New Mexico State Convention

August 9-11, 2013

Albuquerque, NM

http://dukecityhamfest.org/

The New Mexico State Convention was held for the first time in a city hotel about 15 minutes from the airport. Organizers hoped that the move to a venue more impressive than a church or other public building would be successful, by which they meant a break-even first year. Figures were not available by the time I departed, but organizers felt good about the chances of achieving the goal. The hotel is located about 2 blocks from Old Town, a major tourist district with many quaint shops and historic buildings.

The convention began on Friday with vendor set-up and a few afternoon forums followed by a mixer featuring a presentation by Gordon West. I had lunch on Friday with Director Mileshosky and one of the New Mexico Assistant Section Managers. Vice Director Allen was out of town during the convention. The New Mexico Section Manager and at least one of his predecessors were present. During the event I had a chance to meet and chat with our DXAC chair, Arne Gjerning N7KA.

Saturday was the principal day for forums. A copy of the forum schedule is being sent with this report. The program struck me as a good mixture of very modern subjects and more traditional topics. Director Mileshosky chaired the ARRL forum, with the Section Manager and me as participants. The forum was very informal – no speeches – and many members had the opportunity to ask questions and voice their opinions. The overall tone was very positive. At this forum and on other occasions, Director Mileshosky encouraged interest in the 2014 National Convention. I heard a number of people expressing interest in coming to Connecticut for the event. I gave a speech at the Saturday evening banquet.

The vendor areas were well populated with booths and displays. FlexRadio had a significant exhibit. I did not see any other equipment manufacturers present.

Students from a local high school’s ROTC group participated in a high-altitude balloon launch in a local park on Saturday morning. It appears that a great deal of good work is being done with youth in the Albuquerque area.

The convention ended with a Sunday morning breakfast banquet, during which there was a presentation about high-altitude balloon operations. This included a video (available on YouTube) by an Arizona group whose web site is at ansr.com. The young leader of the local ROTC group gave a presentation about the results of the Saturday launch. I was impressed by the young man’s demeanor and evident lack of fear about public speaking.

The event was well attended and seemed to be a good beginning for operations at a more ambitious location than has been used in the past.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Craigie N3KN