



PAWA Lines

Portland Amateur Wireless Association Newsletter

Portland Amateur Wireless Association Repeaters

W1KVI Falmouth: 146.730MHz (-600KHz) (T 100.0Hz)

W1KVI Scarborough: 444.100MHz (+5MHz) (T 82.5Hz)

Portland Amateur Wireless Association Board of Directors

President	Jason Cote	W1WDW	W1WDW@jcwebdesign.com
Vice President	Bryce Rumery	K1GAX	K1GAX@juno.com
Secretary	Ariel Cote	KC1CCB	KC1CCB@jcwebdesign.com
Treasurer	Vacant		
Chief Operator	Ross Drivas	KB1OND	rmdkb1ond@yahoo.com
Member at Large	Steve Mitchell	KB1YBT	SJMitchell@maine.rr.com
Member at Large	John Bogner	W1JLB	JBogner1@maine.rr.com

Club Birthdays

1st - Peter Eastman, N1AKP

13th - Bryce Rumery, K1GAX

17th - Jason Cote, W1WDW

On The Web

Please visit us on the web! We have pages on Twitter, Facebook and the world wide web. Check out our addresses at the top of the newsletter's first page, follow us on Twitter, and like our page on Facebook to stay up to date on club activities. If you have something to add, please let us know!



New Clubhouse?

Ariel met with a representative from a new facility. Pg. 3

Meeting Agenda



Next meeting's agenda on page 9.



Club Treasurer

PAWA is in need of a treasurer. Please consider stepping into the role.

President's Message

Happy February everybody. As we roll forward into 2018, our club is on the cusp of some important changes.

At our last few meetings, we have discussed the idea of moving to a new venue due to some issues with our current building leaving us with some unanswered questions. Ariel KC1CCB arranged a meeting with the Commander of the Falmouth American Legion Hall and will present at our next meeting and in this edition, a proposal for moving the club. I intend to entertain a motion and hold a vote on this important topic. Since this decision is incredibly important to, and as a whole, affects our club, I would strongly encourage all current voting members to attend the meeting in anticipation of a vote to move. The more voices we have on hand to voice their opinion means the likelihood of us making a correct decision for the club is greater.

I also want to thank those members who have returned to me the member survey I sent out to everybody I had contact info for. I have received some extremely valuable information and ideas and while I will not be identifying those who responded (as I promised), I will be identifying some responses that were sent my way. See my column later in this edition.

Also new in this edition: Meeting agendas! One of the ideas I received from the survey response was

to add the agenda for upcoming meetings. Ask and you shall receive!

I also want to remind the membership that we are in need of a club treasurer. Jack KC1UX has decided to step down after many years of dedicated service to us and we will need somebody to step into the role. As you may know, the club relies on our treasurer to ensure the bills are paid and without this key position, our club could very well come to an end. Please consider volunteering for this important role.

Thank you,

Jason Cote, W1WDW

President

Treasurer's Report

No treasurer's report was available for January 2018. A reminder, annual club dues are due. Please bring payment to the February meeting. Thank you.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

✱ Next meeting:

Wednesday, February 7th, 2018 - 7pm

Stuart Morrill American Legion Post #35 - 413 Broadway, So Portland

✱ February Contests:

12-16 School Club Roundup

17-18 International DX - CW



Falmouth American Legion Post #164

Ariel Cote - KC1CCB

I met with Commander Allen Mazerolle a few weeks ago regarding our interest in potentially moving our club to their post in the future. The post is smaller than the space we currently rent in South Portland, though it has a large kitchen and decent front room which I felt could easily accommodate our members. The kitchen would be at our disposal at any time we would rent the space, providing we carry out any items-trash we being in. There is ample parking and a handicap accessible ramp if it was ever needed.

This particular post prefers to rent out space per portion of the day, beginning from 8:30-12, 12:30-5:00 and 5:30-10:30, each block costing 55\$. Additionally, we could choose to use the room for 25\$ per hour. Our normal meeting night (first Wednesday of the month) is available, so would not have to change. Additional items and spaces are able to be rented, including the outdoor yard and basement. The Commander and I discussed the potential for the club to rent a "closet" in the basement to house a radio room for 10\$ a month, though I was unable to see these areas and do not have the ability to comment on them. I am also unaware on the post's stance on antennas, so if we decide to use this option in the future, it is possible we may need to put up/take down any antenna we may use each time. Whereas the legion rents space per hour or day, they may also charge us each time we use said radio room, which maybe a prohibitive proposition.

Overall, the space was clean and the Commander inviting. It is conveniently located off of 295 and the spur from 95. I will be presenting this information at the February meeting. Hope to see you there!

Chief Operator's Report

Incoming QSL Bureau

Chances are if you are a ham long enough, or if you made some QSO's in the past you may receive a postcard from one of the QSL bureaus here in the US telling you that there are foreign QSL cards on file for at the bureau.

In my case I was contacted by "O" sorter at the W1 QSL bureau. The bureaus here are organized by areas, the W1 bureau handling calls from the first area. The "O" sorter was handling my cards because the letter O is the next character after my area designation in my call sign.

In our case the bureau is run by volunteers from the Yankee Clipper Contest Club. The whole process is under the guidance and oversight of the ARRL. You don't have to be a member of the ARRL to use the service.

As they mention on their site- <http://w1qsl.org> "The W1 QSL Bureau does not accept stamps or envelopes. We require that you send money credits rather than SASEs (Self Addressed Stamped Envelopes). We can use the exact postage which is needed for your shipment plus a service charge of 10 cents plus 10 cents per ounce. It is also less expensive for you as no funds are wasted on unnecessary postage". (It seems the bureaus are getting away from handling SASEs, some bureaus still accept them, but storing them and making sure that postage is correct creates additional problems. Especially since a postage increase limits the utility of the envelope...)

Basically you can set up an account at a QSL bureau with a \$5.00 check or a PayPal or credit card payment and that money will be dedicated to processing any cards that make it to the bureau. A little more information can be found here. <http://w1qsl.org/qslsort/W1%20Bureau%20Information.pdf>

Some hams feel that QS cards are passé, and eQSLs are more efficient and faster. While the electronic QSL's are certainly faster, there is something to be said for getting an actual card in the mail. Maybe the same aspect of the hobby that draws ones interest to tube radios and crystal sets of yesteryear generates the appeal of QSL cards. Certainly not as fast as its electronic counterpart, the W1 bureau is staffed by volunteers and they process over 100,000 QSL cards a year.

Pretty impressive when you think of it.

Some do's and don'ts mentioned by the ARRL..

(Again - Please Note - our bureau doesn't handle SASEs so any reference to them below really doesn't apply.)

- Do keep self-addressed 5 x 7-1/2 or 6 x 9 inch envelopes or money credit on file at your bureau, with your call sign in the upper left corner, and affix at least one unit of first-class postage.
- Do send the bureau enough postage to cover SASEs on file and enough to take care of possible postage rate increases.
- Do respond quickly to any bureau request for SASEs, stamps or money. Unclaimed card backlogs are the bureau's biggest problem.
- Do notify the bureau of your new call sign as you upgrade. Please send SASEs with your new call, in addition to SASEs with your old call.
- Do include your call sign on any correspondence with the bureau.
- Do include a SASE with any information request to the bureau.
- Do notify the bureau in writing if you don't want your cards.
- Do notify the Bureau of a change of address.

Don'ts

- Don't send domestic US to US cards to the various call area bureaus.
- Don't expect DX cards to arrive for several months after the QSO. Overseas delivery is very slow. Many cards coming from overseas bureaus are over a year old.
- Don't send your outgoing DX cards to your call area bureau.
- Don't send SASEs to your "portable" bureau. For example, NU0X/1 sends SASEs to the W0 bureau, not the W1 bureau.
- Don't send SASEs or money credits to the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service.
- Don't send SASEs larger than 6 x 9 inches. SASEs larger than 6 x 9 inches require additional postage surcharges.

Next column we will look at the Outgoing QSL Bureau.

73

Ross - KB1OND

Secretary's Report

Ariel Cote - KC1CCB

January 3rd, 2018

The Board of Directors Meeting began at 6:35. The lack of treasurer candidates was discussed. It was decided that unless absolutely necessary, it would be preferable to not have any current member hold two offices at the same time.

The General Meeting was called to order at 7:05 with introductions. The Chief Operator and Secretary's reports we're both accepted by unanimous vote. There was no Treasurer's Report as we are still looking for a member to fill that position.

The lack of members is a concern. We are looking for suggestions to increase the membership and participation. Jason, W1WDW, emailed and brought copies of a survey for the membership to complete to get an idea of the current state of the club and ideas going forward.

Jack, KC1UX, brought up the excellent point about equipment and the radio room being a good asset to possibly fix up and use down the road.

Though the HamFest is traditionally in April, we may have to move to June or July depending on whether we stay here at the legion. Jack also suggested that we could add craft tables or other hobbies to increase attendance and exposure to a new crowd.

George, NX1C, did some excellent sleuthing and discovered some details about the Falmouth Legion Hall as a new venue for our meetings.

There is also a concern about money for this year. Funds may need to be shifted to continue to pay rent and expenses.

Survey Results

Jason Cote - W1WDW

As mentioned in my President's report, I sent out via email and also via hard copies at our January meeting, a general member's survey asking questions of our members and asking for their honest, direct opinions. I have so far received three responses, slightly less than I had hoped. The responses I did receive were eye-opening, a common theme was discovered: We don't do enough as a club.

One of the questions on the survey was: "Do you regular attend PAWA Club Meetings?" Of the three responses, all three said "yes". I would also very much like to hear from those of you who do not regularly attend meetings. More importantly, I'd like to know why you do not attend. I would invite anybody and everybody to reach out to me directly via any method of communications to express concerns, ideas, or thoughts.

The most eye-opening portion of the survey were the responses to the question "Are you satisfied with the current state of our club?". All three responses were "No". Each respondent provided their thoughts as to what they'd like to see changed and all of the comments will be looked at for implementation.

I don't like being the bearer of negative news, but even with so few responses, the current climate is clear: We can do better, and I as club president am ultimately responsible. I will have more paper copies of the survey with me at February's meeting, please consider taking one with you. Everybody's voice should be heard.

Jason Cote - W1WDW

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Testing for Dummies – A Reference for Everyone Else

By: Bryce Rumery, K1GAX

ARRL/W5YI Volunteer Examiner

Yes, you can be successful in your initial licensing or upgrade of your license. All you need to do is follow a few simple guidelines and your success is almost assured. I've been a VE now for about 20 years and, over the years, I have noticed a few pitfalls that various people make in taking licensing exams and I have also observed how successful test takers achieve their success. It's not really hard to achieve success on licensing exams. You just have to understand how to prepare and the psychology of testing.

Back in "the good old days" (and maybe they weren't so good), tests were conducted by the FCC. You had to attend a test session that was held twice a year in Portland or twice a year in Bangor or you had to make a trek to downtown Boston to take an exam at the FCC Field Office. If you took the exams at either Bangor or Portland, you had to sign up at least a month in advance and you had to specify what exams you were going to take. If you failed an exam, you had to wait a month before taking the exam again. If you were taking the General Class exam and, say, passed the 13 WPM code exam, but missed the written portion of the exam, you got no credit for the code or the theory and had to take both again. You took the exams before a government bureaucrat who was usually none too friendly. Study materials for licensing were based on a syllabus issued from the FCC. No, the question pool was not published!

Today is a world apart from the "FCC days". Exams are given by volunteer examiners (from the amateur community) and are given usually monthly within a short driving distance from your

home. Most sessions are a walk in type exam with no prior registration required. You don't have to specify what exams you wish to take in advance. If you fail an exam, you may retest immediately, if you like by simply paying another test fee (no, you won't get the same test again). Although there are rules for exam sessions, the sessions are usually a bit more relaxed than the old FCC days. The examiners are just other hams that have been certified to serve as volunteer examiners.

Study materials today are based on a published question pool. Yes, all the exam questions and answers are published and are available in most all study manuals and are available for download from the Internet. There are also various web sites that have practice exams available on-line using the exact same question pool as is used at any VE exam session and the same formula for selecting various questions in the pool.

I've been taking government style exams (and the amateur radio licensing exams are "government style" exams) for well over 30 years and they are all pretty much the same in structure. They consist of a question and four multiple choice answers. There are usually two answers that are totally wrong (these are called "distracters"). There is usually one answer that is "almost" right and there is one "right" answer. The trick is to know the right answer either by knowledge or by memorization. There are really too many questions in a given question pool to memorize all the questions and answers, so, some knowledge of the subject is essential. Don't bank on memorizing a question and a specific answer in a specific order. The questions and answers are published, but the order of the answers may be scrambled on the actual exam. If you, say, memorize that question 1 is answer "B", you may be surprised when it's not in that exact order on the actual exam. The actual order of the questions may not be in the same order as they are in the question pool. You will find, though, that many of the questions in the

question pool are actually the same, but just reworded.

In taking the exam, use a simple two step rule: **RTFQ** ("Read The Frapping Question") and **RATFAC** (Read All The Frapping Answers Completely"). Don't jump at an answer if you haven't read the question and all the answers. Next, try to eliminate the two "distracters" (the totally wrong answers). If you can narrow the answers down to two, you have a better chance. This where your knowledge comes into play. If you've studied sufficiently, you should be able to eliminate the "almost correct answer". If you have a question that requires calculation, be sure to calculate correctly. If you, say,

must calculate the voltage drop of a 1k Ohm resistor in a circuit, don't read it as a 1 Ohm resistor. Your numbers will come out right, but the decimal place will be totally off (and the incorrect answer may appear to be the right answer). If you draw a complete blank on a question, use the "best guess" principle. That is read all the answers and based on your knowledge, select your first guess (which statistically is most probably correct).

Don't get rattled or panic at a test session. Remember, you are not going to be taken out and shot if you don't pass. You won't lose your job or be sent to "the big house". Amateur radio is a hobby and you can always take the exam again (sometimes immediately or at another test session after some further study). The examiners are not out to fail anyone. They just correct the exams and forward on to the Volunteer Examination Coordinator (VEC). Relax at a test session! It's not the end of the world if you are not successful on the first try.

Now on to some suggestions for proper study. First, **study!** Even if you have a background in, say, electronics it doesn't mean that you'll pass the written exam. There are questions on rules and regulations, amateur operating practices and frequency allocations that are not automatically

learned as a skilled electronics technician or engineer. As a point of fact, only about a third of the amateur exams involve actual electronic theory. The remaining two thirds involve rules and regulations, operating practice and frequency allocations. Get a good study manual to study the material. Not only is it good in preparing for the exam, but is also can be used as a reference for you in the future.

In your study manual, read the first chapter and study the exam questions from the question pool that are covered by that chapter. If you are able to honestly (no peeking at the answers when you're answering the questions) answer all the questions with a 90% or above, you have a pretty good handle on the material and you should proceed to the next chapter. If you get less than a 90% or above on a chapter, go back and review the questions you had a problem with. If you still have problems with questions, seek out a ham to "Elmer" (or assist you) through the questions. Do the same for each chapter in your study manual.

Now that you have completed the study material and been able to answer all of the suggested questions in the question pool, it's time to do an overall review. I strongly suggest you start by honestly (again, no peeking at the answers while doing the

questions) taking all the questions in the question pool. If you get less than 90% in taking all the questions, note what questions you missed and go back and restudy the material that those questions covered. Try it again and repeat the process until you are able to take the entire question pool with a 90% or better.

You're now ready for the final review. Go on-line and take some practice exams. Although there are many web sites that have practice exams, I'm partial to the practice exams on QRZ (<http://www.qrz.com>). To properly take on-line practice and get a good view of most all of the question pool, take the on-line exams a minimum of 40

times. If you are able to score a 90% or above on all the exams you take, you're ready for the real thing. If not, review those questions you missed and restudy the material. Now, why do I keep mentioning the 90% or better rule? I've found that in test taking, there's a 10% "panic factor". It's human nature to get rattled or panic at a test session. This usually accounts for about a 10% drop in your score just because you are rattled. If you are able to get a 90% or better in practice, you may drop your score by as much

as 10%. You'll be looking at passing the exam with an 80% or better. If you say are "just passing" in practice, you can expect that your score may drop by as much as 10% at a test session (due to the "panic factor") and it may result in a failure of the exam. Always best to have that "90% plus" edge!

One final thought. One may take as many exams at an exam session as you like as long as you are successful on each one. Many folks often like to "try" the next level to "see what it's like". This indeed made sense back in the old FCC days; today, it doesn't make a lot of sense. In the old days, the question pool was not published and there were no on-line exams. At least by trying the next level one got an idea of what the next class of exam was like. Today, with the on-line exams, one can "try" the next level anytime in the comfort of your own home at no cost. One never needs to be embarrassed when a VE tells you "you didn't quite make it". In my experience, most folks that "try" the next exam without any study get between 35 and 45% correct and for those folks that have "glanced over the material" usually come out with between a 50 and 60% correct. A passing score on any of the exams is 74%. If you haven't really studied the material for the next exam, you usually have two chances of passing; slim and none. It usually ends up as a study in frustration. Perhaps be happy with what you were successful in attaining, enjoying the new license class and returning to take the next level when you are really ready.

These are a few tips to ensure your success in taking the amateur radio licensing exams based on my experience as a VE over the last 20 years or so. They've worked for many in the past and I know they'll work for you.

73, Bryce, K1GAX

PAWA Meeting Agenda - February 7, 2018

Schedule	Topic	Who
	Board of Director's Meeting	
6:30PM	Call to order	
	Old Business	
DISCUSSION	Lack of Treasurer	Jason
DISCUSSION	Moving to Falmouth - American Legion Hall	Ariel
	New Business	
	Any new business	All
7:00PM	Adjournment	
	General Membership Meeting	
7:00PM	Call to Order	
	Introductions	All
VOTE	Acceptance of meeting minutes/Secretary's Report	Jason
VOTE	Acceptance of Chief Operator's Report	Jason
NOT AVAILABLE	Acceptance of Treasurer's Report	Jason
	Old Business	
DISCUSSION	Lack of Treasurer	Jason
PROPOSAL	Presentation to membership of proposal to relocate PAWA to Falmouth American Legion Hall	Ariel
DISCUSSION	Discussion	All
Entertain Motion to Vote	Intention to Vote	Jason
	New Business	
DISCUSSION	Solicit ideas for presentations and programs	Jason
	Any new business	All
VOTE	Adjournment	