



Florida Contest Group Contest Gazette

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Spring 2026

From the President's Corner

Chris Plumblee, W4WF, FCG President

Greetings to everyone in FCG-land! I hope you're all enjoying the beginning of spring. It looks different in Florida compared with the rest of the country - the high in Orlando at the time of writing (in mid-March) is already 85 degrees F with higher temperatures just around the corner. It's prime antenna work weather if your station needs some attention - we haven't started the daily thunderstorms yet, and it should be nice and dry for the moment!



The ARRL DX SSB contest just finished last weekend. I wasn't able to operate this time, but I saw some big scores from N4UU and AD4ES, among others. It's great to see HI3LT also QRV from Loma del Toro in the Dominican Republic. Several of our members have operated from Tino's station in the DR, including a memorable CQWW CW M/2 in 2007 with AD4Z, N4TO (sk), K1TO, K8NZ, and N4GI, where they set the North American record (which has since been broken several times) at the bottom of that sunspot cycle. 3830 shows 231 10m QSOs in their FB effort! Just imagine what a similar group could do with good 10m propagation!

Thanks to everyone for their attendance and support of the FCG and WRTC 2026 at Orlando in February. We raised over \$5,000 in profit from the dinner, which was sent to WRTC 2026 (the check is literally in the mail as I write this article). M0DXR, the WRTC 2026 director, promises that FCG will feature prominently in publicity materials and on social media in recognition of our donation.

The spring contest season marches on. If you like CW, the Russian DX Contest is a mixed-mode 24-hour event beginning at 1200z on March 21. I've operated this contest a few times before; in low sunspot years, we're chasing the Europeans on the low bands, but there's always some exciting DX on. In the Russian DX Contest in 2020, I logged my first (and to date, only) Zone 34, working DL2RMC as SU9TH on 20m CW. Sadly (for WAZ purposes), he's better known these days as A65CW, 9G5FI, and 9J2FI. This is an everyone-works-everyone contest, though Russian Oblasts are multipliers as well as DXCC countries. It's a popular contest in WRTC qualification years, as the Russian WRTC group added it to the list of qualifying contests. In off years, it probably won't get as much attention. There is relatively less SSB activity than CW in this contest, and if your QSO partner logs your number incorrectly, you both

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The Contest Gazette is the newsletter of the Florida Contest Group (FCG). The Gazette is published quarterly and notifications for input and publication will be on the FCG reflector.

Please send input to the editor, Dave Kalahar, NF6P, dave@nf6p.com.



From the President's Corner continued:

lose credit. That tends to keep the cut numbers from the Europeans to a minimum, at least on fills and repeats.

After the Russian DX contest, the WPX SSB contest begins at 0000z on March 28 (7 pm EDT on March 27). This is another everyone-works-everyone contest, though limited to SSB. The assisted and unassisted categories are combined for this contest. That may or may not be to your taste; multipliers in a contest like WPX are basically meaningless anyway; keep running, and they'll call you sooner or later. This can be a good contest to operate to wring the last of the wintertime propagation out of Cycle 25. WPX SSB is usually the contest closest to the vernal equinox in the northern hemisphere. After the equinox, propagation switches (gradually) to summertime mode, featuring less reliable morning high band openings and more atmospheric noise on the low bands. As a tradeoff, the high band openings can extend well into darkness as long as there is light on at least one end of the path, and Sporadic-E openings are more common in summer as well.

Speaking of rare DX, 3Y0K is still going strong as of this writing. If you needed Bouvet and you chased DX, I hope you managed to make it into the log. I understand they have had a decent signal on 10m CW and 30m FT8 at times. I'm guessing there won't be many more activations of Bouvet in the future, certainly not regularly, so WFWL!

After WPX SSB, the next big operating event for us is FQP at the end of April. Plans are underway for a large mobile fleet in 2026, and we'll have 20 1x1 calls on whose suffixes spell US BIRTHDAY to celebrate the US semiquincentennial.

Work continues on the 2025 FQP results; I've received the spreadsheets and am drafting the write-up now, aiming to publish by the end of this month.

Thanks again to everyone for your generosity and for representing the FCG so well with our donation to WRTC.

I appreciate every member.
73/OJ/LN, Chris W4WF

**From the FCG VP
NK4O - A.J. Stockton
Winter NAQP 2026:
Sunspots, Static,
and the FCG Spirit!**



Hey FCGers,

The winter leg of the 2026 North American QSO Party (NAQP) is officially in the logs, and once again, the "Orange Shirts" made quite a splash! Whether you were chasing multipliers on CW or letting the computer do the heavy lifting on RTTY, the Florida Contest Group showed up in force to prove that the Sunshine State is the place to be for radio.

CW: Dave Leads the Charge The CW leg in January saw Dave, N2NL, put on a masterclass. Operating with FCG Team A, Dave snatched a #3 overall finish in the Assisted category. Clocking over 1,200 QSOs is no small feat—that's some serious high-speed action! We also had a fantastic turnout across the board, proving that our club's depth is second to none.

SSB: Team Falcon Battles . The SSB weekend gave us a run for our money with some "interesting" solar weather. The FCG FALCON crew was anchored by Jay, N4OX, with 994 Qs, Dave, NF6P with 789 Qs, and Franco, VP2MAA with 746 Q's. . Despite the "watery" signals, they proved that Florida grit can beat a grumpy sun any day!

In the SSB leg specifically, Jay fought through the solar noise to land a spot in the National Top Ten (Single Op) with over 225,000 points! This follows the major "mult-magnet" on CW. When you see a score like that from his home base in McDavid hitting the scoreboards, you know the rest of the country is taking



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Florida QSO Party Updates

FQP progress continues!

While the final 2025 write-up is being completed, all of the supporting tables, detailed records and final results are finished. Plaques not hand delivered at Orlando are going out in 3 waves. Those outside of the USA, including Canada, require Customs forms and the most lead time, so they are first.

Then, within the USA, outside-FL plaques are next with in-state plaques to follow. All are packaged and labeled.

Meanwhile, for the FQP 2026, we have 20 hosts for 1x1s that spell "US BIRTHDAY" twice, using N4 and W4 prefixes. Although the FQP 25th anniversary featured 25 hosts, many of them were single mode, so having all 20 be mixed is terrific!

We are getting set for the FQP 2026 on all fronts, including activity pages, the ARRL Contest Update, Zoom calls, e-mails, website updates, etc.

You can help by activating your station for anything that is comfortable. We anticipate that the bright FL sun will be ablaze at the end of April this year, just a few months from the USA turning 250 - and WRTC right after that as well!

Thanks! Vy 73, Dan

Dan Street, K1TO
Vice President
Florida QSO Party



During the contest dinner, some FQP awards were handed out. Photos are from the dinner, with more info to follow soon.



FLORIDA QSO PARTY - 2026 USA 250th Anniversary Celebration



2026 FQP Update from Chris Blake, NX4N, FQP Public Relations Coordinator

ACTION REQUIRED!!!

Please go to the FQP website and register your fixed, mobile, expedition operations (note- Spelling Bee 1x1 stations are pre-entered so no action required). Just click on one of the applicable links below. Remember to submit forms for both Saturday and Sunday as applicable.

FLORIDA COUNTY ACTIVATION FORMS

Use these forms to enter your planned FQP Activity:

Florida **Fixed** Station County Activation form. You only need to enter your information once on this form. Click [here](#)

Florida **Expedition** Station County Activation form. You need to enter your information for each day on this form. Click [here](#)

Florida **Mobile Station** County Activation form. You need to enter your information for each day on this form. Click [here](#)

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU REVIEW YOUR ENTRY FOR ACCURACY BEFORE SUBMITTING*

NEW for Mobiles & Expeditions:

There will also be a new FQP Mobile & Expedition APRS real-time tracking tool at <https://mobiletracker.stateqso.com/>. **Instructions for using this tool on APRS so folks can track you is [here](#).** NOTE: FQP does *not* permit self-spotting so ***do not** include your operating frequency* in APRS!

Sincere Thanks to the NYQP leadership team for providing this valuable tool for FQP.

Thanks for helping to make all our counties Radio-Active!

vy 73/OJ,
Chris, NX4N

FQP April 25-26, 2026



Motivation for ARRL DX CW & SSB Top Scores

This winters ARRL DX contest had some mixed conditions, and FGC member, N4UU, posted some world class scores, operating Single Operator, two radio. We asked Martin, "what motivates you?" And here is his answer for all of us to enjoy.

First a short history.

I was originally licensed in 1972. I had a blast with my HW16 and 4 crystals. Girls, cars and then family intervened and I did not get licensed again until 1993. I built a small station in Naples. I had a 70 foot tower with a tri-bander and I thought I was the man !

I think a round 1998 I joined the FCG and that opened a new world to me. I meet K4OJ and his enthusiasm was infectious. I then had K1TO show up at my QTH when I was hosting a field day style M/M for the WPX SSB in 1999. He sat down at the 10 meter station and proceeded to show us how it is done. By the way we won the 4 call district in that contest. Not bad for field day style. I only had one problem. I was getting my butt kicked. I'm making few hundred Q's in a contest and these guys in the FCG are in the thousands. I knew I had a lot of work to do.

I moved from Naples to Chiefland in 2005. I put up a 90 foot tower with a pair of stacked tri-banders. With the station improvements and some improvement in skill I'm now in the middle of the pack.

In 2012 another move to Hawthorne. I put up 2 120 foot towers and a 50 foot tower. I now have 3 stacked tri-banders fixed on Europe, 2 stacked tri-banders on JA with 50 foot tri-bander for South America and a shorty forty at 120 foot. No excuses now. It has just been in the last couple of years that I think I've



Martin Pelt, N4UU, Hawthorne, Florida

made it to what I call the bottom of the top.

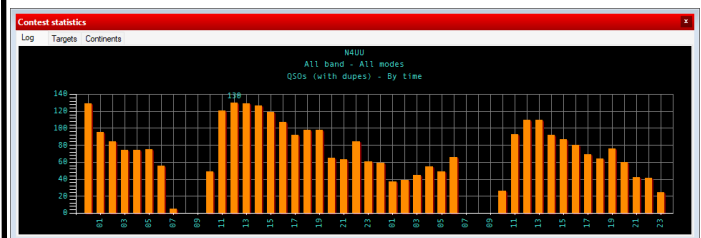


What has changed ? Skill has improved but I think the biggest thing is a change in attitude. I maintain a sense of urgency constantly now. No slacking. Butt in the chair! Constant looking for new stations to work while at the same time trying to get that next big run going.

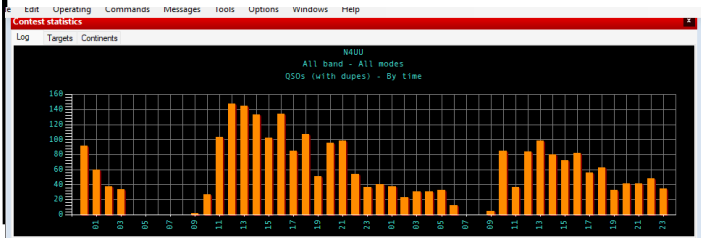
I plan to move to the big bend area this summer. Time for retirement and get closer to the grandkids. A new station with new improved antennas! With the new station more practice who knows maybe I'll make it to the top. I also am lucky to have a great XYL Pat N4TUU that supports and encourages this hobby.

Well what does motivate me? I want to be number one and that's a lofty goal in a club full of WRTC competitors!

CW Claimed Score ARRL DX 2026
Total: 3196 QSO 460 Mults
Total Score 4,400,820 (#12 World SOUAB HP)



SSB Claimed Score ARRL DX 2026
Total: 2586 QSO 398 Mults
Total Score 3,018,432 (#6 World SOUAB HP)





AA4TI 2025 FQP Expedition Station Saga

The Florida QSO Party has been a favorite for me (AA4TI) ever since I relocated to Florida from Costa Rica in 2018. For the 2021 FQP I decided to operate as an Expedition station, and since that time, I have been working as an Expedition entry every year while honing my routes and station to maximize performance.

I have traditionally operated as a SOAB Mixed Expedition station from County lines. This plan has always produced good results since every QSO counts for two counties. However, the plan is not without problems. First and foremost is the difficulty in finding suitable county lines to operate from. As a County Hunter, I make it a point that all of my operating locations split the county lines so that my contacts are acceptable under MARAC rules for county line operations. Compounding this issue is the requirement for all of the county lines to be reasonably close together so that the lost time traveling between each operational site is minimal. Typically, set up, tear down and travel time gobbles up about half of the available contest period so that the station is actually only on the air for about 10 hours of the 20 hour period.

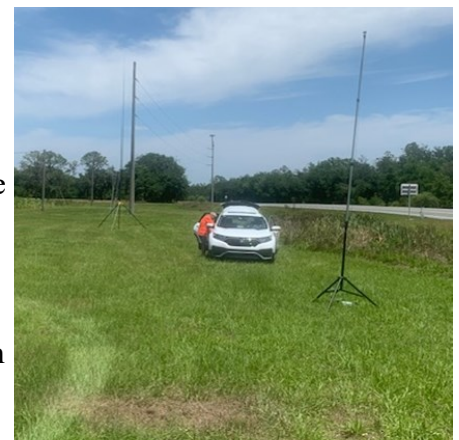
The Expedition station that I have assembled requires a fair amount of “real estate” since my choice of antenna has been a 33 foot vertical that has four 25 foot ground radials. Most of the county lines that I have operated from are located on rural dirt roads or private property because of the need for “real estate” to set up the antenna. In fact, this year the AA4TI Expedition only operated from one county line that was on a paved road right of way.

I use Randy Majors Maps with county line overlays along with Google Street views to determine exact GPS coordinates for my operating sites. Obviously, permission has to be obtained to operate from private property owners in some cases, which has never been much of a problem. I learned from experience that actual site visits are a must in advance of the FQP. A few years ago, I did not make these visits and relied on Google Street View. At one location, I discovered that a big solar panel farm had been built near the county line sometime after the Google Street View pictures were taken. This solar farm completely wiped out my

Steve Morton, AA4TI, Nokomis, Florida

radio reception and I had to find another location on the fly which resulted in a fair amount of lost time during the party.

I usually start preparing for the FQP a couple of weeks in advance. Over the past several years, this task has taken less time each year since I have built a complete station dedicated to FQP alone. Most of the year, this station resides in my closet on a high shelf. My routes to each county line have been honed and improved each year. The station itself includes the portable antenna system with UnUn and ground radials, an operating desk that is custom fitted to the passenger side front seat of my Honda CRV, radio, tuner, power supply, Winkeyer, paddle, cables and ground rods, laptop computer, lighting, generator, etc. It still takes a full day to get the equipment installed in the car. Once the desk is in place with all of the equipment set on it, everything gets “wire tied” to the desk for safety purposes. Nothing causes a bigger “OH S*&t moment than when equipment starts flying around from hard braking or a back road pothole. No part of the station is grounded/bonded to the vehicle... the car is nothing more than a shelter from the elements. On Saturday night during the FQP, at dusk, I can close up the car, start the engine, run the AC and keep all of the bugs out! We do have a whole lot of bugs that start showing up when the sun goes down. With my task lighting turned on, my vehicle



Getting set up on HIL and POL County line



becomes a magnet for mosquitos and various flying critters so it is critical to be able to close the windows of the vehicle.

After the FQP, it takes quite a few hours to “de-trash” the car and dismantle everything and stow it away for next year.

Setting up the station, operating in the FQP and stowing the station has become an increasingly tiring event. The two days of FQP usually have me leaving the house at 10am on Saturday, and returning home about 11:30 pm that night. Then, after just a few hours of sleep, I leave the house on Sunday morning around 5:30am and return home about 7:30 pm. So, I decided that this year will likely be my last “full effort” Expedition operation – I’m 75 years old, and not getting any younger. I’m not sure what the 2026 FQP will look like but there is a full year ahead in which to make that determination. Maybe I can be a 1X1 next time around?

To that end, I decided that I would try to go out with a “bang” this year and bring in a second operator to help reduce the burden. Enter Dave – K8DV. Dave lives in Ohio and has been a friend for many years. When I lived in Ohio, Dave spear-headed many SQP operations in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. Our group was quite successful having “wins” in all three states multiple times. A couple of times, we set Ohio QP records using a group of seasoned operators and five radios from Dave’s house in Goshen, Ohio. Those were massive operations that required a Herculean effort by Dave to set up and network.



Rear of CW station ready to test



Both stations on bench ready to test

Dave usually comes to Florida for a visit to Ham-Cation every year. This year, when I told him I was thinking of not doing the FQP Expedition, he offered to fly back down in April to be a second operator and another source of “labor” for setup, operating and tear down of the Expedition station. I readily accepted his offer. Many “Thank You’s” go out to Dave for making this trip to play radio in the FQP. And “Thank You’s” are due our wives for putting up with this insanity. My wife however has already spent the FQP prize money. Dave’s wife is still working out how she will get her pound of flesh from him.

After brain-storming ideas to maximize the 2025 Expedition effort, Dave and I decided that we would do two complete stations – one dedicated to CW and another for SSB. On paper, this sounded like a great idea, but in practice, it turned out to be a huge effort... much more than double the effort of putting a single station in play.

Dave shipped down five bandpass filters (one was all band selectable) and some misc. fittings and grounding materials. My son (AA8Z) shipped me back the IC7300 that I gave him as a permanent loan. I started building a second operating desk for the back seat of the Honda CRV and assembling all of the cables and radio bonding/grounding straps. I’m a firm believer of using short coax jumpers and correctly sized inter connecting cables with loads of ferrite beads. Too many times in the past I’ve had stray RF show up unexpectedly. The one constant with Expedition stations is that Mr. Murphy will



always show up to create problems. I began assembling the rest of the stuff to set up two nearly identical IC7300 stations with LDG AT600 tuners, WinKeyers, etc.

One other important thing that needed to be built was a Quick Deploy Vertical antenna.

The Quick Deploy antenna is a 19 foot tall telescoping tripod/mast. Beneath the tripod sits a homemade pad that contains an Unun and four 17 foot ground radials on spools. I use a 1:1 current balun as an UnUn which is not very ideal - I let the auto tuner figure out the best match. I use a single $\frac{1}{4}$ wave wire for each band (10/15/20) which is attached between the Unun and top section of the mast, then the mast is raised and each section is locked in place as it is being raised. The Quick Deploy antenna can be set up in just a few minutes by one person while the other person is starting the generator, driving some short ground rods and



QD Antenna ready to go

powering up the CW station. At each new county line, we always started the CW station on 20 meters. The SSB station would then come on line in about 15 – 20 minutes using the “big” antenna usually on 15 meters. The Quick Deploy antenna worked quite well, but does not cover 40 meters due to the short size of the mast/tripod.



QD Antenna set up for testing

The big antenna is a 33 foot tall telescoping mast and military tent pole tripod. This also has a 1:1 UnUn which is definitely not the best choice here. Unfortunately, since this antenna is used for all bands from 10 – 40, the characteristic impedance is

all over the place depending on frequency, so a properly selected UnUn that would work on all bands is not possible.

One of the other things that I have discovered is that using insulated wire for the radiating element may not be a good choice. Normally, insulated wire does not have a “velocity factor rating” like



coax, but the use of insulated wire makes a big difference on where the wire resonates – calculations for length just don't work. Insulated wire works just fine for ground radials and may actually be preferable to bare wire. Once again, the auto tuner comes to the rescue.

I think that more experimentation is needed for this kind of antenna system. Stay tuned...lol.

Dave arrived on Thursday evening 4/24 and we immediately started to assemble the two stations. I had "pre-staged" the equipment in the garage and test fit everything in the car earlier, so the actual setup went fairly quickly. We wanted the two stations to talk to each other in real time, so Dave went to work on the network using an iPhone as a Hotspot. This proved to be a much bigger problem than expected.

On Friday afternoon, we had both stations assembled in the car and drove up the street to a convenient spot of real estate and gave everything a shakedown. The radios and computers all behaved well and interference between the radios was very minimal. We were good to go. This seemed like a good time to come back home, hop in the pool, and chill out with a couple of adult beverages.

Saturday morning arrived, we packed the cooler and headed out. When



K8DV running CW from Highlands

we arrived at our first location on the Polk/Hillsborough line, we got set up and were ready to rock well before noon. At the starting bell, we ran into issues almost immediately. The network was very unstable and crashed right out of the starting gate. Rig control for the SSB station was not working and contacts from the CW station were getting

dropped as the logbooks tried to update. Our Hotspot was basically useless likely due to our somewhat remote location and the overhead that two clients put on it. At that point, we felt that using separate logs without the network was the fastest way to get into the action. The SSB station was on the air at 12:08pm and the CW station was finally back in action at about 12:20pm. Being a successful Expedition requires Planning the work, and working the plan – and then improvising when everything goes to crap.

Most of our work plan still remained in place. In particular, we wanted to maximize the amount of on air time that we had. So, the plan was that when it came time to move to the next county, the CW station would remain on the air using the Quick Deploy antenna while the SSB station operator would tear down the bigger antenna and get it stowed in the car. At the very last minute, the CW station would shut down, and both operators would finish the tear down which included shutting down the generator, pulling up the ground rods, and stowing the Quick Deploy antenna system.

Upon arrival at the next county line, both operators got the generator, ground rods and Quick Deploy antenna system set up and the CW station would start operating while the SSB operator set up the big antenna system.

This part of the plan worked well, and we were able to have the CW station actually on the air for about 13 of the 20 available hours of the FQP. The SSB station was actually on the air for about 10 hours out of a possible 20. The balance of time that each station was not on the air was taken up with travel time, set up time, tear down time and Murphy visitation. And, Murphy did make a number of visits to our locations... but we managed to cut his visits fairly short whenever he showed up.

Sunday morning was one of the dumbest Murphy visits of all. I had the exact GPS coordinates programmed into WAZE, so all we had to do was click on the "stored location" and go. Unfortunately, I clicked on the location for Hendry/Glades, which I used three years ago. I did not have the location for Hendry/Lee in the stored location folder. Without thinking, I navigated to the wrong county line,



which would have a big bearing on the rest of the day. So, once we discovered that we were arriving at the wrong county line, I plugged in the correct GPS coordinates and WAZE insisted on taking us to a location that was 752 miles away. We ended up pulling out the paper Florida road map and manually navigating to the closest point the Lee/Hendry lines crossed. When we got there, there was no good place to set up shop, so we moved on to another place where the lines crossed. Fortunately, there was a dirt road where we could pull off and split the county line. Even though we left home 30 minutes early, we ended up being about a half hour late getting on the air from Lee/Hendry. Operator error stinks!

Murphy was not finished with us yet on Sunday morning. Dave started a run on the CW station and I proceeded to set up the SSB station. Right off the bat, I noticed that the antenna tuner was doing something weird. As I talked, the SWR seemed to be spiking at the tuner. I could also see the spikes on the IC7300 control screen. I'm not sure how this sounded at the other end of the QSO, but we were making contacts so I ignored the issue thinking that the antenna was actually tuned and the issue was "mostly cosmetic".

When the smoke cleared, we managed to activate 5 county lines (10 counties) and one single county at the end of the FQP. For the most part, we were able to maintain the schedule that we published prior to the party. We threw in the towel about 20 minutes before the end of the contest. In Highlands County, we only set up the Quick Deploy antenna and

operated a single station and when the contacts started to dry up, we called it a day.

Our goal this year was to exceed 1,000,000 points. We hoped for 2K CW contacts (actual was 2064), 500 SSB contacts (actual was 1113) and 130 Mults (actual was 120). We came up short on the Mults, but we exceeded our goals on CW and SSB contacts. We never worked AK or HI, and missed a few provinces. We also missed a few DX entities that were active in the FQP on sideband. We don't know what deductions the robot will make, but we think the final score will be between 1,100,000 and 1,200,000 after deductions and penalties. When operating from county lines, there is always going to be a sizable score reduction due to other operators not properly logging both counties. And, in the heat of the battle, there will be busted callsigns and other assorted errors. A "golden log" from an Expedition station is just not likely to ever happen.

Tidbits:

Number of Search and Pounce contacts: The only S&P contact we had was with N8II. I was looking for a clear frequency to run SSB and heard Jeff calling CQ Florida. After I made the contact with him, he gave me his frequency! All of the rest of our contacts were made in "Run" mode. It can be quite tough for a pipsqueak station to find a quiet run frequency so that was very kind of Jeff to give us the frequency he had established.

Visits from "Murphy": Not sure, but at least 5 or 6 - some minor, some major. There were multiple computer issues, primarily in the networking. We had one major navigation error. We let the generator run out of gas once. On the plus side, we had no RF issues at all.

Total curse words used: Pretty much all of the "regular" curse words - not many new ones.

Total miles driven: 476 - (788 miles including picking up/returning K8DV from/to TPA airport)

Total time on road including time to get to first stop and back home each day: 28 hours plus 6 hours driving back and forth to TPA airport.



AA4TI running SSB



Amount of sleep between Day One and Day Two: ~5 hours

Sandwiches consumed during FQP operations: 6 and 2 bags of chips – we were just too busy and “wired” to take the time to eat. We did stop at a real restaurant on the way home on Sunday.



Sunset from Sarasota and Desoto County

Bottled water and soft drinks consumed during FQP operations: 18 bottles/cans – It was really hot sitting in the car under sunny Florida skies. Fortunately, the required visits behind a bush was minimal due to the dehydrating effects of the heat. We only made one gas station stop and it was quick. We used 30# of ice keeping our drinks cold.

Quantity of sweat expended during FQP: Very close to 18 bottles/cans.

Estimated time to build operating desks, arrange equipment, install in car: ~20 hours

Time to dismantle and stow equipment: 5 hours

Cost to repair tuner that crapped out toward the end: TBD – tuner was shipped to LDG and awaiting repair.

Cost to ship “borrowed” equipment to FL and back to OH - \$ 175

Cost of car operation and airfare associated with Expedition: ~ \$ 900

Estimated hours devoted to FQP in 2025 including planning and actual operation: ~100

Collateral costs: Spouse bought new sewing machine in retribution: Cost was \$ 2,000. She refers to this as “her portion of the prize money”.

Best conversation: Dave - (while sitting on the ground working on antenna) “Do you have chiggers in Florida?” Steve – “Don’t know, but the fire ant mound next to your foot could be problematic”.

I think that just about covers this year’s FQP for AA4TI. This was by far the best effort for AA4TI. Hopefully the log robot will agree. Many thanks to all of you around the globe who chased us around and gave us so many contacts.

***About Steve, AA4TI:** first licensed in 1964 as WN8PME then upgraded to General in 1965 as WA8PME. Steve had a period of inactivity (chasing girls, caught one, got married, started family, etc). Got relicensed as KB8NHK then upgraded to Extra as AA8HH. 1st Harmonic got his license (AA8MC) but his little Sis decided that flying is cooler than Ham Radio. XYL still thinks both hobbies are a waste of time. Primary activities are County Hunting - USACA 1161 - and limited contesting. He has earned the ARRL Triple Play Award. Steve enjoys chasing DXCC countries and working toward 5BDXCC.*

***2026 plans:** Very limited fixed operation this year due to health issues. Last year was likely his last expedition. Steve hopes to hand out Sarasota county to a bunch of participants this year in 8-10 hour effort. maybe more.*



...Continued from page 2

Winter NAQP 2026: Sunspots, Static, and the FCG Spirit!

RTTY: Making Digital Noise By the time the RTTY leg rolled around in late February, 10 meters was giving us the silent treatment. However, the FCG digital footprint was still loud and clear. Operators like K9OM (asst-SO), NF6P (SO), and W4MLB (M/2) kept the buffers full and the multipliers climbing, ensuring we stayed on the air for the club even when the bands weren't cooperating.

The Bottom Line Whether you submitted a log with 10 QSOs or 1,000, thank you. It's the collective effort—and having anchors like Jay, Dick, and Dave Mueller at the top—that keeps the FCG name respected nationwide.

Let's take this energy into the upcoming Florida QSO Party and show 'em how we do it!

73,

NK4O | A.J. Stockton

Preliminary Winter NAQP Results for FCG Members

Event	Calls	Q's	M's	Score	Results
CW (A)	N2NL (Team A)	1,293	319	412,467	#3 Overall
CW Mut-2	W4WF (@N4WW) (N4GI, N4WW, W4WF)	1,810	308	577,480	#9 Overall
SSB	N4OX (Team FCG FALCON)	994	227	225,638	#8 Overall
SSB	NF6P (Team FCG FALCON)	789	183	144,387	#6 W4 Area
SSB	VP2MAA (Team FCG FALCON)	746	194	144,724	#2 Caribbean
SSB Team	FCG FALCON- (N4OX, VP2MAA, NF6P, KT3T, WS4AM)			624,040	#6 Overall
RTTY	K9OM	684	222	151,848	#9 Overall (SOA-LP)

FGC Gives Big to WRTC 2026 Fundraising Effort

The World Radiosport Team Championship event is coming 8-13 July, this summer to the United Kingdom. WRTC is a means to demonstrate international goodwill and friendship in the true ham spirit. It also allows youth operators to demonstrate their skills within this highly competitive event.



Thanks to everyone in the Florida Contest Group and their generosity, the club has made a donation to support WRTC. As a refresher, the FCG committed to support WRTC 2026 by donating all of the profits from the 2026 Orlando Contest Dinner to WRTC.



DX Engineering was extremely generous to donate a brand new IC7610 and a brand new IC7300 to

serve as door prizes at the dinner. Immediately following the dinner, we were at approximately \$4,400 in profit. After we held the window for donations open through March 1, we received an additional \$615 in contributions for a final profit (and hence donation to WRTC) of \$5,015.

Thanks to everyone in the club for opening your wallets at the dinner, buying raffle tickets, and donating to a worthy cause.



Winner of the IC-7610, Lowell, W2DLT

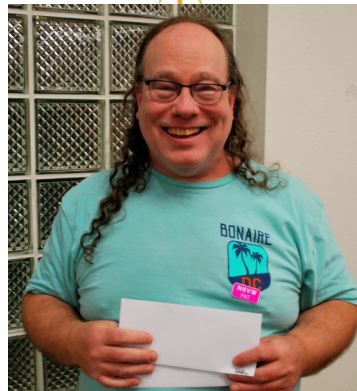


FCG Contest Dinner Prize Winners

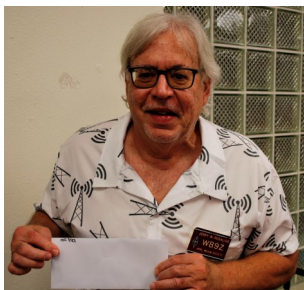
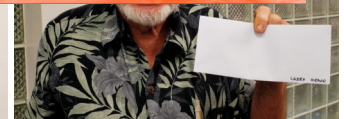
DONOR COMPANY	2026 PRIZE	2026 VALUE	Ticket
DX Engineering	IC 7610	\$3,500.00	W2DLT
DX Engineering	FT 7300	\$1,299.00	WO4D
4o3a	Antenna Genius	\$950.00	K4IMB
FLEX	Gift Certificate	\$500.00	K2SG
GEOCHRON	A2A (refurb)	\$479.00	K2SG
Elecraft	XG3	\$350.00	K5KG
4o3a	MC1/NC1 headset	\$400.00	K4NMR
4o3a	MC1/NC1 headset	\$400.00	WA4ZXV
4o3a	MC1/NC1 headset	\$400.00	W4EE
4o3a	MC1/NC1 headset	\$400.00	NA5M
Bioenno Power	12 15ah LiFePO4 Battery/charger	\$175.00	KJ4GDL
SDR PLAY	RSP1B	\$140.00	WC3W
DX Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	K4IMB
DX Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	AA7XT
DX Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	WB2KDG
DX Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	K3WJX
DX Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	N4HU
Dx Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	W4MMY
Green Heron Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	HANNA'
Green Heron Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	KJ3Q
Green Heron Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	N4HU
Green Heron Engineering	Gift Certificate	\$100.00	WO4D
N3ZN Keys	Gift Certificate	\$75.00	NF6P
Stichin Waves	Shirts	\$80.00	WO4D
Stichin Waves	Shirts	\$80.00	NV9L
Stichin Waves	Shirts	\$80.00	NV9L
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	NS4P
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	K1EBY
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	K3EW
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	N8VW
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	N8VW
ARRL	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	N89IQV
KB3IFH QSL cards	Gift Certificate	\$50.00	WB9Z
WRTC Package	Cap/Tshirt/Mug/stickers/pin	\$50.00	KA3FCE
WRTC Package	Cap/Tshirt/Mug/stickers/pin	\$50.00	W2TT



FCG Contest Dinner Prize Winners



KB3IFH QSL CARDS





FCG Contest Dinner Prize Winners





FCG Contest Dinner Prize Winners

stitchin' waves

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Murphy Assaults during ARRL DX SSB Event

Murphy paid me a visit on the Friday of the 2026 ARRL SSS Contest. Mt radio started sounding raspy on the air. Power was fluctuating then suddenly it crashed. I needed to figure out what happened and get back in the fight. It was not RFI, not network issues, and not SWR. Since my rig is inside a homemade Ikea Lack Table rack in my garage and my operating position is in the house, we didn't see (or smell) any unusual things. Then I went into the garage and looked into the back of the rack on Saturday. There, I smelled burning plastic!

The PS for this radio is sitting out of sight behind the rig deep in the back of the rack. Upon inspection, the negative terminal must have come slightly loose and/or become corroded, as the terminal cap was melted! I replaced the power supply with one with had bolt down terminals and all was well. Grateful that I didn't have a fire on my hands!

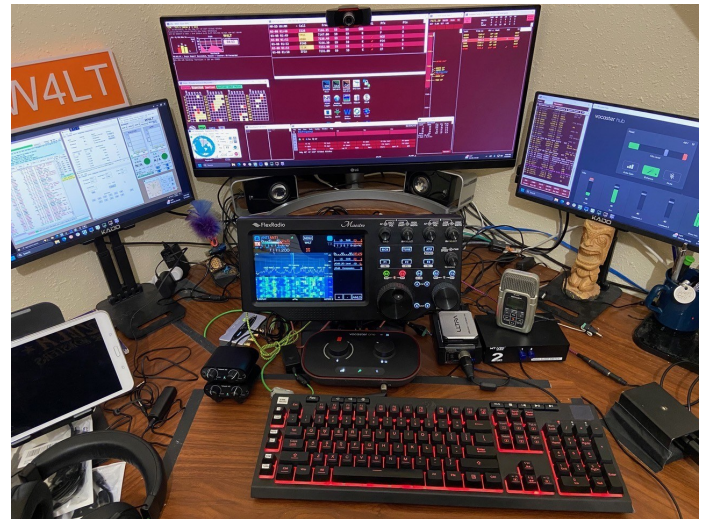
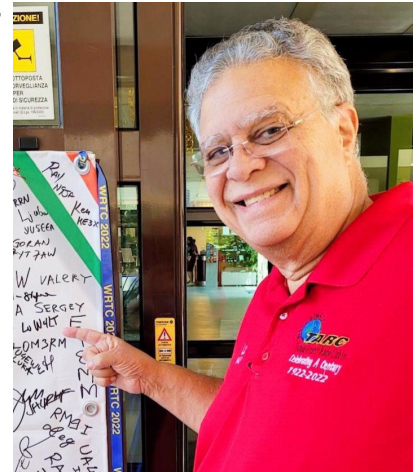


For the contest I worked mostly Search and Pounce but did manage a short run on 15m for which, after the time change and work on figuring out why the radio was not working well, I was woefully unprepared for! We felt like a rookie trying to manage the pileup through the brain fog.

My rig is a Flex6400 with Maestro. We also have the KAT500 - KPA500 combo amp and tuner. Antennas include a Cushcraft A3S @ 40ft, and a MyAntennas EFHW8010. The highest point 40 feet in back yard oak tree configured as inverted L with droopy

Lu Romero—W4LT

end in the front yard oak tree 8 feet off the ground. The amp and tuner worked well with the radio. The EFHW8010 completely out-classed my previous 2 half waves in phase antenna on 40m! And, for the first time, enabled a decent signal on 80m from my antenna challenged yard! Thank you Danny! You are the god of balun winding!





FCG Contest Dinner Photos



A big crowd turned out for this years FCG Dinner during HamCation in Orlando



K8KSU, Melanie, a team member at DX Engineering with K8OV, Bernard with others enjoying conversation





FCG Contest Dinner Photos



KM3T, Dave & K4NMR, Tom



K5KG, George and NK4O, A.J.



K8EAL, Kevin, from Newington, CT



K8MR, Jim, in a deep discussion with others



NB1U, Mark and K5KG, George





FCG Contest Dinner Photos



WC4E, Jeff



WOCZE, Hank, his XYL, and NU4Y, Jim



K1EBY, Frank and KB1V, Mark



FCG President, Chris Plumblee, W4WF



FCG Contest Dinner Photos



KM3T, Dave Pascoe, our main speaker from LiveATC.Net



WA1S, Ann and the serving team



FCG Member Spotlight Flash — KN2D



Hi from Ken, KN2D, Longwood, Florida

After about 40 years of relatively little activity (raising a family and focusing on my career at Motorola, Marriott, Caremark, and as a consultant for Constant Contact), I just earned DXCC 200.

I also requalified this year for Worked All States as KN2D. (I had earned W.A.S. in 1971 as WA2MSF.)

I've traveled over 3,000,000 miles - mostly for work - including to much of the USA (over 40 states) as well as to Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Germany, Ireland, England, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and the Caribbean.



THANKS AGAIN TO OUR SPONSORS



KB3IFH QSL CARDS





Weekly CW (1 Hour) Events

Other Weekly Events

ID	DAY	UTC	EXCH	WP M	Sponsor	ID	DAY	UTC	EXCH-BANDS	Sponsor
SST	FRI MON	2000-2100 0000-0100	Name+SPC	<20	K1USN	Phone	WED	0230-0300 Tue Eve NA	Name+SEC 15,20,40,80,160	HAMS
MST	MON MON TUE	1300-1400 1900-2000 0300-0400	Name+QSO#	20- 25	ICWC	NS-FT4		0100-0145 Thr Eve NA	GRID Square	NCCC
CWT	WED	1300-1400	Name+CWO# or Name+SPC	20>	CWops	RTTY	FRI	0145-0215 Thr Eve NA	W/VE:Name+State DX: Name+CTY PFX	W3QE
	WED	1900-2000				NS-CW	FRI	0230-0300	SR#+Name+QTH	NCCC
	THU THU	0300-0400 0700-0800								

PERIODIC TABLE OF SELECT AMATEUR RADIO CONTESTS

<https://Radiosport.World/>

Start Day (UTC) → 1 → 2 → End Day (UTC)
 Start Time (UTC) → 0000Z → 2359Z → End Time (UTC)
 Contest Name → Select Contest of weekend as chosen by N3QE

off-the-air SSB VHF/UHF
 Multimode CW Digital

2026

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3 1800Z ARRL RTTY Roundup	4 2400Z SSB Sprint	1 0000Z ARRL DX SSB	7 0359Z SP Polish DX	15 0000Z 7QP/IN/DE New England QSO Parties	2 2359Z ARRL Digital	5 1500Z Marconi Memorial HF	6 1500Z NAQP CW	1 1800Z All Asian DX SSB	2 0600Z California QSO Party	3 1600Z SSB Sprint	4 2159Z ARRL 160
10 1800Z NAQP CW	11 0559Z NA Sprint CW	8 0359Z NA Sprint RTTY	15 0000Z JIDX CW	15 0359Z Volta WW RTTY	11 0700Z ARRL June VHF	12 1300Z IARU HF WRTC 2026	9 1200Z WAE CW	10 1200Z WAE SSB	13 2359Z Oceania CW	10 0600Z ARRL SS CW	11 0600Z ARRL 10
17 1800Z NAQP SSB	18 0559Z CQ WPX RTTY	14 0000Z BARTG HF RTTY	21 0200Z CQMM DX	23 0200Z Contest University Dayton Hamvention	18 0900Z All Asian DX CW	19 2359Z NAQP RTTY	15 1800Z NAQP SSB	16 0600Z SAC CW	19 1200Z Worked All Germany	17 1500Z WAE RTTY	18 1459Z Croatian DX
23 2200Z CQ 160 CW	25 2200Z ARRL DX CW	21 0000Z CQ WPX SSB	22 2359Z Florida QSO Party	28 0000Z -	26 2159Z ARRL Field Day	23 0000Z RSGB IOTA	24 2400Z KH6/OH QSO Parties	22 varies CQ WW RTTY	23 varies CQ WW SSB	26 0000Z ARRL SS SSB	27 1500Z Stew Perry Topband
	28 1800Z NAQP RTTY	1 0559Z		30 0000Z CQ WPX CW	31 2400Z		29 1200Z WW Digi	30 1200Z		28 0000Z CQ WW CW	29 2400Z

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<https://Radiosport.World/>



WORLD RADIOSPORT TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP

8-13 July, 2026—United Kingdom

WRTC is a means to demonstrate international goodwill and friendship in the true ham spirit. It also allows youth operators to demonstrate their skills within this highly competitive event.



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The Florida Contest Group



"I love contesting. There is something about the camaraderie, discipline and knowledge contesting demands that fits me; it doesn't fit everyone . . . but it sure fits me." – Jim White, K4OJ (SK)

The Florida Contest Group (FCG), an ARRL affiliated club, is Florida's amateur radio contest club. Its members share a common interest in the sport of amateur radio contesting. FCG members have a wide range of contesting experience, from beginners to World Champions. They willingly share their knowledge and skills to promote ham radio contesting in Florida. Members, who number in excess of 400, range from Jacksonville to South Florida. FCG has a "Panhandle" division for those contesters living in the Florida Panhandle who are outside the ARRL's 250 mile "club circle". Additionally, the FCG has members in states outside of Florida and in several DXCC Entities.

The Florida Contest Group supports and encourages all types of contesting, from HF to light, all modes, power classes and skill levels.

FCG Shirts

If you would like to purchase an FCG shirt, you may contact Joyce Ann at Stitchin' Waves in Sarasota. Joyce Ann has both Orange and White FCG shirts and FCG hats if you are interested. She embroiders the FCG Shirts with the FCG Logo and First Names and Call Signs. Hats are embroidered with the Call Sign.

Stitchin' Waves
Joyce Ann Wright
ja@stitchinwaves.com

(Phone orders not accepted)

To place an order, send an email to Joyce Ann, and provide the following information:

- Identify yourself as an FCG member
- First and Last Name
- Call Sign
- Mailing Address (not a PO Box)
- Size of shirt
- Color: Orange or White

