Di-plexer and Filters. Operators were: K7UT on CW, with K7MZ, N7RXL on SSB. W7HPW provided additional support.

W7EEE county expedition 420 cw 380 ssb

Operator(s): W6IA W7EEE

We had a great time on the WACHE / WAKTT county line! Band conditions felt a little worse than last year earlier in the day, but improved in the afternoon. Two G5RVs high in trees did not perform well on 15m, where we were not easily heard -- but they did well in getting us into Europe in the afternoon on 20m for some DX multipliers. DX was better than any of our previous five 7QPs. It was an unseasonably chilly and sometimes snowy experience at 4,000 feet+ elevation in the Cascades, but we loved every minute of it. Thanks for all the Qs

N7D County Expedition 489 cw 271 cw

Jim (W6KC) and Randy (W6SW) teamed up to operate in our second 7QP county expedition. This time from Gardnerville, Nevada in historic Douglas County, Nevada. We had fun staying at an Airbnb ranch house in foothills of the High Sierra and were

joined by our XYLs. There were some substantial trees to support our dipoles and we strung them all end-to-end at about 40 ft elevation.

Saturday night we had dinner at the nearby 1862 David Walley's Restaurant & Saloon with our XYLs, which was fun, but we missed 2 hours of prime time operating. Our total QSO count was about the same as our county expedition last year from Esmeralda County, Nevada, but we got 3 more multipliers including a WAS and our total scored increased by about 4,000 points.

Portable rig: FT991A, KAT/KPA500, all dipole antennas

73, Jim W6KC & Randy W6SW @ N7D - See the team at: <https://www.qrz.com/db/n7d>

K7C (K6SWC opr) County Expedition 937 cw 107 sssb

This was my fourth 7QP expedition, this time from a house rental situated on 20 acres near Sonoita in Santa Cruz County, AZ. When I reserved the house, I told the host what I was going to be doing, so there were no issues. This was my first time out with a new antenna system. See details below. This antenna system is much bigger (full size 80) and a lot higher than my previous expedition antennas. Lots of work went into designing, building and tuning this system. The design goals were to be louder (of course), ease of tuning, and ease of storage & transportation. The louder part of it is at the expense of the effort required to get the antennas up in the air and then take it all down hours later. It all worked perfectly and held up in high winds (although it was not pretty). I guess it was not big enough.

Rig: FTdx10

Amp: KPA-500

Antennas:

- 1) Full size 80 & 40 fan dipole suspended on a 32 ft center & two 28 ft end masts
- 2) 20/15/10 fan dipole suspended below the 80/40

Thanks to everyone involved with running the great 7QP!

73, Bill

K7C / K6WSC

Santa Cruz County, AZ

WS7L County Expedition 670 cw Pacific WA

Fairly good condx with rates often hitting 150+ per hour, which isn't too bad with my compromise antennas in the suburban environment of Ocean Park, WA. I also kept the power down because I found out long ago that you can scorch the traps in a TH3JRS if you run 500 W through a tuner trying to push it a bit farther in frequency than you should.

Missed only MS and ND among the US multipliers.

73 and thanks for the Q's and thanks to XYL Kathy KC7USE for joining me in the antenna wrangling.

-- Carl WS7L

K3 + KPA500 + TH3JRS + wires for 40 and 80.

WY7M County Expedition 996 cw 26 ssb QTH: WYJOH/WAS

This expedition was a dry run for FD in June. All was good except for the WY wind. I used a 43 foot vertical fiberglass mast with a wire as the radiator. It collapsed down as it got colder during the night, so I quit early. 80 was just getting going. Next time I won't rely on a friction fit and use some electrical tape to fix the sections. Used all battery and solar to power the 100 watt FTDX-10.

W7Y County Expedition 500 cw

Tough day. The wind blew my EFHW half way down, working NVIS for the evening. Almost double my QSO count from last year. Overall, happy with my results.

W7Y (NN0G)

N7WY County Expedition 357 cw

Lusk, WY - K3s inverted vee, vehicle power. Wind gusts above 40 MPH and

imminent rain/lightning lead to early retirement of my portable station.

N6WT/7 County Expedition 151 cw 13 ssb

Rig: Flex 6500 Antenna: Clipped dipole at 25ft with a hodgepodge of coax put together, not good! Could only operate on 10 through 40 meters at 100 watts. CW worked well but Phone was very hard. Had a nice view for the contest on San Juan Island.

W7QM County Expedition 110 cw

Nevada Mineral-Esmeralda county pedition. 55 contacts logged twice. Quit very early because of fine dust covering and penetrating everything.

K3, Hustler whips, N1MM+.

NR7T – County Expedition – UT-Piute 927 cw 24 ssb

Super windy all day Saturday. At one point a bumblebee was blown into the tent and I was dodging it while being tethered to the headset with N1MM CW blazing away.

Thanks to VE2FK's work on call history files, they seemed inclusive and accurate.

Kudos to the Eastern late night operators who hung in there treating us to QSO's.

Best Regards, Jon NR7T

N8II - fixed – WV - 231 cw 175 ssb

This year with Mothers Day on Sunday, I chose to maximize 7QP in lieu of a serious effort also in NEQP (no 40M with NEQP until it was open well to 7's). Conditions to New England were incredibly great on Sunday most of the day with even a 10M opening which made me regret my choice. For much of the 7QP, time seemed to go by too quickly despite slow QSO rates. I hit a better stride after 22Z, but QRN and weak signals from some were an issue while others were quite loud at the same time. Band conditions were better on 20 and much better on 15 than in 2021, but activity was not as good as the best prior years especially on SSB.

First and foremost, 15M was open much better than the totals would indicate. PHONE OPS, you are losing QSO's by not making an effort on 15M. This is a very disturbing trend; the current solar activity supports daily east to west USA openings on a daily basis. For about 75-90 minutes around 18Z, signals on CW were good here from all over the 7th area and I would suspect 15 was open quite late thanks to sporadic E help, but no

one was operating. The band was open to AZ/NV for many hours. Thanks to KT7E in Yamhill, OR for my lone 10M CW QSO and 6 Q's total. It took me slightly over 2 hours starting at 1330Z to make my first 100 QSO's. 15M was open at 15Z. I was able to run stations up until about 1530Z on 20M SSB, then not able to run much until 21Z. The D layer blanketing cuts down on 20M signal levels quite a bit at this time of year from here making QSO's with N7WA/M and other weak stations almost impossible. Many well equipped stations were loud all day. I spent 15 minutes sweeping across 40 at 1625Z working the INQP. Once I was able to run on 20M in my evening, I made the best of it until about 0130Z. A lot of county expeditions and other from rare counties always call in. The noise on 20M at sunset and after was nearly S9 from storms out west. Our local Weather was awful, cold in 40's with wind and steady mostly light rain. Fortunately, the precip static on my yagis was not a problem like it was the week before in FQP. Quite a few weak stations called, a few a real struggle to pull through. Having good processed audio really helps during conditions like we had. 20 was still open at 0155Z, but I was overdue for 40M. 02Z seemed to be the perfect time to hit 40 from here as 7 land signals were good and pile ups were minimal. I swept across 40 CW quickly not having to wait much at all in pile ups. 40 phone was sparsely used, but I worked most all of the few I heard. 80M was not in great shape at 03Z; I could tell several ops really struggled to hear me through the noise. I QRT'ed at 0335Z having worked most of what I could from here on the low bands.

Thanks to the mobiles who operated. Always enjoyable to work Jefferson OR and ID (same name as my county). It was tough to hear any of them on 20 during mid day. I did a little better with Dick, N7XU this year with 7 Q's but quite a few times he has not the only one I worked in the OR counties he covered. Randy K7TQ/M provided a lot of rare ID counties and was there well into my evening. I only caught Duffey, KK6MC/M 3 times for 6 Q's. Thanks to Dink, N7WA for 6 Q's and some rare mults, always a bit of a challenge to find/hear from here.

There were many expeditions was in last year, some with very good signals. Thanks for putting out those rare counties.

I could make 500 QSO's as I have in the past with more activity on 15M. Please try 15 and 10M next year. Thanks for all of the QSO's and calls. I tried CQ's on 20 CW and only received a very few answers. 20 phone was okay thanks to the longer evening opening.

73, Jeff

AI5P Trip Report

Marais des Cygnes Massacre site



In travelling the backroads of America, you can certainly come across interesting historical "footnotes." One such place I found was in rural Linn County, Kansas. From Wiki: The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 made Kansas a territory whose people would decide whether it was admitted to the Union as a slave or free state. This set off a rivalry with pro-slavery supporters from bordering Missouri. The conflict escalated into the violence known as "Bleeding Kansas."

Missouri border ruffians like Charles Hamilton led raids into Kansas to steal goods and harass freestaters. Linn County was the site of some of the raids, including a particularly deadly one on May 19, 1858. Hamilton and some thirty other men rode through the village of Trading Post, captured eleven free-state men, and marched them into a ravine where they opened fire upon them. Five of the men were killed, five were seriously injured, and one escaped unharmed.

The community was drawn together in the face of these events even as they were

unfolding. Sarah Read, wife of the captured Reverend Benjamin L. Read, set off on foot, spyglass in hand, to chase down Hamilton and his men. She came upon the victims, some still alive, and tried to render aid. Word of the massacre spread quickly and by afternoon free-staters from around the area had gathered to treat the wounded, collect the dead, and help James Montgomery's Jayhawkers ride into Missouri in fruitless pursuit of Hamilton's gang.

This state historic site is one of the Parks on the Air Program (K-9190) sites and I was able to make 13 contacts on 20m SSB before moving on.

Rick AI5P

Arkansas QSO Party

They changed the date and times this year. It was held the weekend of the Dayton Hamvention – which had to impact the number of people participating. Several mobiles and hundreds of contesters were in Dayton for the yearly big event. This year the contest was one day – instead of former 2 day event.

From the 3830 reflector:

WA9LEY mobile in IL 12 cw 13 SSB QSO 21 Mults

"Got on for a while in the mobile from my son's driveway during a lull (naptime) in a babysitting job. FT891 to an ATAS120A on a mag mount."

K5CM/M - 1257 cw 437 ssb

Conditions were good on 20,15, and 10 meters. The QRN was bad on 40 and especially 80 meters. AA4TI and N8II were worked many times on 10 and 15 meters. We should have tried 6 meters, I bet it was open on Es also.

All Q's are important but the following were worked most.

61 AA4TI

45 N8II
26 N6TQ
25 NS2N
24 WB9HFK
20 K9CW KA6BIM
17 AC4G K8NYG
16 AA4DD K4ORD
14 W8PI
13 K4RUM N6GP W4XK W5TM
12 AD1C K4OAQ K9OZ N3RJ W5YO WA5LFD
11 K4BYN N8RW
10 AA0CW AK2S K2MN K4DR K7IA KG4IGC W1END W3WHK
9 AF5J K5TIA KB4CG KE0TT N7EPD W5CW WA8ZBT WA9LKF
8 KC3X N8CQD NM5S/M WA4OFW

Thanks to The Noise Blankers Radio Group for sponsoring the event.

73, Connie / K5CM

KA6BIM - fixed - OR 50 cww 30 ssb 29 Mults

Only fair band conditions, seemed like activity was pretty light. Would be nice to have a couple rovers to activate more counties. Found 2 new counties. Thanks for the qso's
Dave ka6bim

N8II - fixed - WV 61 cw 77 ssb 25 mults

I got off to a very late start and was not feeling up to par Saturday morning. The XYL and I were scheduled for COVID vaccine boosters at 15Z followed by walking the dog before it got too hot (high was around 93F!, by far hottest day so far). So, my first few QSO's started 1640Z with a lunch break at 1655Z. The good news was that band conditions were close to perfect on 20 and 15M, and 10M was open for quite a while from at least 1925-2305Z! The bad news was that most of the AR ops did not try above 20M. Starting at 1925Z, I would ask AR stations who were not busy to QSY to 15 and often 10M. As I recall, 100% of the stations moved were successfully worked on 15 and 10M! That's how I managed to work the most out of state QSO's in less than 5 hours.

Thanks to Con, K5CM/M for the most moves/QSO's on 15 and 10. He had a pretty good run around 23Z on 15M CW after I spotted him. W5YO also helped a lot with 8 x 4 Q's per encounter and a sweep from 40M up on both modes. Ed, WA5SOG also ran up through 10 CW and SSB for some nice help. WR5P also helped with a sweep from 40M up and those bonuses raised my score from 3450 to 5050!

. Thanks for all of the QSO's and QSY's. Don't forget to check 15 and 10 next year. The suggested frequencies are poor choices on 15 and 10 SSB; 15 should be around 21300 and 10 around 28430 KHz or so to align with band activity.

73, Jeff

AA4TI- fixed - FL 71 cw 64 ssb 29 mults

Storms in AR probably curtailed several operations today. The bands were in fairly good shape. 10 and 15 were open most of the day but not too many folks ventured up there. 80 was a bummer however. I enjoyed the party and made more contacts than last year, but many fewer mults. Special thanks go to K5CM who I worked many times on all five bands. Connie made a world of difference in my score.

N4CD - mobile in OH - 5 cw 5 mults

Turned on radio in motel parking lot for few minutes. Worked two mobiles/rover – one on 4 way line. Busy at Dayton Hamvention along with dozens of mobiles and hundreds of testers on this Saturday. Some years I go mobile there. Came through AR on Sunday but it was over this year – only a 1 day event.

Monday MST

There's a new event for CW folks. For years, there has been the weekly CWT – CW Test that runs 1300-1400z, 1900-2000z and 0300-0400 z on Monday/Tues AM. Speeds are typically 30 wpm and up but a few at 25 wpm. You exchange your NAME and CW Number (give state if no number). Fun event. Folks call CQ CWT de... or CWT

de....call.....

Now, there is the Monday Medium Speed Test – code speed between 20-25 wpm – no faster. Same times – 1300-1400z, 1900-2000z and Tuesday AM 0300-0400z. Give name and State. CQ MST...CQ MST de.....

There is also the weekly SLOW speed Test - 4 pm Fridays. So you're covered 3 days a week if you want to get the cobwebs out of your radio and check whether your paddles are still working! CQ SST...CQ SST..... under 20 wpm.

Note: Great way for park activators to pile up some contacts, too, when they are in a park. Usual frequencies just above General band – 14025 to 14040 , 7025 to 7050, etc. Some activity on 15m as sunspots improve.

On the Road with N4CD

In May, the Dayton Hamvention is held. It's been 'missing' for two years due to COVID concerns but was back big time this year. Hopefully, most attendees were vaxxed and boosted, and took care to not be in close contact as much as possible. Still, the big dinners, the big forums took place, and lots of indoor displays, vendors, etc. To be safe, I minimized my exposure by spending most of time outdoors. There's lots to see in the flea market and lots of folks coming by if you just sit and watch. I spend a lot of time at the Parks on the Air outdoor booth. More on that later.

So – I'd plan a route that hit some new parks. Hundreds had been added around the country. There's now more than 9800 different parks, Wildlife areas, State Game areas for folks to activate. I could hit many just off the interstates or other main routes and only took a 200 mile side excursion. It's the better part of a thousand miles to get to Dayton so you can't wander all back roads and get there in a reasonable time.

I left on Monday after some bad weather here – route up on I-30 to Little Rock, I-40 to Nashville with detour south from Memphis to Jackson TN. Then up I-65 to Louisville and across to Cincinnati, then to Xenia, OH.

Laci, OM2VL needed Trimble KY for one of his last 10 for WBOW. I'd get that for him on Sunday leaving Dayton – he's usually only around on weekends – he travels 30

minutes to the 'super station' to make contacts.

Not all the parks had signs – often the rural WMAs just have a parking lot and no signage. Or the boiler plate small boundary markers with no park name.

Monday May 16 2022

First up was **Prairie Bayou K-7350 in Lonoke County AR**

from the web: “Prairie Bayou WMA encompasses 453 acres in southeastern Lonoke County, south of Carlisle. The area was acquired through the Farmers Home Administration program in 1994. The WMA is part of the Grand Prairie ecosystem. Deer, squirrel, rabbit, wintering waterfowl and many nongame animals use the area.”

There's a nice parking lot but bad QRN – S9 level on SSB. Did catch 25 QSOs from here. Five on 17m, ONE ON 30M , rest on 20M CW.

Then to **Railroad Prairie State Natural Ara nearby K-7351 Lonoke County**

Railroad Prairie Natural Area occupies portions of the abandoned right-of-way of the former Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific railroad along U.S. Highway 70 between Carlisle and DeValls Bluff. Its long, linear shape encompasses a variety of habitats and communities including prairie, herbaceous wetland, oak woodland, and forest. A large portion of Railroad Prairie consists of tallgrass prairie, a habitat that was once much more common across the Grand Prairie of eastern Arkansas (Mississippi Alluvial Plain). Today, less than 1 percent of the prairies that occurred across this region remain. Parts of the prairie have been little disturbed and are dominated by grass species typical of tallgrass prairies such as big bluestem, little bluestem, switchgrass, and Indiangrass. Along with grasses, the natural area contains a diverse complement of forbs including narrow-leaved sunflower, long-bracted wild indigo, and compass plant. The natural area also provides critical habitat for several species now considered rare throughout the state. “

Found a turn off that went into the WMA and operated from there. Short run just to get credit for it – 21 QSOs.

Mike Freeze Wattensaw WMA - Prairie County K-7305 and KFF- 5106



from the web: “Located in eastern Prairie County, Mike Freeze Wattensaw WMA contains approximately 19,750 acres. There are more than 14,400 acres in timber, primarily oak and hickory; and 2000 acres of old fields that are managed on a rotational basis by controlled burns, bush hogging, disking and planting. Several hundred acres of old beaver ponds provide valuable habitat for furbearers and waterfowl. Webb and Moore’s Lake are oxbow lakes, formed by the White River running along the east side of the WMA. In addition, there are 200 acres of streams and ponds including nine created from the removal of dirt for I-40 construction. The main streams include: Wattensaw Bayou, Hurricane Creek, Miller Creek, Clark Creek, Barkley Branch and Bell Branch.

There are 38 primitive campsites maintained by area personnel.”

Sheffield Nelson Dagmar WMA – K-7279 KFF-5119 Monroe County AR

from the web: “Sheffield Nelson Dagmar is a bottomland hardwood overflow area with many lakes, ponds, sloughs and bayous. Bayou DeView, Robe Bayou, Hickson lake, Gator Pond, Bowfin Overflow, Straight Lake, Apple Lake Waterfowl Rest Area and numerous other small lakes and sloughs occupy approximately 800 acres. Along with

hunting, it is known as a great fishing area and offers excellent birding trails. Maintained by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Approximately 8 miles Southwest of Brinkley.”

Benson Creek Natural Area - K-7158 Monroe County



from the web; “Benson Creek Natural Area, located in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain of eastern Arkansas, provides an extension and buffer to a high-quality bald cypress-water tupelo swamp located along Bayou DeView. Previously disturbed plant communities within the natural area are the focus of restoration efforts designed to improve the ecological quality of the site. The Nature Conservancy and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission hold an undivided interest in 302 acres.“

It was late in the day and I'd run the county. Tried 20m SSB for a change. Then CW or total of 22 Qs.

- - -

Headed to the Super 8 in Brinkley AR for the night. Did 437 miles on the way to Dayton (991 miles the short direct way). Dinner at Pinos Mexican Restaurant. Not a lot of choices in Brinkley on a Monday night. Most other places, well, two of them, closed on Mondays so not too many choices even on a Tuesday – hi hi.

Tuesday 5/16/22

Had breakfast at the motel. Bowl of Raisin Bran. Coffee. 66F outside. Headed over to

the Memphis TN area.

Presidents Island WMA- Shelby County TN K 7617

from the web: “Presidents Island WMA for the majority of game species covers approximately 5,620 acres, and limited sections of this unit are comprised of public land. The dominant land cover for Unit Presidents Island WMA is cultivated crops.” Quick run here then on to the next.

Old Forest State Natural Area – K-6258 Shelby County

from the web: “The 125-acre Old Forest State Natural Area (locally known as “The Old Forest”) is part of the 342-acre Overton Park in Memphis, Shelby County. The natural area protects an important remnant of an old growth ecosystem that has largely vanished from west Tennessee. By the late 1800s, much of the vast virgin forest that once covered the Chickasaw Bluffs had been cleared for timber and farmland. In 1901, a 342-acre tract of land known as “Lea’s Woods” was purchased by the City of Memphis, from Overton & Ella Lea of Nashville, to be transformed into Overton Park. When Overton Park was created, in the first few years of the 20th century, it contained 200 acres of old growth forest that was widely recognized as a civic treasure.

The natural area canopy is largely dominated by tulip poplar, eleven oak species and five hickory species. Other common trees include white ash, green ash, black cherry, sassafras, sweetgum, hop hornbeam, American hornbeam, sugar maple, red maple, box elder, redbud, sugarberry, American elm, slippery elm, three dogwood species, red buckeye, and pawpaw. Shrubs include spicebush, hazelnut, common hydrangea, and hearts-a-bursting. Herbaceous plants include prairie trillium, celandine poppy, wild ginger, white avens, cut-leaf toothwort, Solomon’s seal, black snakeroot, Jack-in-the-pulpit, inland sea oats, smooth yellow violet, woodland phlox, Virginia knotweed, tall bellflower, jewelweed, cut-leaf coneflower, Jacob’s ladder, and thirteen fern species.”

Ran just 30m CW here. No time to spare – too many parks to run today.

Lucius E. Birch State Natural Area K-6254 Shelby County TN

from the web: “Lucius E. Burch is a 728-acre natural area located in Memphis, Shelby County and is a part of a larger 6,000-acre county park, Shelby Farms Park. The natural area is a remnant of historic river meanders, bald cypress-water tupelo swamps, bottomland hardwood forests, and open river channel habitat. Unfortunately, much of

this ecosystem has been significantly altered as a result of change in hydrology and the invasion of Chinese privet, an invasive exotic pest plant. Lucius E. Burch Natural Area offers passive recreation activities such as day hiking, bird watching, and wildlife viewing within the metropolitan Memphis area. The natural area is a relatively large unfragmented forest that follows the banks of the Wolf River. It provides a refuge for forest dwelling birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians within an urbanized environment.

Lucius E. Burch State Natural Area is a place where impacts on the resource can be interpreted and used as an educational tool to demonstrate the ecological effects of river channelization (straightening of the river channel) and the impacts of invasive exotic pest plants. This outdoor living classroom is reacting to the change in environmental conditions since it was channelized. Chinese privet is native to Asia and has been widely used as hedges in urban landscaping. It has spread throughout the understory at Lucius E. Burch and has displaced many native species. Its impact is indicative of a problem facing all urban natural areas where adjacent landowners introduce invasive exotic pest plants. These landscaping practices create the seed source from which invasive exotics are distributed into natural areas by animals, wind, or water. Privet has invaded at Lucius E. Burch since drier site conditions were created by the channelization of the Wolf River. This invasion often occurs when a natural ecological disturbance regime has been altered or where the native landscape has been severely changed by development. Historically, the site was bottomland forest and a part of the Wolf River floodplain. This is evident by the occurrence of large cypress trees that are periodically encountered in relatively dry habitats. The state-listed Copper iris (*Iris fulva*) is found in some existing low wet areas in the natural area.

30 QSO from here quickly. Time to move on!

William B Clark State Natural Area - K-6279 Fayette County TN

from the web: “William B. Clark Conservation Area is a 460-acre natural area owned by The Nature Conservancy and located along the Wolf River in Rossville, Fayette County. The natural area protects an un-channelized section of the Wolf River including meanders, sloughs, cypress-water tupelo swamp and bottomland hardwood forest. The river and its sloughs provide excellent habitat for rare and endangered freshwater mussels and other aquatic organisms. A variety of aquatic and terrestrial habitats offer opportunities for observing birds and other wildlife. Examples of un-channelized river and functional bottomland forests have become rare in west Tennessee.”

It's a new county – but just ran 20 and 30m cw to get enough QSOs. 18 QSO.

Next – **Wolf River Wildlife Management Area K-3969 and KFF-3969 Fayette Co.**



From the web: “The majority of the Wolf River Wildlife Management Area lies along the unchannelized portion of the Wolf River from the Tennessee/Mississippi state line to the Bateman Bridge. Upland areas are characterized by agricultural fields/pastures, and scattered stands of upland hardwoods.

The Wolf River WMA consists of 4,236 acres of which 2,400 acres is in the Wolf River floodplain and 1,667 acres in open agricultural and pastures. The forested acreage is >80% bottomland hardwood/swamp forest.”

16Q in the log. Nearby.....

Ghost River State Natural Area K-6245 Fayette County

The Ghost River State Natural Area is a 2,220-acre, 14-mile section of the Wolf River from the parking area near La Grange to the Bateman Bridge. Here, the Ghost River section of the Wolf is unchannelized and meanders through bottomland hardwood forests, cypress-tupelo swamps, and open marshes. Some of the most impressive trees are oaks that include Cherrybark, Water Willow, and Swamp Chestnut.

The low ridges above the river bottoms support Tulip Poplar, beech, and White Oak with Northern Red Oak infrequently occurring. The natural area also includes significant

uplands and sandy hills adjacent to the floodplain.

The Ghost River section of the Wolf River received its name from the loss of river current as the water "flows" through open marshes and bald cypress-water tupelo swamps.

A canoe trail has been blazed through the disorienting maze of Virginia Willow, cypress, tupelos, and stunted Pumpkin Ash. This trail includes a 600-foot boardwalk in the Minnow Slough area.

Wildlife to Watch: Neotropical migratory songbirds are common in summer, including Acadian Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Wood Thrush.”

Quick 13Qs including K8MW, K7SEN, W0MU, N2IGW. On to the next.

Grays Creek WMA K-7591 Hardeman TN



from the web: “Grays Creek is located in Hardeman County on Hwy 18 just a few miles

north of Bolivar. This small wetland area has been planted in bottomland hardwoods and offers hunters great small game opportunities. “

“DEFORESTATION FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION has resulted in massive losses of critical fish and wildlife on bottomland sites across West Tennessee. This project initiates reforestation on approximately 600 acres a year and has been very successful. Converting row crop fields back to forest in an area heavily dominated by row crop cover is the overall goal of the project.

This effort is described as a bottomland hardwood reforestation project using high quality oak seedlings from local seed sources. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has been acquiring bottomland hardwood sites for reforestation since 2000. This artificial regeneration effort is needed on Tennessee’s WMAs to decrease soil erosion, enhance soil quality, improve water quality, improve air quality and improve wildlife habitat”

Next up is a '3 fer'. That's 3 parks in one! It's Chickasaw State Park K-2936 which likes in the Chickasaw WMA and in the Chickasaw State Forest. Checked the web carefully. Often the state park is a separate entity from any surrounding, but in this case the web clearly indicates they all overlap. Serendipity. Three park runs for the price of one. One run. Need to submit 3 logs with contacts about a minute different for each log. Otherwise, they get bounced as 'duplicates'.

SO.....Chickasaw State Park – K- 2936 in Chester County TN -



New county - so folks jumped in. From the web: Chickasaw State Park was named for the Chickasaw Tribe who once inhabited West Tennessee and North Mississippi. The 1,400 acres of land located in West Tennessee along the border of Hardeman and Chester Counties was one of Tennessee's 20 New Deal-era state parks. The territory became a state park in 1955 when all park duties returned to state control, and the park and forest lands were deeded to the state.

The park is situated on some of the highest terrain in west Tennessee. Of the area's 14,384 acres of timberland, 1,280 acres are used for recreation. Chickasaw State Park offers various activities for visitors to embark on including more than four miles of easy to moderate hiking trails and bicycle-friendly roads. Guests can utilize the rowboats and pedal boats available for rent on Lake Placid.

Chickasaw State Forest K-5491

Size: 12,754 acres/5,161 ha. Chickasaw State Forest is located in Chester and Hardeman Counties on the Coastal Plain in West Tennessee. The Resettlement Administration Program purchased the majority of lands making up the forest in 1938; the lands at the time of acquisition were highly eroded and degraded by farming and timber harvesting. The entire project area was deeded to the State of Tennessee in 1955 and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division assumed responsibility for the portion that is now a State Forest. Approximately 63% of the Forest is in hardwood types, about 29% is in southern yellow pines, and the remainder is in mixed pine and hardwood cover. The Forest is dominated by stands of mature sawtimber. About 35% of the stands are upland hardwoods in excess of 80 years old.

Two state parks surrounding lakes occur within the forest. There are various educational and demonstration areas highlighted with signs throughout the forest. In addition, there are 115 acres of forest set aside as an experimental forest and nursery. There are 8 cemeteries and 4 in-holdings. Large salvage cuts have occurred as a result of 446 acres of forest being blown down by a tornado in 1988 and 300 acres damaged by southern pine beetles in 1986-87. Hunting has been a traditional use of the forest. Other recreational activities include horseback riding, hiking, and camping.

Chickasaw State Wildlife Area K-3934 and KFF-3934

Basically the same as above..... the WMA is the same as the state forest.

Pinson Mounds Archaeological Site



from the web: “Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park covers more than 1,200 acres and contains at least 15 Native American mounds. In addition to Sauls Mound the group includes Ozier Mound, the Twin Mounds and Mound 31. Archaeological evidence suggests the mounds were both burial and ceremonial in purpose. Pinson Mounds is a national historic landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park is located in West Tennessee, about 15 KM southeast of Jackson, TN and two and a half miles east of the town of Pinson. The site is mostly contained within Madison County, but part does spill over into Chester County. It is located in one of the few areas of relatively flat terrain in the immediate vicinity and sits on a bluff overlooking the floodplain of the South Fork of the Forked Deer River.

The Tennessee Division of Forestry purchased 310 acres of land in Pinson, TN in 1947 to establish a tree nursery. Part of this property contained the Western Mound Group of the Pinson Mound Complex, specifically Ozier Mound, the Twin Mounds, and Mound

31. Between 1962 and 1972 the Tennessee Department of Conservation purchased the remainder of the Pinson Mound archaeological site. In 1964 the site was listed as a National Historic Landmark and in 1974 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Work to transform the state property into a state archaeological park, which included the construction of a museum with an archaeological laboratory and curation facility, began in the 1970's and finished in 1981 when it was opened to the public. The Tennessee Division of Archaeology still uses the curation facility as their main repository of accessioned archaeological collections today.

Pinson Mounds encompasses around 160 hectares and early accounts of the site estimated upwards of 35 mounds and miles of manmade embankments. More recent archaeological research has only been able to confirm the presence of 13 mounds, around 3,500 linear feet of a circular earthen embankment, and four short-term ritual-activity areas. Many of the earlier identified mounds have been shown to be natural features in the landscape and are not of cultural origin. Recent LiDAR data and geophysical surveys have provided additional data concerning site topography and are allowing archaeologist to further evaluate the archaeological features at the site.

Pinson Mounds is the largest mound complex in Tennessee and is one of the largest Middle Woodland (A.D. 0 to A.D. 500) mound complexes in the United States. In fact, the main mound, Sauls Mound, is considered the tallest Middle Woodland Mound in the US and is one of the tallest earthen mounds in the US for any time period.

Several decades of archaeological investigations and numerous radiocarbon dates indicate that Pinson was constructed and heavily used during the Middle Woodland Period between A.D. 100 to A.D. 350. Ozier Mound and the Twin Mounds were likely the first earthworks constructed at the site sometime between A.D 125 and 219. It is important to note that no clear evidence of a domestic occupation during the Middle Woodland Period has ever been found at the site. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Pinson Mound complex was used exclusively for short-term occupations for ritual purposes and, as the largest mound complex in the Southeast during its time, acted as an important pilgrimage center for people across the eastern US. Ceramics from the site show that people from the Tennessee River valley, the southern Appalachians, the southern Tombigbee River area, the Yazoo Basin, southern Georgia, and even further north in Ohio and Illinois (Hopewell) visited the site.

Sometime after A.D. 350, mound construction at the site ceased and ceramic evidence shows that the mound complex was no longer visited by pilgrims. No evidence of a Late Woodland Period occupation has been found to date, meaning the area was left

abandoned for quite some time. Archaeological investigations northwest of Mound 15 found one Mississippian Period wall-trench house at the site, which probably dates to between A.D 1000-1100, but this occupation appears to have been limited and brief.

Surveys of the surrounding area have recorded many Middle Woodland Period sites, suggesting this area of Tennessee was important and heavily occupied during this time. In fact, the State of Tennessee also owns another Woodland Period site in the immediate vicinity called the Johnston Site which is about 5.5 km northwest of Pinson and is managed by the Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park. Despite this concentration of Middle Woodland sites in West Tennessee, Pinson Mounds stands as one of the few Middle Woodland Mound complexes in the Lower Mississippi Valley. “

This is one of the more interesting parks – many of the WMAs and SNAs are nothing but... 'wildlife viewing areas, forests, open areas, etc' and after a while, they all look about the same! Nice to have 'ruins' or a historic house or site! Hi hi Take a short break and drop in at the museum, read some of the display signs, etc.

- - - -

After the park runs, I headed in to the Super 8 in Jackson TN for the night. Been at that motel a few times. Right off the interstate. It had been a busy day with lots of parks.

Dinner nearby at the Old Country Store -sort of a buffet – you pick your meat and two veggies....or two meats and two veggies.....and a dinner roll. Lots of BBQ type stuff, half dozen choices for veggies, roll. Good. Many there.

Wednesday May 18, 2022

Today I had to make tracks to Dayton. Hopped on the interstate - didn't get far! Tire pressure low warned the car. Hmm...tire down to 28 PSI when it should be 35. Time to try to figure out how to get it fixed. Put air in tire....seemed to be holding...but headed east but not long before dropping a pound every few minutes. Oops....Gotta stop and get it repaired. Got off interstate to find tire repair place. Checked a Goodyear Store – 1 ½ to 2 hour wait. Down the road was a Firestone Place....hour to 1 ½ hour wait. Stopped there. Luckily got to me in 30 minutes. Nail in tire. (seems I recall this happening last time I was here. Took hour till fixed and back on car. I am suspicious about nefarious activity in motel parking lot – two times a flat tire the morning after is 'not coincidence'. Someone drumming up tire repair business by putting nails in tire? Hmm?? Won't stop there again, ever. Anyway, killed two hours out of day. Dang. Only made 230 miles yesterday with all the park stops! And that not direct on route to Dayton but

wandering side roads.

There are still some parks to run. They'll be quick runs – mostly county hunters. It takes a few minutes for park chasers to note the spot and show up. County hunters are listening to the frequency, especially when you are running rare counties, or W4SIG is!

There are a few parks not far off the interstate, though. Gotta get em!

Happy Hollow WMA k-7592 Hickman County



from the web: “Happy Hollow WMA for the majority of game species covers approximately 1,704 acres, and limited sections of this unit are comprised of public land. The dominant land cover for Unit Happy Hollow WMA is deciduous forest. From September through December, this unit receives an average of 4.34 inches of precipitation a month and the heaviest rainfall is in December. “

Two and a half miles off the interstate for quick run. There were only 2 previous activations and 43Qs. Added 16 more Qs, nearly all county hunters.

John Noel at Bon Aqua State Natural Area k-6251 Hickman County



from the web: “John Noel at Bon Aqua State Natural Area is a 35-acre area located in Hickman County. It supports a small remnant forest that has old growth forest characteristics. The forest has a diversity of species including towering white oak trees with extraordinarily large diameter trunks. The white oaks are a dominant canopy species here and are estimated to be more than two or three centuries old. Their monetary value as veneer quality wood is why stands of white oak trees of this stature long since disappeared from our landscapes. A mix of other impressive size and old age-class trees are found in this forest. Tulip poplar trees, along with various species of hickory and other oak species are also impressive size trees. This white oak mesic forest community includes sugar maple, American beech, ash, persimmon, cherry, elm species, and sassafras. Another interesting component of this forest is umbrella magnolia (*Magnolia tripetala*), which is a relatively uncommon species on the Western Highland Rim but is common here in the understory. Other shrub and understory species include flowering dogwood, American holly, black haw, spicebush, redbud, pawpaw, hop hornbeam, and hearts-bustin (*Euonymus americanus*).

The forest here also has historic significance. It was once a part of the property where the Bon Aqua Hotel and health spa stood. This enterprise occurred between the mid-1800s to the 1920s. Some ruins of its foundation are still present on the adjacent private property, which today is a National Historic Registry site. This was also the location for

the first meeting of the Tennessee Bar Association in 1882. It is likely that there was some limited small-scale manipulation of the forest during this time. The forest was said to have had a few small cabins built on it. The natural area occurs on a gentle hill and is mainly flat on top with its sides sloping gently to the north and northwest.”

It's 8 miles off the interstate or so. Had a quick run from here. There were 3 previous activations and 143Qs before. Added in just 10 more. Bare minimum to get credit for the park. In and out quickly and back on route.

Beaman Park State Natural Area K-6235 Davidson County TN

from the web: “Beaman Park is a 1,678 acre natural area in northwestern Davidson County approximately 15 miles from downtown Nashville near Joelton. The topography consists of ridges and hollows supporting forest vegetation that is characteristic of the Western Highland Rim. The prominent geologic substrate is limestone, shale, and siltstones from the Mississippian Fort Payne and Devonian Chattanooga Shale formations. Outcroppings of shale and siltstones create patches of post oak woodlands with native perennial grasses in the herbaceous layer; these hillside "barrens" are considered to be a rare plant community type. They host a variety of interesting herbaceous plants, including the state-listed and formerly federally threatened Eggert's sunflower (*Helianthus eggertii*). These distinctive woodland zones have open canopies and often occur on mid- to upper slopes, usually south- to south-west facing, exposing the barrens to the drying effects of the afternoon sun.

Other plant communities include a mixed hardwood alluvial forest, a white oak forest, and a mixed sub-xeric (dry) oak forest. Forest communities occur on steep slopes, dry ridge tops, along alluvial creeks and hollows. In addition, there is a shortleaf pine population on a ridge overlooking the mouth of Henry Hollow. Shortleaf pine is uncommon in Middle Tennessee.”

Bands were not in great shape- horrible – but squeaked by at 10 QSOs.

Then headed up the highway toward Louisville. Didn't make it- at 4pm, the skies opened up – deluges of rain – 30 mph on the interstate and even that was difficult to see anything. Got off interstate at Stephenville south of Louisville. Parked for 10 minutes till the deluge stopped a bit. Checked web for nearby Wyndham Hotel chain place. Super 8 very close. Called to check on a room. No sweat. Got room and stopped for the day. Storms all about. (Lowell, KB0BA and Sandra ran into same bunch of storms in IN). Most of rain to south and west – but it was time to stop. Five or six hours to Dayton if you go direct. Who goes the direct way? Needed to be in Dayton by 4pm

Thursday or so.

Nearby was Cattleman Ranch - good place for dinner – and had a salad bar. Light rain now for few hours.

Thursday May 19 2022

Temp was 64F. Cool trip north. Almost long pants weather but I had my shorts on. Foggy and humid . Breakfast at motel. Raisin Bran, Banana slices on top , decaf coffee. Would not get out of 60s today.

I head on up to Louisville area for the next park right off the I-264 bypass.

Beargrass State Natural Area K-7956 in Jefferson County KY .

Lots of activity here with 17 previous activations and 271 QSOs. I'd add in a bit over 10 more.

From the web: “The Beargrass Creek State Nature Preserve offers people of all ages a retreat from the surrounding urban areas. This 41-acre urban forest provides critical greenspace and recreation opportunities in the city. The only urban nature preserve owned by the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, the Preserve offers:

Over 2 miles of hiking trails, A diversity of plants, including 180 species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers, Over 150 species of resident and migratory birds documented. At least 30 butterfly species observed. Amazing wildlife viewing opportunities”

Added in 18Qs early in the morning.

I'm headed up the interstate, running the counties – Henry - and get to Carroll County KY.....and who do I work? OM2VL.....just passed the exit to get to Bedford KY miles back for Trimble, one of his last 10. There is no county line sign for Trimble County on the northbound side of the interstate. There is just a sliver on the southbound side. You go from Henry to Carroll on the northbound side. Well, have to go some miles to turn around and head back south. You pass Carrollton exit headed south and half a dozen miles you see the Trimble County sign. There's only a few hundred feet in the county so you have to stop on busy interstate narrow shoulder to run it (not recommended but I've done it) or head on down to the Bedford exit and go a mile or two to reach the county line. (best way) . That's the way to run it but one county at a time. I had to go here to

turn around.

Did catch up with OM2VL and that one is in his log! It was raining lightly at the time.

We were going to get this on Sunday, but for some reason Laci was on the air on Thursday. He works – and has to travel 30 minutes to the 'big station' to work US mobiles. Would have been tough at the time I go through here - 8 am EDST – band is just about to open. Glad it worked out!



Then had to back track again to the northeast. Up through Oldham and Boone to I-71 south to town of Crittenden.

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Curtis Gates Lloyd WMA K-3805 in Grant KY KFF-3805



from the web: “ Level to rolling terrain with some steep hills, fields, woods. Nature trail through old hardwoods, one of state’s oldest forest stands.

* Public tube shooting range (for single projectile firearms only; no shotshells or pistols allowed) located off Wildlife Road: closed Monday, open Tuesday - Saturday 9:00 AM-sunset & Sunday’s noon-sunset.

* Public Archery range open during daylight hours (the woods archery loop trail is closed until further notice). Universal access to small fishing lake”

It's a thousand acres. There have been 44 activations and 1400 Qs. – one ham has run it 24 times – KN4PXZ. Must live close by! I added 18 more Qs. Never spotted on POTA site, just county hunters.

Mullins WMA K-3826 in Kenton KY KFF-3826

It's 259 acres. From the web: “Level to rolling terrain, some steep hills, woods, grasslands.” There have been 20 activations from here with 519Qs.

It's not that easy to find the 'parking spot' mentioned on the web site. It's just a narrow gravel/dirt driveway sloping down that goes maybe 150 feet. One car wide. Good for a 4 wheel drive vehicle like a pickup truck. Went far enough in to 'be off the road'.

Didn't want to get stuck. It had been raining a lot this past day or two.

19 Qs in 11 minutes – all county hunters. 40/30/20m.

From here, I head up to OH, then take I-75 toward Columbus. You can hit a few parks along that route before reaching Xenia.

Caesar Creek Gorge State Nature Preserve K-7847 Warren County OH



from the web: “The preserve's prime feature is the gorge that was formed by great volumes of glacial meltwater cutting down through the bedrock to expose Ordovician limestone and shale rich in fossils. The steep walls rise to 180 feet above the river. More than two miles of Caesar Creek flow through the gorge to the Little Miami State and National Scenic River. The stream and its banks support a wide variety of plant and animal life. Many of the aquatic insects and small fish found here, such as darters, indicate excellent water quality.

The preserve also contains diverse habitat ranging from successional fields to heavily wooded hillsides with beech, maple, hickory and oak. A luxuriant herbaceous flora covers the floodplain, and a variety of prairie species is found on the shallow soil of the

cliffs and in old fields. Adjacent to the preserve are 135 acres of Scenic River land, a river access site and the Corwin M. Nixon covered bridge. This forested land maintains bank stability, serves as an example of good floodplain land use and provides recreational access to the Little Miami State & National Scenic River.”

Added 25Qs – all county hunters – to the total from here.

Spring Valley Wildlife Management Area – K-7849 - Greene County-running

Likely Greene County will be run and run – that's where the Hamvention is! Maybe I was the first county hunter to wander through here? Often a dozen mobiles in the past would put it out! That and Montgomery OH – where the Hamvention used to be and where most people found motels/hotels to stay at.

From the web: This 842-acre wildlife area is situated in the gently rolling agricultural region of southwest Ohio just east of the Little Miami River, eight miles south of Xenia and four miles north of Waynesville. The area may be reached by turning east off U.S. Route 42 onto Roxanna-New Burlington Road. More than one-third of the area is in cropland and permanent meadow intermixed with brushy fence rows and extensive brushy coverts. Woods cover approximately a third of the area. A 150-acre lake and marsh complex are located on the area's south edge

The best rabbit, pheasant and quail hunting is found in the open fields and brushy areas; pheasants are also found in the marshy areas north and west of the lake. There is a good squirrel woods in the northeastern part of the area, and fox squirrels can usually be taken in the scattered woods along the river. Deer hunting is good throughout the area. Raccoons and woodchucks are widely distributed and hunting for them is usually productive. The best waterfowl hunting is in the marsh and the vegetation around the edge of the lake. Trapping is productive in the marsh and river for muskrat, raccoon, and mink. The best bass and bluegill fishing is around the numerous logs and stumps and aquatic vegetation in the lake. The wetland complex has long been popular with bird watchers and other nature enthusiasts as its open water and marshy areas include a large number of unusual birds, plants, and animals. Virtually all of Ohio's common avian residents, as well as typical Ohio migrants, are represented. More than 230 species in all have been identified throughout the area.

A 2.5-mile observation trail circles the marsh and provides relatively dry walking. The Birds of Spring Valley Wildlife Area Checklist is available at the wildlife area headquarters bulletin board. Spring Valley Wildlife Area is also the site of a variety of ongoing wildlife research projects. Facility locations are shown on the map and include

parking lots, access roads, nature trails, shooting ranges, and an archery course. Spring Valley Wildlife Area also features designated access roads for Electric Powered All Purpose Vehicle (EPAPV)/Motor Vehicle Use Permit holders. The permit allows use of an EPAPV with a 30 horsepower and/or use of a motor vehicle on designated access roads on specific state wildlife areas for mobility impaired persons.”

This park has had 60 activations and 2000 QSOs so no need to add a lot. Just need 10 for credit. Added in 25 county hunter contacts in log.

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Finally arrive in Dayton area. Head to the Microtel Inn after 1326.3 miles. I've stayed at this motel for quite a few years. Most motels/hotels jack up rates for the Hamvention so I use my 'points' from all the stays at Super 8s and Days Inn on travel around the country. Otherwise, you're looking at \$160/night here, and \$250/night type prices at the Marriott and other hotels. I used to stay at a Super 8 (not too great but adequate) right off the interstate but it changed names, went downhill along with the local area, then went bankrupt six or eight years ago. Before that, I stayed at a real dump but it was \$45/night for a decade or more. It slowly went downhill from not great to really not great. Still there if you really want a 'bargain room' that is maybe one star. Or less – hi hi. I'm not sure they even have upgraded to color TV these days.

The Microtel Inn is 9 miles from Xenia – so convenient and a 20 minute drive to the Fairgrounds. In the past, I'd check out the flea market on Thursday for bargains – but not buying a whole lot these days and the legs aren't up to much walking these days. So I didn't do that this year – and just chilled at motel till dinner. The motel parking lot was full – really full.

On Thursdays, I get a special invite to the ARRL Donor Dinner held at the Schuster Center in downtown area of Dayton. It's for those belonging to the Diamond or Maxim societies for annual donations. Nice place downtown that features two theaters for the performing arts – with a glass atrium that covers a block area.

Park at the Marriott and ride the shuttle bus. I head back afterwards and there are zero spots to park at the motel at 10pm. Wind up parking in the 'no parking' area right in front of the entrance – no other choice. The place is packed with folks and a bus load.

Took the big antenna off the back of the car earlier in day.

Friday May 20 – 2022

Dayton Hamvention Day! Downpour at 4-6am. Not going anywhere for a bit! I'm up early and finally over to the Fairgrounds at 7am. Everything sopping wet and there's a moat on the edge of the race track about a foot deep between the main part of the 'race track' and the flea market area inside it. Oh well. Will be mud this year in the flea market after a bit as cars and feet churn it up. Parking spaces OK.

Meet up with KA4RRU, Mike, to get flea market parking permit. I work with him each year to get a 'flea market' ticket that lets you in after 6am to the flea market to set up. He gets two flea market spots with Kyle, WA4PGM and another from VA. Had the flea market entry ticket but for some reason the parking passes didn't show up. He got them so it was serendipity. You need one to park in the flea market area. I wind up parking near the gate to the rest of the show area. It's a short walk to some of the flea market and short walk to the exhibit buildings.

Didn't need to buy too much this year. Didn't plan on buying any expensive radios, but if you do, the show prices are a good deal – usually 10% lower than you'll find them anywhere else. Likely a million or more in sales take place. Sort of maxed out on regen receivers. Actually thinning the collection a bit. Have too many of several radios all identical so time to let some of them go. (Yeah, 12 Knight Kit Span Masters are a bit overboard – hi hi).

This year the Parks on the Air folks had a booth conveniently located about 200 feet from where I park. Serendipity. Spent a lot of time meeting POTA folks and a few county hunters wandered by. Over 200 folks signed the POTA check in sheet. Many of the top activators were at the table for a while – or for hours, including Bill, K4NYM, and YL Kerri KB3WAV and hubby OM KC3RW. Tried to talk to them about YL Mobile and other awards they are 'good for' and who knows? Maybe they'll show up on county hunter freqs. Most of the time they run 'portable' with a 20 foot mast on the flag pole holder on rear bumper of Jeep. Not a whole lot of metal on a new Jeep – all composite panels for roof, etc. A few years ago, they hauled a military surplus trailer behind – and could sleep in it ...but with gas prices – they've gone mostly to Jeep travel.

Saw a few motor homes on the way up and back, but not that many. Wonder how many came to Dayton and stayed at nearby campgrounds? Some of POTA folks did.

Inside a nearby building to the POTA outdoor booth, MARAC had a booth. Manned by Lowell, KB0BA and Sandra N0XYL and maybe some others.. Maybe 20 county hunters 'signed in'. Think they got one or two new MARAC members or renewals but county hunting has problems attracting more folks. Wandered by a few times, spent 30

minutes there. In the same building as the prize booth so many wandered by. As noted in the past, today's hams work on awards that are all 'electronic' – through ARRL LoTW, through eQSL. Tens of thousands chase DXCC and endorsements. No need for expensive QSL cards – other than perhaps DX-peditions and a few others who collect lots of 'green stamps' for hard to get countries. Folks get WAS, 5 band WAS, WAS on the WARC bands, can track their country totals by mode and bands – all electronically. Where the occasional card is needed to be used – the ARRL sponsors 'card checking stations' at hamfests or you can send them in to ARRL HQ.

With the advent of FT-8, millions of QSOs are confirmed through LoTW. Over 30% of all activity on LoTW is FT-8.

You can get your basic WPX sponsored by CQ Magazine through ARRL LoTW.

“eQSL” has a series of awards. Not all that many use it but many have fun with it. Not as secure as LoTW and it has it's fans. I've never used it.

So for a new county hunter, the thought of 3077 confirmations is a daunting situation. Lots of postage.....and hassles. Hard to convince many to join the hunt. Likely won't change until things change. In discussion with ARRL, it will take a bunch of dollars to pay for the manpower to write the programming for counties – should it ever happen. CQ Magazine has other priorities and not too much cash to spend, either. (didn't even show up at Dayton this year).

So...how were the crowds at Dayton? Lots of folks there. Flea market pretty full of sellers. And buyers. There was no event in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID. This year was the “re-union' year – and the 70th year of Dayton Hamfests! The first time I remember going was 1970. Gosh, I've been going most years for 50+ years on and off. Probably been there 30 times. It's changed a bit. For decades we had a county hunter forum. I had the responsibility for 11 years. Others before me had it 10 years each. No one wanted to keep it going so it died. We lost our spot on Friday afternoons. After we'd QSY to the Old Country Buffet – and then to the Golden Corral for dinner.

With COVID - you saw a few people wearing masks – maybe 1 in 30 or 40. In the flea market areas, you could easily as a seller/buyer stay 6 feet away and lots of folks would 'pass by' in a short time. Probably reasonably safe. Inside the exhibit buildings...lots of 'crowds' to contend with – and of course forums packed and you sit for an hour. Avoided them, just spent a short time in the exhibit areas early Friday morning. Sampled the hamfest food- good but expensive. No deals on food unless you bring it yourself – hi h. Water \$3/small bottle. Lots of porta-potties – no shortage there.

Spent 90% of my time there at the POTA booth this year. Outdoors, good air flow. Breeze constant. Left mid afternoon. Well, it wouldn't be Dayton if it didn't rain. Afternoon showers. Saturday afternoon was very wet. Sunday morning was showers before opening and light rain for a bit after.

After a good day at the hamfest on Friday headed home to hotel and then to a local Chevy dealer by 3pm. Seems I left home with 40% 'oil life' according to the car computer. Should have been enough but it started dropping fast. Figured it wasn't going to make it home with any reserve so arranged to have oil change at Jeff Schmit Chevy nearby. Down to 18% oil life. I guess too many parks with engine idling and of course 1300+ miles up here. In and out in hour. I had to remove the big antenna because if they weren't careful it would get crunched.

Rested up a bit after then went to the nearby Bob Evans. Nice turkey dinner. Parking lot will get more than full tonight at motel. Not a spot left. Got one before the rest came back from dinner.

Saturday May 21

Over to the flea market by 7:30 am. Wandered around a bit. The POTA folks showed up and set up so sat there a bit after 8:30am. Went into exhibit buildings for a quick look around at 8:30 before the general admission at 9am. Talked to one Elecraft guy about 'hardware upgrades' to my KX2 10w transceiver. None. They did it right the first time – no hardware upgrades. You can do firmware upgrades on line. Saw an interesting 'travel key' shown by Vibroplex. Retractable paddles. About 2 x 3 inches retracted by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch high. But \$200. Ouch. Lightweight – a few ounces.

Similar to this one but wider.



The paddles retract into the case when not in use. Some velcro underneath and might make a nice mobile paddle for restricted front of car use. Hard to find a place for control heads and keys and mics these days in most vehicles. The new one was a bit wider than this one shown on their web site. Didn't get a pic of it. They sold out of stock by Friday 9am. There were no adjustments you could easily do.

Most vendors were at Dayton this year. Good crowd. For the most part – avoided indoors crowds. There was a BIG POTA forum – room full and standing room only. Figured I didn't need to be there and wasn't. No need to take chances with 300 people in a room in close proximity! COVID is still around and spiking in many areas again. Even though I got my second booster shot – you can still wind up with it. I guess quite a few seniors skipped it this year for that reason.

Come mid afternoon – and expected rain – left and headed to motel. Rain came late 4pm to 6pm. Went to the Bob Evans for dinner – chicken avocado – good. Put antenna back on car. (six foot mast – 40/30/20/17M horizontal.) OK in rain if moving but if you stop, water settles on top and detunes the resonators. 40M worst. Use ham stick for 40m in rainy conditions on top mag mount. They don't get detuned by rain.

Sunday May 22

Time to head home. 'parked out'. Direct route home – two choices – through IN, IL, MO to OK to home....or down to Nashville to Memphis, Little Rock and home – both same miles/hours. Elected to to the Nashville route. No new counties. Just pedal to the metal – 5 over speed limit for hours and hours. Lots of rain starting out in Dayton – rain down through KY – wipers going most of Sunday and temps in the 60s.

First day drove 12 hours and wound up in Hope AR at the Super 8. Gained an hour going from EDT to CDT. Filled up gas tank again. Gas was over \$4 most of way, \$4.40 in OH, and \$3.99 in AR. Car getting 29mpg most of the way. Temperature never went above 70 all day and gray skies. Luckily no accidents or backups.

It was a Sunday so not much open for dinner other than decent Chinese Buffet in town. Otherwise, the Dos Amigos Mexican place is great! Ate and decided I could run up to Historic Washington 10 miles up the road and put out a '3 fer" park. You can run Southwest Trail, Camden Expedition and Historic Washington there. 3 parks in one.

You'll recall I've stopped at here a dozen or more times for short 'park runs'. . It's a little Jamestown like deal where you have a few re-enactors showing life in the 1800s. Founded in 1824. Washington was actually the Confederate capital of Arkansas for a short period (1863 to 1865). . Many travelers including Davy Crockett, Danial Boone, Sam Houston, and others passed through here on their way to the Texas territory along the rugged Southwest Trail.

Since the Southwest Trail and the Camden Expedition Trail come through here, you can give out all three for the price of one. One run- 3 park activations! There are some '4 fers' and one or two '5 fers' where the Oregon Trail, Mornom Trail, California Trail, all meet at a Fort or other site.

A local talented blacksmith is credited for working with Jim Bowie and creating the famous Bowie knife.

You've got a blacksmith shop, print shop, weapons museum and you can enjoy a lunch at a historic Williams Tavern restaurant. It's a 'state park'. Don't think you can stay there but many motel rooms in Hope AR. (There is the schoolhouse for groups traveling through. \$17.50 for bunk beds – 60 person capacity). Things shut down by 5pm and the place goes back to being a very small town.

Had a quick run – then back to the motel. Had done over 700 miles of driving so tired out. My code copying strange. Hear the dits/dahs – remember the string...then the call

pops in to mind. Must be really tired – brain fade! Hi hi. Usually I copy the letters as they are sent.

Monday May 22

Up early at 6am. Great breakfast at this Super 8. Eggs, sausage patties, cereal, apples, juice, coffee/tea, oatmeal, biscuits and gravy. Filled up. A few drizzles around and total clouds still. Temp 64 degrees. Never got above 70 the entire way home. Roads clear.

It's a straight shot to home – about 4 hours. Lots of trucks on I-30. Hundreds and hundreds of them. Home easily by noon.

Now to do all the park logs.....23 of them. Also write the county hunter news.

Tidbits.....

I put a new radio in the mobile. The IC-706 and the spare IC-706 had power connector issues. The connector would not make good contact and after a five minute run, you'd have to jiggle it. Radio would trip off and recycle. The Molex pins had corroded/burned away. Seems that is a common problem on older 706 radios – the Molex pins giving out. Not sure how easy it is to repair them. Put in an IC-7100 radio. Nice radio. Upgraded to 'DSP' and the noise reduction system is good on SSB. Not so much on CW. Nice filters. NB worked OK but seldom needed it.

It could use a few watts more audio. Big difference compared to the 706. Keyer and filters work nicely. Seems to be happier at lower voltages. At 12.5v at the battery, the 706 would trip off. The 7100 stayed on and seemed to work OK. Had to change the key paddle plug from ¼ to the 1/8th inch size. Had to change the power connector – uses a 4 pin Molex instead of 6. Worked well for the trip. Still haven't figured out how to increase the cw side tone level – don't seem to have a menu for that. Maybe need to do an update? Also need to find if auto power shut off after no activity. You could do that on the 706 so you couldn't run battery down if left on. It would shut off after a present period- like an hour.

Met half a dozen county hunters at Dayton – probably more there but circulating around and didn't stay at the MARAC booth. POTA booth was always busy. WOMU was there. AA8R was there.

That's it for this trip. Whew? What did I forget to write about?

Oil Tidbits

from the Weekly Energy Bulletin 5/12

Quotes of the Week

“On Wednesday, the U.S. national average at the pump rose to \$4.567, up from \$4.523 yesterday, and up from \$3.043 a year ago, according to AAA. That’s a more than 50% rise in gas prices in a year. ‘There is a real risk the price could reach \$6+ a gallon by August,’ said Natasha Kaneva, head of global oil and commodities research at JPMorgan.”

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“The global economy is powered primarily by energy and debt, with energy providing production and debt providing finance. Today, central banks are aggressively increasing interest rates in order to counter inflation, but the move could leave commodity prices too low for producers. If the debt bubble bursts then we will be faced with a shrinking economy that cannot accommodate a growing population.”

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Gas prices in both the United States and Europe hit new highs Wednesday, with average prices per gallon in California topping \$6, compared to over \$9 in Norway and Denmark as Russia’s war on Ukraine plays out in the global energy sector.

On Wednesday, the U.S. national average at the pump rose to \$4.567, up from \$4.523 yesterday, and up from \$3.043 a year ago, according to AAA. That’s a more than 50% rise in gas prices in a year.

In California, gasoline hit an average Wednesday of \$6.05, up from \$6.021 yesterday, and \$4.135 a year ago.

The continued spike in gasoline prices in the United States prompted JPMorgan on Tuesday to warn that the explosive combination of Russia's war on Ukraine and American summer driving demand could push gas prices even higher.

"There is a real risk the price could reach \$6+ a gallon by August," Natasha Kaneva, head of global oil and commodities research at JPMorgan, told CNN on Tuesday.

In Europe, drivers are faring even worse, with Global Petrol Prices showing \$7.70 per gallon in the UK, \$8.25 per gallon in Germany in some areas and over \$9 per gallon in Norway and Denmark.

Norway topped \$9.6 per gallon on Wednesday, compared to Finland, which was nearing the \$9 mark, and the Baltic country of Estonia was over \$7.7 per gallon.

The highest price of petrol in the world on Wednesday was recorded in Hong Kong, at \$10.966 per gallon.

Awards Issued

Roadrunner Awards:

NF0N Attained 400 Last Counties on 19 April 2022. He received #54

W4SIG has attained 850 last counties on 19 May 2022. He received #18

N8OYY Attained 300 Last Counties on 21 April 2022. He received #78

K5GE Attained 475 Last Counties on 28 April 2022. He received #27

K8ZZ Attained 1275 Last Counties on 29 April 2022. He received #6

WY0A attained 125 Last Counties on 3 May 2022. He received #202

W0GXQ has attained 1475 last counties on 27 April 2022. He received #3

N5MLP attained 225 Last counties on 9 May 2022. He received #110

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Ran All State: K0DEQ completed all Illinois on 30 March 2022. He received #36

Ran All State: W4SIG completed all Utah on 2 March 2022. He received #30

Ran All State: W4SIG completed all Illinois on 19 April 2022. He received #37

Ran All State: W4SIG completed all Michigan on 20 April 2022. He received #39.
County Challenge: W0GXQ attained Level 20000 on 23 May 2022. He received #3

Ran All State : WB8III completed Pennsylvania on 13 May 2022. He received #28

Ran All State : AB7NK Completed Minnesota on 17 April 2022. She received #27

Ran All State : K7SEN Completed Minnesota on 17 April 2022. He received #28

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N8OYY Completed 20 meters on 25 April 2022. He received #34

K7REL Completed 20 meters on 13 August 2004. He received #35

- - - - -

County Challenge: K8ZZ attained Level 22000 on 29 April 2022. He received #2

5 Band Award: W0GXQ attained Level 2000 on 28 April 2022. He received #3

YL-OM Team Award: WQ7A attained Level 3000 on 24 April 2022. He received #2

YL Mobile Award: WQ7A attained Level 3000 on 6 May 2021. He received #4

Native American Award: OM2VL completed the award on 13 May 2022. He received #64

Events for County Hunters

QSO Party season is winding down. Two this month then a summer of other activities. You've got Field Day coming up, the VHF contests.....and thousands of parks on the air.

June 4 1300z to 5 0100z

1.8-144

Kentucky QSO Party CW Ph Dig

RS(T), KY county or SPC

www.kyqsoparty.org/rules

18 June 1600z to 19 0400z

3.5-28

West Virginia QSO Party CW Ph Dig

RS(T), WV county or SPC

www.qsl.net/wvsarc

MARAC Annual Convention

Sunday October 2nd, 2022 to Thursday October 6th, 2022

Best Western Gran Tree Inn, Bozeman, MT

1325 North 7th Ave. Bozeman, MT 59715

(406) 587-5261

BOOK BEFORE AUG. 1 2022 to guarantee the rates

DO IT NOW - no fee cancellations!

We have 40 rooms reserved, by contract.

details on hotel page

Confirmed Speaker: Brian Bird, NX0X who will speak on the Past, Present and Future of the CQ USA-Counties Award

Banquet Wednesday evening

Hospitality Room from 3 pm to 11 pm Sunday, 9 am to 11 pm Monday-Wednesday

- special prizes for early registrants - before July 4th (form and payment received) (prize TBD)
-

We're BAAACK !

I'm planning to go! Haven't been out west lately and need to run parks in WA, ND, and MT to finish up that area of the country!

That's all folks.....that's enough..... 73