

Chewacla POTA Fest 2026 Delivers Big Results Under Callsign K4Q



Operating under the special event callsign **K4Q**, the East Alabama Amateur Radio Club (W4LEE) hosted “Chewacla POTA Fest” on April 22, 2026, at Chewacla State Park in Auburn, Alabama.

Early band conditions made for a slow start, casting doubt on the group’s ambitious goal of 500 QSOs. However, as propagation improved throughout the afternoon, operators settled in and pushed forward, continuing operations until approximately 8:00 PM—logging a full twelve hours on the air across SSB and FT8.

By the end of the event, the team achieved **502 total contacts**, surpassing their goal. Activity spanned at least eight bands and reached an impressive geographic range, including:

- **42 U.S. states**
- **11 Canadian stations**
- **6 European contacts**
- **4 contacts from Puerto Rico and Venezuela**

Local contacts were made on 2 meters within Auburn, while the most distant stations reached into Europe and South America—effectively putting Chewacla State Park on the air worldwide.

Much of the operation was powered by a reliable **Icom IC-7300**, paired with a customized “POTA Performer” vertical antenna—an effective and proven combination for portable operations.

Despite last-minute planning and less-than-ideal conditions early in the day, the event proved to be an underdog success. The experience provided valuable lessons, and the club is already planning to make Chewacla POTA Fest an **annual event**, potentially expanding to other parks in the region.

Looking ahead, future activations will likely incorporate additional modes, including CW, and aim to grow even larger.

Thanks to everyone who stayed the course and made the event a success. We’ll be back next year—**bigger and better**.

