

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Each month one of our members is randomly selected and asked to share their ham radio biography with all of us. Questions or comments should go to Paul, KD2MX.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the submitting member and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

STEVE GHERTNER WD4CFN #9754

A strong childhood interest in electronics led me to this fun hobby. I owe thanks to my mom for helping me find a local Novice license class through the ARRL. The class was hosted by the Vanderbilt University Amateur Radio Club. I also owe thanks to my father and grandfather for taking me to the weekly night classes. Also, much gratitude to the college students, who made the effort to teach a 12-year-old electronic theory and morse code to help me get my Novice ticket. I upgraded a few months later to General Class, then upgraded to Advanced Class the following summer. The thrill of sending RF across town or across the world and having someone send some back has never gone away.

SOTA

I continued to enjoy ham radio over the years, but not as actively as the first years I was licensed. My passion for “making” and homebrewing continued over the years. I became really excited about operating again when I discovered Summits On The Air (SOTA) in 2017.

The SOTA program is a great combination of hiking and portable ops. I don't live close to many summits, but I have had the opportunity to activate summits while on trips throughout the south-east, west, and even British Columbia. I am fortunate that my wife enjoys the hikes and joins me during the activations.



BACK TO CW

My interest in SOTA led me to want to get back to CW after 30+ years. Also, homebrewing and QRP lend themselves to CW, especially during a low sunspot cycle. I completed the CWops intermediate and advanced courses, which really helped me. I have been assisting a great CW operator and mentor, Tom Waits WA9CW, with his intermediate course, which has not only been fun but has helped me to continue to learn and meet others interested in CW. I spend a good bit of my air time participating in CW activities, including the

NAQCC sprints, SOTA, QRP Fox hunts, QCX challenge, CWops CWT's, and POTA as well as others.

I also enjoy building as much as I do operating. This includes constructing antennas, QRP rigs,

station accessories, using microcontrollers, and learning more about DSP. There is just so much to explore in our hobby! I hope to hear you on the air.

73, Steve WD4CFN #9754

