

Biography

Jack L Espinal

My interest in radio and electronics began when I was in the 7th grade. I built a crystal radio that worked quite well for local AM radio stations. I used an old five tube radio to log distant AM Radio stations late at night. My first big construction project was assembling a Heathkit Vacuum Tube Volt Meter. It was followed by the building of a Philmore shortwave receiver kit that I used to listen to Radio Moscow and other distant radio stations. I was excited about amateur radio when I began high school as a freshman since the school had a radio club and an amateur radio station. My excitement was short lived because the club and station were open only to junior and senior students. The club and amateur radio station were not high priorities for electronics teacher who was not at all interested helping students become licensed amateurs. So, by the time I was a HS junior the radio club and station were gone and my interests had switched to chemistry, astronomy, and building rockets.

Two years ago, I attended an emergency communications class for the James City County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). This excellent class was taught by members of the Williamsburg Area Amateur Radio Club (WAARC) and it revived my interest in amateur radio. Those in attendance were encouraged to become technician radio operators to support CERT communications during future emergencies. I read the training manual and passed the Technician exam about a month later. This past spring, I studied for, and with the help of WAARC members, passed the General exam. My challenge now is getting an antenna system in the attic and/or getting HOA approval for an outdoor antenna to get my HF radio on the air.

One of my biggest amateur radio interests is making things. In the last year I have experimented with converting computer power supplies for amateur use and I have built and compared three kinds of VHF/UHF antennas using a nanoVNA. I find it exciting to build something yourself, use test equipment and textbook theory to adjust and change it, and then have it actually operate as expected. My current project is making a fox hunting antenna.

I have also enjoyed working in numerous leadership and staff positions during my 32 years of service as a National Guardsman and as an active-duty soldier. While working in the Pentagon with National Guard Bureau, I was responsible for managing all of the tank and automotive equipment assigned to the National Guard. Later, as a contractor, I managed the Army National Guard's \$400 million depot level repair and maintenance program. I am currently an adjunct instructor for Park University teaching database development and other information systems related subjects. As Park University's Academic Director in the Washington, DC area I supervise and evaluate 30 instructors.

I look forward to working at future club activities in just about any capacity. I enjoy helping others explore the amateur radio hobby.