

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.

MARK KELNER, WG8Y, #4405



I got my ticket in 1980 and have really enjoyed the hobby and all the friends that have come from it. I'm 66 and have been retired for four years. The retirement came early from our plant closing. My wife and I had talked about moving somewhere warmer when we retired so we pulled the plug on northeast Ohio. I took down the towers, sold our 2.5 acres and moved to Salisbury NC. We bought .3 acre lot and received an HOA to go with it.

My first taste of the air waves came while in 6th grade when our family was visiting relatives. An older cousin had just finished a simple homebrew SWL receiver for a science fair project. I couldn't believe the signals coming from that mess of wire and "stuff". Too bad I didn't know about Ham Radio then. I didn't get my ticket for another 18 years.

My station consists of an FT-990, Ameritron ATR-10 tuner and a 811H amp. The amp is used on 40M when needed for morning SSB rag chew sessions. Other than that I do mainly 50 to 70 Watts or less and mostly use CW. My main antenna is a full wave 40M loop hung vertically that I use on 10-40M and a homebrew ZS6BKW @45Ft.

For QRP I use my FT-817D and an Ameco straight key that I bought in 1980 for, I think, \$4.95. I have other keys and paddles but still like the Ameco. I can't afford the high priced stuff anyway.

i enjoy running QRP portable from some of the parks in the area and have fun trying out the different antennas I've built for portable outings and in the NAQCC Sprints. The Sprints are always fun and are

my favorite part of the NAQCC. I rarely try for a big score. I have made 39 Q's for my best total but I have more fun seeing who turns up as I tune through the bands.

I also like chasing SOTA activators, **Summits On The Air**. These guys are almost always running QRP and it's fun listening for a weak signal sneaking thru the QRM.

I've had many memorable QSOs over the years but during one of the NAQCC Sprints a few months ago I had been working 20M and the signals were fading fairly quickly and I was about ready to go to 40m. I tuned a bit further and heard an S-8 signal and thought why is this QRO guy calling CQ in the QRP window. It was a French station, F6HFX! He called again so I answered him and he came right back. He gave me a 579. Guess what, he was QRP at 5 watts. We exchanged names, etc, and told him I was in the NAQCC Sprint and signed. I spun thru 20 a couple more times but the band was gone. What do they say? Timing is everything.

I've worked over 300 countries mixed mode QRO with tall towers and monobanders but get as much or more fun out of running QRP with wire antennas. It is always a thrill when running QRP and I call a guy on a summit across the country or in Europe and hear my call coming back to me. It doesn't happen all the time but it sure is fun when it does.

Now if I could just work Hawaii and Alaska QRP to QRP.

The photo is me at my garage work bench with Riley, my playful pup . The Heathkit SB-102 was from my Stepdad's estate. He got me started in the hobby with "Tune In The World With Ham Radio". The smile is because I've got it back on the air but I still need to clean it up a bit more . Also, in the background is his SB-110 6 meter rig I'll start on that one next. Hope to catch you in the Sprints.

