

Spotlight – Wade Shearer KK7RRW

At the age of twelve, I was first exposed to ham radio on Mount Timpanogos when I was part of an active scout troop that summited the mountain multiple times per year. I immediately fell in love with the mountain and volunteers that spent their weekends as guides and first responders along the trail. My neighbor and leader, Ben Christensen, was a member of the Timpanogos Emergency Response Team, so I got an up-close view into how the organization operated. He was a hero to me. I dreamed that I could have my own radio and help people on the mountain.

Having hiked Timpanogos many times, it just so happens that I had proposed to my wife in the upper meadow of that very mountain. The frequency of my ascents up the mountain slowed after we got married and started having kids, however. As my family grew, I also developed an interest in self reliance and emergency preparedness. In February 2024, after being called to serve as the self-reliance specialist at my church again, I was thinking about gaps in our preparedness plan and decided it was finally time to get some radios. I ordered a pair of Baofeng handheld radios, but having them just in case of an emergency didn't last long, and I started studying for the Technician license exam.

My dad Hal KK7RRU, who had started studying to get his license when I was a teenager, but struggled mastering Morse code, was excited to join me now that it's no longer a requirement. Once my son Max and daughter Lila studied, we took the exam together in March 2024 and we all passed. Lila and I went on to get our General, and Hal, his Extra. A month ago, my third daughter Afton joined us with her Technician license.

I started having QSOs, participating in nets, and attending club meetings, and found a wonderful community of some of the friendliest and most kind people, willing to teach and help you out with anything you need. I really appreciate how the FCC rules help create a place where I'm comfortable for myself and my children.

One day, Noji KNØJI invited me to run the Family Net on Sundays, and I began doing this from my handheld outside, but it got cold and it was hard to take check-ins. After I upgraded to a TYT TH-7800 mobile radio and a Pockrus J-pole, and set up a shack on a card table in my garage, I spent the Winter there, working next to a propane heater. I'm really proud of my daughter Afton who has now taken over as net control of that net.

As I'm mostly interested in portable operations, especially in the back country, I didn't think I would be interested in HF. I caught the bug at Field Day, however, and started saving for a base station. I also saved up for some bigger antennas and to move my shack into the house. I now have two vertical antennas on the roof and an off-center-fed dipole that hangs from a tree. I was able to run coax into an unfinished utility room in my basement; it can still be cold in there, but its a much nicer shack than the garage was.



I've enjoyed DX-ing and hunting POTA. I now have confirmed contacts in all 7 continents, all 50 states, 139 counties, 19 countries, and 139 grid squares. I think I'd enjoy activating some day. I'm saving for a battery and portable antenna that I can use for that and camping.

I've dreamed of the day that my children would be big enough to start hiking and I could take them up the mountain. That happened in August, when I summited Mount Timpanogos for my seventeenth time, this time with my daughter Lila. We took our radios and listened in on the TERT team talking. It was an awesome day.

— 73, Wade KK7RRW