



# 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)**

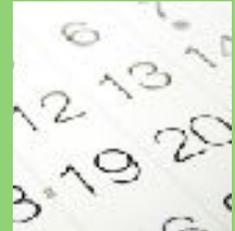
### Portland Amateur Wireless Association Board of Directors

President	Jason Cote	W1WDW	<a href="mailto:W1WDW@jcwebdesign.com">W1WDW@jcwebdesign.com</a>
Vice President	Bryce Rumery	K1GAX	<a href="mailto:K1GAX@juno.com">K1GAX@juno.com</a>
Secretary	Ariel Cote	KC1CCB	<a href="mailto:KC1CCB@jcwebdesign.com">KC1CCB@jcwebdesign.com</a>
Treasurer	Jack Ney	KC1UX	<a href="mailto:kc1ux@maine.rr.com">kc1ux@maine.rr.com</a>
Chief Operator	Ross Drivas	KB1OND	<a href="mailto:rmdkb1ond@yahoo.com">rmdkb1ond@yahoo.com</a>
Member at Large	John Bogner	W1JLB	<a href="mailto:JBogner1@maine.rr.com">JBogner1@maine.rr.com</a>
Member at Large	Joseph Shortill	W1XXV	<a href="mailto:shortill5@yahoo.com">shortill5@yahoo.com</a>



### Growing wiser?

Send us your birthday to include in the newsletter!



### Meeting Agenda

No agenda available.



### Club Officers

We have a full roster of officers! Thank you all who have taken on the necessary roles!

## Club Birthdays

**28th - KB1LBN - Dan Sillman**

**28th - KB1IAX - Rose Coffin**

## 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!

## President's Message

### Jason Cote - W1WDW

Happy May Everybody!

With the warmer weather upon us, its a great time to go through your gear and make sure everything is in working order. Batteries, antennas and feed lines all in undamaged and ready conditions can make you and your station a valuable asset during a local or regional emergency. Please consider joining an ARES-affiliated group near your home to contribute to this excellent facet of amateur radio.

In club news, everything is relatively quiet, I'm happy to see the progress we have made in just a short few months to fill out our board of directors, set a plan for both field day and our club's hamfest, and more! I'm extremely pleased to see faces that have not been seen in some time. With summer on the doorstep, it's a great build up to having some fun radio-related activities over the next few months.

I'm also planning on conducting a DMR codeplug writing course in May for any member interested in learning about DMR technology and how to write your own codeplug. More on this later in the newsletter.

I hope to see you all at Wednesday's meeting!

- Jason, W1WDW - President

## Treasurer's Report

April 2018	
Beginning Balance	\$949.76
Income	\$20.00
Expenses	\$100.00
Ending Balance	\$869.76

## Secretary's Report

### Ariel Cote - KC1CCB

Wednesday, April 4th

#### Board of Directors Meeting

The question on where to hold Field Day was posed. We have been offered Turkey Hill Farm as a possible location. It may be too late to use Fort Williams but worth inquiring about. As back up, Joseph Shortill, W1XXV, has offered his 2 acre farm for the club's use. It was decided to pose the question to the General Membership.

The status of our attend was brought up, a few members offered their extras if needed. Jason Cote, W1WDW, also talked about making an antenna this spring/summer with the materials that already exist in the radio room.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Next meeting:

Wednesday, May 2nd, 2018 - 7pm

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

### Contests:

5-6th New England QSO Party - CW, Phone, Digital

### Events:

Downeast Ham Radio Technology & Robotics Fair

Meadow View Apartments - Phase IV Dining Hall

25 Tweedie Ln, Ellsworth - Saturday, May 19th



A few members attended the ARRL Convention in Lewiston this March. Ariel Cote, KC1CCB, spoke to Hamsource.com about possibly coming to the PAWA HamFest. The date September 15th was tentatively set for this year's event. We will need to decide by May in order to get the announcement in QST.

We may meet in August, especially if HamFest is in September. Possibly just a Board of Directors meeting.

Joseph Shortill, W1XXV, suggested calling hams that are members but have not been to recent meeting to invite them. It also may be worth looking into some outreach on social media.

### General Membership Meeting

Following introductions, Bryce Rumery, K1GAX, gave details for the MS walk 5/5, LL Bean 10k 7/4, and B2B 8/4, all requiring volunteers to help with communications.

Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were both accepted as appeared in this publication.

No Chief Operator's report was available for April's newsletter.

Discussion on field day brought up the pros and cons for both the Fort and Farm. There is some concern about losing the space at the Fort if we don't use it, though both are public spaces. Mike Kilmartin, N1GRO, reminded us that there is much more "foot traffic" at Fort Williams, which is a big positive. The Legion may also be an option if the weather is poor.

We took a vote for a primary location

Fort - 10

Legion - 0

Farm - 2

In the event we are unable to secure Fort Williams, Turkey Hill Farm will be the second choice. Since we will likely be out at the Fort or Farm, we will

need to focus on the trailer. It still needs hubs/tires, and the new lights are in Jason's truck.

HamFest tentatively set for 9/15. It was asked of members to HamFests please feel free to talk to vendors if attending any other HamFests in the near future. What else can we do to increase attendance? Maybe weather spotter training? Craft fair, too? Please feel free to contact any member of the Board with any suggestions.

It was decided to move the planned October testing up to 10am on HamFest day and to cancel the planned April 21st session.

Ideas for upcoming meeting programs:

DMR workshop by Jason Cote, W1WDW

An FL Digi night

Antenna workshop

## Chief Operator's Report

From the Columbia Journalism Review, courtesy of the SWLing Post blog -

<https://swling.com>

a fascinating story of the aftereffects of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. With the internet and TV down one of the best sources of news and journalism on the island became AM radio.

[https://www.cjr.org/united\\_states\\_project/hurricane-maria-puerto-rico-radio.php](https://www.cjr.org/united_states_project/hurricane-maria-puerto-rico-radio.php)

It seems the radio station had gone through a similar storm in 1998 so as a result they had backup generators, and an antenna that could withstand hurricane force winds. The TV station's production manager, Carolina Rodriguez Plaza, ended up doing a radio show to help keep the islanders up to date with the latest news.

"When the power goes out," Plaza says, "a \$5 transistor radio is more valuable than a smartphone."

Speaking of weather summer is coming and as chance to enjoy the outdoors. The International Space Station has been doing some SSTV lately, the latest session should have happened on Wednesday April 25<sup>th</sup>. SSTV from the ISS is a fun activity It is easily done using a handheld HT, Yagi antenna and a tablet or a phone with some freeware. Perhaps if another pass is publicized, at a convenient time we might get a group together and try it.

A great page on the ISS schedule with links to other modes

<http://www.amsat.org/pipermail/amsat-bb/2018-April/067782.html>

By the way the AMSAT web page itself is definitely worth checking out-

<https://www.amsat.org/>

Another possible activity could be a trip to Gray Maine to watch NOAA send up one of their weather balloons. I seem to recall one of the instructors from NOAA giving the weather spotting training saying on a clear summer day you might even see the balloon burst. Definitely it would be worth the trip.

73

## April Exam Session

**John Bogner - W1JLB**

The test session for April was canceled, both ARRL and the Maine Section were notified and re-scheduled for the Ham Fest in October of this year.

One person showed up for test session.

73's, John, W1JLB

VEC

## Public Service Event Season Is Almost Upon Us

**Bryce Rumery - K1GAX**

It's starting to get warmer and with it comes the PAWA's public service event season.

There are three major events that we do. First is the MS walk on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> starting and ending at the Portland Expo building. Next is the L.L. Bean 10k run on Wednesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> beginning and ending in downtown Freeport. The final event is the biggest. It's the Beach to Beacon 10k in Cape Elizabeth on Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>.

I will be putting out reminders to all PAWA members about a month in advance and gathering volunteers.

Please help to make this another smashing year for our public service event season!

73, Bryce, K1GAX, PAWA Public Service Event Coordinator

## The Forgotten Band

**By Bryce, K1GAX**

How many of you have used or perhaps even heard of the 1.25 meter band?

The 1.25 meter band combines some of the best features of the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands.

Originally the amateur radio 1.25 meter band ran from 220 MHz to 225 MHz. About 15 years ago the FCC using the ARRL repeater directory decided to reduce the band by 2 MHz from 222 to 225 MHz. 220 to 222 MHz was allocated to commercial interests such as UPS. About 5 years

ago 218 to 220 MHz was allocated to amateur radio for linking packet and digital modes.

Now, are there any 1.25 meter repeaters in Maine? You bet there are. Dave, KQ1L has set up number of 1.25 repeaters throughout Maine. There are other 1.25 meter machines in Maine. Some are open and some are closed. We even have a machine on Black Strap hill in Falmouth that was set by Paul, W1IMD as a remote base to Camden. Now it is pretty much used as a local repeater for the greater Portland area.

How much do 1.25 meter radios cost you might ask. Not much, really. With the advent of the Chinese radios 1.25 meter radios can be had from Wouxun or Baofeng for \$ 100 or less. The nice thing about the Chinese radios is that they are usually dual band or tri band.

Why not give 1.25 meters a try. You might be pleasantly surprised!

73, Bryce, K1GAX

## 2018 Tour de Cure of the Kennebunks

This year's **American Diabetes Association** bike event, the Tour de Cure, will be held on Sunday, June 10, 2018. The Start/Finish will be at the Wells Reserve at Laudholm in Wells , Maine.

This will be an all day event. The event will include several different length courses so we are looking for many ham radio operators to man communications at Rest Stops and in SAG vehicles.

**Required equipment would be a 2 meter mobile radio (hand held radios will not provide reliable communications in this terrain). A Hi-Viz safety vest would be beneficial.**

For more information or to volunteer please contact Barry Kray, KB1VX at [KB1VX@arrl.net](mailto:KB1VX@arrl.net).

## DMR Programming 101

**Jason Cote - W1WDW**

This month, I am planning to conduct a detailed DMR codeplug programming and familiarization course for any member interested in learning how DMR works and how to plan, outline and program your own custom codeplug or "radio program" for your DMR radio. I will cover what you need to know when it comes to getting your radio to communicate with your computer, how to plan your codeplug, how to create zones, talk groups, contacts, and channels. We will cover several different types of DMR radios including portable and mobile rigs. Requirements for the class are your own DMR radio, can be portable or mobile with appropriate power supply and an antenna or dummy load, a windows computer running windows 7 or later with proper programming software for your radio, and the appropriate programming cable for your radio. If you're interested in attending the class, please email me at [W1WDW@yorkcountyares.com](mailto:W1WDW@yorkcountyares.com). Date and venue will be announced soon. If you own a DMR radio, you'll want to attend this course!

## Status of ARRL EC-001 Online Course

### ARRL Headquarters

**(Editor's Note: This message pertains to any ARES member who is planning to take the ARRL EC-001 Course)**

ARRL has been informed that the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC), the provider of the online platform through which ARRL offers its EC-001 course, is being dissolved, effective July 1, 2018. That decision was announced today by Charter Oak State College, the parent organization of CTDLC. CTDLC officials cited the fiscal challenges faced by the Connecticut State College and University System and the State of Connecticut as a whole for the decision to close the CTDLC platform.

ARRL is working on steps to address the dislocation that this decision will cause our members and others who planned to take this course. While we look at moving our course content to a new delivery mechanism, new registrations for EC-001 will be suspended effective immediately. Those who signed up for the EC-001 session starting on May 30 will receive a refund.

ARRL had already been in the process of developing new content for the EC-001 course, and now we will intensify the process of selecting a new platform on which to post this material.

More information on the new course content and new host site for the EC-001 course will be available in the near future as soon as a decision is made on an alternative delivery mechanism.

## “Alexa, help me with ham radio”

### Dan Romanchik - KB6NU

I have had an Amazon Alexa (<https://www.amazon.com/Amazon-Echo-And-Alexa-Devices/b?ie=UTF8&node=9818047011>) for nearly a year now. Mostly, I just use it to listen to internet radio stations or tell me a joke, but I think it has more potential than that. For example, I've written before about how I'd like to develop an Alexa skill to control my IC-7300 (<https://www.kb6nu.com/use-alex-a-amateur-radio/>). I haven't gotten around to that yet, but, Joe, N3HEE, has just published an Alexa skill called Continuous Wave ([https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B07C7HS47J/?ref=skill\\_dsk\\_skb\\_sr\\_0](https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B07C7HS47J/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_0)). It's designed to help you learn Morse Code.

To use this skill, you have to first enable it. Once enabled, say, “Alexa, open Continuous Wave.” This opens the skill at the main menu. You can then say any of the following at any voice prompt...

- Learn
- Practice
- Alphabet
- Common words
- Random words
- Words
- Sentences
- Call signs
- Contest
- Quick Brown Fox
- QSO
- Help
- Stop - To end your session.

I've just played around with this app for a short time, but I've found it to be quite entertaining. It does, however, have one big drawback. You can't set the speed. It's currently limited to sending at 20 words per minute only.

Also, the learn function could use a little refining. When you give the command "learn," it asks you for a character, sends that character three times, and then asks you for another. If you could set the speed at which the skill sends characters, it could teach a character like the K7QO Code Course, first sending the character slowly, then ramping up the speed.

Overall, though, I think this is a great first shot at a usable Alexa skill for teaching Morse Code. I hope this is the first of many versions of this skill.

#### Other ham radio skills

While I was poking around on Amazon, I decided to see what other amateur radio skills might be available. Here are a few that I found:

- Ham Exam ([https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B01N7NQ3JE/?ref=skill\\_dsk\\_skb\\_sr\\_6&qid=1524602919](https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B01N7NQ3JE/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_6&qid=1524602919)). Ask Alexa to ask you questions from the Technician Class question pool.

- Ham Lookup ([https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073YL88SL/?ref=skill\\_dsk\\_pnps\\_dp\\_1](https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073YL88SL/?ref=skill_dsk_pnps_dp_1)). Allows you to look up amateurs by call sign. Information is provided from the callbook.info database.

- Ham Radio Propagation Forecast ([https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073THV6ZP/?ref=skill\\_dsk\\_pnps\\_dp\\_0](https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B073THV6ZP/?ref=skill_dsk_pnps_dp_0)). Reports the latest forecasts directly from HamQSL (run by N0NBH).

- ARRL Audio News ([https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B078Y7NGYT/?ref=skill\\_dsk\\_skb\\_sr\\_1&qid=1524750783](https://alexa.amazon.com/spa/index.html#skills/dp/B078Y7NGYT/?ref=skill_dsk_skb_sr_1&qid=1524750783)). Adds ARRL Audio News to your Alexa flash briefing.

Building your own voice app

The Continuous Wave Alexa skill was developed using tools found at VoiceApps.Com. Two other websites—Pullstring (<https://pullstring.com>) and StoryLine (<https://getstoryline.com>)—also have tools to help you build voice apps. And, Amazon has an online tutorial that will teach you how to build an Alexa app. I'm just getting started with these tools, so I can't recommend one over the others, but they do look like they'll make developing voice apps easier.

Since I'm currently in the process of updating my No Nonsense Technician Class License Study Guide, it occurs to me that I should also develop an Alexa skill for drilling students on test questions. I guess you could call them audio flashcards. Stay tuned for that.

**When he's not trying to figure out how to build voice apps, Dan blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches ham radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about the voice apps that you like at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).**