

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.

MIKE MANER, WI5H, #7128



My first introduction to ham radio was when I was a SWL many years ago. I eventually decided that the QSOs were more interesting than SWLing.

I have now been a ham for 30 years and spent most of those years operating from EM13. My Novice call was KA5UXU. My Technician through Advanced call was N5IIF. When I passed the Extra exam, I requested a new call and the FCC responded with WI5H. I have been asked a few times if my call is a "vanity" call, but it was just the next 2 by 1 call in the 5th call district.

I was a SkyWarn weather spotter and a member of the local Red Cross disaster team for a number of years.

My favorite aspects of ham radio and SWLing have always been equipment and antenna construction. Over the years, much of my operation has been with homebrewed QRP gear and transverters interfaced with older Kenwood transceivers.

My wife Barbara (N5VLD) and I are now retired and we have relocated to DM91. After about eight years QRT, I returned to the air in January 2013. My first HF contact was with FG5FR on 17 meters. What a nice way to get back on the air! That contact was made with a Kenwood TS-130S and a portable dipole hanging between my porch and a nearby tree. I think I only received about a 539 report, but I had worked France! My first HF contact since 2005. During the next few days, I got back on the popular data modes as well. I then started planning a more efficient HF antenna.

Now my primary HF antenna is a fixed wire loop using about 90 feet of #14 insulated copper wire tuned by a SG-237 remote antenna coupler. The SG-237 is powered over the coax via a pair of homebrewed Bias"T" devices. The loop is oriented broadside to the east and west.

Today, I operate mostly QRP CW using homebrewed gear including a homebrewed ball-bearing straight key. Once in a while, I work a little QRO CW or SSB, but no data modes lately.

We also have an End-Fed Wire and homebrewed tuner for 40, 20 and 17 meters. The EFW is made from aluminum electric fence wire because we had a partial spool available. The aluminum wire works pretty well, and is relatively cheap compared to copper. The wire is available from any store that sells electric fence supplies. I hope to build and install separate 160 meter RX and TX antennas before winter comes and goes. I am thinking a vertical for TX and a flag for RX.

Lately I have been using a CW-only, homebrewed, QRP multi-band transceiver for most of my operating, including the NAQCC Sprints. The QRP transceiver is my current HF project. It is still under development and has resulted in several spin-off projects to develop modules and features for the transceiver. Receive is from LF to above 20 meters. TX is currently limited to 40, 30 and 20 meters. Whenever I get the filter modules built, 160 through 80 meters will be available. Later an additional amp section will add a QRO option of 25-50 watts depending on the band selected and power supply/battery pack capability.

My other hobbies include playing cornet in a band called Ice House Brass, playing trumpet in the San Angelo Community Band, amateur astronomy and model railroading (especially narrow gauge).

I usually hang out on 20 meters and I try to work at least part of each NAQCC Sprint.

If you hear me on the air, please give me a call.

