

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.

RICH BERGER, KC3MIO, #9942

I was born in 1951 and was fascinated by radio at a young age. I was a member of my high school's ham radio club, but never got a license. The years went by and in 2018, a friend of mine said he was interested in getting a license. He never did, but I bought the Technician license manual, studied it and passed the exam in November. My wife promised me station equipment for Christmas and while waiting, I studied for and passed the General exam in December. I got my Icom 7300 on the air on January 4 and it was a great thrill to make my first contacts even though they were in NJ, less than 100 miles away.

My intention was to be a CW operator, but I had fun on SSB and wanted full band privileges and took the Extra exam in April. I then turned to learning CW and made my first QSO on June 14th. As I gained confidence, my QSOs eventually became 90%+ on CW. My first experiences with QRP were on SSB, when I worked an op running five watts from his tent, in upstate NY. I made QRP QSOs with stations in LA and TX, also on SSB. My first CW QRP contact was with a K1 lent to me by my friend Bob (W3ZQN), feeding a random wire from my deck. I think the other station was 100 miles away and I quickly lost him in the noise. I was hooked.



Every QRP QSO is magical, especially two-way contacts. Those that stick in my mind:

- Working KD6JUI from his kayak on Lake Soldano, CA
- Steve, WGOAT, with him running 3 watts from CO with his Mountaintopper
- My first QRP contact in Europe with an op in the Czech Republic
- A two way QRP contact with OH5LP and a QSL card

I impulsively signed up to put out the NAQCC call during the last anniversary celebration. I think I made all of 17 contacts, but I worked the west coast and made a few contacts on 17 meters. I have participated in three NAQCC sprints and look forward to them each month. I will dig into the other NAQCC activities.



Xiegu G90

My base station is an Icom 7300 with a doublet antenna, about 125' long, up around 50', and fed with 600-ohm ladder line. I started out with a Bencher BY-1 paddle, but took up straight key in January and prefer it. I currently use a CW Morse 3D-printed key. I can send at 17 WPM, but my copying is lagging slightly, so I keep practicing.

I have put together a portable setup that I use when we are on a trip in our RV. It's a MTR-5B, an EFHW for 40-30-20 and 3D-printed paddle and key by CW Morse.

I just acquired a Xiegu G90S rig, maximum power of 20w, CW and SSB with a great ATU that tunes my doublet easily. In the works is a doublet for portable operation and if I get to it, a Moxon antenna for 30, 20, or 17.

I enjoy lots of things: DX, contesting, rag chewing, working POTA and SOTA stations. My favorite bands are 30, 20, and 40, although I try all that I can. I especially like operating from our deck when the weather is warmer, preferably with a beer after 5PM. I love learning about antennas, intend to check out digital modes and working the satellites. Besides ham radio, I like playing guitar, lifting weights and photography. My wife (Pam) and I have been married since 1978 and we have two children and three grandchildren.



Rich's collection of CW Morse 3D-printed keys