

Little 'ham,' big dreams

BY CASIE **FORBES**
News Writer

WASHINGTON – With a hand-held device that barely fits in his hands, Jaden Taylor types in a code and tries to reach someone on the other end of a ham radio.

Jaden, a 10-year-old from Washington, is the youngest licensed ham radio operator in St. George and one of the youngest in the state. He first became interested in ham radio after watching his father, Scott Taylor, get his operator's license.

Ham radio is also known as amateur radio. Messages are

transmitted from radio to radio, similar to what truckers use to communicate between vehicles.

Ham radios, however, can communicate around the world if conditions are good.

Scott Taylor was introduced to ham radio as a kid while watching his neighbor. Back then, passing a Morse Code test was a requirement for becoming a licensed ham radio operator. When that requirement was dropped in July 2007, Scott became interested



JADEN TAYLOR

in pursuing his license.

There are three levels of ham

See **HAM RADIO** on A15

Today in Dixie

Thursday, July 2, 2009

HAM RADIO

Continued from A7

radio licensure: technician, general and extra; with each step up, a ham radio user can receive and communicate on more frequencies.

Scott received his general license in March. Jaden prepared for his technician's license, which contains high-level math and electrician's tests, and passed when he was only 9 years old. Jaden is planning to take his general test in either June or July.

The Dixie Amateur Radio Club has been there to help Jaden and Scott with their goals. The club holds monthly meetings as well as a roll call every Sunday. The roll call allows ham radio users to ask questions and check their equipment. Jaden and Scott

are two of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club's youngest members; Jaden is the very youngest.

"There's not a lot of young people," Scott Taylor said. "We've only heard of one other kid that age who has his license. A lot of the guys here are veterans and spent a lot of time with this communication."

In addition to getting a higher license, Jaden has many other goals, including talking to NASA and the astronauts. If there is a school group put together, Scott Taylor said they can set up a time to contact NASA and talk with the astronauts currently in space.

Jaden also wants to speak with a ham radio operator in every state, and he is in competition with his dad to see who can speak to someone farthest away from St. George.

Scott Taylor said he hopes more young people will get involved with ham radio and join DARC; with changes in technology such as the Internet, the club is becoming more appealing to younger members.

"Two of my friends want to try and join," Jaden said.

For Jaden, there are a lot of pluses to being a ham operator, including spending time with his father. The two have been able to bond by having the hobby in common.

"I also get to talk to people around the world," Jaden said.

In the end, Jaden and Scott Taylor said there is only one downside to ham radio: someone's got to be on the other end.

For more information about the Dixie Amateur Radio Club, visit www.dixieham.org.