

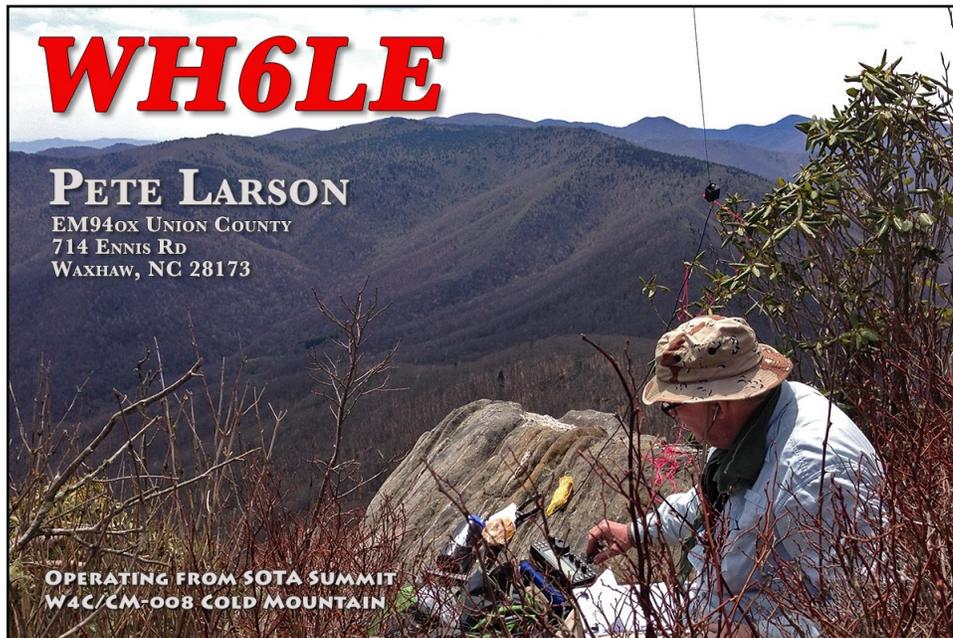
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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.

PETER LARSON, WH6LE, #6328



Greetings NAQCC members! My interest in ham radio spawns from my military experience at not being able to make HF work. I could not understand why, unlike VHF FM radios, turning on an HF rig and using PTT on the hand mic didn't always produce responses. I observed a "pro" HF operator overseas make an impressive long range CW contact with a MARS station back in CONUS. "Where'd you learn how to do that?" He responded that despite being a trained Special Forces communications NCO, he learned an additional wealth of operating tricks and techniques through ham radio. "If interested," he advised, "when you redeploy, go to Radio Shack and buy the book "Now You're Talking". Good tip taken. I obtained my initial Technician Plus license and later upgraded to General while stationed in Hawaii a couple of years later (that explains the Hawaii callsign). My most memorable QSO from Hawaii back then was with VR6RC, Raelene Christian. My ears perked when she gave me Pitcairn Island as her QTH. I asked wasn't that the destination of the HMS Bounty with Lieutenant Fletcher Christian? In a matter of fact way she responded, "yes, he's my ancestor."

In the late 1990s I stowed all my radio gear, as many do, because of competing priorities: job, time available, etc. Years later, the XYL commented, "What are you going to do with all that radio stuff?" I sensed a clean out project. This provided the catalyst to unbox the ham equipment and delve back into the world of amateur radio, resuming radio operations in 2011 after a 13-year hiatus.

Shortly after getting my 1990s vintage rig set up, I stumbled onto the web site for Summits on the Air

(SOTA) <http://www.sota.org.uk/>. Perusing the SOTA site piqued my interest. This, coupled with the Youtube, "W4MPS/N4EX SOTA Activation of Moore's Knob" compelled me to stuff the rucksack with radio gear and climb a summit. I soon learned that the 1990s vintage radio was too heavy and an energy hog, which naturally provided all the logic I needed to buy new radios. I initially operated only QRP phone from summits but noted other activators racking up many more contacts on CW. With encouragement from those same two guys in the Youtube video(see above), I thought I'd give CW a go after years of inactivity. I haven't looked back yet and I view myself as still a QRS CW operator. I use morse code much more than any other mode and find digging out weak signals or concentrating to copy fast operators a fun challenge.

I enjoy the NAQCC Sprints as much as any other ham radio activity from my shack. I have also played around a bit with the 1000MPW and the mW sprints. Activating and chasing summits in SOTA, NAQCC, SKCC, and chasing DX and grid squares comprise my ham activity right now.

The photo is my current QSL card activating Cold Mountain (SOTA ref W4C/CM-008) in North Carolina with Tommy, W4TZM.

I'm always looking forward to the next sprint and working all the great NAQCC operators!

