

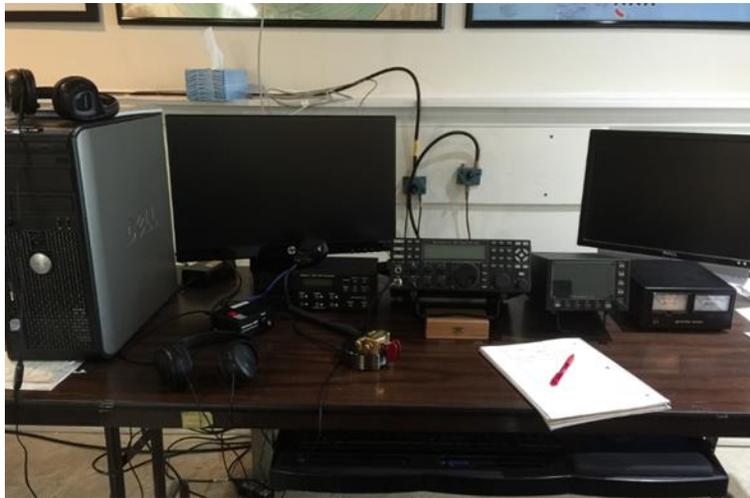
October 2015 Edition - Vol 4 Issue 3

A publication of the Four State QRP Group and OzarkCon QRP Conference

www.4sgrp.com

Group callsign WQ5RP

Ozark QRP **BANNER**



W0XI station

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Have you Home-brewed Anything Other Than Beer Lately?

“Uncle” Phil Anderson, W0XI, 4sQRP #13

I've been torn lately between yard work, travel, emails, bench fun, improving CW and contesting. For the last few months contesting has taken the upper hand. I've worked a half-dozen state QSP parties – these are usually a few hours each and mostly on the weekends: CWT-1, CWT-2 (weeklies), SKCC, ARQP, TNQP, KSQP, etc. Google “radio contesting calendar” for a list of tests.

And how many reflectors are you receiving email wise? Perhaps I'm on too many too: 4SQRP, Elecraft, DCARC, etc. The Elecraft reflector is interesting in that you can see what interests' hams regards equipment, wish lists, operating techniques, etc.

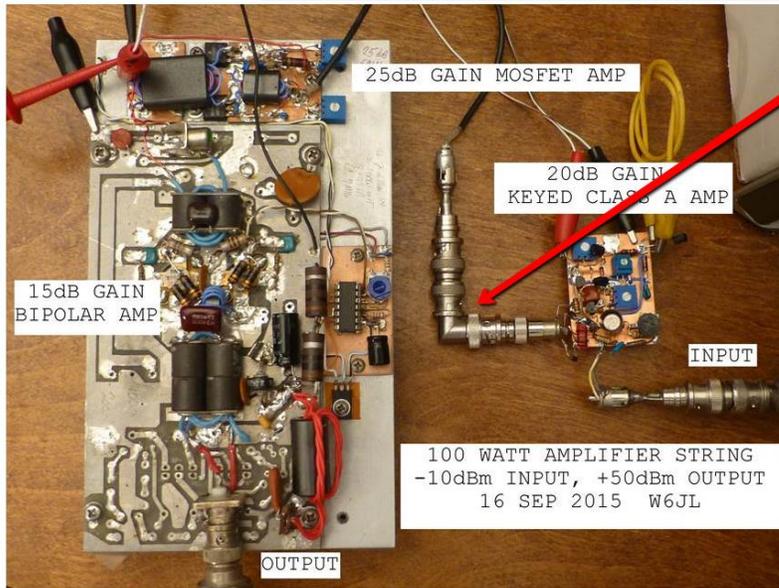
Given all this, a QSO with Don, W6JL, on a nearly empty 20-meter band yesterday, has redirected me back to thinking about homebrew! We had a nice semi-long CW QSO and he told me about his fully-home brew station and other projects. Following the QSO I checked him out on QRZ; there you'll find a long list with lots a super pictures on many of his projects. While not QRP, one picture caught my eye, his layout of a neat amplifier. See the picture below. I particularly liked his creative use of connectors.

I emailed him back and asked if I could post this picture on the 4SQRP banner. He said sure which I kind of thought he would. By the way, he said, “All my PC boards are homebrew, and tin-plated. This is easier to do than most hams think. Both through-hole and surface-mount (SMT) parts are surface-mounted. This minimizes the need for drilled holes.” Look W6JL up on www.QRZ.com and see the many neat projects.

Looking at that neat stuff, I'm resolved to spend some of my weekend getting back to my “current-mode op-amp front end regenerator circuit” for CW op for 20-meters.

Don, W6JL

Here's a pic of one of Don's homebrew projects. See his QRZ page for more fun stuff. 73, Uncle Phil/w0xi



I particularly like this creative use of a combo of connectors for homebrew! Don uses ExpressPCB's free layout and linked schematic capture software.

W6JL's Homebrew Amplifier

4x4 Sprint Results John Lonigro, AA0VE, 4sQRP #163

Well, after toiling for maybe 30 seconds, I've been able to come up with the results of the 2015 4x4 Sprint. We only had 4 entries, which tells me that perhaps we need to change something before next year. Somebody (Chas?) once suggested dropping the 4x4 Sprint and just having a twelfth SSS. We'll have to ponder this. In the meantime, here are the results from October 3:

1st place: Bill, KV6Z (operating as WQ5RP), with 124 points (including 80 bonus points for operating in the field). Bill had 5 QSOs total, two with members and three with non-members.

2nd place: Dave, NE5DL, with 100 points: 80 bonus points, 1 member QSO and 1 non-member QSO.

3rd place: Terry, WA0ITP, with 32 points: 2 QSOs with members.

For completeness, Gary, KF7WNS finished in fourth place. Gary tried, but was unable to make any contacts due to QRM.

I am attaching soapbox comments, as well as a suggestion from Gary KF7WNS. Other suggestions for improving the sprint are strongly encouraged. I've got one

novel idea, which I'll think about a little before sharing it. Some of my novel ideas are better left unshared (hi).

As always, the winners will eventually receive certificates. Since the 4SQRP logo is now in color and I no longer have color printing capability, the certificates will be sent only via email. The individual winners can decide whether to print them out and display them proudly (or not).

Soapbox:

Gary - KF7WNS

Sorry about the poor showing. I spent the whole time trying to get a contact. I heard at least 10 stations, some pretty strong. NE5DL was 599 at times. Hard to make contact through the QRM.

Terry - WA0ITP

Propagation sure wasn't with us today. I almost didn't send in my score because I only made 2 contacts today, WQ5RP and NE5DL, both on 40. I thought I had W0IIT also, but QSB got him before we could complete the exchange.

Bill - WQ5RP (aka KV6Z)

I worked portable at Claremore Lake using a HB-1B with internal batteries and an Alex Loop. 40 was kinda crummy but I did manage 1 QSO on it. 20 yielded 4 more and 2 of them were SOTA stations (both in Utah).

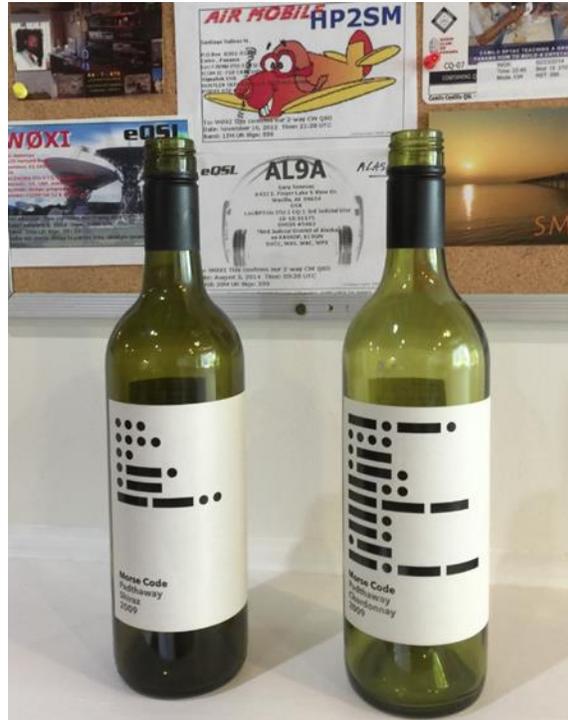
Dave - NE5DL

Was at two sites today for the Sprint. The first was on a "hill" in TX and only worked one Q, a 6 station not in the sprint, and he was using a KW. Mostly on 20M. That was for 3 hours. Then, went to a park on a lower "hill" and made one Q on 40M in the last 1/2 hour.....guess who....?, well of courseWA0ITP. Thanks Terry, but where was everybody else? Will post some pictures later.

Morse Code Wine and Station Picture “Uncle” Phil Anderson, W0XI, 4sQRP #13

Pat and I enjoy wine with our dinner most evenings. On a recent trip to the wine store we noticed some dits and dahs on a bunch of wine bottle labels. I don't recall exactly but think the wine was from Argentina. The label at left spells out Shiraz while that on the right sends Chardonnay. Both wines were pretty good; so, we'll try them again down the log.

Jeremy has been asking for station pictures so here goes. My Dell Optiplex station computer is at left and next to it is a 21 inch flat screen. I use that for ham related internet connections, searches, logging, maps, etc. (Ed. Note – See front page of this issue for station picture)



Morse Code Wine?

Just below that – the picture is a bit dark – I added a WinkeyerUSB. I use this for CW QSOs and contesting along with my Begali paddle. One neat thing about the keyer is that it can accommodate computer keying and/or standalone keying with the rig.

Next to that and just under the computer display is the SteppIR controller box for the 33 foot max vertical SteppIR antenna. It is tunable for 40 through 10 meters. Next to that is a full Elecraft K3 (both receivers, two antenna ports {diversity wired}, antenna tuner and 100 watt final). Coax switches for each antenna port show on the wall behind the station table.

Following that you can see the P3 Panadapter grouped with another flat screen display. With aging eyes, I find the flat screen really helpful, given that the built in screen of the Panadapter is small. Rounding out the station is the metered Aston 12V power supply, sufficient for 100 watt operation.

My next project is to upgrade the safety ground ring around the house and add a DX-Engineering feed through box on the outside wall. The box will accommodate arresters and improve the single-point ground at that intake. In addition, I plan to add a low shelf for the antenna control box, K3 and P3 so that I have a little more room for writing space. I recently added an adjustable keyboard tray just under the table. It accommodates the keyboard and mouse – so that stuff is

conveniently out of the way when not used. A good bit of my operating time is now CW contesting – three weekly CWOPs tests and a number of state QSO parties. The KS QSO party, just last month, was fun. One-hundred watts seems to be sufficient for these tests. Nearly all RUNNER stations I called back came right back to me, including the CA QSP party runners in the Oct 4 test.

Dan – KB6NU's Column

Start an amateur radio virtuous circle

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On the [ham instructor](#) Yahoo Group recently, we talked about the classes that we are going to be offering this fall. About his Tech class, Bob, K0NR, noted, "Currently have about 30 students signed up. We keep thinking we'll run out of interested people but they keep coming."

I've noticed the same thing here, too. I keep thinking that I am going to run out of people to teach, but I have no problem at all filling my classes. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that the more people that have taken my class, the more people there are that want to take it.

Of course, this makes perfect sense. If there are more people out there who have amateur radio licenses, there are more people out there talking about amateur radio, and actually doing amateur radio. And, the more people out there talking about and doing amateur radio, the more likely it is that other people will become interested in amateur radio and get their licenses as well.

It's an amateur radio "virtuous circle."

What does this tell you? Well, if you're in a place where amateur radio seems to be dying out, or belong to a club that is slowly fading away, start a class! I think every club should hold classes at least once a year, even if that first class has only one or two students. Those first few students are the start of your virtuous circle.

Don't know how to start a class? I can help you there. Start by reading my blog post, "[Teaching a one-day class](#)" It has a lot of practical information, including tips on how to select a venue, how to publicize the class, how to get people to sign up for the class, and finally, how to teach the class.

You might also want to join the ham_instructor mailing list I mentioned earlier. It's a relatively low-volume list, but the subscribers have a lot of experience that you can tap into.

Also, get a copy of my free [Tech study guide](#). Not to brag (well, OK I am bragging), but I really think that it's the best study guide for a one-day class.

The study guide presents the topics in exactly the same order as I cover them in class. Read through it and you'll see what I mean.

If you need more help, or even just some encouragement, e-mail me, and I'll do what I can to help you. Seriously.

When not teaching ham classes or publishing amateur radio study guides, Dan, KB6NU, operates CW on the HF bands (mostly 40m and 30m). His #1-rated amateur radio blog can be found at KB6NU.Com, and you can e-mail questions, comments, or complaints to cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Ed. Note – A few years ago, I ended up teaching a 2 Saturday class for our local CERT group. It resulted in 2 new licensees, and was a very rewarding experience.

From The Editor

Getting the New Guy Started

Jeremy Utley, NQ0M, 4sQRP #419

As some of you may know, the first 2 weeks of September were pretty busy for me. WA6CML and I had planned vacation in Washington wine country during this time, plus Brutus happened right after that. Little did I know leading up to this time, how very busy I would be!

A couple of weeks before we left for Washington, I received an E-mail from a gentleman in Yates Center, which is a small town about 20 miles west of us. He indicated he had been studying for his Tech test, and felt like he'd be ready to take it in September. Our prospective ham was Lonnie Larson (now KE0FVM).

Now, our local club makes testing available after every club meeting, which is held the second Thursday of each month. Robin and I looked closely at our vacation schedule, and decided if we pushed it, we could leave Washington early Tuesday morning, and be back here late Wednesday night, so I could be available to help with the testing. Our VE team is pretty small – we have 2 General class VEs, one Advanced class, and 2 Extra class. However, I'm the only one really experienced with doing all the paperwork that's involved with a testing session, so while it was not absolutely necessary for me to be back, it would certainly help smooth the process!

In the days leading up to the testing session, Lonnie and I traded a number of Emails and phone calls. It seems a few months ago he had injured his leg, necessitating a few months of unemployment. So therefore money was tight, and he wanted some tips on equipment he could purchase very inexpensively. I gave him a few suggestions – the standard Baofeng handheld that it seems

everyone is starting with these days, a few suggestions on what I'd get for a mobile radio, and possible HF gear for when he's ready.

So, September meeting comes, and Lonnie makes the drive over to lola. After the meeting, he takes the test, and passes with a 33/35. Couple weeks after that, his new sequential call sign is issued – KE0FVM. Once I see his call post, I say to myself “OK, he's licensed, lets get him on the air!”. So I start thinking about what I can do about that. Being the typical ham, I have some radios sitting idle. One of them is an older Kenwood TM-231A I was originally using for APRS here at home, but had taken off the air because there just wasn't any other activity here. In the toolbox of the truck, I had an old mag-mount quarterwave antenna that I believed was still functional. Lonnie had already purchased a used Astron RS-20M power supply on my recommendation, to prepare for this. That gave us most of what we needed, but we needed something to use as a ground plane for the mag mount. I remember back in the mid-90's, I had used a 5/8 wave magmount attached to a piece of sheet metal scavenged from an old air conditioner serving as a ground plane. So, I asked Robin if we had an old cookie sheet that wasn't in the best of shape anymore. She had nothing, but offered to go take a look at the local thrift store to see if she could find something cheap – boy what a good ham she is too! She comes back with a pizza pan that she got for 50 cents – so now we got ourselves a ground plane! So after work, I pack up all the goodies in the truck, and head over to get him on the air!

That night was a mess! We keyed up the local repeater (which was only about 23 miles away) exactly once! After a lot of testing and trying things, I found that the old mag mount had a bad connection on the PL-259! So, I apologized to Lonnie that I couldn't get him on the air that night, and came back home. Looked at Amazon, found another 2m mag mount for like \$15, and ordered it with Prime shipping. Couple days later, after the antenna had arrived, we tried again. This time, we skipped the pizza pan ground plane idea, and slapped the mag mount on top of his metal carport instead. First test was with one of the HT's he'd purchased, and sure enough, we were able to hit the local repeater this time! So, we ran coax in his window to the Kenwood, got everything hooked up, and called Robin (who had stayed at home to provide us someone to call on the repeater). She reported a good signal, even with the hurried installation. We could also hit 2 other repeaters, one of them nearly 50 miles away – but I know in the case of that repeater, it's a monster with a VERY wide coverage!

Next for us is to get something a little higher. I've already donated a spare J-Pole I had, and we'll get a couple 10ft pieces of fence top-rail to use as a mast. I purchased a used Yaesu FT-7900 from Jim, W0EB at Brutus this year which I'm selling to Lonnie for exactly what I paid for it. I'm also planning to hang a 40m dipole off that mast as well, and will probably loan him my standby IC-706MKIIG so he can take a listen on the HF bands while he studies for his General. I suspect at some point, he will end up buying something of his own, perhaps a FT-450D (I personally think that radio has the best bang for the buck right now).



Four State QRP Group

is meeting at the Country Cupboard Restaurant in downtown Seneca, Mo. This is one of the locations that 4SQRP folks gather.



The Country Cupboard has a nice menu and they have a separate meeting room we can use.

The Country Cupboard restaurant is located in the first block north of the blinker light in downtown Seneca. From Barney's, head north on Cherokee Street (that's the main street of town). Go across the railroad tracks and keep going past the blinker light stop. The restaurant is located at 1038 Cherokee street, on the west side of the street.

Caution: If you are headed north, do not make a left "J turn" into a parking spot. "J turns" are illegal in the downtown area. Keep going north past the restaurant till you reach the residential area north of downtown where a "U turn" is permitted. Make a U turn there (it's a wide street) and come back to the parking in front of the restaurant.

Our group is an informal organization with no dues or any other things to get in the way of having fun with QRP. **We get-together monthly for lunch and the sharing of ideas and information, parts swapping and just plain fun on our normal third Saturday of a month.**

All ham radio amateurs (or prospective hams) are invited to participate.



The Four State QRP Comfortable nets meet each Wednesday night beginning at 7:30 PM CDT, 0030z.

If we have to QSY, I like to move up, Wayne likes to move down, and Dick doesn't have to move much at all.

Add anything to the exchange that you wish, temp rig, ant, etc. Checking into all sessions is encouraged.

7:30 CDT 0030z ... 40M CW Net on 7122, KCØPMH NCS
8:00 CDT 0100z ... 80M CW Net on 3564, WAØITP NCS.
8:30 CDT 0130z ... 40M CW Net on 7122, KCØPMH NCS
9:00 CDT 0200z ... 80M PSK Net on 3580.5, NØTGR

Thursday mornings ~ 8 to 8:30am
A gathering of CW ops are having fun on
7.122 MHz
....and you are invited!

Join us on the air on the second Sunday of each month for the 4SQRP "SSS" – Second Sunday Sprint – 7-9PM Central time

See: <http://www.4sgrp.com/4sgrpOnTheAir.php> for rules and log submission!

Ozark QRP BANNER is a monthly publication of the Four State QRP Group and OzarkCon. www.4sgrp.com
Editor: Jeremy Utley, NQ0M
- Deadline for publications copy is the 25th of each month -

For news, articles, inquiries for the Banner: ozarkqrpbanner@gmail.com
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