



QSP



February 2011

QSP On-Line at: <http://www.centalksarc.com/qsppage.htm>

The February Meeting is
Friday, Feb. 25, 2011
@ 7:30 PM, at KWU
Peters Science Hall
Room 211

February VE Report

For the February 9th Session:

Host:
Robert, WBØWTM
Program:
John, KCØJNK

We had 2 Candidates this month, Paul Collins, KC5ZHB, of Assaria, upgraded to General. Also upgrading to General was Michelle Vought, KDØKYD. She also attempted the Extra Class Exam, and promises to do better next time!

Inside this issue:

VE Report 1

This month's VE's were: Sid, NØOBM, Leon, WAØJFC, Mike, KBØLZQ, Eric, NØYET, Alvin, WØME, and Don, KAØEIC.

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Thanks to all the VE's who helped with the Exam Sessions. I appreciate the help, and so do those who take the exams.

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Next Exam session is:

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Wednesday March 9th, 2011, at 7:00 PM, at the Saline County Sheriff's Office Classroom.

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Sid NØOBM VE Team Leader

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Perry Vail, NØMXJ, SK

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Birthday List Back

Perry Vail, NØMXJ, Former CKARC Member passed away on February 6, 2011 of ALS in Lincoln, Ne. Perry was cremated privately, and there may be a Service at a later date.

Obit: Perry L. Vale, 55, of Lincoln passed away Sunday (2/6/11) at Milder Manor. Perry was born at Superior, Neb. and passed away after battling ALS.

Minutes of the January Meeting

CKARC January 28th meeting minutes

January 2011 club meeting called to order by Mark, KBØMQX at 7:30 pm with 27 members and guests present. After the Pledge of Allegiance and round of introductions Alvin, WØME, asked for minutes of the meeting be approved as printed in QSP, and Mark, KBØMQX asked to amend the minutes to reflect that Michelle, KDØKYD has accepted to be activities Manager for the coming year, so noted, moved and seconded approved.

Treasurers report by Mitch, KAØIFW,
Checking \$ 698.99
Savings \$1043.38
moved and seconded accepted.

Sid, NØOBM, gave the EC report and he noted that storm season is upon us and the Saline Co meeting is on WED. Feb. 23rd at the 4H bldg. At 6:30 PM. Also there is a list of area meetings on the web. Sid said the CKARC and County generators have been started several times.
Down the line Eisenhower Marathon in April, River Festival and Field day both in June.

VE report by Sid For the January testing, we had 4 take the tests, 3 passed one missed by one question. Better luck next time, Michelle! Next testing on Feb. 9th with board meeting to follow with the annual audit of the books.

Ron WAØPSF reported rent for hamfest (Bicentennial Center) will be several hundred dollars higher this year, due to the City raising it's prices on renting the facility.

Activies report by Michelle, KDØKYD,
Feb. 12th Fox hunting and Feb. 26 Balloon launch Michelle also had a list of some actives and she would like some ideas from the members. Some of her list of Possible activities are, Fox Hunting, Paint ball, Contests, Special Events, Building Tape Measure Beams, DXing, Soldering Workshop, Coax Connectors workshop, Antenna's, Satellite's, Volunteering at Schools, Morse Code Workshop.

Mark passed out several copies of the Constitution and Bylaws for any to study for the review every 5 years. Dues are due and Kansas celebration 150 years.

Thanks to Ron and Kathleen for Ron's Birthday cake and Hosts for the evening.

Alvin, WØME, Secretary.

Reminders

ARES Net **March 1st at 8:00 PM** on the NØKSC Repeater (147.270+)

City of Salina Siren Test Net, March 7th at 4:30 PM on the NØKSC Repeater (147.270+) **if the Weather cooperates!**

ARRL-VEC Test Session on Wednesday **March 9th at 7:00 PM.**

Board meeting follows the exam session on **March 9th** at 8:00 PM (or after Testing—which ever is later) in the Saline Co. Sheriff's Office Classroom.

Time Change on Sunday March 13th Start Daylight Savings Time!

ARES Meeting is March 17th at 8:00 PM in Emergency Management.

Storm Fury on the Plains (NWS Storm Spotter Classes)

Clay Center March 1 at 7:00 PM at the Baptist Church

Herington March 7th at 6:30 PM at the New Rec. Center

McPherson March 21st at 6:30 PM McPherson Community Building

Abilene March 23rd at 7:00 PM 1020 NW 8th Street

Great Bend March 31st at 3:00 PM & 6:30 PM at the Crest Theatre

There is a full **Calendar of Events** on the CKARC Web site <http://www.centalksarc.com>

A note from the President

Hello to all CKARC members and friends. I hope everyone had a good February. This is the month when most of us share something special with a loved one. I hope everyone thought about sharing ham radio with others you know.

I would like to thank Michelle, KDØKYD, who had a good program at the January meeting. Her program echoed the comments in a recent article from QST. The February edition has an article, on page 96, titled "Evolve or Die." The author, Randy Ross KI4ZJI has some good comments about getting the younger generation involved. I will quote some of the article below:

"Some of our fellow Amateur Radio operators point to the computer, the Internet, and the cellular telephone as the competition.....These are not the competition; they are the product of evolving technology. Knowledge of computers and the Internet should be embraced and incorporated into the newest evolutions of Amateur Radio.

We, as Amateur Radio operators, need to understand that cell phones and the Internet are not passing fads. They are here to stay. In fact, their integration into society will only continue to expand. With that realization, we also need to understand that Amateur Radio faces two choices: evolve or die. While there will always be a place for the straight key and while CW will work when nothing else will, we must, as a group, embrace the emerging technology and integrate it into Amateur Radio. If we fail to do

this, our hobby will die in the face of the 'competition.' After all, is Amateur Radio about forcing one mode of communication upon the entire world or is it about using the best means of communicating for any given circumstance."

I believe that this article has many good comments. Please take time to read the entire article. I ask each of you to think about how you would like to see our hobby evolve. What have you done to further the hobby? What have you done to introduce others to it? What can you do to make it more interesting, help it evolve, and not let our hobby die? It is up to each one of us.

Mark Boyle
KBØMQX

Where There's Smoke...

James G. "Bunky" Botts,III (K4EJQ) on February 16, 2011

Normally my misadventures in ham radio I keep to myself. But I figured this story might be of interest to you readers. It points how a an otherwise "minor" problem with the ham gear can lead to what could have been a much more serious situation.

This past Sunday afternoon I'm working the January ARRL VHF Contest from my home station. I'm operating 50 through 432 MHz with a QRO amplifier on each band. On 2 meters at the time, when all of a sudden there is a LOUD BANK from the 432 amplifier which is in "idle" mode. It right next to my right ear and sounded like an M-80 firecracker! Oh well, another blown filter capacitor in the high voltage supply I figured and turned the plate voltage off that amplifier. I'll go get a refill on my ice tea and begin the chore of up the mess inside the amplifier and replacing the blown capacitor.

I went upstairs to the fridge to get the refill and on the way back, stopped in the shop next to the shack for the tools I'd need. As I entered the shack the room was filling rapidly with thick black choking smoke and flames were coming out the top of the amplifier cabinet. I had left the filaments, bias and blower running on the amp to "cycle " it down after turning off the High Voltage -- a habit I picked up many years ago in my duties as a TV Broadcast Technician. I pulled the amplifiers AC plug from the wall outlet as I couldn't get to the front panel switches for the choking smoke.

I grabbed a handy CO2 fire extinguisher and doused the flames. I used about half of the 10 lb CO2 bottle to finally get it under control. I immediately began to ventilate the shack of the smoke using a "box" fan. Needless to say, the whole affair was unsettling. Two smoke detectors, one brand new, in the shack and well up in the smoke zone, did not sound an alarm. They both "tested" good afterwards using their internal test feature.

After the unit cooled down, and my blood pressure returned to normal, I took apart the amplifier. The choking smoke was probably generated by the insulation of the wiring when it ignited. Three sheets of Plexiglas that were used to mount the capacitor bank, rectifier bank caught fire. A fourth sheet covering the entire high voltage section to protect the operator should operation outside of the case be necessary melted. With the exception of the plate transformer, the entire High Voltage section of the amplifier was destroyed. As I suspected, the whole incident began with the rupture of a filter capacitor in that high voltage section. I've had other capacitors in other amps do the same thing with only a mess of tin foil and wax to clean up. I was gone from the shack for less than five minutes between the time I turned off the High Voltage on the

amplifier and returned. No smoke had been visible when I left the shack to get the tools and ice tea refill. I hate to think what I would have found had delayed.

In retrospect, I should have turned off the entire amplifier when the capacitor blew and to heck with "cycling down" the power tubes. Probably should have unplugged the amp from the AC too before leaving the shack. Having a fire extinguisher (that worked) handy made a BIG difference. Now I wonder -- does this mean I can't advertise my ham gear as coming from a "smoke-free" environment when I sell it?

Safety is Everybody's business!
From eham.net

One Ham's Bucket List

James Kocsis, WA9PYH

wa9pyh@arrl.net

Some thoughts on radio activities worth trying before you say your last 73.

Okay, you've finally realized that you're not getting any younger and you've thought about what you want to do before you head out for that big "hamshack in the sky." The phrase in common use today to describe your situation is "Bucket List" — a list of things you want to do before you kick the bucket. I've seen bucket lists for other interest groups — car enthusiasts, bicyclists, sports fans, travelers, even a movie by the same name — but none for hams. One list even had getting a ham radio license on it!

The situation is literally a case of woulda-shoulda-coulda for opportunities in the past and a list in your head of things you still want to do in the very near future. I looked back on my 45+ years as a ham and realized that I've had a lot of fun, but wish that I would have acted on several things that I wanted to do but for some reason didn't. I've composed a list of things that some hams may have wanted to do but may not have done. Now is the time to quit dreaming about them and start doing. Below is a list with some things that I have either done or wanted to do. You can use it as a guide to form your own list or use it as is.

Before You Kick the Bucket List

- 1. Operate a contest for 24 hours with no sleep.** This may be a tough one but it's the way to really rack up some points. You will recover from the loss of sleep. Don't spend just 2 or 3 hours but make a real, dedicated effort. Get some extra sleep the day before. Plan your station operation and layout so that you're not strained and become so exhausted that you quit early.
- 2. Go on a DXpedition.** This is shooting pretty high, I know, because of the expenses and time involved. If you can't swing a DXpedition, operate from a foreign country you are planning to visit. Obtain permission or a license if required.
- 3. Operate from a large hill,** the top of (or partway up) a mountain or the top of a tall building with a VHF/UHF rig and gain antenna to see how far you can work simplex. I've operated from a tall building and with 10 W on 2 meter FM simplex was able to reach out well over 80 miles to mobile stations. Another time I was part of a group of hams who operated from the top of a 120 foot sand dune on Field Day and worked out several hundred miles with 5 W on SSB and a small Yagi. It was a blast but exhausting hauling the equipment up and down the hill. You might try paying your kids or grandkids to help haul the equipment and maybe get a chance to show them what ham radio is all about.

4. Operate from a motorcycle or bicycle. If you choose to operate from a bicycle see the article in the May 2009 *QST* by WA3LKN.¹ Presently I use a handheld transceiver with a flexible antenna but reception isn't great. I have plans to add an antenna like that shown in the article.

5. Erect an antenna so large that it is capable of staying up for only a contest weekend (think *Field Day*, *DX contests*). Use the following guideline: If it stays up then it's too small. A directional multiwire array between some really tall supports (trees, towers, flagpoles, etc) will provide a killer signal in the favored direction.

6. Run low power from the beach, park, woods, parking lot at work at lunchtime, hotel balcony, vacation spot, boat or ship. For all but the ship, put up a mobile whip antenna or simple pole and dipole depending upon what space is available. A ship may require special clearance. Bring a dual-band handheld transceiver with a small dual-band handheld Yagi and work through the low orbit ham satellites.

7. Visit a high power AM station transmitter site. These stations consist of power supplies, amplifiers, antennas, coax, etc — just like ours, only much larger. Back in the '70s I went to one of our local TV/FM/AM broadcast sites and was amazed at the size of the equipment. At least one of the broadcast engineers at a station in your town is probably a ham. Be sure to thank him and the station management (in writing) for their time.

8. Operate a classic ham station — this means tubes, separate receiver /transmitter/VFO and a straight key.

9. Build a kit. There are many station accessories that can improve your operation, don't cost much and will be fun to build. If it's been a long time since you've built a kit, pick something simple but be sure to enjoy the actual building process — remember “the journey is the reward.” A low-power rig is relatively simple, inexpensive and can be used for vacation, portable operation, etc.

10. Homebrew an antenna even if it's just with wires. (Remember to keep away from the power lines).

11. Increase your CW speed to 10, 15, 20+ WPM. W1AW still sends code every night and day of the year. Read up on techniques to help you increase your speed.

12. Operate PSK — it really isn't all that hard to set up and operate. You probably already own most of the needed equipment, such as a PC, HF SSB rig and antenna. All you need to add is some free software, a simple and inexpensive audio interface and a means of keying your rig.

13. Participate in Field Day — Go it alone, with a buddy or a local club. If you don't feel comfortable operating, help put up the antennas or cook the hot dogs and hamburgers. If you choose to operate for the first time, volunteer for the overnight shift — the bands really open up, the site gets quiet so you're not distracted and it's really fun being out there when everyone else is asleep. Things get kind of surreal around 3 AM...

14. Demonstrate ham radio at your child's (or grandchild's') school science class. I gave a presentation on one of my ham radio side hobbies (weather satellites) and it was an absolute blast. See my article in *73* magazine, September 2000.²

15. Write an article for QST. If you haven't written anything since high school (or ever), the editors will help you and you will become famous in your local ham group.

I've written a few over the past 15 years. The e-mails and letters I've received asking for help, more information or to tell me what they've done are absolutely priceless! I treasure each and every one. Also, I've gotten my wife involved. She proofreads the articles before I submit them.

16. DX on the AM and FM broadcast bands to see how many stations you can “log.” My friend John, N7LQR, and I used to see who could hear the most stations on the AM broadcast band. The last I recall, in the 1960s, he was well over 125. You probably won't get a QSL, but you can record the audio using a PC for proof. In the early mornings of spring and summer the FM band goes crazy sometimes filling every available channel with a station. Remember to stay away from your local broadcast station antenna sites so the receiver isn't overloaded.

17. Set up a table at a hamfest. Make sure you label everything with prices and clean up the items to make them look more attractive. It's really different "being on the other side of the table." The experience of meeting new hams this way is definitely worth the trouble of setting up.

18. Learn simple satellite operation, how to track them, how to use a PC program to find them and predict when they will be visible. After that you can advance to actually transmitting through them with the help of other satellite experts. Visit the AMSAT to learn the basics. Study the ARRL publications to learn more. AMSAT offers a free trial version of their full featured tracking program so you can test drive it before you buy it.

19. Become an Elmer to a neighbor, friend or relative. If you had an Elmer, maybe it's time to give back to ham radio what it has given to you. I had two Elmers and each one inspired me to try building, operating different modes or become involved in different ham activities. You guys in the South Bend, Indiana area know them — Big Smitty, W9EPT, and Wayne, K9IXU, both SK.

20. Demonstrate ham radio at a nursing home. They may not understand all of it but they enjoy seeing people from "outside." You may actually help a resident get his or her license and provide a link to the outside world (even if it's just via a handheld transceiver and the IRLP).

21. Provide communications during a marathon, parade, bike race, foot race, etc. This is a good chance to see an event up close, provide a useful service to your community and promote ham radio. The compliments and thanks you will get from the event organizers will be worth it.

22. Go to the Dayton Hamvention. If you have never been to Dayton you owe it to yourself to see it at least once. Dayton has been held for a long, long time. I've been going nearly every year since 1974 and still have not seen everything. If Dayton is too far away, attend the biggest one in your area.

23. Organize your QSLs into a photo album and your logs in a three-ring binder in chronological order. Display them proudly and review them when you feel like reminiscing or just to see who and where you've worked. I look back on mine and realize what fun I've had working locals, rare DX and some famous stations like W1AW.

I also kept a citation I got from the FCC for operating out of band with a homebrew VFO. I was shaking at the time (age 15) because I didn't think they would hear a 40 W CW station in Indiana and I was afraid they might take away my license. It was scary but it made me a better homebrewer. I've also kept all the mail (that's before e-mail) I got from contacting authors of articles. Keep it all but get it organized. Make photocopies of paper that is too brittle to put into a binder.

24. Teach or help teach a ham license class. You probably attended one to get your license so return the favor to upcoming hams.

25. Operate from W1AW. They have quite a station and antenna farm from what I see in *QST*. It's free but remember to bring your license.

There you have it — a list to get you started. Use it as-is or modify it to suit your needs, desires and capabilities. But remember, "time's a wasting" so get out there and start working on your Bucket List!

Jim Kocsis, WA9PYH, an ARRL member, is a test engineer at Honeywell Aerospace. He has homebrewed small projects his entire ham career, including a weather satellite downconverter and parabolic dish for 1691 MHz, and a 2400 MHz downconverter, helix fed parabolic dish for satellite work, circularly polarized Yagi antennas for 2 meters and 436 MHz satellite work.

He was first licensed in 1964 as WN9LDB, passed his General in 1965 and his Extra in 1986. He is a member of AMSAT and is active on the satellites when not homebrewing something. Jim's other interests are casual DXing, CW on HF, low power CW, especially during Field Day, noncompetitive bicycling, cooking and reading travel essays. He is anxiously awaiting the high orbit satellite launch to replace AO-40. Jim received a degree in physics from Indiana University in 1976.

¹D. Pennes, WA3LKN, "Bicycle Mobile Ham Radio," *QST*, May 2009, pp 69-70.

²J. Kocsis, WA9PYH, "School's In!," *73 Amateur Radio Today*, Sep 2000, pp 24-27.

February 2011 Contest Calendar

From the WA7BNM Contest Calendar

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>

AGCW YL-CW Party	1900Z-2100Z, Mar 1
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Mar 2
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Mar 4
ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 5 to 2400Z, Mar 6
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0600Z-0800Z, Mar 5
Open Ukraine RTTY Championship	2000Z-2159Z, Mar 5 (Low Band) and 2200Z-2359Z, Mar 5 (Low Band) and 0800Z-1159Z, Mar 6 (High Band)
DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest	1100Z-1700Z, Mar 6
SARL Hamnet 40m Simulated Emerg Contest	1200Z-1400Z, Mar 6
RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	2000Z-2130Z, Mar 7
ARS Spartan Sprint	0200Z-0400Z, Mar 8
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Mar 9
CWops Mini- CWT Test	1100Z-1200Z, Mar 9 and 1900Z-2000Z, Mar 9 and 0300Z-0400Z, Mar 10
AWA John Rollins Memorial DX Contest	2300Z, Mar 9 to 2300Z, Mar 10 and 2300Z, Mar 12 to 2300Z, Mar 13
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Mar 11
AGCW QRP Contest	1400Z-2000Z, Mar 12
ARCI HF Grid Square Sprint	1500Z-1800Z, Mar 12
EA PSK31 Contest	1600Z, Mar 13 to 1600Z, Mar 14
Idaho QSO Party	1900Z, Mar 12 to 1900Z, Mar 13
North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 13
SKCC Weekend Sprint	0000Z-2400Z, Mar 13
Wisconsin QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 13 to 0100Z, Mar 14
NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint	1800Z-2000Z, Mar 14
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Mar 16
RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	2000Z-2130Z, Mar 16
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Mar 17
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Mar 18
SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest	1600Z, Mar 18 to 1000Z, Mar 20
10-10 Int. Mobile Contest	0001Z-2359Z, Mar 19
BARTG HF RTTY Contest	0200Z, Mar 19 to 0200Z, Mar 21
Russian DX Contest	1200Z, Mar 19 to 1200Z, Mar 20
Feld Hell Sprint	1200-1400 local, Mar 19
Oklahoma QSO Party	1300Z, Mar 19 to 0200Z, Mar 20 and 1300Z-1900Z, Mar 20
AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	1400Z-1659Z, Mar 19 (144) and 1700Z-1759Z, Mar 19 (432)
Virginia QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 19 to 0100Z, Mar 21
North Dakota QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 19 to 1800Z, Mar 20
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Mar 23
RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	2000Z-2130Z, Mar 24
CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 26 to 2400Z, Mar 27
QRP Homebrewer Sprint	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 28

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[Http://www.centralksarc.com](http://www.centralksarc.com)

Your issue of QSP is Here!

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@ 7:30 PM, at KWU**

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**SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE
MARCH QSP IS MAR. 17, 2011**

CKARC March Birthdays

F/Member	JoAnn	Matthews	3/1
KAØEIC	Don	Fitzgerald	3/5
F/Member	Mary	Constable	3/9
WØUB	Vance	Eckstrom	3/14
F/Member	Crystal	Boyle	3/23
WØUTS	Bert	Voth	3/26
KCØVDV	Barbara	Mallon	3/28
KAØLTQ	Dennis	Kelley	3/29