

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
2025

OFFICERS

President—Bruce Perkins, K4ONC
Vice President--Wayne Beasley, KO4OJC
Treasurer--Gail (Wally) Wallace, KK4ASP
Secretary/Newsletter Editor--Jim Hartmeyer, AI4WL

PCT Emergency Coordinator-- Bruce Perkins, K4ONC
Web Master--Paul Jodoin, K4MMB

MEETING NOTES

These notes taken at monthly meetings are extracted from the Pamlico Amateur Radio Society weekly newsletter, the PARSgram. Although they are not formal minutes, they constitute a record of those meetings.

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) January 25, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Twenty-two members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.
- * There were no upgrades, awards or new licensees reported for the month. (Dick, K4JJW couldn't make it due to icy roads.) On behalf the club, Bruce congratulated Ray Lewis, KR4ABZ, and Brian and Jeannie Tourville, KQ4UVY and KQ4UTN respectively on passing their exams earning their upgrade to General.
- * Bruce confirmed that name tags with the PARS logo can still be obtained from The SignMan of Baton Rouge, <https://thesignman.com/clubs/pamlicomain.html>. New PARS baseball caps are available from Bruce.
- * Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. Expenditures included annual renewals of club liability/D&O insurance and also repeater internet service. The club roster was sent to current members last week. Another will be distributed when our member renewal cycle is over.
- * AI4WL's Propagation Report: For the past few days, solar activity has been low, 90 day average solar flux 201, and quiet. 10-12 meter bands now closing early evening, 15 & 17 meter bands have been most consistent. All said, HF propagation should stay good for 2-3 years as solar activity slowly declines toward bottom of the cycle. DX next week includes Nigeria, Marquesas, Antarctica, Svalbard and more.
- * Remaining club "minutes"-notes-have been posted at <https://www.n4prs.org/club-minutes/>. Founding President, John Knauth's "recollections" and Jamie King's end-of-year notes for 2006 and 2007 are also now there. Paul, W4MMB, reported 196 hits so far this month. He figures 30% of those hits legit.
- * Bruce thanked vacationing Wayne, KO4OJC, working remote, for calling the Pamlico Communications Net (PCN) during the month. Wayne reported 17 check-ins and 12 Winlink checkins last Wednesday, the day of the 6" snow. Winlinkers submitted severe weather reports and will be asked to do the same next week. Mike, K4NLC, will take the net for February.
- * The next meeting of the "Pamlico Communications Team" is at 9am on Saturday, Feb 1st, at the Station 19 fire house. Lor Kutchins, W3QA, will guide the group through Winlink application set-up, messaging, forms and more. Members were encouraged to put the app on a laptop and bring it to the

meeting. [See announcement nearby--ed].

* The storm brought down the Kershaw repeater briefly on Wednesday morning [Jan 22]. Bruce slid down Kershaw road to find snow covering the solar panels. He brushed off the panels and the repeater was restored but charging slow. Experienced ex-upstate NY winter road warrior, Bill KR4LO, drove to the site and connected his big charger to speed up the charge rate.

* Bruce reported that a week ago, he and Lor connected the NC4ES Arapahoe DMR repeater to the NC4ES network via AT&T LTE cellular internet service. A temporary cell antenna was used. It worked but signal levels are at the margins, reliability questionable. The Arapahoe repeater stayed up through the storm but the internet connection did not. After the roads cleared on Friday, Bruce reoriented the little cell antenna sitting on the station roof and it's back up. He said that an Oriental Repeater Group meeting was being called for later this morning to discuss both repeater issues. A more robust solution for internet at Arapahoe likely needed for signal quality and survivability.

[In short, at the ORG meeting, various options were presented. One was selected. It should be in place within the next two weeks.-ed]

* Balloons are back! There will be two identical balloons. For logistical reasons, both will be launched in or near Greenville. They will be launched at the same time. It will be a 'round the world race between NC4ES-X and N4PRS-X -- the PARS balloon! And... a PARS member gets to launch the PARS balloon. First to make it all the way around wins. Lor showed a photo of the new and improved 12 gram payloads. Both transponders are under test with their antennas barely above ground. They are being heard using WSJT-Wisper Mode on the default 20 meter frequency. Use APRS <http://wspr.rocks/> to see your report.

* There will be a Spring COMMEM. Hams are urged to participate and gain experience with emergency communications. Hold the date, June 17th, a Tuesday.

* After a briefing by Bruce that was helped by favorable H. Helene reports, the Oriental Fire Department directors blessed an offer to install both a UHF/VHF and a HF station at Station 19. Some coax runs are already in place. The unused dual band antenna from the PCC Delamar building will be taken down and put up on the VFD tower. Later, a NVIS HF antenna will be placed above the station roof. They will connect to radios in the station office. Bruce hopes they will be available for the June COMMEM.

* With the interest in POTA exploding, Bill Schrader, K2TNO, put on show-n'tell with some of the latest POTA antennas and accessories (like antenna clamps, connectors, home made cheap temporary radials etc.) Lots of good ideas.

* There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 am.
(PARSgram 2025-01-27)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) February 22, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Thirty members, visitors and guests braved the cold 25 degree morning and attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.

* Congratulations go to Hank, KW1ZR, who had studied hard and passed his exam last week to earn his EXTRA ticket.

* Bruce reiterated that name tags with the PARS logo can be obtained from The SignMan of Baton Rouge, <https://thesignman.com/clubs/pamlicomain.html>.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. The big expenditure from Repeater Group funds was for a StarLink terminal at the Arapahoe site. StarLink was found to be the most cost effective way to provide reliable internet connectivity for the NC4ES DMR repeater into the NC4ES network. The repeater now broadens network coverage for Pamlico County and extends coverage into all of our

surrounding counties. [Although, the network's fundamental purpose is to provide backup emergency connectivity for the Eastern Healthcare Preparedness Coalition it is otherwise open to regular amateur use. See <https://www.nc4es.org/> ed.]

Bill Olah, KR4LO, suggested starting a net to promote use of the DMR repeater, both to learn more about the popular digital mode and for familiarity in case of emergencies. Lor offered that inexpensive (<\$100) HT DMR radios can be found with surprisingly good quality. He also offered that the NC4ES system has bridges into other popular networks and that there are plans to add the PRN. The PRN is a linked DMR repeater system that serves all of the Carolinas.

The group was receptive to the net idea, likely it will be on the Arapahoe local talk group. At least initially, it will follow the regular Wednesday night net.

* AI4WL's Propagation Report: For the past few days, solar activity has been moderate; HF propagation excellent on quiet HF bands. Cycle 25 may have a double peak. The second may surpass the earlier NOAA reported peak in Oct 2024. The HF bands have been crowded; it's difficult to find an open FT8 frequency on the hot 10 meter band. HF propagation should stay very good for the next 2-3 years. DX next week includes Sri Lanka, Nigeria, the Maldives, Comoros, and Christmas Island.

* Bruce thanked Wayne, KO4OJC, for calling the Pamlico Communications Net (PCN) during the month. Bill Schrader, K2TNO will call the net in March. Winlink check-ins are increasing, 16 last week. Members were reminded to check the weekly PARSgram for the form to use when checking in.

* The next meeting of the "Pamlico Communications Team" is at 9am on Saturday, Mar 1st, at the Station 19 fire house. Lor Kutchins, W3QA, will guide the group through Winlink set-up, focusing on configuring for and using HF. Several volunteered to bring their portable stations. In April, the focus of the group will turn to DMR radios and the DMR mode.

A fox hunt is being considered for this Spring. Lor offered a "real" fox hunt may be in the future--to track and find a downed "weather balloon". Will have to track it as it descends, find it when it lands.

Another communications exercise will be on Jun 17th. ARES/regular hams are encouraged to participate. More to come.

Bruce encouraged participation on the Tar Hill Net, 3923KHz. Check-in is by call sign suffix. It was used extensively during Hurricane Helene.

* On the Great Eastern Balloon Race: The launch of the three balloons was on Feb 7th as scheduled. Mike, K4NLC and Brian Shepard, K4LTE, released the PARS balloon. Two of the three balloons made a quick rounding. The PARS balloon was first to pass over NC and on to it's second lap. It was already over central China this morning according to Lor. The NC4ES balloon at a higher altitude ran into slower winds and is far behind. The third balloon was lost in the first hours after launch.

* On repeaters: Kershaw (Oriental - 210) solar was backed up with commercial power last week during a forecasted long string of cloudy days that would slow the battery charging rate. Usage being heavy at times, could otherwise take down the repeater. Arapahoe with light usage does not have this issue and remained solely on solar. The Kershaw UHF repeater is down for repair or replacement.

* On Station 19: The Station 19 VFD directors having now given the go-ahead, efforts are underway to install a dual band FM analog station and later a HF station for use during exercises and emergencies. It is hoped to be available for the June 17 COMMEX.

* Charlie Overcash, WA4GSI, took home a flashlight; Jeffery Cuniff, had the winning number for a Brantleys Gift Certificate.

* There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.
(PARSgram 2025-02-24)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) March 29, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Thirty members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.
- * Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. We are holding at 55 paid memberships. [One member renewed and one person joined at the meeting.-ed]
- * AI4WL's Propagation Report: Solar activity has been high for the past several days and propagation extremely good. The six meter band has shown signs of life. Dick K4JJW reported several days of TEP/F2 propagation into South America with contacts in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and the Falklands. For HF, the most reliable bands continue to be the 15 and 17 meter bands. Upcoming DX includes Rodriguez Isl, Fiji, and the Marshall Islands.
- * Jim, AI4WL, reported that the Aurora DMR KE4TZN repeater is now operational and connected to the PRN network. The repeater, just off of NC306 and about 3 miles south of NC33, is reachable from all of Pamlico County. Details are at www.ncprn.net. The network covers most, if not all, of NC and SC.
- * Paul, K4MMB, reported the n4prs web site is "healthy". In the last 30 days there were 268 "looks", half of them actual visitors.
- * Bruce advised that Mike, K4NLC, will be the new PEN/PCN/ARES net manager. He will be scheduling Wednesday night net controllers and provide scripts, check-in lists and help. It's easy, it's fun and we need to have every one able to run the net during an emergency.
- * Bruce also noted the "growth of DMR". The Arapahoe DMR repeater is seeing increased use both from inside and outside the county, especially now that it is connected to the EHPC/NC4ES network. The Carteret County EMCOMM trailer is now DMR equipped. Expect to see a DMR net on the Arapahoe local talk group soon.
- * The next PCT meeting will be on Saturday, April 12th. Too many people out of town on April 5th. The focus will be on DMR.
- * The Spring EHPC COMMEX is coming up on Jun 17th. The twice-a-year exercises have separate tracks for Health Care, Law Enforcement, EMS, and amateur radio. The Ham track is for "regular hams" with tasks related to obtaining and providing "ground truth" reports.
- * In support of these exercises, an open house for hams will be held at our Eastern Branch Regional Center in Kinston, May 13th, from 1000-1400. It will include a tour of the center and several educational presentations. Sign-up for both the tour and exercise can be done on the Training, Exercise, Response Management (TERMS) web site, <https://terms.ncem.gov/TRS/> ... "fun and learn". There will more info at the next PCT meeting.
- * Lessons learned from Hurricane Helene are causing a significant re-evaluation of and appreciation for the importance and use of amateur radio according to Lor, W3QA. This will be reflected in the June COMMEX.
Pre-Helene, the AUXCOM role was solely a backup for 1st responders. For Helene, AUXCOM operators were not immediately deployed... the need not seen. But, for a variety of reasons, amateur radio filled gaps in 1st responder communications... the Mt. Mitchell repeater remained operational and heard over great distances. A net was established over the repeater with an experienced net control operator. Hams in isolated areas were eyes on the ground and called for/relayed calls for help and support. Lives were saved. A formal liaison between the State and real world took two weeks. It was realized that all emergencies are local, county emergency managers responsible. Some county emergency managers were found lacking and totally unprepared. Ground truth reports from eyes on the ground were vital.
- * Bruce again encouraged participation on the Tar Hill Net, 3923KHz, 1930 hours nightly. Check-in is by call sign suffix. It was used extensively during Hurricane Helene.

- * Ralph Azersky, AC2GR, took home a Bionic Shield; Jeffery Cuniff, had the winning number for a Brantleys Gift Certificate.
- * There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:21am.
(PARSgram 2025-04-07)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) April 26, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Twenty-three members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC. The members applauded our newest ham, Louise Beasley, KR4CYB for earning her ticket.
- * Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally.
- * Buck, AA4SN, did a show & tell on his vintage 1960's "Coffin Key" and his recent QSO with another ham that also used one. Sam/Dave, KD2T, reported that 160 meters really is alive. He worked the BVI last week.
- * AI4WL's Propagation Report: Solar activity has been low for the past several days yet propagation has remained extremely good. 10 and 12 meter bands are still hot during the day but closing at night. A good six meter season may be in the offing. For HF, the most reliable bands continue to be the 15 and 17 meter bands. Upcoming DX includes the Austral, Reunion, Ogasawara, and Marion islands.
- * Paul, K4MMB, reported in the last 30 days there were 268 visitors to the n4prs web site. They mostly looked at the repeater, what's happening, and PARSgram pages.
- * Bruce reminded all that Mike, K4NLC, is now the PEN/PCN/ARES net manager. Hank, KW1ZR, is scheduled to be net controller in May. After net DMR check-ins on the Arapahoe repeater have averaged around 8. The popular (and relatively inexpensive) Baofeng DM-1701 DMR dual band HT has been updated to an "A" version. The A version is recommended if planning to use OpenGD77 firmware and CPS. The original version works fine with its native firmware/CPS. Make sure yours comes with a programming cable. Contact Wayne, KO4OJC, if you have questions/need help.
- * The next PCT meeting will be on Saturday, May 10th. Too many people out of town, town yard sale on May 3rd, cause date change. More on DMR, programming help at meeting. Open house at the Eastern Branch Regional Center in Kinston on May 13th will include a tour and short presentations to prepare for the spring EHPC COMDEX on June 17th. Seats for Pamlico hams still available. Contact Bruce for more info.
- * Two pico balloons are still up and going strong. The N4PRS Pamlico balloon is on its 7th lap, the NC4ES Greenville balloon is on its 6th. When close enough, their 20mw signals are being received by local hams using WSPR mode on the WSJT-X program.
- * Repeater news. Wayne and Bill KR4LO and the repeater group folks will soon be changing out the controller on the Kershaw VHF repeater with a ARCOM full featured controller. It will handle both the VHF and UHF repeaters as well as a third port that will be used for internet connectivity for inbound ALLstarLink and Echolink. It was also noted that the New Bern club has reactivated a UHF FM repeater on the Bridgeton Tower. This one's on the Down East Link System. [W4EWN, 442.075+, PL 100Hz -ed] And, by the end of May, the long awaited VHF FM/C4FM Fusion repeater on the Aurora tower should be active according to John, KE4TZN.
- * The next PARS meeting will be on May 31st.
- * Dick Goodwin, K4JJW, took home a first aid kit; Louise Beasley, KR4CYB, had the winning number for a Brantleys Gift Certificate.
- * There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:42am.
(PARSgram 2025-04-28)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) May 31, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Twenty-five members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC. Dick Goodwin, K4JJW, reported working the DXpedition on Marion Island, an ATNO for his log and his 343rd country.
- * Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally.
- * The club will not participate on Field Day weekend as a group, mostly due to the heat, storms, and tormenting insects that been the norm. Some folks indicated they will miss the social that has been always been a part of our Field Day gathering. Wayne and Charlie Overcash offered to pursue a Fall picnic and POTA effort, perhaps in a park nearby.
- * AI4WL's Propagation Report: Solar activity has been moderate for the past several days. 10 and 12 meter bands are still hot during the day but closing earlier at night. There have been geomagnetic storms but they affect mostly the far northern latitudes. Expect lower solar activity the next few days. Conditions should be fair during the day for the middle HF bands, good at night for the low, poor for the high.
- * Hank gets congrats for conducting the PCN Wednesday night net. Bill, KR4LO, will take it in June. Wayne has been handling the DMR "after-net" on the Arapahoe repeater. Reminders, especially for nets in the digital modes: leave several seconds between returning, listen for the "channel clear" tone if your transceiver has one, use the "dashboard [<https://cluster.nc4es.org/>]. In nets, turn the channel over to someone or back to net control to avoid "doubling".
- * The next Pamlico Communications Team meeting will be next Saturday, June 7th. Mike, AB1OU, will talk about C4FM and Systems Fusion. As always, if you need help programming your charged up radio, bring it, your programming cable. Bring your laptop if you have your programming software on it.
- * The two balloons are doing well. The N4PRS balloon has passed over the Hawaiian Islands headed east on its 9th lap, the NC4ES balloon is over the eastern coast of Greenland drifting toward Jan Mayen on her 8th.
- * June 15th will be the last day to register to participate in the EHPC Spring COMMEM on June 17th. The Pamlico County PACE Plan was offered as a model to follow at the recent EHPC Open House in Kinston. Over 60 hams and AUXCOMM folks attended, some from outside our region.
- * Our Oriental N4ONC repeater can be reached through EchoLink. Now hosted by Wayne in Harlowe, the goal is to host it on site. The Kershaw UHF repeater is down for repair. The repeater controller purchased to integrate services for both the VHF and UHF repeater and the internet will likely be sent back to ARCOM for repair or replacement.
- * Bruce is coordinating with the Town of Oriental and Newport Weather Service office for our "annual" Hurricane Preparedness Seminar, hopefully in late June or early July. Members are urged to attend. They can offer "ground truth" experience for newcomers.
- * A GMRS repeater has been obtained at no cost. To be sited on the Kershaw tower, it is envisioned as providing a last ditch communications means for the public during a disaster, a social communications medium otherwise. GMRS proved to be of great value in the recovery period after Hurricane Helene.
- * The next PARS meeting will be on June 28th.
- * As for door prizes, Charlie WA4GSI took home an AM Radio in a soda can; Dodge KJ4CFE a first aid kit; Ray KR4ABZ a 3D Printed Map on a tile, Charlie KO4YWM another tile with PARS logo and Lor W3QA had the winning number for a Brantleys Gift Certificate.
- * There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:16 am.
(PARSgram 2025-06-02)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) June 28, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Twenty-six members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's

Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.

* As for interesting contacts, yours truly, AI4WL, reported "repeater DX" for the past several days via the Kershaw repeater. We've had tropo "ducting" along the coast. Nelson, up in Broadnax, VA, 135 miles away has been strong around 0745 in the morning. I also answered a signal report request on the PRN from KP3U last week. It turned out that the call belongs to "Sam" Nakano, a retired Japan Self Defense Force officer now living in South Carolina. For his last assignment, he worked as a liaison officer with the US Forces at Camp Zama, Japan, where I had served 20 years earlier. Small world. We had an enjoyable chat. Lots had changed.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. We're doing fine.

* AI4WL's Propagation Report: Solar activity has been low with fewer sunspots. Good DX remains. 20, 17, and 15 have been dependable during the day. Expect low solar activity to continue for the next few days. Conditions should be fair to good during the day for the middle HF bands, good at night for the low, poor for the high. DX opportunities include East Malaysia, Ogasawara, Jan Mayen, and West Kiribati (Tarawa Atoll).

* Bruce surprised me with some very kind words about the PARSgram. [BTW, the PARSgram started in 2006 as a single paragraph email reminder about our monthly meeting. Folks then couldn't remember whether the meeting was on the 4th Saturday or the last Saturday. The reminder morphed into something more and was dubbed the PARSgram in 2007--ed.]

* ARES/PCN. Mike, K4NLC, our coordinator, has been rotating the controllers monthly. This month it was Bill, KR4LO; in July it will be Bruce. The monthly net is a training vehicle offered to all. During an emergency, the first one on the net becomes the controller until relieved. It helps to have had some experience. Once the Station 19 equipment is in place, control will be run from there periodically.

* Bruce reminded all that the Pamlico Communications Team is a subset of PARS. It has EMCOMM origins but has broadened take on technical and non-tech subjects occasioned by member interests. The group is now assembling a multi-mode amateur station in the Oriental VFD. It will start with VHF then GMRS and HF. It will be staffed by PCT and other ham volunteers when required. Because of Croakerfest over the holiday weekend of July 4-5, the July meeting will be on July 12th.

* Web report-- Paul, K4MMB. The N4PRS.ORG web site is healthy with 200 visitors, 400 pages visited in the past 30 days, most legit. Paul requests reader input, especially photos of our ham activities.

* Lor, W3QA, updated the group on the remaining pico balloon from the launch of three in Greenville February 17th. It [call NC4ES] appears to be a wanderer that has not only crossed over the North Pole twice shortening her roundabout considerably, but now has floated back westward from near Bermuda, across NC near Greenville, then north again into Virginia. [By this Monday morning, she had overflown Allentown, PA, Boston, back over the Atlantic and two-thirds of the way to Portugal.-ed.] He believes the Oriental balloon [N4PRS] that was near the Yucatan 22 days ago was lost due to radio equipment failure, perhaps during a storm.

* Bruce reported on the recent COMMEX. Seven from Pamlico County participated. Most accomplished their tasks on the new "home amateur track". The most expansive exercise so far, it had multiple tracks, airborne repeaters, ad hoc injects. By all reports, the exercise was well received. Lots of lessons learned. After-action report to come.

* So no club participation in Field Day this year but a Picnic during cooler October weather instead. Being organized by Charlie, WA4GSI, and Wayne, KO4OJC, it will be at the Park behind Station 19 VFD... a big party to celebrate OUR 20TH BIRTHDAY.

* Wayne talked about his C4FM Fusion Repeater. It is now being tested at his home on Mitchell Creek, but soon will be at about 65 ft. on Bill KR4LO's tower on Upper Baird Creek. An experiment to share the Kershaw UHF antenna with the GMRS repeater is being considered.

* Bruce reported that the Oriental Hurricane Forum last Wednesday went well, the best ever according to some. Following the briefings by the National Weather Service and the Oriental Town Manager, Bruce talked about the additional security GMRS can offer after a major storm and how it helped the public after Hurricane Helene. He reported on the new GMRS repeater, the station at the Fire Station, and demonstrated making calls. The Ad hoc demo went extremely well... Bill M. W3MX simulated a call to the fire house; then Ralph AG2GR called from Fairfield Harbor, followed by Wayne from across the Neuse in Harlowe.

* For the first time, PARS will have a "booth" at Croakerfest. It will be used to promote GMRS and amateur radio communications as a last resort. Volunteers to help are appreciated. [See separate note above]

* The next PARS meeting will be on July 26th.

* As for door prizes, Hank KW1ZRD, took home two PARS coasters and Rick NN2S, a PARS bumper sticker. Bruce K4ONC had the winning number for the Brantleys Gift Certificate. [He swears the drawing was not fixed.-ed]

* There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:28 am.

(PARSgram 2025-06-30)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) July 26, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Twenty-five members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. The Oriental Repeater Group received a generous gift.

* AI4WL's Propagation Report: The numbers reflected significant improvement in HF propagation during the month. The six-meter season however remains a disappointment. Conditions should be good during the day and night for the middle HF bands (30-40); good at night for the low, poor for the high bands. DX opportunities include East Malaysia, Singapore, Svalbard, and West Kiribati.

* ARES/PCN. Bruce has net control duty for July. He reported interesting check-in totals for this month so far: 57 WinLink, 61 net plus two EchoLink... Bruce requests the WinLink CHECK-IN THIS WEEK (Jul 30) be BY SITUATION REPORT...PARS is pushing GMRS. It will offer a community forum on the service at 6:30pm, Thursday, August 21st.

* The next Pamlico Communications Team meeting will be next Saturday, 9am August 2nd at the Oriental VFD, Station 19 on Straight Road.

* Web report-- Paul, K4MMB, reported there were 250 visitors who looked at 415 pages in the past 30 days. For the year, he counted 7740 visitors including bots. There were 1233 returns who were likely real people. Again, he encouraged members to visit and send him your ham related photos and musings.

* Old Business:

- The Fall Picnic planning is on track. Two dates selected and the recreation area behind Station 19 reserved. More to come.

- Wayne, KO4OJC and Bill, KR4LO, have activated a new repeater at Bill's Baird Creek QTH. A Yaesu FM and C4FM machine, it has Wires-X capability. Now under test, its 5 watt output will be increased. [See operational details below.-ed]

- Bill's (W3MX) C4FM/Wires-X node computer failed and is being replaced. It should be back up soon.

- The Oriental VFD station now has a desk, 3 feedlines in place. The FD Directors have approved the proposed VHF and HF antennas with the proviso that the HF roof top wire be lowerable.

- Lor, W3QA, updated the group on the remaining pico balloon, NC4ES. The first was lost on day

one and the N4PRS balloon lost near the Yucatan after 9 laps. NC4ES has taken its time including making side trips over the north pole. At around 47K ft. it is approaching South Africa on it's 10th lap. AND there's a NEW TRACKING SITE, <https://wsprtv.com/> with a Google Earth view "from the balloon".

* New Business:

- On a Kershaw repeater check late Friday, Bruce discovered that the tower site had been broken into. 12 At&T hardlines were cut at about the 40 ft level and stolen. AT&T was not using the Kershaw facility so no service loss. Reportedly, theft of copper feedlines is becoming frequent.

- Bruce advised that although the tone on the GMRS repeater was being turned off to reduce the set-up challenge for new users, keeping it on our transceivers is recommended. The tone may be required later. There will be GMRS forum for Oriental/Pamlico County residents on Aug 21st at 6:30pm at the Oriental Town Hall.

- Bill Michne provided background on the Corwin bequest to the Oriental Repeater Group of which Tom was a big supporter. The money will be husbanded. It will be used only for necessary non-recurring expenses and repairs.

- Bruce reminded all that, by way of a transparent repeater at Wayne's QTH in Harlowe, EchoLink is available on the Oriental N4ONC repeater. Users have reported it has been very successful and very easy to use. Apps are available for computers, tablets, and cell phones.

* The next PARS meeting will be on Saturday, August 30th.

* As for door prizes, visitor Donovan Seagle-Foster--while promising to get a ham license--headed toward VA Tech with a PARS license plate, Eric KG4ISY put on his new PARS baseball cap and Bill WM3X had the winning ticket for the Brantleys Gift Certificate.

* There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:32 am.

(PARSgram 2025-07-28)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) August 30, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Twenty-four members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally.

* AI4WL's PROPAGATION Report: When asked about their experience on HF this past week, members responded that HF propagation was either lousy or it was great. Maybe it was both. The numbers--sunspot, solar flux, etc.--reflected significant improvement in HF propagation during the month, geomagnetic storms were few. But then, selecting the working band for the time of day/night is very important. Currently, conditions are good during the day and night for the middle HF bands (15-30). Other bands not so: 40-80 are good at night, poor during the day; 10-12 the reverse, good during the day, poor at night. Dick, K4JJW, uses his spectrum scope to see if a given band is active. Since I'm mostly using FT8 or FT4, the number signals visible on the waterfall on each usable band is a quick indicator. Start by checking Paul's <https://www.n4prs.org/looking-up/> page for reported band conditions. Current DX opportunities include East Malaysia, Singapore, Svalbard, and West Kiribati.

* ARES/PCN. Bruce reminds that Mike, K4NLC is net manager. For training purposes, actual net control stations (net controller) are rotated monthly. AI4WL had the duty for August, Mike Hurm, K4HPS, for September.

On last Wednesday we had a first, the inaugural net control operation from Station 19, Oriental VFD. Bruce reported that most of the station equipment is in place, coax run. The outside antennas, an 80M end-fed, and two VHF/UHF antennas will soon be put up, a work party to be scheduled. Volunteers requested.

* The next PCT MEETING will be next Saturday, September 6th. The PACE plan will be reviewed.

Bill, KR4LO and Wayne, K04OJC, will talk about duplexers, in this case special cavity filters for repeaters, and their tuning.

- * Paul gave his WEB REPORT. All is well. There are still bots plumbing, now driven by AI. 176 users over 30 days, about 40% actual, most of the probers blocked by the WordPress application.
 - * The last of the February BALLOON launch has been lost over central India according to Lor, W3QA. Maybe high level storms, more likely the very thin 32 gauge wire antenna broke and with it the tracker dropped. She was on lap 10 or more, turned back on herself several times, took short cuts over the North Pole. Launched back in February, she had a great run. Another launch is now being considered, likely several balloons when a favorable jet stream is over Greenville, possibly in October.
 - * PARS is now on FACEBOOK. Another way to connect with Pamlico County residents.
 - * The community meeting on GMRS was held last Thursday. Unfortunately the GMRS repeater went non-operational that same afternoon. Simplex was demonstrated instead. More PARS members than community folks attended.
 - * The faulty/unreliable GMRS repeater will be replaced. Another is available and needs to be programmed. [The current original repeater that lost its audio came back to life Saturday. The replacement will still be programmed, problematic repeater replaced-ed.]
 - * Wayne, K04OJC, invited members to use the new dual mode FM/C4FM Wires-X REPEATER now in operational testing [146.310MHz- CTCSS 131.8]. It's located at Bill, KR4LO's shop with its antenna on the tower at about 66 ft. Tested during during a recent Wednesday night net on FM, it has good coverage, Pamlico County and beyond.
 - * The PARS PICNIC is on. Now scheduled for Saturday, October 18th, a FOX HUNT has been added to the event. For families and friends too, more info to come.
 - * A work party needs to be scheduled to take down antennas at the Banks residence and those remaining at the former Everest residence.
 - * As for door prizes, Bruce's ticket brought him a 2024 ARRL calendar; "Ant" Crook, N1IG, took home 4 PARS coasters; and lucky Lor, W3QA, had the winning ticket for the Brantleys Gift Certificate.
 - * There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 am.
- (PARSgram 2025-09-01)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) September 27, 2025 MEETING NOTES

- * Twenty-four members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.
- * Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally.
- * AI4WL's PROPAGATION Report: About half of those present indicated they had been on HF during the past week. Only a couple indicated they had been chasing DX. Propagation has been very good over the past month for casual users and DX chasers alike. A number of DXpeditions were/are underway including St. Pierre & Miquelon, Christmas Island, Faroe Island, Micronesia, Market Reef, and Palestine. Other "most wanted" countries are expected to be on the air through the end of 2025. The peak of Sunspot Cycle 25 may have past but great conditions continue, especially on the 30 to 15 meter bands. Current DX opportunities include the Solomon Islands, Ogasawara, Micronesia and the Marshalls. Check Paul's <https://www.n4prs.org/looking-up/> page for reported band conditions.
- * ARES/PCN. Mike "great radio voice" Hurm, K4HPS, has completed his month as Net Controller. Ray Lewis, KR4ABZ, will pick it up next Wednesday for October.
- * The ORIENTAL VFD STATION is nearly complete, only the last details for the HF antenna remain. The station now has VHF, UHF, and HF capability and is operational using FM, SSB, GMRS and DMR modes. It is also WinLink capable. It is available for PCN net controller/emergency operator familiarization. Contact Bruce for details.

- * Thanks to Pete and Martha Newman of "Pete's Tree Service" and several PCT members, most of the vital antenna work at the firehouse was accomplished on October 9th. Pete donated his time and bucket truck for the tower work. We urge our members to THANK PETE by visiting his "Taco Truck" (Casa Que Pasa) across from the Oriental Harbor. [The breakfast Burrito is delicious-ed.]
 - * The next PCT MEETING will be next Saturday, October 4th. A tour of the new radio station is planned. Postponed from last month, Bill, KR4LO and Wayne, K04OJC, will show and talk about duplexers, in this case special cavity filters for repeaters, and their tuning.
 - * Bruce reminds us that N4PRS is back on Facebook.
 - * Bill Michne, WM3X, represented PARS well at the Oriental History Museum on Thursday, the 18th. He gave a "History Channel" level presentation on the history of communications at sea. With a short teaser about early direction finding involving Amelia Earhart, he gets to return with a full blown Earhart presentation.
 - * The NC4ES BALLOON has now been acknowledged as lost. It might still be floating, but her tracker has not been heard since August 21st when over India. According to Bruce, she had been aloft for 194 days, 17 hours and had traveled 197,000 miles at an average altitude of 45,000 feet. Another balloon launch is being considered, likely in early Winter.
 - * Bruce advised that the Eastern Health Care Coalition (EHPC)--along with the 7 other coalitions in the State--is THREATENED by the loss of federal funding. It is likely that the coalition hospitals will lose their contingency support, their mobile hospital, back-up mobile generators, deployment and maintenance of a warehouse full of emergency supplies, backup communications and lots more. This is a severe blow to the medical response capability for a major emergency in our area.
 - * The FOX HUNT and PARS PICNIC are on track for Saturday, October 18th. All PARS members and their families are invited. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be grilled at the Oriental Park off Straight Rd. behind the Fire Station. Those coming are requested to bring a dish to share and folding chairs. The FOX HUNT runs from 10-12 am. Be at the fire station by 0930 for check-in and quick briefing. The picnic starts at noon or soon thereafter. PLEASE RSVP to chief cook Mike Marsh, 252-636-1257, or mike@marshconsulting.org.
 - * On ECHOLINK--it's a good tool but takes a little learning and practice on its use, particularly due to inherent delays--it can be up to 7 seconds before a transmission is dropped. Check and set your audio levels using the EchoLink audio test server before use. For a net, use RF if available: a net is not the place to practice with EchoLink. Listen to the net controller, he's in charge. He will likely ask for ECHOLINK callers to check in separately. [See PARSgram 2025-09-08 for more tips-ed.]
 - * Especially in light of the Hurricane Helene experience, Wayne, KO4OJC, requested that we all SEND A LETTER to our representatives to support the bill in Congress to ELIMINATE HOA ANTENNA RESTRICTIONS. Lor pointed out it is an easy "two click" procedure. The official ARRL page for its homeowner association (HOA) campaign is at <https://www.arrl.org/current-legislation>. You don't have to be a member to use it. Just click on the "Send Your Letters Now" button, fill in your call sign. If needed, add any other info requested. Then send. Those letters will be printed and presented to our reps as a "bundle". They won't be ignored.
 - * The Maysville Hamfest is on October 12th.
 - * Drawing winners: Buck, AA4SN, won a PARS engraved tile; Ann Clement took home a couple of PARS coasters; and Ken, WB2AII, had the winning ticket for the Brantleys Gift Certificate.
 - * There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 am.
- (PARSgram 2025-09-29)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) October 25, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Twenty-six members, visitors and guests attended the 9 am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC. Bruce welcomed new members Kathy Lilieholm and Pat LeFebre, N1ZLE, to the club. Kathy's dad was a member of PARS years ago. She has his equipment and will join "Ann's class" in pursuit of her amateur radio license.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally.

* AI4WL's PROPAGATION Report: In response to Bruce's question regarding new awards, Dick K4JJW offered his DX report, in short, advising that conditions are good and for folks to spend some time on HF. Jim reminded all that updated band conditions are to be found Paul's (<https://www.n4prs.org/looking-up/>) PARS web site. Current DX opportunities include Somalia, Burundi, Wallis and Futuna.

* The next PCT MEETING will be next Saturday, November 1st. Bruce reminded us that all sorts of topics are undertaken, from WinLink history and set-up guidance, Hurricane Helene feedback and lessons learned, tuning of repeater duplexer cavities, to knife and drill bit sharpening. All are welcome. A fox hunting how-to class was suggested.

* Mike, K4NLC, joined by others, offered advice on using EchoLink, the biggest issue being adapting to the delays involved. Radio users have to listen for the repeater carrier to drop after an EchoLink user's transmission. It may be a few seconds. It may take some learning, but EchoLink is a good tool to have when away from the area.

* Our (Pamlico Amateur Radio Society) Facebook page has photos of the Fox Hunt and Picnic. Both were declared a big success. According Matt McMahon, WU2V, PARS is the only club around that hunts the fox. He appreciates the opportunity to participate as it relates to EHPC's search and rescue mission. Kudu's go to the "FoxMan", Bill Olah KR4LO, who delights in making the Fox difficult to find. It was a definite challenge this time. Six teams searched, two found it. The rest of the hounds got hungry and headed for the park. Thanks also went to Mike, our experienced hamburger chef and to Wayne, K04OJC, and Charlie, WA4GSI, --our organizers--for finding a great location in our own backyard. Some of us thought that we could have stayed longer, done more POTA, chatted more, maybe played some horseshoes, kicked a soccer ball, swayed on the swings... and socialized still more. Good to see spouses, great to see a few kids. The potluck was fantastic, side-dishes delicious, deserts all too fattening. Consideration will be given to revisiting the park for Winter Field Day in late January and even Field Day on the 4th weekend in June.

* Bill, KR4LO, reported intermittent desensing issues with the Wayne's World KO4OJC repeater. That won't stop the C4FM test net on the repeater in lieu of the next few Monday night 10 meter nets.

* The Oriental Repeater Group will consider acquiring another Starlink unit, now available at significant discount, for the Kershaw repeater. This will provide on site internet connectivity to support EchoLink and other applications with improved reliability, improve communications throughput (reduce delay between exchanges), and other benefits.

* The work party to take down antennas at Tommy (SK) Bank's house will be after next week's PCT meeting.

* Election: Bill Michne, our nominating committee of one, after announcing the annual election, received no nominations. At the meeting none were made from the floor. He announced that all current officers had agreed to serve for another term. That being the case, Bill Olah moved that the nominations be closed and the slate of incumbents be elected by acclamation. There were no objections. Officers for the 2025-2026 term are:

President- Bruce Perkins, K4ONC

Vice President - Wayne Beasley, KO4OJC

Secretary - Jim Hartmeyer, AI4WL

Treasurer - Gail (Wally) Wallace, KK4ASP

* Drawing winners: Dick, K4JJW and Paul, KO4MHM, both took home HRO cups and PARS bumper stickers; Tripp Beasley, KI4KEB, had the winning ticket for the Brantleys Gift Certificate.

* There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 am.

(PARSgram 2025-10-27)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) NOVEMBER 29, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Twenty-four members, visitors and guests attended the 9am Saturday breakfast meeting at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC. Buck, AA4SN, shared his latest find, a CW paddle crafted from two WW2 British straight keys, glued bottom to bottom and mounted sideways. Weighs a ton, solid as a rock.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. A StarLink Mini for the Oriental-Kershaw repeater was purchased using repeater group funds.

* AI4WL's PROPAGATION Report: Although the official NOAA forecast was for low activity and only fair propagation, a returning large sunspot brought with it a major solar flare and a short HF blackout for the Pacific. Propagation has been very good of late and even the high bands have been staying open into the evening. Jim reminded all that updated band conditions are to be found Paul's (<https://www.n4prs.org/looking-up/>) PARS web site. Current DX opportunities include Rodrigues Island, Easter Island, the Mariana's, and St. Helena.

* The next PCT MEETING will be this coming Saturday, December 6th at the Oriental VFD. All are welcome to learn more about Fox Hunting, direction finding, and the equipment required both for the fox and the hounds.

* Mike, K4NLC, thanked Charlie, KO4YWM, for handling the Net Control Station duties in November. It was his first time. Mike will take it for December and Wayne K04OJC in January. Mike noted we are seeing 15 or so Winlink check-ins and a few more voice check-ins on average. Three of those 15 members who checked-in last Wednesday were from afar via EchoLink. Next week (December 3rd) members will be requested to QSY to the Baird Creek (Wayne's World) repeater on FM. They will be called in turn to validate improvements made recently, both in voice quality, reliability and repeater range. [KO40JC FM/C4FM/WIRES-X Baird Creek (146.310MHz- CTCSS 131.8)-ed]

* Wayne and Bill KR4LO spent untold hours refurbishing the KO40JC YSF repeater out by Baird Creek. Gremlins persisted. They came and they went. As a last resort, down came the tower, apart came the hardline... Ugh, the green stuff! Now all connections cleaned, polished and protected. It appears, finally, all is well. According to Mike, we'll give it an operational test on Wednesday next as part of the Wednesday Night Net.

* Announcement from Bruce: our NEXT PARS MEETING will be A WEEK EARLY. Brantleys will be closed for the holidays on the last Saturday. Not to miss out on the festivities, ON THE 20TH OF DECEMBER we will have our brief regular meeting followed by our ANNUAL GIFT EXCHANGE. Look around, find something from your shack, the junk box, or garage ham radio related. Wrap it and bring it. If you buy something, keep it for less than 20 bucks. And as for the exchange, after you unwrap what you get from under the tree, if you find someone else willing, you can swap yours for theirs. Bring the family. Enjoy.

* Hank KW1ZRD talked briefly about the growing local and active "ship" of Sea Scouts with crew from Oriental to New Bern that is sponsored by the local Coast Guard Auxiliary. They are looking forward to a short talk by Bruce about GMRS at their February meeting on the 5th in New Bern. This could be an introduction to things radio, both marine and amateur. Future Sea Scout technicians perhaps. He's hopeful.

* Drawing winners: Ralph AC2GR, a PARS tile by Rick NN2S; Jeff Cunniff, coax connectors; Anthony N1IG, a PARS logo engraved wine glass. Charlie WA4GSI had the winning ticket and took home the Brantleys Gift Certificate (or what was left after paying for his breakfast).

* There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45am.

(PARSgram 2025-12-1)

PAMLICO AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PARS) December 20, 2025 MEETING NOTES

* Twenty-nine members, visitors and guests attended the 9am Saturday breakfast meeting and annual gift exchange at Brantley's Village Restaurant chaired by President Bruce Perkins, K4ONC.

Congratulations went to Jeff Cunniff who passed his exam Saturday to earn his technician grant. Bruce recognized our guests from the Carteret County Club: Joseph DiFabio N2UBI and Van Manuel KN4YCK. They were ferried over by PARS member Keith Stroud W4WKS.

* Dick Goodwin K4JJW, reported that the ARRL has added a new award, this one recognizing our country's 250th Birthday. It's a 5 Band WAS that must be accomplished during 2026 and confirmed using LOTW.

* For show-n-tell, Ray KO4ABZ, passed around his newly assembled 9:1 UNUN. Fine work indeed.

* Bruce delivered the Treasurer's report on behalf of Wally. Our D&O insurance was renewed, prizes for the next Fox Hunt purchased, and dues letter postage paid.

* AI4WL's PROPAGATION Report: Like last month, our recent numbers are down--like a SSN of 33 this morning--and low solar activity reported. Nevertheless, the HF bands have been crowded, at least with FT4 and FT8 traffic. The forecast for the next few days is for the same, not the best. Recommend just re-connecting the antenna and turning on the radio. Check the bands for activity. Make a few contacts. Current DX includes the South Shetland Islands and Cambodia.

* The NEXT PCT MEETING will be on Saturday, January 3rd at the Oriental VFD. All are welcome to come and learn more about FOX HUNTING, direction finding, and the equipment required both for the fox and the hounds. The next BIG fox hunt will be in the Spring, a two stage hunt likely--find the first fox to get the frequency for the second fox. Other clubs and the Sea Scouts will be invited.

* Paul K4MMB, our Webmaster, reported 149 hits and 300 pages visited during the recent 30 day period. Yes, there's some phishing but the WordPress server blocks much of it.

* Bruce briefly reviewed our ongoing relationship with the Oriental VFD, especially our regular use of their building for PCT meetings, VE testing, and other events. He suggested that PARS might want to again make a donation or purchase some equipment not in the VFD budget. From a discussion with the fire chief, Bruce moved that PARS obtain a Sound Bar for their Computer Monitor/TV at a cost of no more than \$300. The MOTION was seconded by Bill Olah and APPROVED unanimously.

* Bill Michne WM3X presented a \$500 check to Bruce from the estate of Dan Baker N6XWF. This was a DONATION TO PARS from money received from the sale of Dan's radio equipment. Dan was an early and long time member of PARS who passed last May.

* There being no further business, Bruce then orchestrated the eagerly awaited gift exchange. There were many very well thought out gifts. Thank you all! The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am.

(PARSgram 2025-12-22)