

# County Hunter News OnLine

April 2026  
Volume 22 Issue 4

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. There is CW activity now occasionally on 7188, 14336., 18136, 21336, 28336 . The CW folks are now pioneering 17M operation on 18.0915. (21.0565, 24.9155, and 28.0565 ). Look around 18136 or for occasional 17M CW runs usually after the run on 20M CW . (21.336 and 28.336)

You can see live spots of county hunter activity at [ch.W6RK.com](http://ch.W6RK.com)

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

The USACA award was sponsored by CQ Magazine, which unfortunately has gone the way of the dinosaurs. However, like other CQ Awards, they are still available. CQ awards require confirmation of all claimed contacts.

Rules and information are here:

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

**MARAC sponsors the US Counties Award which can be earned in increments of 500 counties.** The rules for this award are at:

<http://marac.org/documents/usa-ca-rules.pdf>

This award requires log data only to earn.

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](http://www.countyhunter.com) . Please check it out.

Back issues of the County Hunter News are available at [www.CHNewsonline.com](http://www.CHNewsonline.com)

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

## Notes from the Editor

**1 ) Sunspots** – Still have them by the hundreds. Band conditions continue to be good. Lots of contacts being made on 10m, although that tough for county hunting with the long 1500 mile type first skip. Most days 10M not open but at end of month, good 10M propagation. There were days of very high index – A 35, K=5 or 7! Some QSO Parties affected with not so great propagation. Tough for the mobiles

**2 ) Weather** - It's either winter or summer depending where you are in the country. Some locations have both the same week – 30s then 80s and 90s. Big snows in MN and WI with up to 4 feet of snow. If you're headed to Mimi, check ahead on route across

upper MI - they'll be digging out for weeks. Which, by the way – a reminder to get your reservation in for the MI Mini this month. Now! Last minute. It's coming up and always a good event. It's tornado season in much of the country. Keep an ear out for weather advisories. With the web, you can get up to date weather maps and forecasts.

**3 ) QSO season** - we are back to the spring QSO Party season. Lots happened and more to come for a while till the summer lull.

**4 ) Mobile Trips** - for the most part, winter weather is over – time for mobiles to get out and run around - on the way to the Mini – on the way to Dayton Hamvention in May, and of course, local hamfests, visits to family, etc.

## South Carolina QSO Party

There are 46 counties in South Carolina. Most if not all were up for grabs. The way the scoring for multipliers was done doesn't help determine how many anyone worked. Multipliers were once per band per mode. Work multiple bands, multiple modes, run up score.

### **AA5JF county expedition 170 CW 196 SSB QSO**

Only was able to devote a few hours at the end of the day to the SC QSO party, but what a party it was! For the whole 2:49 hours I was on the air, the pileups just wouldn't let up. Huge activity. One of the few times of the year I'm on 40M phone and really enjoying myself.

Intention had been to operate from the NEWB/LAUR county line in Belfast WMA, but the only spot I could drive to in the park was under TWO powerlines merging right there at the county line. So did NEWB from Belfast WMA and LAUR from a Clinton Reservoir, different POTA parks.

### **N4CW mobile 916 CW QSO**

W4TMO, Jim, provided the vehicle, planned the route, and drove the entire QSO Party time! I sat in the back seat and played with the radio!

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE TO THIS STORY...

The plan was to try something different this time, like running high power/500 Watts. Moreover, we were going to operate CW AND Phone. We had the amp, power supply, high-power screwdriver antenna, and a 3-kW gasoline generator. We would use a K3 as the station. That was the PLAN...

Jim arrive at my house in Raleigh on Tuesday, and we had until Saturday to de-bug everything, the typical "shake-down".

We set up the station, spending a good amount of time finding the "sweet spots" for tuning the antenna on the CW and SSB portions of each band. Then we checked out the "live" operation barefoot. Great! Everything worked as planned. Then we ran out of daylight!

On Wednesday, late morning, we checked to see if everything was still okay, and we were good to go try high power...first, we fired-up the generator to check out the noise level...S6!!!!...that wouldn't be good at all...we tried all sorts of grounding and placing leads, but nothing worked at reducing the noise. After all that, we decided to try my 3.5 kW generator which is a different mfr. That generator had NO noise! So, we went and got one...that took care of the noise problem and things seemed pretty-well set for the trip, and that ended the day.

Thursday, we woke up to rain...but after a late breakfast, we went and ran the station "through its paces"...due to the rain, everything got wet there behind the SUV, generator, connections, and antenna. And we discovered that our antenna settings were changing...not much, but enough to notice, requiring a resetting of the tap on the antenna. Later on, the SWR would change on us even more...moisture was getting into the loading coil. We didn't expect that to happen, but it did. Then, it rained on Friday also...it wasn't suppose to do that, but it did! So, we reverted to "Plan B", using two monoband "hamsticks", and we removed the screwdriver antenna and generator (they were in a trailer hitch "carrier" behind the SUV. We took great pains to adjust (using a Rig Expert AA-55) the heliwhips to the desired operating frequency for each band. They didn't have to be re-set for the SCQP AND NCQP! We thought we had left our troubles behind us....

Early Saturday morning, we were going to get bagels and immediately head South to SC...well, Murphy got up before us...we had a "dead" car battery in our hybrid SUV! So we put my "smart" charger and went to enjoy our bagels while the battery was charging...when we came back, we had barely taken a charge and the voltage was still

around 6.5 Volts on a 12V battery...so we left it charging and went and watched TV for a while. Then we checked the battery voltage again, and it hadn't improved! My charger wasn't putting out enough amps for a quick charge. Jim suddenly got inspired and suggested we use an AC supply that I normally used to power my own rig; it's rated 30A and 35 surge. We hooked it to the battery: first, it pegged the ammeter for a few seconds, then went down to 32A where it stayed for about 5 minutes, then down to around 15A where it stayed for about a half hour. Then we decided to try to start the SUV -- no "starting current" is drawn from the 12V battery! We succeeded and were soon off for SC, about two hours later than we had planned!

I started working stations as soon as we drove into SC and we did our planned route in 11 hours! We "toured" 19 counties, and made 916 (valid) Q's. Our "Top Ten" "followers" were:

K9CW(28Q's),K1RO(26),K3WJV(24),WB9HFK(23),N0HJZ(21),DL3DXX(21),WA5SOG(20),OM2VL(20),N8II(16), and tied for 10th place were F4EUG(15)and K3TW(15). MY APOLOGIES for often being late to respond to a call...with the rough roads and many curves, my mouse would "move" the cursor and I would lose focus in my N1MM data entry...I had to regain the focus before I could respond! Note: I was using a backup laptop (Windows 10)and there must be some setting to do with the mouse enabling a field when passed over...I need to fix that before our next QSO party venture! Thank you all!!!

### **N2CU mobile 1142 cw 552 SSB QSO**

Fun contest with lots of activity. I worked 41 SC counties, 42 states, 7 provinces and 11 DX countries. Best state activity was MN (199), NY (169) and FL (120). These guys really came out to play! Shout out to heavy hitters (>20 QSOs) AA3R KB0NES (20), WB9HFK (23), N2PP WA5SOG (24), N8II WW4SF (29), K3WJV (30), W0ZQ (33), K2QO (39) and N0HJZ (45), plus many other double digit QSOs. Special shout out to Laci, OM2VL with 19 Q's. Some great runs and pileups were tremendous when entering a new county line. Have patience and I promise to work y'all. Many fellow NFR members worked - thanks guys!

FTdx10

Tarheel 75

100 aH LiFePO4 battery

N1MM+

73, Tom N2CU

### **KA2G mobile 252 SSB QSO**

My first time doing mobile operation for a contest. Not the score I was hoping for, but it was a learning experience. I had a dedicated deep cycle battery just for radio use, apparently 12.9 volts was not enough, causing terribly distorted audio at the beginning. I changed back over to the truck battery, but still not getting great reports. I learned that certain power lines cause very bad interference with my Hustler antennas. Moving only a couple hundred feet cured that. Problems with my Signalink and rig interface followed. I tracked that down to the one last minute change I made before the contest - a USB dongle for a wireless mouse. Those issues cost me approximately 45 minutes at the beginning of the contest. After moving to my second location, I realized it was surrounded by the troublesome power lines. After about 90 minutes of struggle there, the frustration won and I packed it up and headed home.

All that negative to say this positive - It was a GREAT time, despite the issues and aggravation, I truly had a lot of fun doing county line activations. I have a laundry list of things to work on, refine, and retest before next year. Thank you to all the stations out there that worked me, especially those dealing with the audio issues I was having. Awesome turn out for the 2026 SCQP!!

### **K1RO fixed NH 117 cw 91 mults**

My version of Writelog didn't count multipliers by band, so I sorted the the log in Excel to find the mult totals. I have that right. Score includes bonus points for 4 contacts with WW4SF and 4 with W4CAE.

I didn't operate the whole time because I wanted to participate in NAQP RTTY but was very happy to be able to work SC stations on 4 bands.

TS-590S x 2

2 el at 25 feet for 20/15/10

Dipoles at 35 feet for 80 and 40

### **D:3DXX 98 CW 77 mults**

No serious entry after 10m antenna broken.

Anyway thank you for the QSOs and to the mobiles for driving through the counties.  
Score includes 2300 extra points for working W4CAE 3x and WW4SF 5x.  
See you next year again.

**OM2VL fixed DX 87 cw 36 ssb 67 CW mults 32 SSB mults**

Unfortunately I missed first hours. My first QSO at 19:36Z.

Thanks for the QSOs!  
Most QSO with:

N2CU 21/7  
N4CW 18/13

W4CAE 4/2  
WW4SF 8/2

(6): KB1AWM  
(4): N2ZZ, N4XL

73, Laci

**N8II fixed WV 117 CW 88 SSB 81 CW mults 62 SSB mults**

I ran into the buzz saw that is Rich, N0HJZ, great job Rich. I knew I was in big trouble when Rich posted "CQ SC" on 10M. Despite my fairly good numbers on 20, prop to SC was mostly limited to the distant half of the state. A lot of Q's on 20 were scatter especially on CW. I never heard W4CAE on his 3 county lines on 20 and several other posted mults. Analyzing the bits of wood chips scattered on the ham shack floor, Rich had a big advantage on 20 and 15 (only scatter here). Most of my scatter Q's on 20 and all on 15 and 10 except a post sunset with KY4GS (worked 80-10m!) were in the morning. After lunch my local QRN was terrible on 10 and 15 rendering those bands useless. I also had almost no use of the 15M main yagi due to a feedline fault. I took time off for 2 quick meals, a walk across the Potomac River bridge (first time in years) on a very warm day, and 20 minutes of Middle East news, otherwise I was at the radio. I would have skipped the last 2 but knew my "goose was cooked" when the noise came up and Rich was everywhere. I couldn't make much headway in the afternoon until activity shifted to 40. Many thanks for all of the QSO's and mults, 143 mults was surprising!

73, Jeff

Many thanks to Tom, N2CU and Bert, N4CW for digging me out on scatter (Tom several times on 15 CW) and for many Q's and mults. I caught AA5JF only about 3 times. I would have to say that the SCQP has progressed to a point where there is usually a new Q or mult to be found soon most of the time. Many ops did a great job of working different modes and bands, especially the joint effort from WW4SF in 3 counties. K4Y TZ was only heard on 40 and 80 SSB, disappointing. I did what I could to put the WV mult in multiple times for many ops. I even CQ'ed on 160 CW to no avail and saw no 160 spots either.

## Michigan Mini

Time is short. By the time you're reading this, there is only 3 weeks to reserve your hotel and join the fun. Send in reservation to Dorie, to.....

The dates are official! The 2026 Michigan Mini will take place April 23-26 at the Spring Hill Suites in Midland, Michigan. Room rates are \$134 plus tax.

We will have the conference room for our use from 8AM-10PM each day. Call now to reserve your room. Hotel and Registration information can be found on our website at [marac.org/events](http://marac.org/events) soon. Thank you for your patience as our software developers are very busy!

Hosted by Dorie N8WTQ

See you there!

# North Carolina QSO Party

There are 100 counties in NC. A lot of them were up for grabs in the NC QP. Conditions were good. Multipliers were just NC counties, regardless of band/mode.

## **KO4PZA county expedition 275 SSB QSO**

Thanks for everyone who called. I set up a spooltenna on the side of the road in Vance county and operated for about 9 and a half hours from my car. Got a few pileups, even one DX station. Didn't break my 2024 record, which was my secondary goal, but I had a great time!

## **N4CW mobile 1331 CW QSO**

W4TMO, Jim, drove, and I operated from the back seat. Jim planned and executed the route. We tried to provide some of the rarer counties in the northeast. What I got the impression of, from the back seat, is that SC has far better roads than NC!!! It was really rough riding in some counties; the mouse would bounce around, and the laptop keyboard would jump up to meet my raised hands, and unintentional keyboarding would take place, hampering my logging efforts!

Moreover, NC power lines seemed to exhibit more noise than SC. It is what it is! As for the contest itself, we traversed 25 counties, making 1331 CW contacts..

The "Top Ten" (sort of) stations worked: K1RO(47 Q's), OM2VL(33),NE8P(29)W1WBB(28),K9CW(26),K3WJV+W8PI(22),WO4O(19),N1CG P+DL3DX(18), and WB9HFK+W3US+K0PC(16)!!! There were many more with several+ QSO's, but I picked the ten in order of frequency. Thank you all for outstanding work!

For some really interesting explanations of what could possibly go wrong, please read my 3830 submission for the SCQP. The moral of that story is that plans "gang aft aglay"!!! I hope y'all enjoyed chasing me as I did

working you.

73 Bert&Jim

### **N2CU mobile 852 CW 380 SSB**

Score is about the same as last year - a little disappointed. Not having a driver really cuts into operating time when spending an hour getting to the next county line. It would be nice to have a Mobile, Single-op (no driver) category like many other QSO parties. Pileups got a little unruly later in the day when I got to my last few county lines. Stations calling over and over without listening. I had to send a call several times before finally making the QSO with the desired station. Called it quits early when frustration finally set in :(

I worked 26 NC counties, 37 states, 5 provinces and 8 DX countries. Best participation was from MN (154), NY (122) and FL (92). Most QSOs (>20) were from OM2VL (40), N0HJZ W0ZQ (36), K3WJV (30), K1RO (22) and K2QO (20).

FTdx10

Tarheel 75

100 aH LiFePO4 battery

N1MM+

73, Tom N2CU

### **N4T mobile N4CWZ operator 691 CW**

riding and typing on a keyboard in the back seat of an f 150 is an acquired skill, especially heading thru the hills.. I just got home Don't know how many counties we ended up with, activating.... long day but.... it was "grand Fun" Don't even know if this is the right category thanks for the q's and thanks to everyone that followed me on the bands as I went thru the counties..

Thanks Dave n4cwz

**OM2VL fixed DX 201 cw 76 ssb SSB Mults 75**

Thanks for the QSOs!!  
From 10 rare counties I missed only CAB.

N2CU 40/8  
N4CW 35/23  
AA5JF 16/6  
N4T 9/9  
N4C 8/3

(9): AA4NC  
(7): K4MN  
(5): AD8J N4BCJ, NC4KW, WA2LMC

73, Laci

**KA6BIM fixed OR 127 cw 42 ssb                      Mults 65**

Spent the full contest looking for Avery county, the only one I still need from North Carolina. Never heard one or saw one spotted. Same as last year. Still it was a fun contest Digging up multipliers and chasing the rovers. The afternoon got a little slow, until 40 finally opened about 45 minutes before the end of the contest. Thanks for the QSO's

Dave ka6bim

**AA5JF rover /portable 681 CW 425 SSB**

First time operating in-state during a NC QSO party, and it was spectacular fun, driving through and operating in the mountains of western North Carolina. Highlight was operating from the Haywood-Jackson Overlook (on the county line) at 6,000 feet on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Perfect weather all day, no wind, and surely unseasonably warm.

Was active from six counties total, with two locations on county lines. All four locations were POTA sites, although all quite common parks. Nonetheless the POTA spotting site generating a great deal of traffic, even on CW. And many of the casual/non-contesting

POTA chasers were very tolerant of my speedy approach. Many thanks to both the regular state QSO party participants and the POTA chasers for making this a fun and busy day of operating.

Radio conditions were excellent, with 20M skip quite short, and from the two ridge locations I was able to work all over the state on 20M. 15M was quite good, although I think it was hard for you all to hear me with just a hamstick, especially from the valley location at the GRM/SWA county line.

In 6:13 hours of operating made 717 contacts (from two locations, got dual credit).

Learned something new. The Macon county spot I picked -- based upon Google and USDA maps -- was Tellico Gap on the Appalachian Trail. I knew there were power lines running over the saddle, but thought maybe I could park well enough way from it. But when I got there, it was very tight, and the only spot was immediately below what turned out to HV transmission lines. I figured I could at least check the noise on the hamsticks before looking for a new spot. It was fine, and in fact, on all four ham sticks, there was no noticeable noise. Quite different from parking under a powerline on the street.

Andy AA5JF

FT-991A

20/40 dipoles

Hamsticks on 80, 40, 20 and 15

### **W4KAZ portable 468 SSB QSO**

This was more a POTA activation than ncqp. Anticipated working CW this year but the phone rates were steady so just went with the flow. Expected more dupes since all three pota entities were in New Hanover county, but was still in striking distance of 500 Q's. Dropped some time by making a very late breakfast mid afternoon, but no regrets there. Now, what do I want to try for 2027

# MARAC Annual Convention

Extra! Extra! All County Hunters !

News....News... News.....Read all About it!

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Welcome to Utah where we will be having the MARAC National Convention!!!! Ogden, Utah to be exact.

Here is a preliminary outline of the convention. I hope to have everything finalized by the end of February with bios, presentation summaries, websites, etc.. There may be some changes as I work through everything. The convention will be the weekend of September Friday 18th and Saturday 19th, 2026.

Friday:

Breakfast- everyone on their own.

Presentation 9:30-10:30 by Don K3IMC

Presentation 11:00-12:00 by Ron KF7ZN. A Visit to the Sun and the Ionosphere

Lunch 12:30-1:30

Field Trip to Hill Air Museum 2:00-4:00PM They have guided tours. Hill Aerospace Museum is a military aviation museum located at Hill Air Force Base, one of our nation's biggest and best aviation museums.

Dinner 6:00 pm

Slide show with slides of members and their activities during the year.

Along with dinner we will have a historical club present that has some very interesting presentations on history of the West.

Saturday:

Breakfast everyone on their own

Presentation 9:30 to 10:30 Bob Carter WR7Q History of CW and how to improve your skills

Presentation 11-12:00 Jed Petrovich AD7KG Mobile and Portable antennas

Lunch 12:30 to 1:30

MARAC Board meeting 1:30-2:30

Harvest Moon Celebration In the afternoon people can attend the Harvest Moon celebration- Live music, fall-themed photo stations, and sometimes rock climbing and axe throwing., etc.

Dinner 6:30 pm, speaker from Rio Grande Railroad club on History of Railroads in the West

Prizes!

## Oklahoma QSO Party

There are 77 counties in OK. Not all were on the air this year likely but most were.. Top scorers reported getting just over 70. Most in 50s.

Band conditions were not great. On Saturday morning, checked the propagation. A index 24. K index 4. Yuck. Still, the hunters were out and the mobiles were running.

**from the 3830 contest reflector:**

**KK6MC mobile 866 cw 118 ssb Mults54**

Score induces 9,000 bonus points for activating 18 counties.

Poor conditions on Saturday on 20M with some auroral effects on European stations and some northern NA stations. 40M was open all day with some very long QSOs even at midday. No luck on 15M despite calling CQ to a dead band. On Sunday propagation improved on 20M, but 40M no longer supported long QSOs. 15M was marginally better with a dozen QSOs. The big problem on Sunday was the 50mph winds which made driving tedious and necessitated a minor antenna repair. At the last two stops I had bad QRN which made it difficult to pull out weak stations, many of which I had worked at earlier stops. Stations worked a dozen or more times included: N6MU, OM2VL, NE8P, KA6BIM, W2FU, AA5JF, WB9HFK, WN4AFP, WB2FKO, N5TJ, and W0PI. As a mobile, it is nice to know that there are stations which follow you around and know that someone will answer your CQ at the next stop.

**K5CCW mobile 11 CW 70 SSB**

no comments

**N5O Mobile Unlimited 2480 CW QSO**

Operator(s): K2UA N5OT

It's tempting to write one of those hour-by-hour recaps, but that will have to wait for another day.

This was my 4th Oklahoma QSO Party in the latter days, since I have retired and have Sundays more free than before. The last three I have done together with my good pal Rus, K2UA, who comes out from New York to join me in the RadioCar for an Mobile Unlimited Multi effort.\*

This Rover thing just gets better and better!

This year we got our hours right (last year we missed one hour of operating time because the WA7BNM contest calendar listed different hours than the K5CM website), we operated for the whole contest (20 hours), and we managed to get on from 41 counties. Relatively smooth mobile operation somewhat made up for the far-from-decent atmospheric conditions. Ugh, conditions were awful, but we bettered last year's entry by a little.

This year we got all the components in all the right places – I finally acquired what Rus

has run in New York for some years – a Kenwood TS-480 driving an SGC-500 solid state amp. We ran 600 watts on 80, and 500 watts on 40 and 20. The amp managed 300 watts on 15 meters for what good it did us. Additionally, Rus brought a smaller Tarheel in his suitcase, which we installed on the roof and dedicated to 40 meters. At the back of the RadioCar was a battle-tested bigger Tarheel which could tune from 80 to 10 meters.

Most of the contest we would go from 20 to 40 and back just by switching antennas. Re-tuning the bigger Tarheel from 20 to 15 and back was quite fast, using a control head mounted at the operating position. We only made 20 QSOs on 15, virtually all at the request of stations asking us to QSY to 15. Last year we made 468 QSOs on 15 meters. The new antenna for 40 meters certainly pulled its weight. We made 1061 QSOs on 40 this year, compared to 352 last year.

Okay, so, start the violins, after all our plans were made, I was offered a date by the orthopedic surgeon to get Hip #1 replaced on March 5. I took the date. Rus and I looked at our plans, and we looked back at my hip, and ... we decided we would push forward with our initial plan to operate the Oklahoma QSO Party. That's a whole long story, but on Tuesday I had my 2-week post-surgery check-up (actually Day 12), the doc was very happy with my progress, and gave me permission to drive. I did not tell him I put 1000 miles in 20 hours on the car the previous weekend. I think the conclusion is that State QSO Parties are good for hip-replacement recovery, or something like that. (Actually I only drove 4 out of 20 hours, and Rus let me operate the other 16).

Many different voices have commented how “the State QSO Parties would not be as fun as they are without the mobiles.” You guys are kind to say that, but from our perspective, what we do would not be as fun if it were not for all the stations that get on and chase us around the state. Seriously. I think we can all agree we all benefit from all of us actually getting on the air, boy can it be fun, and this year's Oklahoma QSO Party is a case in point.

Thanks to Connie, K5CM for putting on a great QSO Party, for the fun of it!

A Hat-Tip to <https://mobiletracker.stateqso.com/OK/> where people were able to follow us around the counties of Oklahoma in real time.

73 and thanks again!

Mark, N5OT with Rus, K2UA

\*Accordingly, I go to New York in October to operate the New York QSO Party with Rus and friends.

**K5CM mobile assisted 1711 cw 561 SSB**

As others have said conditions, especially at the start of the party were poor. But somehow we still managed to make 2272 Q's and 75 mults. The score above does include bonus points. Thanks to all that put up with the QSB and called! Couldn't do it without you. I'm always amazed with Laci (OM2VL)!

**N5KW mobile (with K5CM) 482 cw 363 SSB**

It was a rough start with poor conditions this year. The only thing worse than calling to a quiet band is having to listen while K5CM did the same! Between the dead bands and the roaring winds on day 2 there was no where to escape to. hi hi! It's always fun to work the friends we have made along the way while making new ones to add to the group.

In all honesty.... I don't think we can complain about making a combined total of 3117 q's while running 100 watts. So many thanks to all of you that make this possible for us to have fun doing what we love...ham radio, and spending time together.

**W0BH mobile assisted 953 CW 754 SSB**

Score includes 10,500 mobile bonus points for working at least 10 stations in each of 21 counties.

2026 Oklahoma QSO Party by Bob Harder, W0BH

It's been an exceptionally busy year for me, but the OKQP is always on my calendar. This year, it started off Spring Break at Hesston College, so we planned a run north to south through Oklahoma, then east towards Arkansas for a visit to the Hot Springs National Park afterwards. A powerful front was forecast to come through on Sunday with very high winds and severe storms, so we kept a close eye on the weather as well.

Saturday was a very nice travel day but as others have said, the radio conditions were poor most of the day. I was able to work stations, but it took a lot of effort. I'm sure I missed many who called (if they could even hear me). Things finally picked up later in the afternoon although 15m never opened, and my last three-county line stop was a real treat. I did forget to grab my headlamp as it got dark, so the last 20 minutes or so, I was

a having trouble on the keyboard and not very smooth at times. Sorry about that!

Sunday started out great. I planned six counties and only one two-county line, but I did put in three birding stops for Lorna at convenient reservoirs. About 30 minutes in, the Enter key on my keyboard quit working. I usually have a spare keyboard, but not this time. After several reboots with no luck, I swapped computers but I no longer had automatic band and mode switching because of a known port issue. That all added up to more work, but I think I got everything logged correctly.

We watched the forecast squall line build in front of us as we headed east, and delayed at times so we wouldn't catch up. At the last reservoir, I got out of the van to a nice day. Within a few minutes, I felt cool air, then a wind switch, then the trees almost bent double from 50+ mph gusts from the northwest. The whitecaps on the reservoir were impressive and the waves on the shoreline looked like the ocean! The forecast got this one right. Needless to say, Lorna's birding took a turn for the worse.

Driving got more difficult for her after that, but radio conditions stayed good. We drove across the state line into AR with about 10 minutes to go and no one left to work. I wish more had tried 15m because it was wide open to both coasts a good part of the afternoon. We successfully stayed behind the squall line, but not it's effects.

About 20 miles from Hot Springs, we came upon a line of five cars stopped on the highway. Just a few minutes before, an enormous tree had blown down across the road and both shoulders. Someone had already jumped out and started up a small chain saw. Five women were pulling branches as he cut, then someone else with a big pickup and a chain started hauling bigger branches off the road. All helpful, but it was clear we weren't going anywhere until some heavy machinery got there. I asked a resident for an alternate route and he sent us on a long detour which finally got us into Hot Springs. On the way out, the line of cars stretched over a mile. Along the way, we dodged other branches on the road from the wind storm which got even more interesting as it got dark.

We made it to our hotel. I had booked a room with a lake view. When we pulled open the curtains to check out the view (it was dark by then), a huge garish yellow and black billboard flooded with spotlights advertised space at a marina dead center in our window. In fact at night, it was all we could see. We closed the drapes and listened to the wind howl overnight. When we woke up, the billboard was in tatters and the lake view returned! Sometimes things work out. There was a record freeze overnight and we had a cold and windy but sunny visit to Hot Springs.

Stats

Operated 13.6 hours, 1745 Qs, 409 unique calls, 38 dupes, 606 OKQP miles.

States not worked : AK DE HI NE SD

Canadian mults worked (6): AB BC MB NF ON QC

OK worked (10) : CIM COM HAS LAT LEF MCL MUS OKL OKM PIT

DX worked (5) : KP4 DL F OM ON

Afterwards

Thanks to Connie/K5CM (and Pam/N5KW) for getting things organized. It was another very enjoyable run!

The 2026 Kansas QSO Party is scheduled for August 29-30, the last weekend in August. Once again, there are five weekends in August and we are the LAST weekend. With 105 counties, we need all the help we can get, so mobiles, head this way (and shoot me an email)! Everyone else, thanks for the Qs in Oklahoma. See you down the log in 2026 ..

73, Bob/w0bh and Lorna/k0why

### **N0LD mobile 191 SSB QSO**

Operator(s): KC0MTM N0LD

My daughter, Samantha-KC0MTM, was my driver. We traveled to 14 different POTA parks in 4 different counties on 2 days. Good weather except for the strong winds late in the Morning and into the afternoon on Sunday. POTA really helps stations work you! -

Randy-N0LD

**OM2VL fixed DX 187 cw 76 ssb Mults 72**

QP start with bad condx on high bands. 10/15m was absolutely dead, but fortunately 20m was so good with nice mobile activity. Unfortunately 20m closed here at 21Z. Sunday was much better and on 15m stations was so strong, but unfortunately not many try this band.

I missed only 5 counties (I don't know that I miss some mobile or no activity from here):

Wood, Custer, Roger Mills, Jackson, Tillman.

Thanks for the QSO!!

Most QSO with:

K5CM 52/18

N5O 51/40

W0BH 46/21

N5KW 23/14

KK6MC 22/18

N4CD 19/19

K9OZ 6/6

WT0RJ 6/2

(7): W5CW

(6): N5UM

(4): W4TM

73, Laci

**NE8P fixed FL 177 cw 55 SSB      Mults71**

Wow, the mobile/portable activity made this QP a winner! 84% of my QSOs were with mobile/portable stations. Thanks to them and all who participated!

Mike, NE8P

TS-590SG, SPE Expert 1.3K-FA, 20/15/10 rotatable dipole @ 32 ft, 160/80/40 vertica

**N6MU fixed CA 187 CW QSO 71 counties**

Conditions not the best. 15 never opened Saturday and did open around noon on Sunday. Mobiles make QPs and K5CM had a nice selection this year. Top for me was N5O with 53 Qs followed by K5CM(26), W0BH(22), KK6MC/N4CD(20), N5KW(16) and K9OZ(12). 90% of my Qs were with the mobiles. 73...

John, N6MU

TS-570 & 5BTV

**K9OZ mobile 82 cw**

no comments

**AD4EB fixed TN 51 CW 39 counties**

Primarily got on to experiment with using the new Live QSO Party APRS Tracker and also passing out a few QSOs to the mobile ops. I've got to tell you, for mobile operators and their chasers, the Live QSO Party ARPS Tracker is a total game changer!!! It makes tracking the mobiles fun and incredibly easy.

The only mobile station with using the system with APRS was N5O, so I expect they greatly benefited from using it. N5O (Mark and Rus) are both FB CW operators and did an outstanding job with the pileups. Also enjoyed working K5CM especially on the county lines, wish they had been on the tracker as well.

I can't wait to use it in the GQP and FQP next month, but from the being chased side.

73 - Jim - Ad4eb

**AB5SE portable 388 CW QSO**

When planning our camping trips for the year, I try to schedule two or three around a CW contest. The middle of March is usually our first trip of the year coinciding with my birthday (March 14). With our affection for Lake Wister State Park in Eastern Oklahoma and the seemingly serendipitous occurrence of the Oklahoma QSO Party, it was an easy decision to book this trip.

Lake Wister State Park (POTA US-2793) is located in East Central Oklahoma, an easy hour's drive from our home in Fort Smith, AR. It is a water reservoir for several municipalities as well as an outstanding recreational facility.

Having never worked the OKQP, despite the proximity to home, I follow many state QSO parties and feel that Oklahoma's is among the best. The organization and management is second to none and participation is really good. I anxiously awaited this weekend while watching the weather forecast. Without exaggeration, Eastern Oklahoma weather in mid-March is transitory. Fortunately, the weather cooperated, at least through

Saturday, which was sufficient for our needs as we had to depart Sunday morning.

Since returning to this wonderful hobby after a twenty-year hiatus, I have accumulated a decent portable setup including an assortment of dipoles and EFHWs and, most importantly, a BuddiHex for the high bands. Radios include a Yaesu 891, Icom 7300, and Icom 7610. For this excursion, I chose the 7300, the BuddiHex (of course!), and an 88' EFHW for 40 and 80 meters. Due to overhanging limbs and limited space, the beam was only about 17' above ground, putting the 20m element near 20'. Not ideal, but it worked well. The EFHW was erected in a "hollow" again due to space limitations with the feed point at 5' sloping up to about 35' into a tree. Overall, I was pleased with this setup considering the space limitations.

After setting up on Thursday afternoon/evening, I worked some POTA, primarily CW with a splash of FT8, along with trying to work 3Y0K. I had been trying as time allowed since the operation began, but my work schedule conflicted with the best high-band openings and my low-band antennas at home suck, so no luck. I'd hoped to work them while at the Lake but only heard them once just above the very low noise floor on CW.

N1MM was chosen for the logging program, which I set up for the contest hours prior to the start time; however, I didn't test the F keys to make sure all was in order. Just after 14:00 Z, I found a clear frequency, called CQ, and shortly had K2YG in NJ call me, and it wouldn't log! I'm sure he thought I was a LID, but I finally figured out how to force-log the Q but still didn't know why the F keys weren't working. After 20 minutes, I realized that I had not changed the QTH from AR to OK! N1MM wanted to log as a non-Oklahoma station and would not log other states. Once this was corrected, everything worked flawlessly for the remainder of the day.

Things I learned/realized about this contest:

1. It is a must to make arrangements to spend every possible minute in the chair. This trip was not only for the QSO party but also a getaway for me, my wife, and our dog. I had some food preparation as well as dog walking and other miscellaneous deeds that were needed, and this cut into my operating time.
2. Time should be scheduled in advance to also operate on Sunday. (This will be corrected next year!)
3. A better camping spot is a must. We had our favorite campsite reserved, which has everything we need for seclusion and space for setup, but they moved us last-minute because of maintenance on that spot. I will be more diligent next year to ensure a

satisfactory location.

4. Patience is necessary. At times, it felt like I was working a CWT. Fast-paced with a semi-pileup. Other times, it felt like CW Sweepstakes Sunday afternoon!

After all was said and done, I operated appropriately 9 hours, had 388 QSOs, 64 multiplier's, and a claimed score of 74,496, and, most importantly, had a blast!

Thanks to all who work so hard to make this QSO Party possible and, as I still contend, one of the very best in the country.

I've been paying attention to those who operate state QSO parties fixed and mobile and the enjoyment they seem to have. My plan is to do more, including our own ARQP, as time allows...perhaps even mobile :)

Thanks also to all the out-of-state operators. Without you, there would be no contest!

73, Jerry, AB5SE

## On the Road with N4CD

It was time for the OK QSO Party. I've been mobile in this QSO party for over 10 years on and off. It's not far from home (Collin County TX) and is well organized by Connie, K5CM, and Pam, N5KW, to get the mobiles out and counties covered. This year saw a half dozen or so mobiles out there – most on CW running large routes through the counties. Some both modes. Some counties are not easy to get to – or hard to do as it takes detours and they lack county lines easy to run. The far west in the panhandle are isolated – takes a few hours to cover just 3 counties out that way.

Connie, K5CM, is the master at finding 3 way lines which run up totals quickly.

In addition to mobiles, there were several portables – some at POTA parks – out there helping out with those counties.

I had several routes planned. In the past year or two, there have been 25 new parks added to the system – many of them wildlife areas. Often these are off the beaten path with dirt or gravel road access. When you check the info sheet, some warn – road in can be muddy, especially after rains. Hmm..... I was planning a trip up the east side of OK on RT 259 – great drive – but the WMAs had warnings about muddy access and it had just dropped a couple inches of rain the few days before. Off to the Plan B.

Plan B was to head up I-35 – up and up to near the border with KS, then across on route 60 to Bartlesville in Washington County. Motel overnight there. Then Sunday down route 75 back to TX. I could hit a few new parks along the route on Saturday. I would do about 20 counties that way. Not many rare ones,, but I'd still put them out. Mobiles go all over OK – both SSB and CW. Some operate from 80M thru 15M. Ten meters not too good these days – especially for mobile ops. As it turned out, 15M was poor the whole contest. The rarest counties are in the panhandle and the SW corner of OK. I ran SW OK last year.

I spent a few days researching the POTA parks and the route. You need to check, write down the address and any special info about the site, hours of operation, etc. Some close the gates after hours giving no access. Some are 'walk in only' with no way to run mobile. In many cases, you can simply do a Google Maps search and have your smartphone take to right to the address for the state parks and monuments. . But not always as the WMAs are often not in Google Maps – or the right access point. This trip would be no WMAs Those would be another trip. Plus, they can take a lot of time to get to and back out of as many are off the beaten path.

## **Saturday**

Up at 5:50 am. Yawn. Nuked a Redd's Turkey Eggwich. Made cup of coffee. Took in the newspaper. Out the door at 6:28. It's 2 hours to the first county line. It's 1 ½ hours just to get up to OK from my QTH via I-35. It was DARK. Sun doesn't come up till 7:38 after Daylight Saving Time started a week ago. However, lots of street lights and well driven roads – so no difficulty even in 'dark'. I'm not a fan of 'dark' at age 79.

Checked the propagation. Ugh! A index 24. K index 4. Not good!

The car this year was new car – year old 2025 Chevy Malibu. 4 cylinder 164 HP turbo engine coupled to a CVT transmission. The previous car was a 2016 Chevy Malibu 4 cylinder with 6 speed automatic transmission. It went 173,000 miles. After 8 years, it

was time to sell it and let someone else have it. In my opinion, after 8 years it's time to change cars as they become less reliable at that point. Same with mileage – as you approach 200K miles – lots of things can wear out. (GM transmissions have bad habit of croaking at 200K miles) . On this car – no major problems at all. Repairs included one main 12v battery replacement, two 'start stop' batteries replaced (probably keeping the voltage up by turning on headlights didn't help that) , one 100,000 change of plugs, and routine oil changes and filters. For someone on a tight budget, probably running it a few years more could be OK. Car got near 30 mpg on trips.

I really don't like cars with a 'turbo'. That's trouble spelled slightly different. Hi hi . Same for CVT transmissions. The only advantage there is better gas mileage. This car gets 34 mpg on the road.

Unfortunately, the seats in the other 'sedans' didn't fit me. So I would up with a new Malibu with a 'turbo' engine and CVT – both not good for reliability. If you want your CVT to last, CHANGE THE TRANSMISSION OIL at 40,000 miles. The belts need special lubrication. It wears out. Without new lube in the fluid, the belts begin to degrade. Otherwise, the transmission will likely crap out before 100,000 miles.

The Malibu is now extinct. They don't make them any longer. Last ones rolled off the line late 2024. For some reason, Detroit thinks no one wants a conventional sedan car. Meanwhile, Toyota and Honda are selling tons of Carollas, Accords, and Camrys. Same for Kia and Hyundai. Even VW.

The radio is the IC-7100 with a 4 magnet mount on the roof. I have to stop to change antennas. A long hamstick on 20M and 40M, and a Hustler 52 inch mast with 15M resonator. Never made it to 15M this trip.

The contest runs 9 to 9 local time on Saturday and 9 to 5 on Sunday. Lots of hours to operate and give out counties for the mobiles and the stations chasing them.

Arrived at first county line early – Love/Carter. Nice spot to run. Tuned around. Band not sounding great. Looked for POTA stations. Rare. This was a special WWFF weekend event. SES. With half dozen 1x1 calls ready to run WWFF parks (which are usually POTA parks as well). Band quiet. Most stations will call “CQ Parks”. Heard a few EU stations weak. Some kind of contest going on there.

At 9am, the contest started. Ran 20m, changed to 40m. After 25 minutes, time to head north to next line of Murray/Garvin. Again a good spot is available to run. 2 miles west on the 'county line' road but signs just as it turns a bit to north. Another 20/40m run.

Heading north on I-35 toward OK City. Traffic medium for a weekend. Radio conditions not great, though.

Next up is McClain County. No way to run C/L on I-35, so find exit and run single county on 20M only.

I-35 heads to Cleveland (CLE) next. Again, no way to run C/L on or near I-35 so find exit and run it on 20M CW only. Can't spend too much time in any county as got miles and miles to go today.

I'm not a speed demon, but set the keyer at 24 wpm. I can't write any faster. To do that, I'd have to be using a computer for logging and sending. No thanks. I'm old fashioned with hand sent code. Maybe someday I'll upgrade to memory keyer and just push buttons. One for CQ OK QP DE N4CD. The other the 599 County message. Just have to change the county memory each county or C/L. I'm not there yet. Old school.

I head up through OK City to the north part of OK. At exit for route 66, get off and head east to the "Arcadia Round Barn" which is a historic site and a POTA park..

from the web:

"The Arcadia Round Barn is a landmark and tourist attraction on historic U.S. Route 66 in Arcadia, Oklahoma. It was built by local farmer William Harrison Odor in 1898 using native bur oak boards soaked while green and forced into the curves needed for the walls and roof rafters.

The Arcadia Round Barn is 60 feet in diameter and 43 feet tall.

Why is it round?

Odor's son, Ralph, provided the answer to the question in a 1981 interview:

"At that time, there was a lot of tornadoes. My father figured if they had something round, it would hit and go around it instead of through it."

In the early 20th century, round barns were touted to be "cyclone-proof", but there is no scientific evidence to support the belief"

<https://arcadiaroundbarn.com/history/>



By the 1970s, it was in poor condition, but restored in 1991. There is a museum there, too.

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The ID QSO Party started – caught a few ID stations. Many were gone after a few hours. Seems conditions to way out west weren't that great.

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To the North is Logan County. There are two POTA parks in Guthrie, OK. One I ran before, so I hit the second one, US-11837. It's in downtown, so 10 minutes to get there, ten minutes back. Doesn't help the 'counties run' total, but this trip is both counties and some new parks. Put 20 in log and move north.

Next is Payne, OK. Again, no easy C/L so run single county at convenient exit. There's not a whole lot of anything around until you hit the next state – miles of open road. Traffic medium on I-35. Again if I were just doing the QP, I'd get off and find 2

and 3 way C/L to run but there are some parks coming up.

Heading North you hit Noble County. Run it as a single. Twenty Q in log and move on – just running 20M CW for last couple. Have lots of miles to travel. Do check around for POTA stations and others in the OK QP. Not many OK stations heard – but then again, not listening on 40M. Do hear W5CW in Muscogee from 200 miles away but he doesn't hear me – probably he's running 500w plus and not that strong where I am. I'll catch it closer to his QTH for the multiplier.

Next up is a park in Kay County.

### **MILLER BROTHERS 101 RANCH.**

In 1881 George Washington Miller first used the 101 brand on his cattle, establishing what would become one of the most recognizable names in ranching and western entertainment. A native of Kentucky, he migrated west after the Civil War, settling in Missouri and driving cattle from Texas to the railway heads in Kansas. Miller later moved his ranch to land leased from the Quapaws, in present northeastern Oklahoma, and resided in Baxter Springs, Kansas. Then he relocated his family to Baxter Springs, Kansas, and his ranch to the Cherokee Outlet. Miller also cultivated a relationship with the Ponca tribe, which was briefly displaced to the Quapaw Reservation. He suggested that the Ponca take land in the Outlet as their home.

The 101 earned most of its notoriety from the Wild West shows that it staged. Their show business career began in 1905 when the Millers invited the members of the National Editorial Association to Bliss, Oklahoma, and entertained them with a large exhibition, which they called "Oklahoma's Gala Day." The event showcased the skills of their ranch hands and American Indians, including the famous Apache Geronimo, who killed a bison from the front seat of a car.

The show competed against Buffalo Bill's show. However, as time moved on, the aging Buffalo Bill joined the 101 Ranch Show in its final years.

The onset of the Great Depression drastically impacted the ranch, causing the family to fall deeper in debt. On October 21, 1927, Joe Miller died. Two years later, on February 2, George Miller passed away. Zack Miller could not pull the operation out of its financial woes, and in 1931 the 101 Ranch went into receivership. In 1932 a large amount of the land was divided and leased, and most of the personal property was auctioned. The ranch was sold off piece by piece.

At the beginning it was a 110,000 acre spread. Now, only a memorial exists along Highway 156 - Ranch Road. Nice parking lot to run from. Ran on 20M. There are 2 other parks in this county, both new. However, the day is wearing on – got to keep moving, moving, moving.

### **Next up is Standing Bear Historic Park in Ponca City, OK.**

Same county – run on 40m CW for this park.

### The Story of Ponca Chief Standing Bear

It was January 1877 when the decision was made that the Poncas should be moved to Indian Territory. The Poncas were a peaceful nation of farmers and hunters living along the Niobrara River in northeastern Nebraska. They made a good living there and were fearful about leaving.

Standing Bear and the other chiefs traveled by train to inspect the “Warm Lands” of Indian Territory. Unaccustomed to the climate, they became ill, said they would not bring their people south to die and wished to return home. They found themselves with no food or money, in a place where no one spoke their language. Thus began a wintry, 500-mile walk. In 1877 the Poncas were told that they were to be moved to Indian Territory, by force if necessary.

The dreaded journey “toward the heat” began in April 1877. The members of the tribe who would not go willingly were driven from their village like cattle. All their belongings, tools, seed, and household goods were taken by the soldiers. The old, the sick, and the children suffered the most. Standing Bear’s own daughter, Prairie Flower, died on the long walk.

In July, they reached Indian Territory. The U.S. government had made no provision for their support and many fell ill. Standing Bear’s 16-year-old son died. On his deathbed, he asked to be buried in the land of his grandfathers instead of in the spiritless Indian Territory. Veiled in darkness, Standing Bear and 29 others fled one January night in 1879 - starting the long journey back to Nebraska. He would keep his promise to his son. He would carry his body home.

The Poncas were arrested and imprisoned at Fort Omaha. Hearing of the Poncas' pitiable condition, Thomas H. Tibbles, of the Omaha Daily Herald met with Standing Bear and others who told him of their many difficulties. Tibbles sent details of the Poncas' arrest to major newspapers and raised great public support for their cause. He

concluded that a case should be brought to trial asking for protection under the 14th Amendment, “nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” Standing Bear had not committed a crime and should not have been held under arrest. There was, however, the question of whether or not an Indian was a ‘person’.

Mr. Tibbles enlisted the aid of two attorneys, Andrew J. Poppleton, who was at that time the general counsel for the Union Pacific Railroad, and another attorney by the name of John L. Webster. Together they sued the United States government on Standing Bear's behalf.

The trial of Standing Bear lasted only two days – two days that would leave an indelible mark on generations to come. National attention focused on the story of lost homes, dying children, fear, starvation, illness, and orders relentlessly obeyed.

At the end of his testimony, Standing Bear held out his hand to the judge and pleaded eloquently for recognition of his basic humanity in these words:

“My hand is not the color of yours, but if I pierce it, I shall feel pain. If you pierce your hand, you also feel pain. The blood that will flow from mine will be the same color as yours. I am a man. The same God made us both.”

Judge Dundy ruled in favor of Standing Bear, declaring, “...the question cannot be open to serious doubt. Webster describes a person as ‘...a living human being; ...an individual of the human race.’ This is comprehensive enough, it would seem, to include even an Indian.”

Standing Bear had won the battle to be considered a person under United States law. His fight for his land, his freedom, and his dignity was a major step in the struggle for civil rights in America.

Standing Bear died in 1908 and was buried in the land of his grandfathers.

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Dedicated in 1996, a twenty-two-foot-tall bronze statue of Standing Bear, by artist Oreland C. Joe, highlights the Chief Standing Bear Native American Memorial Park in Ponca City.



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Had a good run. 40M decent at this hour – getting late. Didn't have time to explore the nice park, museum.

I had to skip one park here. Not enough time. Oh well, another trip.

Headed east to Bartlesville for the night. As you drive along Route 60, you are on the **Osage National Heritage Trail** along the whole way. I find a spot 30 minutes later to pull over and make some Qs from Osage County. Get both OK QP credit and park credit. You can actually do this park 'on the run' if you had a driver, or didn't mind operating and driving. At my age, I'm not going to try and do that, and didn't bring the recorder either. No way to work and log for the contest.

From the web:

“Travel the 70-mile long Osage Nation Heritage Trail in northern Oklahoma and experience some of the state's most unique and beautiful landscapes. The surrounding area includes habitats for wild horses and buffalo, hills that held gangster hideouts in the 1920s and '30s and the estates of Oklahoma's historic oil barons such as Frank Phillips,

E. W. Marland, Harry Sinclair and Jean Paul Getty.

The Osage Nation Heritage Trail is identified as beginning in Ponca City and proceeding east along Hwy 60 through Pawhuska to Bartlesville. The byway travels through the beautiful Osage Hills past historic landmarks, charming small towns and natural attractions, such as the renowned Tallgrass Prairie Preserve.”

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There's not much to see along the route. The small towns have been dying for years. It's interesting to note that the only new business in some of these towns are gyms and spas. Duh! Of course, in OK, there are dozens of Native American run Casinos.

I make it to Bartlesville in Washington County, OK. Fairly large city. Find the motel – an Econolodge where you can park outside your room. Like those as opposed to big box motels where you have to drag your suitcase through big lobbies, down large hallways, or up elevators. Don't need the extras and additional cost. I check in.

It's getting late in the day. Head five miles north to another POTA park and a run for WAS County.

### **Tom Mix Museum – Dewey, OK**

#### FROM THE WEB:

Located in Dewey, the Tom Mix Museum houses items from Mix's personal collection, providing a glimpse into the life of one of Oklahoma's most colorful figures. Those too young to remember the man and his talent are sure to find his story as fascinating as those who watched him ride across the movie screen years ago.

Tom Mix was born to Edwin and Elizabeth Mix on January 6, 1880, in Mix Run, Pennsylvania. After a stint in the army, Mix moved to Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, where he worked odd jobs. At various times, he worked as a bartender, a hand with Zack Miller's 101 Ranch, and for a short time in 1911, served as marshal in Dewey, Oklahoma. While working for the Millers Brothers 101 Ranch near Ponca City, Mix began his movie career. He married five times and had two children: Ruth, born July 13, 1912, to Olive Stokes, and Thomasina, born February 12, 1922, to Victoria Ford. Tom Mix died in 1940 in a car accident on a highway between Tucson and Florence, Arizona.

Tom Mix's movie career spanned 26 years from 1909–35. At times, he was under

contract with the Selig Polyscope Company, Fox Film Corporation, Film Booking Office, Universal, and Mascot. He made 336 feature films, produced 88, wrote 71, and directed 117. Mix made nine sound feature films and the 15-chapter serial Miracle Rider. His movies were famous for quick action and daredevil stunts, and Tom and his horse Tony performed their own stunts. Mix was a superb athlete and kept himself in good physical condition. He pioneered many of the early movie stunts. No trick cameras or fake scenes were used because of the limited shooting budgets.

Misinformation and lore seem to abound about Tom Mix. Some of the stories were created as publicity for the studios, others Tom Mix spread himself, and from there, the stories multiplied until the truth became hard to find.

The Tom Mix Museum is an affiliate of the Oklahoma Historical Society,

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It's right downtown. The noise level is S7 on 40M cw. . Museum closed at 6pm so didn't get to do a quick look inside. Fortunately, 40M is rocking and signals LOUD. Make a dozen Qs, to qualify for a park 'activation' then move down the street away from noise to finish up. That's often a clue to a difficult to run park. There's parking spots out front, and a small area behind the museum to park.

Noted before trip that most activations here were short on Qs. Now I know why!

Well, it's 7pm. Dinner time. Time to quit. I'm tired.

Head back to motel. See a few restaurants but don't feel like spending hour eating, and most places busy as it's Saturday night. Grab a salad and 2 slices of pizza at Caseys convenience store, get gas again, and head to motel. Dinner at motel – Italian salad and pizza. Hmm...and bottle of water. Sun is about to set. Time for this oldster to definitely go QRT for the day! It's 65 degrees outside. QSO party goes to 9pm. Not me!

It's been a long day. Now after 7:35 pm. 13 hours on the road by the time I'm back at the motel. Six new parks – missed the 7<sup>th</sup>. Weather has been great – 60s. Warm. Sun. No complaints. Hitting the parks took several hours out of the day – that could have been used to run more counties and concentrate on county lines. You need to run the parks as single counties. Then again, combined trips are more fun. You get to see things you normally drive by or learn about.

Last year it was snow and rain in SW OK and COLD. I think it rained everywhere last

year. This year a whole lot better. Tomorrow is also supposed to be decent.

## Sunday

Up at 6:30. Wander over to breakfast - hmm...not many cars at motel. Have bowl Raisin Bran and 2/3rds banana sliced up, Cup OJ, two cups coffee. The QP starts at 9am. Didn't check weather. Oh well. I'm headed home.

Head south – got to go through Tulsa on Route 75. Years ago, used to be up this way visiting Charlie, W0RRY(SK) in the Collinsville OK area. For many years, we went on trips together – to County Hunter events, Dayton Hamvention, and major county putting out trips all over the country. Sadly, his health deteriorated and the trips stopped. That was fun time! We probably did 30,000 miles of driving/operating together.

No traffic to worry about on a Sunday but lots of exits and ramps to follow Rt 75 down through the Tulsa urban area with dozens of major highways criss-crossing back and forth. Make it through and kept going to the line of Tulsa and Okmulgee Counties.

On the northbound side, nice county line road, nice area to pull off and run it.

At 9am (1400z) start again in the QP. Run the C/L Tulsa/Okmulgee on both 20 and 40m CW. Wind is starting to blow from North. Still nice and warm.

After the run, south again on US-75 down to Henryetta OK and I-40 going west. US-75 goes west for a bit, then turns south again. You enter Okfuskee County. Head on down 75 to county line Okfuskee//Hughes. Nice spot to run on northbound side. Put out on 20 and 40m. Wind picking up! Now gusting 40 mph! Changing antennas getting interesting as wind makes it challenging - trying to blow over antennas as you try to hold them vertical to screw them into mag mount on top of car.

Head further south on US-75 – well, across the entire state from N to S – all the way from Washington County to the Texas border. From the motel to within 5 miles of my house, I'm on US-75 – hundreds of miles. There's not a whole lot of towns south of I-40 all the way down to far south OK.

The wind is helping the gas mileage – fortunately howling from North at 40+ mph.....as I head straight south. At stops, the car is rocking. If you open a door- watch out – the wind will catch it. At the end, really hard to change antennas on roof top. Hmmm..

Down through not much of anything along US-75. Not much civilization along route.

Farms, open range. Run Coal/Atoka line – both bands just before US-75 becomes a major road combined with US-69.

Oklahoma is a mixed bag of counties - half of the area of the state is Native American reservations. Many have few roads – or just one or two crossing. Where there are towns, many are from 'wayback' pioneer days – and have grown little. Outside the town boundaries, the land is restricted to Native American members.

There's a good 'map book' for OKLA – 80 pages of detailed maps.

After the Coal/Atoka line, US 75 goes into Bryan. Getting worn out. Put some WI QP stations in log for Bryan..

Decide there's enough energy left to take 10 mile detour to Marshall County. Don't know if anyone has run it – off the beaten path. Head across US-70, over the narrow bridge, into Marshall. Stop at the park there – Lake Texoma - and park by the HQ building on the hilltop. Run it on 20M. Just across the bridge – nice. Run on 20M.

Time to head home. I'm worn out for the day at this point. Haven't been on a long trip in six months. . Back east on 70 to US-75. The wind is blowing/howling ferociously. . Temps still in 60s. To east, lots of heavy black clouds. Someone, somewhere is likely to be experiencing nasty weather soon.

Down US-75 into TX - 25 miles of two lane cattle chutes (concrete barriers both sides, no shoulders) in Grayson County. To Collin County and 6 and 8 lanes – to home. Arrive at 4:28pm. Enough. Skipped last 2 hours of contests. Tired out. Over 21 hours of driving over two days. Haven't done that in a LONG time. Temp 75F. Wind strong from NW.

738.4 miles driven. Car computer said 34.0 mpg on trip. I'm sure the 40+ N wind helped the mpg as I headed south with strong tailwind.

Looks like 657 QSO. Bonus points for 20 counties making 10+ Qs.

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Woke up next morning and it's 34 degrees in Plano TX. Check weather. It's 17 in Bartlesville in Washington County way up north OK. 25F in Oklahoma City. Wow – what a difference a day makes. The weather cooperated for the QSO Party other than strong winds on Sunday. No rain, no snow, no tornadoes, hail, sleet, frozen roads! It

was good!

## World Cup Special Event Stations

World Cup 2026 · Special Event Station  
2026-06-11 – 2026-07-19

Amateur radio operators across USA, Canada and Mexico host cities are activating special callsigns (W6C, W5C, W2C, VB7FIFA, XE1C, VE3C, ...) to celebrate the FIFA World Cup 26™. Operate VHF, UHF, and HF with us.

<https://www.wc2026ses.org/>

The operation is centered around the games in each city, although activity may be on continuously during the period

There are 16 host cities in North America. Here's just the schedule for Dallas

Matches in this city

Match 11 · Sun, Jun 14 19:00 · Group · France vs Italy  
Match 43 · Mon, Jun 22 22:00 · Group · Round of 32 Qualifier vs TBD  
Match 57 · Thu, Jun 25 19:00 · Group · Final Group Matches vs TBD  
Match 70 · Sat, Jun 27 19:00 · Group · Last Group Round vs TBD  
Match 78 · Tue, Jun 30 18:00 · Round of 32 · TBD vs TBD  
Match 88 · Fri, Jul 3 22:00 · Round of 32 · TBD vs TBD  
Match 93 · Mon, Jul 6 14:00 · Round of 16 · TBD vs TBD  
Match 101 · Tue, Jul 14 19:00 · Semi-final · TBD vs TBD

Other cities include Houston, LA, NY/NJ, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Miami, Kansas City, Atlanta.

The stations on the air will be in the local area but county unknown unless you ask, or find out when they upload to LoTW.

## WI QSO Party

This was not the year for mobile operation in WI. A major storm had dumped feet of snow and it was continuing to snow in many parts of WI for the contest.

**WO9B multi ip mobile 570 CW QSO**

Operator(s): AA9RK KA9FZR KD9NZB WO9B

Our team looks forward to Wisconsin QSO Party all year, and we watched with trepidation as increasing gloomy forecasts threatened the whole operation. Many mobiles, especially in northern and western parts of the state, had to cancel completely. Fortunately, as time went on, the four-foot snow bullseye moved north and our area's forecast shifted to (mostly) rain, allowing us to attempt an abbreviated, more southerly route. We wound up visiting MIL -> OZA -> SHE -> FON -> DOD -> WAS -> DOD -> COL -> DAN -> ROC -> WAL -> JEF -> WAL -> KEN instead of our posted route through southwest Wisconsin.

As the drive went on, whenever road conditions deteriorated, we drove south, out of the freezing precipitation and into the rain. We weren't in truly awful road conditions except on the drive from Sheboygan to Fond Du Lac, at which point we drove south to Hartford where it was much less slippery. We finished the contest in the far southeast corner of the state, an hour from home at that time. We had hard-earned our post-QSO Party dinner, and we relished the meal and the company. By the time we headed home at 10 PM, the roads were very slippery and it was difficult to find the lane. It was a relief to arrive home.

Speaking of conditions, the band conditions had their ups and downs. 20 meters was very hot at the start of the contest, but it petered out early, and 40 meters was much more productive for us throughout the event. 20 meters was good for the east coast and the south, but 7-land calls were hard to come by the whole day. 40 seemed long during the day which made in-state QSOs more difficult, but helped us to work the midwest and beyond. We made two forays down to 80 meters in the last two hours, but the

atmospheric noise was loud, signals were quiet, and rates were low.

High points: Max KD9NZB, at age 14, is already making an impact on this team. He was in the op's chair for 200 QSOs, calling CQ at about 20 WPM and gaining confidence as the event went on. Our antenna system worked extremely well and just needed some tightening midway through the event. As it got less snowy and more just wet, the system became more difficult to use as our usual tuning points weren't accurate. Having a nanoVNA available salvaged those last two hours. We actually tried out some of the contingency plans in our route for the first time, and it was nice to see them work as planned. Our computer networking worked extremely well for N1MM+, spotting, communication, and navigation. Our N1MM+ setup, done carefully and in advance, worked well for all of the ops. The Live QSO Party APRS tracker was a cool and useful addition, and we can't wait to see it full of mobile ops next year.

Low points: Being forced to use the contingency plans by the weather was not unexpected, but still caused a little stress. Navigation was challenging when we were off our planned route after dark. The necessary antenna work and tuning difficulties forced us QRT for about 20 minutes in Jefferson County. We had one N1MM+ lockup plus two unexpected reboots of the spotter's computer, which were minor issues. The unsettled, stormy atmosphere made band conditions sub-optimal, which showed in our lower rates this year than the several previous years. Our rates also took a hit from something which shouldn't have been a big deal but was—our radio's QSK was very slow and took unexpectedly long to switch between TX and RX, which meant we often missed or miscopied the first character in received call signs, which meant we requested repeats on a large percentage of our QSOs. This is probably a setting that can be adjusted, but it was an unfamiliar radio for some of us. It's a skill issue, as they say.

Of course we're biased, but this is our favorite state QSO party and one of the highlights of the ham radio year, and we were pleased to reconnect with so many friends on the air during the event. We'll plan on getting the team back together as KA9FZR for the Illinois QSO Party in October, and we'll plan to see you again next March for 2027's Wisconsin QSO Party.

Final count:

$(570 \text{ CW QSOs} \times 2) = 1140 \text{ points}$

$(40 \text{ states} + 4 \text{ provinces} + 26 \text{ counties}) = 70 \text{ mults}$

$(1140 \times 1.5 \text{ low power multiplier} \times 70) = 119,700 \text{ points}$

$(500 \text{ bonus points/county} \times 12 \text{ counties activated}) = 6,000 \text{ bonus points}$

$119,700 + 6,000 + 100 \text{ (W9FK bonus, 40m CW)} = 125,800 \text{ points}$

Rig: FT-891, 100 W  
Ant: Screwdriver  
Software: N1MM+, Live QSO Party APRS Tracker

**W9W mobile 173 cw 548 SSB QSO**  
Operator(s): NØHJZ

I modified my trip to stay close to a friend's cabin. Minimal driving and still able to hit five counties.

I wish the organizers would change the point value for SSB. There is no way for a phone Op to compete with a CW Op in the same category. With 1 point to SBS and 2 points for CW, there is just no way you can make twice the amount of SSB Q's to compete head-to-head.

Thanks to everyone that pulled out my weak signal from the road!

**W9ET multi op fixed 223 CW 306 SSB**  
Operator(s): KA9CHM WB9SBD

With the snow coming down soo hard, that you couldn't see trees 100 feet away. The snow static was so bad the S meter was like stuck at 20 db over! This made making any contacts on 20 or higher very hard for sure! And I MUST make a Dipole or something for close in Contacts, the elevated vertical on 40, sucks for close in contacts!

**KB9S fixed 251 CW 117 SSB**

I operated in the Wisconsin QSO Party with my wife K9KTT. We had planned a mobile operation, but the snowstorm forced us to remain at the home station. Part of the morning was spent snow blowing.

Operating was limited by the lack of an 80-meter antenna, but conditions on the available bands were generally good. K9KTT had several strong runs on phone, handling the pileups smoothly while I logged. It was nice to work many familiar calls.

Despite the change in plans and antenna limitations and one break to snow blow the end

of the driveway, we had an enjoyable and productive WIQP and look forward to returning to mobile operation next year.

73, Mark KB9S

**OM2VL fixed DX 30 CW 36 SSB Mults41**

Not good condx this year to WI. 20m was the money band, but many time it was so hard to break USA wall.

On 40m same situation, but I can work with all stations which I heard. I tried many times on 20/40m SSB run, but very few WI come back. No any QSO on 80m this year ....

Thanks for the QSOs!

WO9B 12/12

W9W 10/5

W9FK 5/3

(4): W9AV

(3): K9WO, NE9U, W9ET, W9XT

73, Laci

**W0ZQ fixed MN 27 cw 24 ssb Mults29**

Was disappointed that I was unable to get over to Wisconsin from Mpls this year due to the significant winter storm. We missed the great weather by one weekend. Just wait till next year.

73, Jon

## ID QSO Party

**N8II fixed WV 11 CW 16 SSB CW Mults 8 Ph Mults 12**

Intentions may have been the best but I don't have anything positive to say about this QP. I count only 13 unique ID calls in my log. To run this QP for 12 hours x 2 days is ludicrous. Activity continues to decrease the last 2 years. No mobiles/rovers heard or seen spotted this year, a new low. Only 5 points for first QSO with each of the 4 bonus stations. I just read this is the last year for bonus stations, a good idea. Did anyone check or try CQ's on 15M Sunday? I heard a WA station well. Self-spotting is allowed, try a CQ and spot yourself please. And the bonus station 15 WPM code speed limit together with unnecessary long macros I find extremely annoying.

Next year I plan on making 2 QSO's for the State QSO Party Challenge only.

73, Jeff

## The New ICOM MAIHFT Mobile Transceiver

They call it the MAIHFT – the Mobile AI HF transceiver prototype. It looked similar to the IC-7100 unit, but was a half inch taller. Inside was the next generation of AI assisted mobile transceiver coming soon in full production for the ham community. Rumor has it that Elecraft, Yaesu and Kenwood were also frantically working to keep up with the competition.

You'll find it advertised as the new IC-7100-IQ transceiver.

If you go mobile these days, or operate portable in a POTA park, you have a few choices for logging and operating assistance. Unlike base station setups, where now a days folks have their home computers linked to their base station radios, which allows

logging, digital modes, automated QSO exchange using several popular log programs such as N1NM, MARAC Logger, etc.

However, when you're portable at a park, you either log on paper, or log using some form of laptop or iPad computer. Some use iPads, some full scale laptop type PCs. Some use paper logs. That's not too bad if you're sitting at a table, but a bit more difficult sitting in the driver seat. You've got to manage to get this safely connected. Many do it successfully. Works most of the time. But you can still make lots of errors typing in calls real time.

Now if you are mobile – zipping along the roads – without a second person to log and help out, it's more of a situation. You can use a digital voice recorder or even old fashioned cassette tapes. Otherwise, you stop to operate – maybe on a county line. Well, some do go mobile as a team, or having a log person. OK on SSB but if you operate CW, your logger or companion has to be CW literate.

Well, the manufacturers listened. Some of the young folks in the engineering department, those growing up living on the web, went ahead and worked on putting current AI technology into ham radio equipment. Base stations were fairly well covered with logging, memories with CW or voice recordings for CQ's and exchanges like 599 VA, or 599 County. What was needed was having the same or better ways of letting mobile operators work for county hunting, park chasing, county lines, park activations, etc. The goal to enable the mobile to be highly competitive if they want to be.

Thus, the ICOM IC-7100-IQ MAIHFT was conceived a year ago – and it took until this April until a good working prototype, with the bugs ironed out, was ready to go to market. No telling just yet when production will occur, but rumor has it ICOM will be taking orders at the Dayton Hamvention – first come, first serve. That's going to be mind blowing. During the past six months, several folks have been selected to field test the new radio to help debug it.

Now you might ask how did I stumble upon this information. Serendipity. Long ago I made ham radio friends with an ICOM rep who was a county hunter. He mentioned recently ICOM was looking for a few Beta testers for a new rig similar to the IC-7100 I had – and he put in the good word. A few weeks later, I got an email from him, and he said watch your incoming mail/packages. OK.....He kept up with my mobile trips although he didn't have the time to be an active county hunter these days. He was too busy at work.

The box arrived on a Monday. Looked just like a regular ICOM box but had no

markings. I opened it and took out the pieces. The control head was a bit larger than the IC-7100 but not much. It had another row of buttons above the standard unit.

The radio was somewhat taller but fit the same footprint. Instead of a microphone, you got a ear dongle with microphone attached.. I looked through the manual. Wow – some new sections, but also some web links to check out to understand what was in the radio – some tutorials on how to use the AI features. Wow.....impressive to say the least. However, you got a special code to use to access that info and it expired in 7 days. You couldn't copy it either for some reason. I just read through it, watched the videos. Wow!

It took a good few hours to get through all the material. ICOM had induced a new board above the main boards with a Qualcomm Snapdragon Processor/GPU chip. Several other large LSI chips filled the board and it included a cooling fan. Qualcomm chips are in half the cell phones sold these days and are going into data centers by the millions.

The start – here's some of the features included:

1 ) Automated frequency, mode, band hands free selection. When turned on, the radio would come up on the last set parameters, but all you had to do is say “Radio 40M CW mode ” and the unit would switch to 40M. If you had a screwdriver antenna, it would use a new port to control the screwdriver controller and tune it to the 40m CW frequency, then check it for SWR quickly, and Respond with “Done”. They had integrated with Tarheel and other manufacturers to make it work well.

You could also get a SWR sweep of your antenna by command. Useful.

You could program the 'voice' of the radio – male or female, high or low pitch, language, etc.

OF course, at first you had to set up those parameters. Easy to do. It would use existing memories you have stored for frequencies. If you wanted to go to 14278 for some reason, all you had to do is say “Radio 14278 SSB” and it would put you there. A few seconds.

) Automated voice, cw, data decoding and logging. Great. You're driving along and hit a new county. Just to be sure, all you have to do is say “Radio what is my county?” and within a few seconds, using GPS, and stored maps, it would respond with 'Haywood Tennessee’. It also connected to your smartphone via Bluetooth, so it could also use on line databases. And your cellphone location ability.

If you're a CW county hunter like me, you could just tell the radio to log. "Radio LOG contacts". It would then start a log with current Zulu time, with the frequency and mode, and using the AI processing power, decode the received signal – either SSB or CW and log it. If the contact announced their county, it would also log it. You could set it for 'county hunting' mode, QSO Party mode, etc. You had a small display on the top row to indicate the current call decoded! Fantastic!

2 ) In addition, for QSO Parties, you could just tell it when you start – RADIO QSO PARTY MODE'. It would respond WHAT STATE'. You answer – say OK QSO Party. It would quickly download the multipliers and be ready to log them including the OK counties and their abbreviations. It was smart enough to know about county lines, too. It went to the MARAC database for county abbreviations for county hunting, but used the specific multipliers for each state QSO Party. Nifty. Also knew how many points a CW contact was vs a phone contact. Or digital.

So you could be driving down the road and operating. Even better, you could tell it to call CQ or CQ OKQP with your de N4CD. You'd initiate a contact by stating "RADIO MAKE CQ'. It would put out "CQ CQ de N4CD/M Haywood TN". If someone responded, it would decode, respond, and log it. You could program it to immediately go QRZ or send "DE N4CD". Easy to do – just voice input! If you want to make QSO one by one, just say 'again' and it sends the full CQ chain. Now imagine your zipping along the road by yourself, running counties on the run. Contact after contact. Change bands. Change modes. Even run FT-4, RTTY, etc, if you want. For those who want control, you simply have it stop after each QSO and wait for the RADIO AGAIN" command. Or program the dit paddle as a start command.

Well, that's not too much different that those big multi-operator mobiles who use laptops and interconnected systems, except now the radio is also decoding the signals – voice and CW and digital, and logging them. But how well will that work?

I know that the DSP (digital signal processing' power of the standard IC-7100 is great. It whacks down the QRN/QRN on the bands. Makes those weak signals copyable. How much better can it get? The current DSP doesn't address pileups, nor does it even think about decoding signals for voice or cw. You can get external CW readers but they fall apart in pileups.

Now what will AI do? You will be amazed.

I only had a week to evaluate this new radio before I had to send it back. ICOM wanted

feedback from exiting IC-7100 users and active mobiles but their was a long waiting list and they wanted to showcase it at some international trade shows coming up. That left the usual Wednesday CWT test period and some park chasing to be able to evaluate this new beast of a rig. It had the same radio head with the existing functions but a new row of buttons for the AI functions. I'm not sure I even learned to use only 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of what the radio could do.

So off on a Wednesday at 10:30 AM I headed over to my favorite local POTA Park 25 miles from home with the new system installed. My first few miles are really full of traffic, but after that, I told the radio to call CQ County. Then RADIO 20M CW. RADIO SPOT MARAC. RADIO START QSO. It acknowledges each. I'm driving along and the radio is putting out Collin County.. The spot appears on W6RK. Make some contacts. Automatically logged. I move into Dallas County. Radio sends spot to W6RK. The radio seamlessly transitions to the new county.

I get to Spring Creek State Forest Preserve. Tell the radio to QRT county mode and go to POTA mode. It uses the POTA database to know I'm in US-4423 and logs it. Now I tell it to make contacts in POTA mode. RADIO 20M CW. Radio 14041. It spots on the POTA spotting site. People call. I make QSO after QSO. I have the paddles handy but don't even need them. It does a fantastic job of decoding half dozen folks calling all at once. 99.99% of the time, it picks out a call – even when I'm clueless. The ICOM folks used the DX pileup simulators to train the system – on how to decode 20 people calling at once. I can go manual – turn off the automatic decode and operate 'old school' which I do for a while. It still logs contacts as I send them and logs the reports. Well, I let the radio do most of the sending, just hitting the dit paddle once to start another QSO.

I change over to SSB. My hearing is horrible and I usually only make a few if any SSB QSOs. I tell the radio to find POTA stations. It checks the POTA SSB spots, tunes the frequency, and if there is something there, decodes it. You've got a little small new display showing the call. RADIO Make QSO. It sends the voice memory I loaded. N4CD Park to Park US-4423 TX”. Contact made after 3 tries. Logged. Move on to next POTA spot. Great. Add in 10 SSB QSOs. Didn't call CQ on SSB. Band busy. Changed the hamsticks to 17M. Told it find open frequency. After it did, told radio to call CQ POTA. The radio spotted itself. Two dozen folks called. Worked and logged by the radio. Using 'my voice' which it synthesized faithfully. Great!

A bit later, it's time for the weekly hour long CWT. I tell the radio to Search and Pounce starting at band bottom 14040 going up. Wow...does a nice job. I put in my CWT number – 1928 and it sends it at 30 wpm. The radio zips along. After it reaches the top of the CW activity, I change it over to CQ mode. CQ CWT de N4CD. I usually

don't call CQ myself but I'm testing out the system. Whoop Hoo....The radio chugs along. Pileups? Not a program. It's incredible in working the pileups. Some folks in CWT only do search and pounce so I work a bunch of new folks. Well, after an hour CWT ends. I've got 85 in the log from just that. Didn't even change bands. Tell it to upload logs to 3830 scores and POTA database – and it does via the link the my smartphone. It does ADIF for the POTA log, and can do Castillo for the contests. Also sends log to WWFF for KFF-4423.

Head on home. Got to take out the radio and get it back to ICOM. My few days of evaluation are over – and really just got one good day using it. I'm sure going to be near the beginning of the line when ICOM makes it available. It's got so many features , and I've barely scratched the surface of it's capabilities. It will make a fantastic county hunting radio. I can zip along, and the radio does all the work. Easy to save logs to the home computer, too, after a trip or outing.

If you head to Dayton, be sure to look for it.

This is the radio to have for county hunting – you just drive, enjoy the view – and the radio does the rest. Same for park activation. Or if you want, revert easily to regular IC-7100 operation.

I clear the memories and other specific information to my call. Do a 'clear all' command. The radio is now back to factory settings. I sent it back. Sadly. Price will probably add a few hundred to the basic unit....

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It's got to be back at ICOM for **April 1\*** and the announcement they'll probably make that day. While AI investment is in the near trillion dollar range, I'm not sure when it will hit ham mobile radio transceivers.

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\* Yes, there's significance in this date if you haven't caught on yet.

# Virginia QSO Party

**N4CW mobile 1245 cw 18 ssb**

Operator(s): N4CW W4TMO

Thanks to all the stations that worked us this weekend in the VAQP.

Jim, W4TMO, assembled a really fine station in/on his SUV and did all the driving. I (Bert, N4CW) did all the operating. All didn't go as planned...of course!

Our plan for this particular QSO party was to operate high-power (500W) and do phone as well as SSB. Everything seemed to check out in the days prior to the weekend...we started the QSO party in Carroll County on CW. The generator (Honda 2000i) was fueled-up, along with its auxiliary tank, the big Tarheel antenna was all tuned and ready to go, all mounted on a trailer-hitch luggage carrier. We left early, stopping to have our customary bagel and coffee before heading out. Great! We left Raleigh and on our way to our destination, we got stalled by an early-morning "wreck" on I-40 around Greensboro and lost almost a half hour! As planned, we started on time in Virginia prior to arriving at CRL (our planned starting point) with the generator running to provide power to the amplifier and began calling "CQ VAQP" on 40 CW...no "takers" for several minutes...then we worked a few before K1GQ informed us that we had a "poor" CW signal, apparently caused by using the amplifier! So, from then on, we used only the K3 at 100 Watts except for a few minutes on 40M SSB with the amp later. No bad quality reports ensued; however, we reverted to CW at 100 Watts and were able to run that way to the end. We ended our planned route and headed home in daylight.

Stastics:

Approximate total mileage; 1000 miles! Add a few hundred coming and going from NC to VA

We "enabled" 41 counties and 12 cities, for a total of 53 "entities"/mults.

Top "20" worked in two days: K1RO,64 - WB9HFK,47 - K1GQ,40 - K9CW,34 - w5TM,33 - K1ZZI,29 - OM2VL,28 - VE3KP,27 - NE8P,24 - w1FJ,21 - WB8ASI,20 tied with WA1Z,20 - VE3AQ,19 - KR2AA,17 tied with K8MV,17 and KG3V,17 - WA2JQK,16 tied with K8MR,16 and K4BAI,16 - K4HQK,15 tied with AA5JF,15 and N0HJZ. Honorable mention goes to DL3DXX who worked us 14 times on Saturday..s... ALL calls from all over were greatly appreciated.

Need I mention the "GREAT PROPAGATION" that prevailed all weekend??? Many, many thanks to all who persisted the countless requests for "NR?" and the many times that I had to say, "SRI NIL NIL" because the calling station simply faded away...Thanks y'all...it was a great workout. We ended up also working 38 Virginia mults!

PS: We tested and found the cause of the bad CW signal we had while using the amplifier; it's got a relay changeover system that was NOT designed for QSK...guess what? The op (N4CW) had the K3 exciter in QSK mode!!! Duhhhhh...Lesson learned!

73, Bert, N4CW and Jim, W4TMO

**N4HAI mobile 163 cw 115 ssb**

Operator(s): K2KAR N4

4 bonus multipliers for counties in which we logged 10+ QSOs mobile

9 x 100 bonus points for each county activated mobile

4 x 50 bonus points for working K4O, K4V, K4R, K4S

Counties Activated:

Saturday - LDN, FFX, FAU, MAX, PRW, MPX

Sunday - LDN, CLA, WIX, FRE

K3 & Screwdriver

KW4EE portable 95 CW

Band conditions were extremely poor. Which we could have a do over.

**K1RO fixed NH 226 cw Mults94**

This is my first time CW-only in this contest. The few times in the past that I've worked it seriously have been mixed mode, and I've found the lion's share of activity on SSB.

My goal for this contest was to work toward finishing up my CW-only USA-CA county

award, and I saw that N4CW/W4TMO mobile team was going to several I needed. They kindly made some route alterations, and they gave me 9 of the last 11 needed counties (still need Highland and Northampton on CW). Thanks guys! I got sucked in and ended up spending most of the weekend on the radio, ending up with 60+ N4CW QSOs in 50 different counties. Mobiles K4MI, N4A, N4HAI and KK4UZK were also greatly appreciated, and mobiles/rovers accounted for 103 of my contacts.

I started with low power but quickly turned on the amp to be able to get through the putrid conditions at the start. 80 and 40 always work from here, but I was happy to snag some contacts on 20. I even made a few noise-level contacts on 15 and 10 with the beam pointed southeast.

I do think that this contest is far too long and would not have stayed in the chair if I wasn't following N4CW for needed counties. I find that 1-day QSO parties concentrate activity and are a lot more enjoyable for a serious effort.

Thanks to all the VA stations who got on and stayed on and worked through this tough weekend.

**OM2VL fixed DX 163 CW 162 ssb0 Mults95**

Very bad condx and unfortunately most of the VA stations was only on 80/40m. Usually I work N4CW from his all counties, now I missed more than 30!!! his counties ... :(

This time it seems he preferred also 40m.

My big thanks to all stations who called me especially mobiles who come to my frq more times!

For EU station it was no chance make LOVERS sweep, K4L,K4E,K4S was only on 40/80m.

Most QSOs:

N4CW 28/21

N4A 10/6

N4HAI 9/6

K4MI 6/5

KX4O 5/5

KK4ZUU 4/4

N4FE 4/3

(8): KG3V

(7): K1HTV, KW4CW, KW4VA

73, Laci

## Mobile Activity in March

This was a slow month for mobile activity.

At the beginning of the month:

NA8W was running Parks/Counties in FL – mostly on FT4

There was a day of NC QP with many spots

There were many days with no county hunter activity, but parks spotted.

:Mid month, the OK, ID, and WI QP brought many spots and QSOs.

W0GXQ and N0KV took a trip to Texas. Later into OK for several days including east side. There for many days – running the bands in each county. Home by the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

That was it other than some parks being spotted.

W1AW was portable in several states as part of the 250 Celebration. Caught them in ND mid month.

Let's hope mobile activity picks up. Of course, there were hundreds of counties up for grabs in the state QSO parties and hundreds more coming up next month.

As always, check the ARRL Contest Corral for all the upcoming activities/contests.

## Events for County Hunters

April 4 1400z to 5 0200

1.8-28,50,144

**Mississippi QSO Party CW Ph Dig**

RS(T), MS county or SPC or 4-char grid

[www.arrlmiss.org](http://www.arrlmiss.org)

April 11 1400z to 12 0200

1.8-28,50,144

**New Mexico QSO Party CW Ph Dig**

RS(T), NM county or SPC

[www.newmexicoqsoparty.org](http://www.newmexicoqsoparty.org)

April 11 1400z to 12 2000

1.8-28,VHF/UHF

**Missouri QSO Party CW Ph Dig**

RS(T), MO county or SPC or "DX"

[www.w0ma.org](http://www.w0ma.org)

April 11 1800z to 12 1800

1.8-28,50,144

**North Dakota QSO Party CW Ph Dig**

RS(T), ND county or SPC

[ndarrlsection.com](http://ndarrlsection.com)

April 11 1800z to 12 2359

1.8-28,50

**Georgia QSO Party CW Ph RST, GA county or SPC or "DX"**

[gaqsoparty.com](http://gaqsoparty.com)

April 17 1200z to 20 2359

1.8-28,50

**Florida State Parks on the Air CW Ph Dig**

Signal report, SPC (if hunter)

[fspota.org/rules](http://fspota.org/rules)

April 18 1800z to 19 1800

1.8-28,50,144

**Ontario QSO Party CW Ph**

RS(T), ON county or SPC

[www.va3cco.com](http://www.va3cco.com)

April 18 0000z to 19 2359

No WARC

**Texas State Parks on the Air CW Ph Dig**

RS(T), TX park nbr or SPC or "DX" or grid

[www.tspota.org](http://www.tspota.org)

April 19 1200z to 19 2200

3.5-28,50,144

**Quebec QSO Party CW Ph**

RS(T), QC zone or SPC

[quebecqsoparty.org](http://quebecqsoparty.org)

april 25 1400z to 27 0200

1.8-28,VHF/UHF

**Nebraska QSO Party CW Ph Dig**

NE county or SPC or grid square

[nebraskagsoparty.com](http://nebraskagsoparty.com)

April 25 1600z to 26 2159

7,14,21,28

**Florida QSO Party CW Ph**

RS(T), FL county or SPC

[floridaqsoparty.org](http://floridaqsoparty.org)

## Awards Issued

### USACA Awards:

USA-CA: K1ZN Attained Level 3000. He received #1305

USA-CA: JI1LNP Attained Level 500, He received #3906

USA-CA: JM1OFJ Attained Level 500, He received #3907

USA-CA: AD4TT Attained Level 500, He received #3908

USA-CA: IK4UXA Attained Level 500, He received #3909  
USA-CA: IK4UXA Attained Level 1000, He received #1994  
USA-CA: IK4UXA Attended Level 1500, He received #1633

**County Challenge:**

W4SIG Attained Level 18000, (# TBD)

**Gemini:**

W4SIG Attained Level 150, (# TBD)

**Polaris:**

W4SIG Attained Level 250, (# TBD)

**Ran All State:**

RAS: K4YT Ran all Georgia, he received #30  
RAS: N8HAM ran all Georgia, He received #31  
RAS: K4YT ran all Minnesota, he received #32  
RAS: W4SIG ran all Georgia he received #32

**County Challenge:**

OK2FD Attained Level 2000,

That's all folks! 73