

# Propagation

Kootenai Amateur Radio Society (KARS) Newsletter

APRIL 2006

More satire for your amateur radio buck

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### The 2006 KARS Program:

- Encourage • Manage • Promote • Prepare

( E - M - P - P )

Hams and friends that attended the March KARS meeting learned that your new officers actually have a "Platform" for the 2006 year. If you missed that meeting, or forgot some of the points presented, here they are again:

1. We will Encourage member participation and add new members, by...

- hearing your input, through the Member Survey and the Suggestion box. Also, you are welcome to contact any KARS officer with your input.
- "tuning up" monthly meeting hospitality. You will be met by a greeter at the door, and a name tag will be provided. And of course we will continue with refreshments for the meeting break.
- providing output in at least two forms: planned publicity, and "Elmers".

2. We will Manage costs by..

- setting up a Two-Year planning cycle for club events
- setting up a Budget and financial closing for club events
- promoting ARRL Affiliation

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## VICE PRESIDENT'S WORD

*Editor's note: John wins the busy-busy award for the month--his column will return in force next month. For now, Hollar fans will have to be satisfied with the following:*

N7JU humorous definition of the month:

Dopeler effect: The tendency for dumb ideas to seem better when you attend a lengthy board meeting.

## HAM CLASS: TELLES IN ACTION AGAIN

Want to explore other operating modes? How about other frequencies? How about DX? Get your general class license, and go HF. Go PSK-31 or RTTY. Contact that Cuban or that Israeli.

Larry Telles (K6SPP) is at it again. Along with with other KARS members, he will teach a an amateur radio class for those interested in upgrading to a general class license. Classes will be held at the NIC Workforce Training Center (525 West Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, Idaho 83854). The class begins on Wednesday, 12 April 2006, and will end 19 May. The class will meet Wednesdays and Fridays from 6 p.m. To 9 p.m. This class will have a twist that most amateur radio classes don't feature. The first three weeks will be devoted to developing Morse code skills, and will give students the opportunity to build a code practice oscillator--the oscillator building project will be scheduled for a Saturday to avoid impacting class learning time.

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Propagation is published monthly by the KOOTENAI Amateur Radio Society (KARS). The club is located in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho and serves the North Northern Idaho and the Spokane, Washington areas

KARS operates voice repeaters on 146.980 and 444.775 MHz and a packet repeater on 145.510 MHz. KARS normally holds meeting at 1900 hrs, on the second Monday of each month in the Shep Rock Building at the Coeur d' Alene Airport.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is welcome to join. Dues are \$12.00 (individual) and \$18.00 for a family membership. Contact the Treasurer (see page 6) to join KARS.

## KARS e-mail Directory

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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
10 April at 7 p.m. (Monday)	KARS monthly meeting	Kootenai County Airport (see below left)
17 April at 7 p.m. (Monday)	ARES/RACES meeting	Kootenai County Sheriff's Department
Every Wednesday at 8 a.m.	Donut Day	Rathdrum Super 1 store (on Highway 53)
Second Saturday each Month, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	NW Traffic Net Coffee Klatch	Old European Breakfast House in Post Falls

#### Next KARS Meeting:

**Monday, 10 April 2006 at  
7:00 p.m. in the Sheprock Building at  
the Kootenai County Airport**

#### Directions to the KARS meeting:

**U.S. 95 to Miles Ave. (Miles is about one mile North of Hayden Avenue.). West on Miles to the airport gate. Bear left to the Shep-rock Building. (about 100 yards from the gate).**

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*(continued from page 1)*

3. We will Promote amateur radio and KARS through planned publicity.

4. We will Prepare and present intellectually stimulating events, by turning up the WOW factor at:

- Monthly Meetings
- Learning Events (classes, nets, build-it sessions, "Elmering")
- Public service events (highway cleanup, classes, licensing)
- Social events - (if we feed them, they will come)
- Operating events (Idaho QSO Party, Field Day, others?)
- Special events (Ham-Fest)

We will need help from KARS members in our quest to "Do the Right Things Right". A good start is to attend as many KARS club meetings as you can during the year. (Club business goes better with a lot of members present).

Lastly, if you have a good KARS experience, please tell everyone! And if you have a BAD KARS experience, immediately contact any club officer (see page 6 for list) directly. We promise to address your concern as quickly as possible.

Now for a few administrative notes:

- What is the WOW factor? That means, "WOW, I really enjoyed that meeting" and/or "WOW, I learned something new today!"
- What is the suggestion box? See it near the door at the KARS meeting room, with scratch paper nearby. Suggestions are welcome, signed or anonymous. We had 8 suggestions in the box at the March meeting.

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- Please turn in your Member Survey at the next meeting. So far we have 8 surveys in hand. If you've misplaced yours, e-mail me for a new one.
- Refreshment committee: Help is needed! Can you (or your YL) provide refreshments for one KARS club meeting during the year?
- Elmer board: Who would like to sign on as an "Elmer"? (If you're fuzzy on the term, an "Elmer" is a more experienced ham who will help a new ham work through the tough spots getting started in our great hobby).

Please contact me ([ai7h@arrl.net](mailto:ai7h@arrl.net)) if you need a blank Membership Survey form, would like to join the refreshments committee, or would like to join the Elmer board.

73 to all--Ed, AI7H

## HAM RADIO CLASS AT NIC WTC

*(continued from page 1)*

KARS president Ed Stuckey (AI7H) and KARS former president Randy Carlson (KB6YAV) have agreed to assist with this class, and, if history repeats, other KARS members will no doubt pitch-in as well. The cost of this class is \$15. Register online at <http://workforcetraining.nic.edu> or call 208.769.3444. The course name is "Get Your General Class Amateur Radio License." If registering online, search on INSTRUCTOR ("Telles") or COURSE NAME (as shown above).

For those interested in learning Morse code, this class is the path for you. It dovetails perfectly with the opportunity to practice Morse code on 2-meters, where Technician class licensees already have operating privileges--see the related article (Guest Submission from WA7BKZ) on page 4.

*--the editor*

## Upcoming VEC/VE Licensing Exams for Our Area

- 13 April (Thursday), 5:00 p.m.; Tidyman's Grocery, 13014 E. Sprague Avenue, Spokane Valley, WA; Contact Mary Qualiteri (AA7RT), 509.991.2192 or [aa7rt@arrl.net](mailto:aa7rt@arrl.net).
- 16 April (Saturday); By appointment in Sagle, ID. Contact Russ Arndt (AA7XM), 208.265.4534 after 8 p.m. or [russell.arndt@verizon.net](mailto:russell.arndt@verizon.net)
- 25 April (Tuesday) 7 P.M.; University High School, Room E102, 12420 E. 32nd Ave, Spokane Valley, WA. (Use far east entrance on 32nd Ave.) Contact Betsy Ashleman (N7WRQ), 509.448.5821 or [n7wrq@aol.com](mailto:n7wrq@aol.com)
- 28 April (Friday) (Saturday); 6:00 p.m. To 9:00 p.m.; NIC Workforce Training Center, 525 West Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID ; Contact John Hollar (N7JU), 208.765.5470 or [n7ju@arrl.net](mailto:n7ju@arrl.net)

## The 2006 Idaho QSO Party The week after, as seen from K7ID

Readers may recall having read some publicity about the "First Annual Idaho QSO Party", which was held on 03/11 and 03/12/06. The event was organized by the Voice of Idaho ARC, located in Boise. The objective was to get stations from all of the 44 Idaho Counties on the air, so that distant Hams, especially "county hunters", would have an opportunity to work Hams in Idaho.

The Plan: Several KARS members expressed interest in participating, so we organized into several "flights", as follows: KA7RNX (Jerry) and N7SZY (Mike) agreed to operate using their own call signs, from their homes in Shoshone County. N8BNI (Jim) and KB6YAV (Randy) went mobile. "The rest of us" (see below) secured permission to use the Shep-Rock building (where KARS meetings are held), for the K7ID multi-operator / multi-transmitter site. Additionally, N7JIL (who is involved with CAP) got clearance for us to use the CAP radio room upstairs at the Shep-Rock building.

Setup: We did some advance setup, and erected a long wire antenna between Building 7 and a convenient utility pole. AA7AF (Lee) positioned his motor home to make good use of the long wire. On Saturday 03/11, the following operators were on hand at the K7ID site: AA7AF (Lee), K6SPP (Larry), K7PEJ (Tom), KE7FOW (Ed), and AI7H (Ed). We set up Larry's "Mosley Apartment-Dweller" antenna, and Tom set up his "Buddi-Pole" antenna. Rigs, Power Supplies, Extension Cords, Coffee and Snacks soon followed. The commotion and snacks also attracted N7JIL (Jim), WO6LF (Steve), W7GSV (Bob), and KE7DJL (Chris).

**Operations-Shoshone County:** Our operators in Shoshone County reported having over 20 QSOs on 20 meter SSB.

Operations-Mobile: The mobile unit got started around 9AM and had a fabulous day, with a total of 123 QSOs. During the day they operated from Kootenai, Boundary, Bonner, Benewah, Latah, Clearwater, and Shoshone Counties.

Operations-K7ID: We only had "fair" luck at the K7ID fixed site. AA7AF had six digital QSO's then experienced rig trouble. The portable antennas were somewhat frail in the North Idaho wind, and blew down a couple of times before guying. The CAP antenna was satisfactory for 20M but not very good for 40M. We had a total of five SSB QSOs and 42 CW QSOs. We decided to close the site about 3PM on Saturday 03/11.

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Things that went well: Advanced planning, opportunity to work together and learn from others, use of AA7AF's motor home, bountiful refreshments.

Things that need investigation and/or work: Publicity/Signage, how to keep in touch with all participants prior to the event, how to reduce mutual interference, choose a common logging program, how to "ruggedize" portable antennas, investigate a local HF interference problem, set up better grounding, develop a better understanding of effect of steel buildings on our antennas, possibly tune-up the CAP antenna system.

A big thanks to: Civil Air Patrol (CAP), for use of the Shep-Rock building for the K7ID site, and to N7JIL (Jim) who was our go-to man. Also a big thanks to all the Hams who participated from all of the North Idaho locations.

Submitted by Ed Stuckey (AI7H) 03/19/06

### GUEST SUBMISSION by WA7BKZ

*Editor's note to new hams and other Technician Class operators: don't think that the info below is only for General class and above--the activity described below includes 2- and 6-meter frequencies, and KARS Elmers can show you how to use your FM-only transceivers for CW (a tone generator input device--what a great project idea). if you're are interested, contact any KARS officer.*

My name is Denny WA7BKZ, located near Athol, Idaho. In the months to come I will contribute to the KARS news letter with info on AM and CW activity in the Northwest. This month I would like to talk about the resurrection of CW on the bands. On January 9th, a few people got together and formed an informal group called "Straight Key Century Club" (SKCC). Since that time more than 1800 people have joined this group. The CW speed is from 5 wpm to 35 wpm using only a straight key or Vibroplex type "bug". No paddles, keyers or computers. If you formally join and then work 100 SKCC stations you'll get an award certificate. There is no cost involved; just your desire to have fun in amateur radio. The recommended frequencies are (all in Mhz): 1.820; 3.530 for European DX; 3.720; 7.055 for European DX; 7.120; 10.120; 14.048; 18.080; 21.120; 24.910; 28.170; 50.090; 144.07. All frequencies are plus or minus 10KHz. Anytime (day or night) the band is open and sometimes when it's not. For more information on SKCC, go to the web at [www.skccgroup.com/opfreq.htm](http://www.skccgroup.com/opfreq.htm)

Denny (WA7BKZ)

The editor thanks Denny for this material.

## LAST WORD ON ANTENNA PARTY?

You may remember that several KARS members earned Manhood Awards for their heroic efforts (hooo-ahhh!) at a recent series of antenna parties.

Unfortunately, new calculations have shown that the huge tower and the multiple antennae installed so high in the sky at these parties, and the electromagnetic emanations from the antennae has resulted in distortion of the space-time continuum in the solar system. This distortion, along with naturally-occurring wrinkles in the galaxy's gravitational matrix have caused the development of a funnel-like gravity vortex, with the small end of the funnel pointing directly at Dalton Gardens, Idaho.

It is possible that this gravity vortex could "steer" asteroids from the nearby Kuiper Belt into the mouth of the funnel, where they might spiral downward towards the narrow end of the funnel, gaining velocity with every passing moment until they are obliterated in a fiery collision with planet Earth. Such collisions are not unknown in Earth's history. Scientists suspect that a mass extinction of life on Earth 65 million years ago was the result of such an event.

Astronomical physicists at North Idaho College say that the development of the gravity vortex over Dalton Gardens has increased the likelihood of a killer asteroid striking Earth by a factor of 10,000. One researcher said that the only difference between what is now likely to happen in Dalton Gardens and what happened to the dinosaurs 65 million years ago is that it wasn't the dinosaurs fault.

So, while you were worried about the H5N1 avian flu virus, or Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (mad cow disease), someone has been messing around with your space-time continuum. Last word indeed--maybe from all of humankind.

*--KARS Science Correspondent*

## FUN AND GAMES ON E-BAY

Ebay can be a dangerous place for hams or other old radio buffs. Your pocketbook, your checkbook, and your savings account could easily be wiped-out in just one session on Ebay. Proof? The Heathkit SB-104 was a kit-form 100 watt HF solid-state SSB transceiver from the late 1970s. Some people enjoy building equipment as much as they enjoy on-air operating. The SB-104 sold for about \$600 when it was new. An un-built Heathkit SB-104 recently sold on Ebay for \$2150. As if that weren't bad enough, if you just want to listen to a ball game on the radio, you may be in more trouble than the kit builder: a bakelite-cased Emerson broadcast band

*(continued next column)*

table radio went for \$21,500 several weeks ago. Just to make sure that you know that the figure above is not a typo or a misprint, let me repeat it: \$21,500.

Now--if you recovered from that shock, let me warn you of other dangers on Ebay for the radio enthusiast. Even if you are not taken to perdition by over-spending, you can die of nostalgia (this only applies to old timers, but still...): a Harvey-Wells Bandmaster Senior changed hands on Ebay about three weeks ago for a mere \$110.23 after 16 bids chased the thing around the web for a week. For non-old-timers, the Bandmaster Senior was a post WW II CW-only transmitter running an 807 vacuum-tube final-amplifier. Wanna see it? Check the photo below. Need a companion receiver? A Hammarlund HQ-120 ( pre-WW II radio) sold for a paltry \$73.93 at about the same time. I am not going to show a picture of the HQ-120 for fear that some old-timer will have a cardiac event at the sight. If you ever wondered why these old radios are called "boatanchors," the HQ-120 weighs in at over 50 pounds. If you wonder why such old radios stir the hearts of old-timers, I can only say that it must be the same thing that causes some older hearts to quiver at the sight of a '55 Chevy.

Ebay presents dangers for newer hearts too. The excitement of bidding against others and trying to out-smart them can be bad-juju for anyone. I saw a Yaesu FT-817 QRP transceiver sell for more on Ebay than it sells for at retail.

Ebay can also break your heart in obtuse directions: I own an old Eico 720 vacuum tube transmitter--I value it highly. I was much chagrined when two of them sold recently on Ebay for about \$70 each. A lousy \$70 for my beautiful Eico 720? What an insult!

*--your most humble editor*

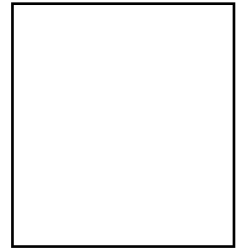


AN OLD LOVE AFFAIR?

THE HARVEY-WELLS BANDMASTER SENIOR



KOOTENAI AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY  
PO BOX 5222  
Coeur d' Alene, ID 83816



Deliver to:



***This is the April 2006 Issue.***

*Spring: an elastic device, such as a coil of wire,  
that returns to its original shape after being compressed or extended.*

**Current KARS officers**

President:	Ed Stuckey 208-457-0354	AI7H
1st Vice President:	John Hollar 208-765-5470	N7JU
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Repeater Tech:	Jim Monroe 208-687-2251	N7ESU
Webmaster:	Larry Telles 208-762-2548	K6SPP

**SILENT KEY: W6PFI**

Roger Harris (W6PFI), former resident of North Idaho and former active member of KARS died recently in Southern California. The membership of the Kootenai Amateur Radio Society expresses its sincere condolences to Roger's family and friends.

Roger developed his interest in radio while serving as a radioman in the U.S. Navy. While living in Kootenai County, Roger served as communications officer for the local Civil Air Patrol organization. Roger is survived by his wife, Betty Jo, who is also a ham, with call sign N7XTV.

*The editor thanks Roger's friends Bob Compton (N7RXD) and Bill Cothorn (N7VVK) for contributions to this article.*

**DISCLAIMER**

Unless otherwise indicated, the material presented in this newsletter is fully the responsibility of the editor, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of any other member of KARS.