

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.



WARREN PUGH, KC9IL, #7610

I was interested in radio and electronics back in grade school and high school. I received my ham license in 1976, partially at the urging of my girlfriend's (now wife) grandfather, who was licensed back in the 1920's. In the early days I sampled as much as Ham Radio had to offer, including HF, 6-meters, repeaters, packet radio and early digital modes like PSK31. I've held a "know code" Extra license since 1987.

In 2001 I bought a Yaesu FT-817 at Dayton and became enchanted with QRP and portable operation. Being an avid bicycle rider, operating QRP portable just seemed to be a natural fit. I was traveling for work quite a bit in the 2000's so the '817 became a trusted travel partner for those nights on the road. I even took it along on a family vacation to Aruba in 2003, and had a blast working beach portable as P40WP.

My interest in CW was reignited in 2013 and I discovered the Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) in January 2014. This really got me interested in CW on-air events. Later that year I found the NAQCC and became #7610. I wasn't terribly active in NAQCC, other than a few nets, until late in 2018 when I started participating in the monthly sprints.

To my amazement, in my first attempt in an NAQCC Sprint in November 2018, I won the Simple Wire Antenna – Straight Key category in the 9th call area. At that point I became hooked. I will attribute my success to all the practice operating as an SKCC member. I know we have a number of hams who belong to both the SKCC and NAQCC, and would highly recommend both organizations. They are fine people.

My interests in Ham Radio remain diverse, including straight key CW, occasional contesting, digital modes, including FT-8, FSQCall and WinLink, as well as repeaters, both analog and digital (D-Star, DMR and Yaesu Fusion). My favorite NAQCC activities remain the monthly sprints. I can easily fit in a 2-hour event as opposed to an entire weekend for some other events. I try to get out during warm weather for a quick activation at a local park.

Current rigs include an Icom 7610 at home (so easy to remember my NAQCC number now that I have this rig!) that winds down readily to five watts, and an Elecraft KX-3 as my portable rig. For antennas I use a G5RV at 45 feet and for portable use I have a home brew end fed with a 9:1 UNUN as well as a Super Antenna. Each has their advantages. The rest of the fleet includes numerous VHF/UHF mobiles, portables and hot spots for digital voice modes.

While I have a number of keys, my favorite is a rebuilt J-38 that was a gift from my wife's grandfather. I use it every week. Another one I enjoy is a mini travel key from American Morse Equipment that I use while operating portable.

As far as awards, I have ARRL DXCC and Triple Play WAS as well as SKCC WAS but the one I am most proud of is being on the top of the list for SKCC "miles per watt", which I achieved by working K3SEW in Pennsylvania with just 2.5 milliwatts for a total of 213,757 miles per watt. Good conditions, but great ears on his part made it possible.

My other hobbies include bicycling, Senior Softball, astronomy, photography, boating and golf. With all these interests, I'm looking forward to being able to spend more time enjoying them.

Professionally, I am a Chief Financial Officer on the verge of (semi) retirement so that I can spend more time with family and enjoying the many hobbies I've accumulated. Not surprisingly, I'm also the treasurer of my very active local radio club in the Chicago area. I've been married for 41 years to the girl I met on CB radio 45 years ago, have two grown daughters, two great sons-in-law and two grand-puppies.

Thanks for reading and I look forward to meeting up with you on the air.

72/73,
Warren Pugh
KC9IL
#7610

