

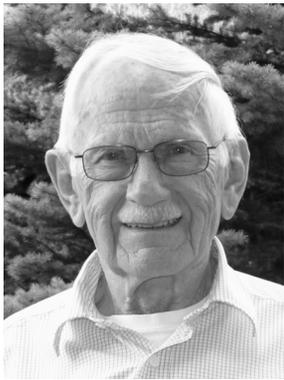
THE VILLAGE VOICE

Rocky Mountain Village Estates • September, 2019

Meet Jerry Mertz

You might not have known it, but we have a radio personality amongst us. Jerry Mertz is one of those people who really likes to ham it up – especially on the radio.

OK, so we're talking ham radio. He's been at it since he was 13 when he was invited to join a radio club in junior high school, passing his first test with the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) in Sioux Falls. Jerry's school had its own radio station, something that set it apart from other schools, fostering his interest in electronics. He took three years of electronics courses in high school and accepted a job with Sylvania upon graduation.



About the time he was going to be drafted, he joined the Air Force, which made good use of his electronics background. Over his 25 years with the Air Force, he lived in North Carolina, Michigan, Georgia, Louisiana, Kansas, North Dakota, and Korea, getting his training at Lowry AF Base in Denver in 1959. He earned a Bronze Star in Guam in 1972.

It was while at Lowry that he met his wife – in Central City, to be exact. They married in 1961 and had one child — a daughter who lives in Evergreen. “Both my parents and grandparents had lived in Denver briefly,” he noted.

Their Air Force assignments ended in 1984 when Jerry retired, having achieved the title of Chief Master Sergeant. He then accepted a job with Lockheed, which put him inside missiles even though he'd only worked with airplanes previously.

He and his wife were married for nearly 55 years, 20 of which were spent in North Carolina after he retired in 1998. They'd started out in North Carolina years earlier sharing a 36-ft-long mobile home with a dachshund and a baby.

A Midwesterner, Jerry was born and raised in Sioux City, Iowa. His grandparents emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania, then relocated to Fort Dodge and Webster City, east of Sioux City. One great-grandfather was known for having designed the 2-cable guardrail for highways and later invented the drop feed for hogs. Jerry still has relatives back in Iowa.

After all these years, Jerry is still hamming it up. “I love code. I'm the first guy ever to work all the counties on 30 meters (code),” he says. He's transmitted to every county from his home or his car – all 3,077 of them – although he's only set foot in 1,000 of them. “I've talked to someone in every county seven times.” Now he transmits from his car or remotely via computer to a station in Minnesota to talk to others. His call sign has been W0GXQ since January 16, 1952.

As you might have guessed from his having set foot in one-third of the counties in our country, Jerry likes to travel. He belongs to an organization that gets fellow ham radio operators together. He's been with others on 35 trips and been on hundreds by himself. One of his favorites was a five-day road trip visiting 39 of the 64 counties in Colorado. “I loved Ouray – I'm going back!”

To Jerry, “Code is like music.” He thinks in dots and dashes whenever he reads a sign or message, tapping it out in his head. In addition to ham radio, Jerry enjoys just about every kind of music, especially classical rock. Pink Floyd is amongst his favorites, but classical music ranks right up there too. “I never played an instrument, but music has always been a part of my life,”

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“People who prefer to believe the worst of others will breed war and religious persecutions while the world lasts.”

- Dorothy L. Sayers

Memo from the Manager

Please welcome Donna Frantz, who will serve on the Board as Treasurer, replacing Carolyn Kindt, who is selling her unit.

The Board of Directors will meet on September 19th at 5:30 in Genesee.

Garage cleaning will take place in Bergen on Monday, September 9th and in Genesee on Tuesday, September 10th. Please have your cars out by 7:30 am.

If you have a bike in the bike rack that you use and want to keep there, please let me know. I would like to donate abandoned and unused bikes to a place that restores them and donates them to folks needing transportation. Please send me a description, picture, note, whatever by September 20th. Thank you!

-- Kathy

Reminders....

Rhonda from Safeway will do our flu shot clinic again this year on Monday, September 16th at each of the Monday morning coffee hours. Medicare covers the cost of the shots, so bring your insurance cards along (Kaiser Permanente members get their free shots directly from Kaiser.)

Pot Luck is starting again in September — the second Monday of the month at Bergen and the fourth Monday at Genesee.

Movie night is returning too after a summer recess. They're slated for Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in Bergen. Watch for details on the flyers in each building.

Aces Bridge takes place on the second Wednesday of the month from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. Party bridge — all levels welcome. Contact René Kilmer at 303-679-4907 if you'd like to play.

The Evergreen Chamber Orchestra Guild meets on Saturday, the 21st at Genesee with a 9:30 am coffee and a 10:00 program — Mike and Shirley Marecak on the cello and Peggy Lyon on the piano. There is a \$10 fee for the program.

The hiking group will continue on Thursdays at 9:00 through September, weather permitting. Contact Bette or Charlie Carcano for information on trail locations and where to meet.

Jerry Mertz continued

Rhythm must be in his bones — he still likes to dance too — everything except square dance and polka. He plays bridge a couple times a week too. Hiking is something he used to do.... His grandmother started him collecting US postage stamps in 1943, and he still collects them. He inherited her US stamp collection when she died.

Jerry has been a resident in Bergen for two years now. "I love it here," he says. "I love the security, the quiet, the people of course, and the activities."

Profile and photo by Linda Kirkpatrick.

WELCOME!

Meli Garcia — 311-B