



PAWA Lines

The Newsletter of the
Portland Amateur Wireless Association

April 2017

Published September-June by Ariel & Jason Cote

Web Site: www.qsl.net/pawa

Repeaters: 146.730 (-600kHz) (100.0 Hz CTCSS) Falmouth
444.10 (+5MHz) (82.5 CTCSS) Scarborough

Pawa Information

President	Bryce Rumery, K1GAX K1GAX@juno.com
Vice President	John Bogner, W1JLB jbogner1@maine.rr.com
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The PAWA Lines is published monthly
(September through June)

All submissions for publication must be
received not less than one week prior to
the first day of the month of publication.

Submissions may be made to the editor:
Ariel Cote, KC1CCB
KC1CCB@jcwebdesign.com

Meetings and Programs

Meetings are held at 6:00pm (Board of Directors) and at 7:00pm (General Membership) September through June at the Stewart Morrill American Legion Post #35, 413 Broadway, South Portland.

Informal Meetings are held at the Legion Hall during the months of July and August.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Program: Public Service Events/Hamfest Sign Up

Upcoming Exam Sessions

Exam sessions are held the third Thursday of the months of January, July and October at 6:00pm and in the month of April on the third Saturday at 10:00am. All exam sessions are held at the Stewart Morrill American Legion Post #35, 413 Broadway, South Portland.

Next Exam Session: Saturday, April 15, 2017 (10:00am)

For further information contact John Bogner, W1JLB at jbogner1@maine.rr.com or at 207-490-0533

President's Message

Even though it doesn't feel like it, Spring has sprung! With Spring brings the PAWA's busy season. We have the PAWA hamfest coming up on Saturday, April 15th. We have the MS Walk on Saturday April 22nd at the Portland Expo. We have the March of Dimes walk on Sunday, April 30th at the USM Sullivan Gym in Portland. We have a short break and then there is Field Day June 24th and 25th. July 4th brings the L. L. Bean 10K run in Freeport. To round out the season there is the Beach to Beacon 10K run in Cape Elizabeth on Saturday, August 5th.

We need volunteers for all these events. When the call goes out, please volunteer! It really doesn't take all that long and is really appreciated!

73, Bryce, K1GAX

April Exam Session

The next exam session sponsored by the PAWA is on Saturday, April 15, 2017 at 10:00 AM at the Stuart Morrill American Legion Post #35, 413 Broadway in South Portland (on the third floor in the Helm Room) in conjunction with the annual PAWA hamfest.

Doors open for exams at 9:30 AM, exams begin promptly at 10:00 AM and doors close for exams at 10:15 AM. Exams for all classes will be given.

Candidates, remember to bring the following for the exam session:

The exam fee (\$ 15.00 cash; sorry, no checks accepted; exact change appreciated)
One piece of positive identification (picture ID) or two pieces of non-picture identification
For the Technician exam: your Social Security Number
For upgrades (General and Extra)

The original and a copy of your current license

Your FCC Registration Number (FRN)

The original and a copy of any CSCEs claimed

** Please note that if you do not have the above, you may not be able to test!

If you are an ARRL VE and wish to serve at this session, please let John, W1JLB know that you will be there (jbogner1@maine.rr.com).

Hope to see you there!

April Public Service Events

We have two public service events in the month of April.

First, there is the MS Walk starting and ending at the Portland Expo on Park Ave. in Portland. The walk begins at 9:00 AM and ends around 11:00 AM. We need 8 to 10 hams for the event. Our operational frequency will be the PAWA repeater, 146.73 (-) (100.0 Hz CTCSS). Show time for the event is 7:30 AM at the Expo for assignments and briefing.

Next is the March of Dimes Walk for Babies starting and ending at the USM Sullivan Gym off Falmouth Street in Portland. The walk begins 9:00 AM and ends around 11:00 AM. Again, we need 8 to 10 hams for the event. Our operational frequency will be the PAWA repeater, 146.73 (-) (100.0 Hz CTCSS). Show time for the event is 7:30 AM at the Expo for assignments and briefing.

You may sign up for either (or both) events at the April PAWA meeting (April 5th) or you may send me an email to k1gax@juno.com

Hope to see you there!

73, Bryce, K1GAX
Public Service Events Coordinator

Secretary's Report

Board of Director's Meeting

The Board was called to order by President Bryce Rumery, K1GAX at 6:41 PM when a quorum was gathered.

The repeater continues to work well. No oddball or phony call signs have been heard for several months.

The PAWA web site has been completely updated after several "go rounds" with QSL.net

The club will be buying 2 Baofeng UV5R V2+ portables for prizes at the hamfest on April 15th. Jack, KC1UX issued a check to K1GAX in the amount of \$ 70.00.

There being no further business the board meeting was adjourned at 6:54 PM.

General Membership Meeting

The General Membership meeting was called to order President Bryce Rumery, K1GAX at 7:02 PM as there was a quorum present.

The standard introductions were completed.

K1GAX reported that the repeater continues to operate well and that no odd ball or phoney call signs have been heard for several months. He also reported that the web site had been completely updated.

A note to the membership that dues are due. If anyone has not been getting their newsletter then they should check the roster on the web site. See Jack, KC1UX to pay your dues or to iron out any problems.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Secretary's Report, the Treasurer's and the Chief Operator's Report as published in the newsletter.

As there was no further business it was moved and seconded to adjourn the business meeting.

Ross, KB1OND presented a talk on the Pixie QRP transmitter and an old crank operated 78 RPM phonograph.

Secretary's report taken and submitted by K1GAX

Treasurer's Report

Starting balance	\$1854.71
Income	\$270.00
Expenses	\$105.00
Ending balance	\$2019.71

Club Birthdays

11th - Tom Berman, N1KTA

PAWA Hamfest

The PAWA hamfest is scheduled for Saturday, April 15, 2017 at the Legion Hall in South Portland.

The hamfest runs from 8:00 AM to Noon. Doors open for vendors at 6:30 AM.

We need folks for setup at 6:30 AM, staff for the ticket sales at the door and staff for the consignment table.

We also need a crew for tear down at Noon.

If you are available you may sign up at the April meeting on April 5th or email me at k1gax@juno.com

Please visit the PAWA web site (<http://www.qsl.net/pawa>) for hamfest details.

73, Bryce, K1GAX
Hamfest Chairman

Chief Operator's Report

Repeaters Lists, Handling Message Traffic, and Coax Workshop

I learned from Jay that the York county ARES group will be practicing message handling on one of the Alfred repeater (147.345 123 hz tone), scheduled for Thursdays at 7pm. I think this is great opportunity for those who haven't done it for a while to hone their skills, and for those of us that haven't done it at all, a great chance to get some familiarity with the techniques involved. Whether it's the advent of cell phones, or the internet, I've heard far less message handling on the 2 meters nets than when I started into this hobby ten years ago.

As Bryce stresses many times in his training on our repeater, being able to get the message through is the important thing in emergency communications, and having amateurs skilled in various techniques is a net positive. Another added benefit is when it comes to justifying our use of those frequency allocations.

With that information I attempted to tune in to the Alfred repeater on the drive home, and was annoyed to find that I heard nothing, because the Alfred repeater I had programmed in was not the 147.345. After consulting my latest copy of the ARRL repeater directory, I could see that much has changed in the last year. The list is dynamic and shows some of the changes in ham radio. In Maine alone, many new repeaters have been added, and I should have probably updated my radios earlier. As one would expect DMR repeaters have been added, along with additional DSTAR and FUSION repeaters. And not surprisingly, I have noticed additional analog repeaters too. The utility of your 2 meter radio is directly related to the number of accurate entries in your memory list. An outdated list serves no real purpose. With the advent of chirp and other tools perhaps we could come up with a mechanism to share Chirp image files for the 2 meter analog radios, for those that can use

and need them. Jason provides this function for the DMR world with his continued development of Code plugs for the ham community to use. (Thanks again, Jason). It has also occurred to me that the Alfred repeater may be not in range for those of us that live north of Portland. Perhaps the club could give some thoughts of doing a message handling practice on our repeater a couple of times a month at a time that would encourage some active participation. There are a lot of new hams out there and this would be a way of highlighting our repeater and the club.

Field Day Preps

Last year's Field Day we discovered that several of the coax lengths in our inventory needed new connectors. One length had tested fine, but it actually experienced issues as we were using it causing one of the Autotuners to occasionally light off as it sought to match the intermittent cable. I have some connectors and a multi-meter and Jay mentioned might be a good idea to schedule a workshop some weekend to go over our inventory and rejuvenate and remove the coax as needed. Coax which works only part of the time is similar to an outdated repeater list, it looks impressive but it is actually not very useful.

Whether it's training, coax, or programming your radio, It all comes down to taking that extra time to be prepared so that when you need to use your equipment (or skills) you are ready to go.

73

Ross KB1OND

DMR Programming Class

JASON COTE - W1WDW

I am considering conducting a class and workshop on DMR codeplug programming. With the popularity of DMR or Digital Mobile Radio especially amongst our club members, I feel that it would be beneficial to the group if everybody had an idea on how to program a codeplug if they needed to.

My idea is to set aside a weekend day (or maybe a weekend) and hold a workshop on how to plan out, build, test and upload a codeplug to your radio. Since most of us are using the MD-380 I would focus on that particular model, however, the details of programming a codeplug are almost identical for any DMR radio.

I would be focusing on the basics as well as the intricate details of programming a codeplug and show each student how to set up their own working codeplug, where to find DMR repeater and talk group information, how to plan out RX groups, scan lists, and zones, as well as explaining several different methods of actually putting it all together. I would encourage anybody with a DMR radio to attend, and of course there would be no charge for the class.

Each person should be prepared to come equipped with a DMR Radio (MD-380 preferred), a windows laptop with the MD-380 CPS software and MD-380 drivers installed (I can provide these for you), MD-380 programming cable, and the preparation to listen to me talk about DMR for a few hours.

If you would be interested in attending such a workshop, let me know by email W1WDW@yorkcountyares.org and once I have a few people on board, I'll put together the class.

Heard Around Town

An Editorial Opinion By Bryce Rumery, K1GAX

I want to try the next exam!

I've been a VE (volunteer examiner) for going on 30 years. I notice at nearly every exam session there are usually one or two candidates that upon successfully passed one exam, they want to take the next level exam without having studied for it. Many established hams recommend to newer hams that they do this. The newer hams invariably fail that next exam. A passing score is 74% and most taking the next exam without study score between 40 and 50 percent.

Why, you might say, do old established hams recommend this? It actually harkens back to the old FCC days (when only the FCC gave exams excepting the Novice license). There were no on line practice exams and there was no such thing a published question pool. There was only a published syllabus. You always signed up to take the next higher exam just to see what it was like. You probably going to fail it, but you took it anyway.

Today, we have the question pools fully published and on line practice exams where one can practice in an non stressed environment. In fact, if you take the practice exam around 40 times, you will have seen all the questions in the pool. You can easily see where you are weak and need more study. If you can pass all the practice exams with a 90% or better you know you're ready for the real thing.

At all exam sessions, I discourage most folks from taking the next exam without study as most all are doomed to failure and they only see a third of the actual anyway. In the relatively recent past I have only

recommended one person try all three exams. She got 100% on the Technician, around 85% on the General and 75% on the Extra. Yes, indeed, she passed all three exams with only really having studied for the Technician. I should mention that she had a doctorate in electrical engineering.

Do yourself a favor, when asked if you want to take the next exam at a test session, if you haven't studied for it, politely decline. Save yourself some time and be happy with what you have achieved. Save the VEs some time also from having to correct something that is probably not going to make it.

73, Bryce, K1GAX

Battery Maintenance

By Bryce Rumery, K1GAX

There are two givens in the world of batteries:

1. No battery will hold a charge forever. All batteries will self discharge just sitting on the shelf unused.
2. Rechargeable batteries should never be allowed to fall to less than 1 volt per cell. It can cause a battery cell to short out or reverse polarity.

How long will different types of batteries hold a charge?

This depends on the type of battery.

Alkaline cells: Generally, alkaline cells will hold their charge for about 10 years. After that period they are pretty well worn out and should be discarded.

Rechargeable batteries lose their charge much more quickly and need regular regular maintenance to keep them in tip top shape.

Lithium Ion batteries: These will hold their charge the longest. A lithium ion battery will hold its charge for about a year before the cells are exhausted.

Nickel Metal Hydride batteries: These batteries will lose their charge much more quickly. They will lose about 1% of their charge per day just sitting on the shelf. In three months, the batteries are nearly exhausted.

Proper battery maintenance:

Lithium Ion batteries: These batteries should go no longer than six months without being recharged. By this time, they have lost half their charge. I highly recommend they be recharged every three months.

Nickel Metal Hydride batteries: These batteries will lose about 90% of their charge in three months. To keep them in top shape they must be recharged every three months!

Maintenance tip:

To remember the state of a battery charge get a small 1/2" x 3/4" label and place it on the battery pack. Using a pencil, write down the date the battery pack was last charged. Using a pencil allows you to erase the old date and saves labels. No guessing about when the battery was last charged! I put my labels on the side of the battery where it mates with the radio so it doesn't show and will last longer

73, Bryce
The old RF doctor