

What an APE!

APE Team members - Sue my wife and our two rescue cats (Cinder and Emmy).

We traveled 3634 miles in 19 days. Visited 2 countries (US and Canada). We had a great visit with Barry (VA7GEM) and his wife Jane at their home in Canada. Barry and I activated a park near his home as well. He got to see first hand what it took for us to activate a park. Traveled through 5 states (AZ, CA, NV, OR, WA). Stopped at 17 parks, activating 16 of them. Eight of those parks had PSK31 contacts, one of which was in Canada. Three parks I was able to activate twice. Worked 3 unique grids requested by club members. Grid DN01 was at Sheldon NWR in NV. We were able to get 8 psk31 qsos. Grid DN00 was tricky. The first stop yielded one qso and conditions were terrible so I went south to Lovelock NV (Barry confirmed we would still be in DN00). I still had interference from powerlines but was able to get 3 members in the log. Somewhere along the trip I had pulled a radial from the bundle which I just stripped down and attached it with a screw. It worked to get those 3 qsos and several others along the way. I was having trouble with Rick (N7WE) and knew he needed that to close out NV. Did I mention we were in a dirt lot with no shade. I moved the antenna further away from the camper and powerlines hoping it would clear the interference, I connected the radial bundle and there he was. Once we got over the excitement and stopped doubling up on each other we got Rick in the log. I could only imagine Stan and Barry laughing and shaking their heads as Rick and I just doubled up. This was a very big deal. It closed out NV for him. One other member needed DN10 and we were able to get him in the log as well. The hottest temp I worked in was 106 degrees in NV and CA on the last day.

Some challenges:

Time - Never seemed to have enough. We tried to limit ourselves to an hour or less at the parks along the way. We needed to get to the next place we were staying at before it got dark. It doesn't leave much time for contacts. We were able to setup the station and run it out of the rear seat of the truck within 5-10

minutes. We were able to keep most of the cables connected and do a loose pack up which helped setup times

tremendously. Unfortunately, we had to abandon DN03. It was just too far out of the way. Sorry guys, I know you needed it.

Power - Had to balance battery power for most of the trip. Most stops had no power so we relied on the truck to charge up the batteries as we drove from stop to stop.

Environment - Oregon, Washington and Canada were fairly cool with temps. The issue up there is the mountains. Most of the stops left us in valleys sandwiched between the mountains. We attempted 2 activations in DN02 but couldn't raise anyone. We know we had people looking for us too. Several members and I had prepared for this grid as we did those others. Getting into NV the temps began to get hotter. It just got hotter as we moved further south.

SWR - There were times I didn't think we'd be able to get this resolved. Several places required moving the antenna 3-4 times for it to settle down.

Communications - Lacking cell coverage during activations makes things difficult. You can't spot, can't work out qsy, etc. You're out there hoping that all the planning you've done someone sees you.

I'd like to thank a couple of people that helped us out. First, Barry (VA7GEM) for his hospitality, friendliness and a partner in this adventure. We worked for days prior to our departure making sure he knew the route and our plans. He did a great job at

tracking us and helping others find us on the waterfall.

Rick, thanks for the grid spreadsheet and the encouragement to get that last NV grid. Congratulations on that feat. Those are some tough grids.

Stan, always the motivator and helpful spotter. Who has more fun than a ham?

I'm attaching some pics for you. Just some different looks of the operations along the way.

Cinderhill Campground was way off the grid. We drove until the road ended. This was in the Newberry Crater Volcanic park



Crater Lake National Park was a two day stay but only one day on the radio. No power at the camp spots so I lugged the batteries to the bathroom and charged them there.



DN00 Lovelock NV where we closed out NV for Rick.



DN10 reststop getting the grid for Barry.



Gilchrist State Forest antenna shot. This was a hard one to get too. Got help from the Forest department for set up.



Las Vegas. Cell coverage, hot showers and power. This was pretty easy one.



Mojave Trails was tossed in so I could say we did California on this trip. Just more Desert and heat.



Newberry Crater Volcanic Park was at the visitor center. We were going for a 5 Rove. Five parks in one day. This was a 2fer which got the five. The little hill right behind the trees is a lava flow.



Operating out of the back of the truck. It's not pretty but it got the job done on more than one occasion.
Sheldon NWR was a homerun for 070 and DN01.



Tumalo SP was in Oregon and part of the 5 rove day.



Walker Lake was hot but cooled down at night. I remember Lee (N5SLY), Buz (WA5AAM) and Eric (KG6MZS) getting in the log that day. I knew it was Lee by his operating style.



Working side of Gilchrist trying to get another park in the 5 rove.



Time to get things cleaned up and ready for the next run in October. This will be a southern run consisting of Northeast AZ/Southeast UT for the upcoming eclipse, a couple of stops along Navajo country, AZ/UT border then back towards Phoenix for a layover. We will end up going through southern NM, TX, LA, MS, AL and layup for a few days in FL before heading to GA to pickup a new member of the team. Her name is Libby. She's an Aussiedoodle. Oh yeah our other grandkids are there too. Heading back will mostly likely be through Middle AL, MS, TX, maybe OK and NM and back home to AZ. We're still working out the details. If you might need a specific grid in those states let me know and see if we might be able to work it in for you.

Well that's a wrap. Thanks to everyone trying to get in the log. If I didn't hear you maybe next time conditions will be better.