

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.

BOB CARDONE – N2EIM #10373

My interest in ham radio began when I received a gift of a crystal radio kit in the late 1950s. Listening to a radio that I built inspired me to learn more about ham radio. Growing up I often read *QST Magazine* in the library but I did not have an opportunity to become a ham because of the typical reasons cited: lack of an elmer, lack of financial resources and fear of asking my mother if it was okay to drill a hole in the house for an antenna.



RETIREMENT HOBBY

A couple of years before I retired I was looking for a hobby to occupy my free time. Ham radio seemed to be a good fit. I got my Tech license in 2013, followed in rapid succession by my General license and Extra license.

I joined a radio club and got HF operating experience at the club's shack. My first HF rig was a 50 watt Ten-Tec Argosy 525D. The 10M band was wide open at that time and I became hooked on ham radio. Six months later I purchased a Ten-Tec Eagle and I enjoyed working DX and contesting. I mostly operated SSB and

all the digital modes earning WAS, DX100 and Worked All Continents.

MORSE CODE

The lure of working distant stations using low power drew me to CW. I tried teaching myself morse code using online CW apps but I did not have much success. I read about the CWOPS CW Academy and enrolled in the Level 1 training class in fall of 2017. CWOPS requires that you use a paddle so I bought a Vibroplex Standard lambic key which I still have. The training

was great. I got on the air using CW and participated in the weekly CWTs before I finished the course.

To improve my head copying ability and sending speed, I enrolled in the CWOPS Level 2 training. I attended the Winter 2019 class. It was time well spent. Operating CW opened up a new world for me. I was able to make very long distance contacts with 100 watts and my compromised antennas.



In 2020 I purchased a Begali key and the day it arrived news broke that Covid-19 was raging in the Italian province where the Begali factory is situated. At that time the health experts were warning us that the virus could live on inanimate objects for up to two weeks so the box sat in my garage until it was "safe" to use. It was a long two weeks!

SPRINTS AND WORD CHALLENGES

My next challenge was to become proficient operating QRP. I joined NAQCC and participated in the Sprints. I like the Sprints because they give me an opportunity to run during a contest. I find that running is much more challenging than S&P and more rewarding.

I love the NAQCC Word Challenges. I did the April and May 2021 Challenges. They motivate me to get on the air and operate QRP.

IN THE CAR AND THE SHACK

Recently I began activating Parks On the Air. I operate from my car using a KX2 with KX2PD

paddles. My antenna is a trunk lip mounted Wolf River coil with a 118" whip. I am still learning how to operate the KX2 and the KX2PD keyer.

Current gear in my shack are an IC-7300 and a Begali Magnetic Classic key. I have a stealth ground mounted vertical antenna with a counterpoise on my deck. I use a Wolf River Mini for the low bands.

I retired from Merrill Lynch Bank of America in 2015 where I was a Six Sigma Master Black Belt and a senior software development manager. Before my finance career, I was a research chemist at Hoffmann-LaRoche. I am an avid birder and share this hobby with my significant other Christine (KD2EOZ). Chris is a great help with all of my antenna projects. We also enjoy providing radio support for community events like the NJ Triathlon and the March Of Dimes Races. I am a VE and teach Ham Crams at the Trenton Computer Festival.

I hope to hear you on the air. Please give me a call if you hear me doing a POTA activation. I will be doing many New Jersey parks this year.

