

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.

JOHN VEACH KE4D #7640

In 1969 I was a Junior at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL. The University had a radio station, K4FAU, which wasn't active at that time. One of the instructors at the lab school where I worked as a student aid brought the station online and I made my first contact with a ham in England. I was hooked.

BUILD A RADIO, THEN GET LICENSED

A couple of years later while teaching in Indiana, I enrolled in the National Radio Institute Amateur Radio course and built my first receiver, a Conar, if I remember correctly. And I think the course including the radio kit was \$25, or \$5 a month.

In 1973 I moved back to Florida and got serious about getting licensed. I enrolled in a Novice class taught by Reid, WA4DNJ, now K7YX. I passed the Novice in the early Spring of 1974 and 16 weeks later I was the proud owner of WN4IKG. Later that year I upgraded to General and became WB4IKG. A year or so after that, I upgraded to Advanced and in 1978 I passed my Extra at the Miami FCC Office. The code was no big deal but I was teaching third grade and had no background in electronics so I struggled with the theory. At that time, there was no question pool to study. You read the books, studied and took the exam in front of the FCC.

Passing the Extra was a big deal as I really had to put a lot of effort into that test. I asked for an Extra class call and was issued KE4D. It was fun to have one of the early 2x1 calls. I got a lot of QSL cards with a SASE attached.



In 1979, my ham radio career launched me in a new direction. A fellow ham steered me to an interview with Southern Bell. I got hired, quit teaching and actually started doing some communication work, although I was in marketing working mostly as sales support at the time.

QRP Rigs

That is when my interest in QRP began to blossom. I picked up an HW7, a Ten Tec Argonaut and then maybe a HW8. I remember working Rhodesia in South Africa with the Argonaut running less than a watt SSB on 10 meters.

Over the years I have had a number of QRP rigs including one of the first Yaesu FT-301SD, a 10-watter. Since then I have had a number of Elecraft QRP rigs, a bunch of kits from various sources including QRP labs and uBitx. My latest in the shack is an Xiegu G90, which is about a week old.

While I also have an IC7300 and an ALS 600, I really enjoy qrp work with my restricted antennas, a small steppIR and a fan-inverted-v for 80/40 with the apex at 20 feet. Living in a 55-plus community in Central Florida, my tower, beam, quad, full wave loop days are over but its fun to see how I can reach out with a few watts and minimal antennas and still work the world.

I worked a few QRP CW contacts in the NA QSO party this summer running 5 watts with my wire and G90. Unfortunately the radio didn't arrive until late Saturday so I didn't get a lot of op time for that one. I am looking forward to spending more time running QRP CW over the next few weeks.

73,
 -John KE4D #7640



We have a one vertical antenna limit here, 20 feet or less. The inverted V is on the property belonging to the horse ranch behind us so we are not violating the antenna restrictions. I did manage to get this changed later to include a vertical and a wire antenna for a couple of other hams here who don't back up to the ranch.

