

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.

JON MILLIREN, AB3RU, #6431



Hi everyone. I'm Jon and my callsign is AB3RU. I've been licensed for less than five years. My tech call was KB3YXM and my General call was KB3ZBI. Each time I upgraded, I went for a new call hoping to get one that was short to send in morse code and I think AB3RU is ok. I'm soon to be 47 years old and I work as a systems administrator at the University of Pittsburgh where I've been since 1997. I'm thankful to have a job that I enjoy. I'm married and we have three kids, none of whom are interested in hearing the old man talk about making a five watt contact to Japan, hihi.

Although I'm relatively new to amateur radio, I have always been a DXer and just didn't know there was a name for it. When I was very small, my family would visit with my grandparents, and put my brother and I to sleep in the guest room. The radio would be tuned to KSFO and there was a man reading Winnie-the-Poo. Later on, I was old enough for Mystery Theater, and around that time after that was over, I would tune around on AM to find something else to listen to. Once I heard Sacramento which I'd never heard. I never kept track of the stations I would pick up, but I did listen to things at the noise level just to do it. I didn't know about shortwave radio at the time.

So the typical story happens: Boy gets older, finds different hobbies, goes to school, etc...

Now it's 2012. I by now knew what shortwave radio was, and the XYL kindly bought one for me for Christmas. I put the wire out my window, and tuned around. I could hear Australia, Romania, and islands in the middle of the ocean. I was having fun. My friend Drew, now W3FFZ, had inherited some ham radio gear from his uncle and grandfather. He kept the radios around because he thought it would be a shame to throw them away, even though he didn't have a license to use them. He was visiting one day and I was showing him the shortwave and told me I could have his TS-120s. I figured out it was a

transceiver and asked if we didn't need licenses for using this stuff? Yep, you do. So, we went down and took the test and got our Tech licenses.

I took off from there. I got my General the next month, and Extra seven months later. I first used the local 2m repeaters, and did sideband on 10m as well. I also bought a cheap plastic straight key and CPO kit from the ARRL. I've always liked electronics and kits, and I assembled electronics for five years in a previous job, so the electronic aspect of radio was appealing to me. I started buying kits and learning morse code. I stumbled onto the air and kept practicing and learning. I joined the SKCC and the NAQCC and started participating in the sprints, and that really helped me get better with morse code. The TS-120s blew up because I was still learning the digital modes, and that left me with my YouKits Hb1b as my main rig. If I wanted to make contacts, it was going to have to be QRP and CW.

I have other radios now, but I'm still 99.9% QRP and CW. I am active on the amateur radio subreddit on [reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com), where I often encourage people getting started learning morse code to check out the NAQCC. I had the pleasure of operating N3A two years ago and I did that to get more comfortable with calling CQ because at the time I was only answering calls. I have operated on the USS Requin with John, K3WWP, and Mike, KC2EGL and sat at the NAQCC table at a couple of hamfests with them as well. Everyone I've ever met from NAQCC has been friendly, welcoming and helpful, and I credit the majority of my progress in the hobby to all of you in the NAQCC. 73 and I hope to work you soon.

The picture is of me testing my friends G5RV with my YouKits Hb1b while I made a qrp cw contact to Umma, Germany.

