

Spotlight – Matt Newman KA7VSA

I grew up in the Provo/Orem area of Utah. All during my childhood I wanted a set of walkie-talkies. Every Christmas I would ask for a set and never receive them. About the time I was 11 or 12 a friend got a pair of the horrible bottom-of-the-line Archer Space Patrol walkie-talkies from Radio Shack.

Using them one night, we noticed that we could hear CB traffic, and that started me on the road to CB radio. Ah, the good old days. I really felt like hot stuff. I got to know all the guys and especially girls in my school who had CB. It almost made you feel like a member of a club or something. Staying up late at night with a CB by the bed talking to friends was as much fun as a sleep-over.



Every spring I get the urge to grab a walkie-talkie and head for the mountains. The sad part is, there's no one left to talk to. A few years ago we had a handful of old-timers living around us that I could chat with but these days the only thing I ever hear are passing truckers being obnoxious with their echo units and roger beeps. And Nate in Elberta. I'm almost hoping another CB fad comes along soon!

In 1985 while in college studying electronics I had a teacher assign the class an end of term project. As he described the types of projects he'd accept he threw in, "On [such and such a date] there will be a ham radio license test given. Anyone who gets their Novice license as their project will be given a B+." That sounded great to me and a couple of buddies, so together we set about learning Morse code and everything else the test would entail. A few years later I took the test for the Technician license and happily passed. Of course the code was forgotten within six months.



Right after getting my Technician license a friend lent me a Kenwood 2-meter hand-held. I had a lot of fun with that, talking to locals and using the phone patch on the 76 repeater. But I eventually had to give it back.

In the early 2010s I received a church calling as Emergency Communications Specialist. I purchased a Yaesu FT-60R and started checking in on the Stake nets every week. And I joined the 76ers! I still use that FT-60R. I've also acquired a TYT TH-7800 which I use as a base station. And now that I'm retired and have more time on my hands, I really should get my General license.

– 73, Matt