



**W1KMG ON AIR!**  
MONTHLY SPECIAL  
NETS



**2021 VE SCHEDULE**  
HAM RADIO TESTS IN  
STEBEN



**W3HBM - SK**  
DOWNEAST AMATEUR  
RADIO ICON WILL BE  
MISSED

# Signals Downeast

# LONG PATH



A Quarterly Profile

## Pedro

### From Apollo Project To World Traveller & Hammin'

Pedro Ceijas, WA4KEO, of Alexander Maine has been a licensed ham radio operator since his friend and neighbor, Ike, K4SMV (silent key now) mentored him and administered the test in 1962. Even before discovering his beloved

ham radio hobby, Pedro was into technology. He was part of the Apollo Project when he worked as an engineering aid for Minneapolis-Honeywell. Later he traveled to the Caribbean and South America as a television engineer.

“The story of my life would be a best seller. I have had a great life,” Pedro said during a 2018 interview. “The only horrible thing that ever happened to me was losing my wife [Bonnie].”

Pedro grew up in Florida, both around the Everglades and further up north along the Gulf coast. After finishing college, Minneapolis-Honeywell was hiring folks to work on the Apollo Project, on the inertial guidance systems and other components of the space program. Pedro worked extensively on the communications and telemetry systems.

He worked in the chemistry department of the Apollo Project first, helping to develop an epoxy that was used to encapsulate the circuit boards that were plugged into the spacecraft’s computer. All of the air had to be removed from the epoxy or it would bubble in space and ruin the circuit board. His team finally found a formula that worked.

That was during the Kennedy administration. “He wanted to make it to the moon and back in that decade. It’s tragic that he didn’t get to see it happen, but yes, by 1969 we did it,” said Pedro.

After three years working on the Apollo Project, Pedro struck out on his own. “I am very entrepreneurial in nature. I established an exclusive Motorola Sales and Service Center in Tampa.” His experience and reputation grew, and before he knew it, Motorola persuaded him to close shop and join the Motorola facility in Franklin, Illinois, where they frequently sent him overseas as a field engineer.

He said he would never forget the task in Chile, where the power mains were different and they redesigned the power transformer for the television set the company was licensed to manufacture in

## *New England QSO Party*

**May 1-2, 2021**

2000Z Saturday until 0500Z  
Sunday (4pm EDT Saturday  
until 1am EDT Sunday)  
1300Z Sunday until 2400Z  
Sunday (9am EDT Sunday  
until 8pm EDT Sunday)

**Rules & Other Details:**

<https://neqp.org/>



**Forty Meter Fun Net**

**A Special W1KMG OPS**

Let’s test the 40m short skip on Sunday, Mar 21 at 10am on or near 7262 kHz. Net control will be W1KMG/N1EP based out of Milbridge. This is the backup frequency for the Maine Emergency Communications Net so this will be a good test for EMCOMM purposes as well!

Santiago.

*““ And they built our transformer, and I’m going to tell you — it could have powered a battleship! Every time they turned it off, it would pop the rectifiers.”*

Pedro said the workers there were in a panic because they had sold 1000 of those television sets for \$450 each, and they could not deliver them. So, that’s where Field Engineer Pedro came to the rescue. He was there 10 minutes and fixed their problem. “After that, they started calling me Savior.”

Through the 80s he loved flying remote controlled model airplanes and was an avid contester in that side of the hobby. He and his wife would chase contests all over the Midwest. Pedro is also a licensed pilot.

Pedro and Bonnie moved to Maine in 1998, and it is here in Maine where he upgraded his ham ticket all the way through Extra class.

He loves building, repairing and inventing things, whether electronic circuits or antenna projects. He also enjoys making contacts on 160 meters and other bands.

One of his favorite contacts was when he had a great ragchew on 10 meters with a ham in South Africa.

Pedro encourages new hams to actually learn the theory. Knowing electronics and radio wave propagation has been very rewarding for him through the years. For instance, knowing radio-wave principles, he was able to chat with hams in Norway, Greenland, Spain, and South America on the same day using the appropriate antennas and ham bands.

His favorite antenna is the “inverted L” he made for 160 meters. “I’ve made contacts with Ireland, Germany, and Bulgaria on 160.

“For me that’s really fascinating that I’ve been able to build an antenna that has a big enough aperture that it can actually collect the energy from places on the other side of the world.”

Pedro is a past long-time president of the Saint Croix Valley ARC. He remembers convincing club members to build an AM 6 meter transmitter, using heising modulation, without spending any money. They all got enthused and collected the parts, and they built a working Six Meter AM Transmitter with a power out of 40 watts.

Signals Downeast salutes Pedro for his many decades of contributions to country and amateur radio!

*The above article is a sneak-peek from a ham radio profile book being written by Phil Duggan, N1EP. The book publishing is way overdue, but it is coming!!!*

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## Maine Ham Radio 2021 Can Be Epic!

The Covid-19 pandemic does not have to suppress ham radio activities around Maine this year. We can adapt, as individuals and as clubs, to make the airwaves sizzle with signals and enjoy every aspect of our hobby.

Warmer weather will invite outdoor portable operations. Whether alone, or with other hams, we can still safely call CQ from our local parks, or from the backyard! The Ellsworth Amateur Wireless Association members are looking forward to setting up portable stations along the waterfront in Ellsworth again soon. Maine Ham Radio Society members are planning similar outings where proper distancing will allow members to get together, something that was difficult to do in 2020.

Midcoast hams have been braving the colder temperatures of wintertime and have been putting ham radio on display to the public. Jose KB1TCD and friends recently activated a park and made many contacts, including using the ever-popular FT8 digital mode.

If you have a ham station inside your home (I hope you do!) then USE it! So many of us earn our tickets and setup ham radio stations, then rarely use them. Pick up that microphone! Take hold of your CW paddle or straight key, and Just Get On The Air!!!

Here are some activities that as individuals or in groups we can do this year:

- Schedule monthly on-air events using various modes and amateur radio bands. Invite your friends and area clubs to participate.
- If you have a portable radio, go to a park or other scenic area, throw a dipole or random wire over a tree limb, and call CQ.
- Experiment with antenna design. This summer, erect a type of antenna you have never tried before and see how it compares to your other aerials.
- Go Hill-topping this summer. See how far your two meter signal goes the higher you go. Try joining in the fun of SOTA (Summits On The Air) or shrink the size of your portable setups and power by having some QRP (low power) challenges. We are officially in Solar Sunspot Cycle 25 and band conditions are gradually improving. QRP can be a blast with good band conditions.
- Support the hamfests! Most Maine hamfests (except for Alexander Hamfest) were cancelled last year because of the pandemic. But word now is that at least some will be back this year. Plans are still moving forward with the Herman Hamfest in June and the Windsor Hamfest, as well as Alexander later. Things could change, as you well know, but if these hamfests do occur, please support them!

## George Kidder W3HBM - SK



Signals Downeast pays tribute to Bar Harbor's George Kidder - W3HBM, who passed away in January. George was friend and mentor to many Maine hams. He was an avid ham radio operator whose voice and CW and digital signals could be heard daily throughout the amateur bands.

Pine Tree Net members, and those of the Maine Public Service Net and other nets are very familiar with George as he was a loyal checkin, net control operator, and was former net manager of the MPSN. George dabbled in many areas of the amateur radio service, including APRS and Packet Radio (his MDI node is missed), many digital modes, and especially he loved operating using CW (Morse code).

At his wife, Beth's request, his equipment has been sold or given away to benefit hams. Equipment sale proceeds have benefitted the Ellsworth Amateur Wireless Association, Kidz RadioActive, the Middlesex Amateur Radio Society in Connecticut (George was a member for many decades), and a donation will soon be sent to the Maine Ham Radio Foundation to benefit the eventual restoration of the KQ1L linked repeater systems in Maine.

### Upcoming Events

- MAR 10 MHRS Zoom Meeting 7:00pm. Contact n1ep for link.
- MAR 11 EAWA Zoom Meeting 7:00pm. Contact KA1DBE or W1DLC for link
- MAR 21 W1KMG Forty Meter Fun Net 10am on or near 7262 kHz LSB
- MAR 21 ST Croix Valley ARC Zoom Meeting 5:30pm. Contact KB1GEO for link.
- MAR 22 VE Test Session 4:00pm Steuben. Registration required. Contact N1EP
- APR 3 MHRS 6M FM Net on or near 52.525 Mhz
- MAY 23 MHRS Remember The USS Squalus Special Event W1S Details coming soon....

## Ham Radio Test Session



Monday March 22 at 4:00pm at the Henry D. Moore Library in Steuben. Applicants **MUST** pre-register by sending an email to [n1ep@yahoo.com](mailto:n1ep@yahoo.com). Face-masks are required. Applicants must have already obtained an FRN (FCC Registration Number) available at no charge on the [fcc.gov](http://fcc.gov) website, and bring that FRN to the test session. Fee is \$15. Legal photo ID required.

# Congratulations and thank you

to **Cory Golob KU1U** and **Joe Grace W1SK** for putting on an awesome Maine Virtual Hamfest on March 6. All presentations were professional and interesting, including the Skywarn talk, Bob Heil's amazing presentation, Riley Hollingsworth's "monitoring" talk, the FT8 presentation, and the Maine ARRL segment. Soon, they will make the videos available for those who could not attend. Can't wait to see what is next from this dynamic duo!

## Field Day 2021

From comments heard on the nets around the Great State of Maine, it appears many hams are optimistic that many clubs will be able to hold ARRL Field Day this year. Perhaps it will be scaled down and less public, and Covid-19 safety precautions and rules will apply, but getting together as a club just might happen! We cannot predict the future, but it would be wise for clubs to start planning now. We may have to get creative on locations and facility use, as many schools and other traditional sites may still be restricted in June. But with foresight and planning, getting together outside for our beloved Field Day can be a reality. But if the pandemic suddenly worsens and restrictions are put back in place, do not throw up your hands and despair. The ARRL is continuing the modified rules to allow individuals to operate from home, but include the club name for aggregate scores. This year stations operating at home will be limited to 150 watts, so no big amplifiers will be allowed.

## Local Nets

- Mondays - Washington County ARES Net 147.330+ (PL 118.8) at 1900 (7:00 pm).
- Tuesdays - Downeast Simplex Net 146.595 at 1830 (6:30pm)  
Hancock County EmComm Net 146.910- (PL 151.4) repeater at 1900 (7pm)
- Wednesday - Ellsworth Amateur Wireless Assn on-air meeting 147.030+ (pl 100) at 1900  
St Croix Valley ARC DMR Net Region North at around 1930 hours  
St Croix Valley ARC 10M FM Net 29.100 at 2000 (8pm)
- Thursdays - Maine Ham Radio Society Net K1HF Marshfield Repeater 146.775- (PL 192.8) 1900.  
(The last Thursday of the month will be a MHRS Swap Net on the K1HF Repeater)

**The Maine Seagull Net** will resume starting nets at 1700 mid-March. Check-in Monday through Saturday on 3940 Khz LSB, especially Wednesdays, which is the BEST SGN (I must divulge I am biased as I am net control on Wednesdays....nlep)

For those interested in learning how to pass radiogram traffic, this is a great place to start.

The **Maine Public Service Net** meets Sundays on or near 3940 kHz LSB at 0900

The Quarter Century Wireless Associations **Pine Cone Net** meets Sundays at 1400 on 3942 Khz. The summer months the net does not run.

The **Maine Emergency Communications Net** meets Sundays at 1630 hours (but will likely soon revert back to 1700 start time) on 3940 kHz.

CW Traffic Nets

### Maine Slow Speed Net

3585 khz 1800 Monday - Friday

### Pine Tree Net

Daily on 3596 kHz. Presently starts at 1630 but will likely revert back to 1900 start time soon.