

Propagation

Kootenai Amateur Radio Society (KARS) Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Boy, What a great social! The ice cream and all the side dishes from the ladies was fantastic. I really enjoyed all the low calorie foods. I think each serving was only two weight watchers points. 80 meters has sure been weird this last month, but the activities were fun.

I was looking back at the last six months and started thinking, again, on our future direction. If we want the club, and amateur radio to continue we need to start planning for next year now. Remember: Five minutes before the party starts, is not the time to learn to dance!! I would like the club to continue and expand the growth rate. To do this we need to position ourselves and organizational structure to manage this growth in the future.

I would like to make some suggestions regarding the future operation of the club and I would appreciate your feedback and assistance. Several of these ideas will need changes to the constitution, which I think is due for a review. Below are some of the areas I think need attention. I will have a handout for the next meeting with more details.

Elected office staff:

1. President:
2. Vice Pres:
3. Secretary:
4. Treasurer:
5. Written Position descriptions for each office.

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL!!!

An outstanding event took place in Jack and Patti McElroy's backyard on Saturday, 13 August 2005. Jack and Patti special-ordered a warm but not too hot day for the event, attendees brought delectable food-stuffs to go along with the ice cream (which was manufactured on-site); no arms or shoulders were injured due to a new invention: the electric ice cream maker!

Thanks to Jack and Patti for their hospitality, and thanks to those who came for their good social graces which made the day a delight for all.

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BITS & PIECES de K7JMC

Three "bits" from Jack

COMPUTER TUNE-UP TIME...

Its computer tune-up time again!! Like I did last year, I've set out to update the software and drivers for each hardware device I have attached to my PC. I have an HP 932C printer, an Epson 1250 Scanner, and a Kodak Digital Camera Docking Station.

One at a time I went to the web site for each of these manufacturers and downloaded the latest software & drivers meant to run with Windows XP. These updates are free!! After they were all installed, I was amazed at the performance improvement..

The bottom line,,,, keep your stuff up-to-date. It makes using your PC a real pleasure.

73 de Jack

WEB INFO SOURCES

Last year, my experience building a small PC to run Packet and PSK31, unveiled some interesting web sites that provide a wealth of information and/or equipment at a low cost.

Here are a couple:

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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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 Anderson, Scott KD7YXE topfule@ix.netcom.com
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 Bak, Victor K3SHD k3shd@arrl.net
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 Hall, Dennis KK7X kk7x@countyhunter.com
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 Sausser, Brad KB7FUN brad@acm.org
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 Thomas, Shaun, (K7SLT) dodgerecker@yahoo.com
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 White, Darrel N7ZUI n7zui@icehouse.net
 Williams, Ken W7LQT w7lqt@yahoo.com
 Zion, Harvey K7VZ k7vz@earthlink.net

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
12 September at 6 p.m. (Monday)	KARS monthly meeting	Kootenai County Airport (see below left)
19 September at 6 p.m. (Monday)	RACES/ARES meeting	Kootenai Co. 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, 12 September 2005 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 Ave.). West on Miles to the airport gate (access code 1088). Bear left to the Shep-rock Building. (about 200 yards from the gate).

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

(continued)

6. Create Custodial position: Responsible for identifying and recording all assists of the club.
7. Establish and publish (newsletter and web) a club annual calendar.

Standing Committees:

1. Establish the following standing committees:

Technical:

Web site committee:

Training committee:

Hamfest committee:

Field Day committee:

2. Each committee will have a chairman. Should this position be appointed or elected?
3. Each committee needs to establish their goal and budget for the year approved by the membership.

I need your help. First I need to know what direction the membership wants the club to go for the future. Start thinking outside the box. If we want to grow, where are the new members going to come from. Yes, we have hams in the area who are not members of KARS, but we need to look beyond. How can we grow the sport of amateur radio. With our various activities, what can we do to get in front of the public. If they are interested, do we have a plan on what they do next. We need to have "Your next step is" built into a club marketing plan so no one get lost in the shuffle.

What suggestions do you have? Email me with your ideas so I can add them to the list.

KEEP ON HAMMING!!
73 BOB

Bits and Pieces de K7JMC

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<http://www.netseller.com/>

Computer components at VERY reasonable prices.. (I bought 32meg RAM SIMMS for \$15.00 each.) They have Sound Cards for as low as \$8.97 ea.!

<http://www.mods.dk/>

This is European site but it has info (and manuals!!) on just about any Ham rig you can think of. (Bear in mind that some of the Mods are for European models and may not always apply to US models.)

73, de Jack/K7JMC

PACKET RADIO – R.I.P.

After several months of continuous "Beaconing", and only two or three contacts, I have made the determination that Packet Radio on 145.51 has died, due to lack of interest.

Our Node is up on the mountain and running, but so what, if no one uses it?

I am going to try my luck on the 145.090 and see if there is any more activity there.. If after a reasonable time, there is no activity there either, It's time to pull the plug on my Packet station.

For those of you that have invested in Packet equipment, perhaps it's time to go in another direction. You know, some times the truth is just what it is...

73, de Jack/K7JMC

Upcoming VEC/VE Licensing Exams for Our Area

- 24 September (Saturday), 2:00 p.m.: University High School, Room C111, 12420 E. 32nd Street, Spokane Valley, WA; Contact: Betsy Ashleman (N7WRQ), 509.448.5821 or n7wrq@aol.com
- 13 October (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.

*** Bring existing FCC license (if any), two forms of identification and fee (\$14). ***



Above: part of the KARS gang enjoys ice cream and other treats in Jack and Patti McElroys' backyard during the 2005 edition of the KARS Ice Cream Social. Below: what made this event so special is that the ice cream made itself--no human intervention! The ice cream machines loaded themselves, ran by themselves, then served ice cream to KARS members without human assistance (see photo below for proof). How did Jack and Patti arrange for this technical feat? No one is saying! Hmmmmmmmmm.



BPL Overview – Summer 2005

What is it? BPL is the acronym for “Broadband over Power Line”. BPL is a method to offer consumers Broadband Internet service (similar to a Cable Modem or DSL connection), using the electric power distribution system as the transfer medium. BPL promoters feel they can provide a unique service to rural electric utility customers who don’t have access to CATV or DSL. However, BPL radiates a “hash” signal over the 2-60 MHz portion of the spectrum, and overhead electrical lines act as very long antennas. (Broadband signals don’t radiate from CATV systems because they are 100% shielded, and they don’t radiate from DSL systems because they are carefully balanced).

Recent Developments: Although BPL falls under Part 15 rules (must not cause interference to licensed services), interference complaints have arisen in every test. In some cases the BPL vendors have “notched” their system to reduce interference in Ham bands (particularly 20 Meters). The FCC is considering a relaxation of the Part 15 rules so they are “more friendly” to BPL systems.

Why This Is A Threat: There’s nothing wrong with BPL. What’s wrong is the interference that radiates from power lines carrying BPL signals. There are two kinds of interference – intense local interference that completely wipes out portions of the HF spectrum, and background interference that radiates from distant BPL installations.

The Avista Project: Avista Utilities announced last October that they would be doing a BPL test in the local area. A Spokesman-Review Newspaper article on 07/07/05 indicated that the test area will be somewhere in North Idaho, starting later in 2005. If you would like to receive future info about this project directly, contact Todd Cady, K7PKT (toddcady@qwest.net) and indicate that you would like to be on the “BPL List”.

For More Info: The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has tons of excellent material on BPL. Go to www.arrl.org and click on “BPL” for hours of reading!

73 to all,

Ed Stuckey, AI7H

(editor’s note: Thanks Ed, for a great newsletter input.)

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

(continued from page 1)

Those of you who missed this event missed one of the best--and that makes two in a row, counting the Carlson’s Pancake Breakfast last month.

What I don’t understand is why all KARS members don’t attend these events. The opportunity to get to know members that you may know as only a name on a list or a voice on the bands is priceless, as is the opportunity to meet the spouses and near-spouses of members that you do know. From my own experience, I can tell you that the people who do come to these events enjoy them greatly. I know I do, and I am inclined to be a hermit. If you are also a hermit by nature, do yourself and your fellow KARS members a favor--get out of your cave and come to the next KARS social event! And, you others--unless you are doing something vital on a Saturday or a Friday evening--come on out.

--the editor

CALLING ALL CODE WIZARDS

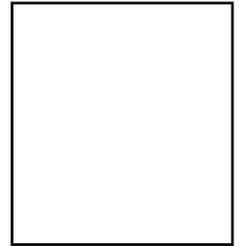
To support those who are interested in advancing their amateur radio skills to include Morse code, I want to compile a set of tips and hints on learning Morse code--I am not talking about full-blown learning methods such as a computer program or a set of tapes, but simple tips that will help new learners avoid the pitfalls many of us experienced and help them maximize their learning efficiency.

An example of such a tip is “learn Morse code as sound patterns rather than as sight patterns, i.e., do not learn letter B as -- . . . but learn it as the audio sequence which the dashes and dots try to represent--otherwise, the visual cortex or your brain will forever be competing with the ‘sound processor’ in your brain as you try to decipher code, and will mess you up.”

If you are a code wizard, or if you are trying to become one and can share what you have learned in the way of tips and hints, please contact me (see page 6 under Newsletter Editor). I will be seeking input from specific individuals who I know are code wizards, but I do not know all of you yet.

--Steve McQuiston/WO6LF

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



Deliver to:



This is the September 2005 Issue.

See below right for info on Larry Telles' Ham Radio License class at NIC-WTC.

Current KARS officers

President:	Bob Kesson 772-6745	K7CGA
1st Vice President:	Jack McElroy 687-3293	K7JMC
2nd Vice President:	Warren Conklin 772-6484	WB7ECU
Secretary:	Linda Chamberlain 765-3144	N7UTK
Treasurer:	Chris Monroe 687-2251	N7ZUJ
Newsletter Editor:	Steve McQuiston 772-4095	WO6LF
Repeater Tech:	Jim Monroe 687-2251	N7ESU

HAM RADIO LICENSE CLASS

Notify your non-ham acquaintances

Due to the efforts and sacrifices of Larry Telles (K6SPP), with the assistance of other KARS members, the North Idaho College Workforce Training Center will offer a class in Amateur Radio this coming October.

The class will run two 3-hour sessions per week (Wednesdays and Fridays starting at 6 p.m.) for six weeks, beginning 12 October, and will culminate with a Technician Class license exam. The fee is only \$15. Don't let your non-licensed associates miss this opportunity to join the ham radio community.

For more information or to register, call 208.769.3333--ask about the class entitled "Get Your Amateur Radio License."