

# **NEVER TOO OLD**

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## NEVER TOO OLD

Often when we retire or otherwise become less active we almost give up on living an active life. Someone once said, do not retire from something...retire to something.

Keeping active both physically and mentally helps provide a healthier lifestyle.

Unfortunately, many retirees find life boring, they may reflect on things they used to be able to do and what they have accomplished in the past, but now they are unable or unwilling to do much of anything productive or fun. Their days are occupied thinking about what to do next and sleeping the hours away...life is no longer fun. Some even slip into depression; how sad is that?



Unlike the scenario of the people above, here is a story of one person who decided to accomplish something during retirement. Meet Wayne: he was a Seabee in the U.S. Navy serving as a Construction Electricians Mate. FYI, the name Seabee comes from "CB" or Construction Battalion. Following his service in the Navy, Wayne worked for a telephone company and

held several positions: he was a cable repairman, installer, lineman and central office technician. Following the telephone company, Wayne was a technical representative for the U.S. Air Force working on telephone systems. Subsequently, he joined the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve where Wayne served as a Senior Electricians Mate, Chief Warren Officer, and then a Lt. Commander. After retirement he decided to do more with his life. He wanted to do something he was passionate about and would challenge him, something he would enjoy long term and have fun with. He decided he would obtain an amateur radio license. Applying himself to this task would keep him mentally sharp and engaged in life.

Wayne claims he does not have much electronic knowledge; however, he studied intently, and recently became a licensed amateur radio operator, commonly referred to as a "ham." On July 29, 2015 he was issued a Technician Class license after passing the required thirty-five question exam. Wayne's call was KM4MDL. Shortly thereafter, on October 14, 2015 he was issued a General Class license after passing the thirty-five question General exam. Not one to let grass grow under his feet, Wayne also studied for the highest level, an Extra Class exam and on February 18, 2016, after passing the fifty question exam, he was issued an Extra Class license as well. His call remained the same, KM4MDL. Each of the three exams was passed on the first attempt. Oh, did I forget to mention, he is only eighty-five years young. Though he had many accomplishments and memories of life past, he decided to live forward, learning and accomplishing new things.

Are you, or do you know someone who could benefit from a change in lifestyle? Amateur radio provides an opportunity to learn new skills and meet new people all over the world, either in person or from the comfort of their favorite chair. Joining a club and attending meetings puts them in contact with like-minded people. With so many aspects of amateur radio, clubs can provide a means of learning, or even teaching the science and art of the hobby. They can also provide a pool of people who are willing to assist when help is needed. Not to mention the many friendships developed through amateur radio.

Though this article focused on retirees, amateur radio can serve young and old alike. It is certainly not limited to retirees...age does not matter nor does the person's background; it is a hobby for anyone to enjoy. Amateur radio offers many diverse avenues; it does not have to be just listening and talking to other amateur radio operators.

If your interests are computer related there are many options in amateur radio, some of which are: Radio Teletype (RTTY), Phase Shift Keying at 31 baud (PSK31), packet radio, such as Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) to name a few. Maybe you

enjoy designing and/or constructing things, often referred to as "homebrew." Various antenna designs are popular homebrew projects as well as designing and building adjunct equipment. Many people have designed and built low power (QRP), less than five watt, transmitters and transceivers. Perhaps, communicating with the International Space Station or making contacts via "moon bounce" is of interest. Does making long distant contacts known as "DXing" pique your curiosity? Hams use various modes of communicating, e.g., amplitude modulation (AM), frequency modulation (FM), single sideband (SSB), continuous wave (CW), and of course the various digital modes. There are so many diverse opportunities within amateur radio to enjoy for a lifetime.

Keep life fun and exciting!

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