

Propagation

Kootenai Amateur Radio Society (KARS) Newsletter

JUNE 2006

More satire for your amateur radio buck

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Lots of Action, Mostly Outside

Dear KARS Members and Friends,

With the sudden arrival of warm weather, club members are devoting more time to outside activities. Unofficial polling indicates that most everyone is spending quality time getting re-acquainted with their yards and the spring weed crop. Ham stuff is happening outside too! Here is a quick recap of just completed, as well as upcoming KARS events. Hope to see you at one of these events during the next couple of months!

Recent Past Activities:

Scout-O-Rama: On 04/22 N7JU and AI7H attended a Scout-O-Rama that was held on the Kootenai County Fairgrounds. We helped the scouts get started on three Merit Badges: Electricity, Electronics, and Radio. Almost 100 scouts were "launched" during five sessions. Everyone learned a lot (including the instructors), and we will be even better prepared next year! This was an excellent opportunity to expose young people to Amateur Radio, and was a very positive public service interaction for KARS.

Highway Cleanup: You probably have heard about the "Adopt-A-Highway" program. On 05/13 a total of 19 KARS members turned out to make "our" two miles of I-90 just East of CDA an absolutely litter-free zone! Findings included approximately 40 orange bags brim-full of trash, one tire, one sleeping bag, and \$3 in cash. A huge Thank You to KARS members and spouses who participated!

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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT--N7JU

KARS VE Training

On occasion of the Spring 2006 General Class (and upgrade) classes held at the NIC Workforce Training Center conducted by Larry K6SPP and Ed, AI7H, open (and class specific) licensing exams were held on April 28th but this time with a twist. Seven VE's showed up to proctor the exams which included code tests, Technician, General, and Extra Class examinations. Perhaps a bit daunting to the applicants, the occasion was also a VE training session for many of the newly appointed VE's who had not conducted exams before under the ARRL program. Their work was under the watchful supervision of Roy KI7EP and Jerry KA7RNX, long time Northern Idaho VE's for the club.

A VE class photo is included and the session went remarkably well as everyone took their turn at testing and paperwork and other essential elements of the process. A remarkable job was done by Stevan, WO6LF who kept the receipts, FCC 605 forms completion and ID verification process in proper order. He was assisted by Mike, N7SZY and Bob, K7CGA scoring exams. Professor Telles, W6SPP, also a VE, recused himself because he was teaching the class. The only mishap was made by yours truly when I *pulled* a General exam for Bailey Barrett out of sequence. Bailey, now AD7IP, sat for the whole enchilada from the 5 wpm code test, through Technician, General and Extra in one sitting. Many VE's of long experience, rarely see that feat in their careers, but our new KARS VE's were privileged to

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(See VP's Report)
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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.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
09 June at 7 p.m. (Special night: Friday)	KARS monthly meeting	Lion's Club in Rathdrum
19 June 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:

**Friday, 09 June 2006 at
7:00 p.m. At the Lion's Club in Rathdrum
(bright yellow building near the
corner of Hwy 53 and Meyer Rd.)**

Directions to the KARS meeting:

Rathdrum is located at the intersection of Hwy 41 and Hwy 53 to get to the Lion's Club in Rathdrum, see below.

From the East: U.S. 95 to Hwy 53; West to Meyer Road. Or, from the West: Hwy 53, East to Meyer Road.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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Upcoming Events:

KARS Hamfest: Our annual Hamfest will be held on Saturday, 06/10, at the Rathdrum Lions Club Building, located on SR-53 at Meyer Road. The building is painted bright yellow, and is located about one block east of the Rathdrum Super-1 grocery store. Hours will be approximately 6:30AM to 2:00PM. This will be an opportunity to buy/sell/ trade ham gear, socialize with other hams, and do some quality eating (which supports the club treasury!). Admission is free, and flea-market space is also free on a first come, first served basis. Talk-in will be on the KARS repeater, 146.980-. Contact event coordinator Jim, N7ESU (n7esu@arrl.net) for more info.

Field Day: Amateur Radio Field Day weekend is 06/24-06/25. This year KARS will team with the Spokane DX Association (SDXA) club in a joint venture Field Day operation. We will run the Get-On-The-Air ("GOTA") station and a VHF station, using our K7ID club call. The site will be the Jacklin Seed Research Farm, located .5 miles East of SR-41 on Prairie St., in Post Falls. So far we have located parts to assemble the two stations, and have seven operators at the ready. Please help us with setup/teardown, and/or as an operator, if you can. If you can't come as an operator, stop by and visit! Visit the KARS web site K7ID.COM for updates, or contact event coordinator Ed, AI7H (ai7h@arrl.net) for more info.

Iron-Man Competition: This event is scheduled for Sunday, 06/25. Although KARS is not directly associated with Iron-Man, many of our members participate through ARES/RACES. Contact Jim, N7JIL (n7jil@verizon.net) for more info.

73 to All!

Ed, AI7H

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(continued from page 1)

See it their first time in the ring. Our congratulations to Bailey.

The successful applicants will be introduced at the KARS meetings and reported elsewhere and we all were pleased to see so many students achieve their objectives of licensing and upgrading in a rather challenging class. But for my part, the proof of our VE effectiveness was the speed in which the entire paperwork process was verified by the ARRL and acted upon by the FCC. Under normal circumstances this process usually takes about three weeks. The new license call assignments and upgrades were sent out by priority mail on April 29th and were finalized by public record in less than 10 days a true testament to the outstanding job done by our VE team. But we get to do it all again on May 24th and June 10th will you be ready to upgrade? Call me for details of these VE exams.

One item did come up during the exam process that may be of interest to all licensed amateurs. The FCC 605 requires that the applicant enter their social security number or their FRN number. The FRN Number is an FCC confirmation process that provides for the registration of licensees under the Commission Registration System (CORES). Upon completion, the FCC assigns a FCC Registration Number (FRN) which can be used on all subsequent applications. The process is easy. Log on to <http://www.gov/frnreg> and select NEW Registration (or update if you already have one). It is the applicant's responsibility to keep this record current with correct information. Many FCC services are based upon the use of this number in addition to the fact that it is a requirement. We had one applicant who brought their FCC letter but didn't realize that the FCC hadn't printed the FRN number on the acknowledging letter. That was obtained at log on. If you have any questions about

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Upcoming VEC/VE Licensing Exams for Our Area

- 10 June (Saturday), 10 a.m.; Northern Lakes Fire District Number 2 Building at 14000 Hwy 53 in Rathdrum, ID; Contact John Hollar (N7JU) at 208.765.5470 or n7ju@arrl.net
- 17 June (Saturday); By appointment in Sagle, ID. Contact Russ Arndt (AA7XM) at 208.265.4534 after 8 p.m. or russell.arndt@verizon.net

KARS HAMFEST 2006

- Free Admission
- Free flea-market exhibit tables (first come, first served)
 - RV parking available (no hook-ups)
 - Tailgaters welcome

SATURDAY, 10 JUNE 2006

At the Lion's Club Building in Rathdrum, Idaho
(corner of State Highway 53 and Meyer Road)

Schedule:

- Breakfast (6:30 am To 11:00 am)
- Ham license exams (10:00 am--offsite location--see below)
- Lunch (11:00 am 'til the crew drops or the food is gone)
- Grand prize (Yaesu 857D HF Radio) drawing (2:00 pm)
 - Prize drawings every hour

Hamfest info: Jim at 208.755.2100 or n7esu@arrl.net

TALK-IN REPEATER: 146.98 Mhz (negative offset)

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE EXAMS

10:00 am at the Northern Lakes Fire District Number 2 Building at 14000 State Hwy 53 (about one mile SW of the Lion's Club Building). Exams for all license classes available. Bring copy of existing license (if any), CSCEs (if any), photo ID, and \$12 test fee.

The Kootenai Amateur Radio Society (KARS) has been deemed MOSTLY HARMLESS by the following authorities*:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation • Mother Teresa • Underwriter's Laboratories
- Good Housekeeping Magazine • Audubon Society • Federal Communications Commission
- Mondale for President Committee • The Reverend Billy Graham • Knights of Columbus
- California Citrus Commission • Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- International Plumber's and Pipefitter's Union • International Chili Society

* not really, but we'll do almost anything in the name of humor and satire, and you shouldn't be wasting time reading the fine print anyway.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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this process contact me and we'll walk you through the process.

I've been a radio amateur for almost 50 years and I've seen a lot of modes come, go, and evolve through the years but none is so exciting as the release of the new ICOM -91AD. This Analog/Digital D-Star portable works with a new line of repeaters offered by ICOM. Similar to what Kootenai County is considering for 700 MHz, a D-STAR system provides air link features akin to wireless Internet features. The protocol applies to signals traveling between radios or between a radio and a repeater. D-STAR radios can talk directly to each other without any intermediate equipment or through a repeater using D-STAR voice or data transceivers. A gateway features seamless repeater interconnects within and outside the system. D-STAR also specifies how a voice signal is converted to and from streams of digital data, a function called a codec. The D-STAR open access codec is known as AMBE® (Advanced Multi-Band Excitation) and the voice signal is transmitted in the D-STAR system at 3600 bits/second (3.6 kbps). What all this means is that we will be able to cross connect repeaters in all our bands and have data and crystal clear voice communications going forward. What's cool about all this technology is that we can start with a simple repeater strip adding to it as our club finances allow.

What can this system do? Imagine arriving in town as a visitor or on business. Connect a laptop or PDA to your D-STAR handheld, key in a few simple characters, and request a "what's happening" report from a local D-STAR kiosk server. In seconds, you're viewing text listing meetings, clubs, electronics stores, and events. Need a weather check? Or how about D-PRS, this low-speed data port is compatible with the GPS NMEA data interface. With GPS data integrated into the D-STAR digital data stream, your location data is forwarded to the D-PRS server where gateway software connects you to the APRS® reporting system. IRLP and Echolink can be linked with these popular repeater sharing applications. Remote control and monitoring can use D-STAR's high-speed data to build a link to a KARS high profile HF station. We can control our electronics at home at either high-speed or low-speed, support wireless web access, email and networking, Ethernet, TCP/IP and more. I'll bet Dayton will have the skinny on these new systems to be marketed this year. Move over Packet...this is really our future in Ham radio.

N7JU--John.

Editor's note: Go to www.icomamerica.com/amateur/dstar for more information on the D-STAR technology.

EDITOR'S LAMENT

(continued from a past life)

Wow! As I write this, the Spring 2006 semester at North Idaho College has come to an end. My Monday night *Introduction to Computers* class is complete. That Monday night class kept me from attending both the monthly KARS meetings and the monthly ARES/RACES meetings. Was the sacrifice worthwhile? I'd like to think so--for the fourth year in a row, I released upon society a group of students with three units of college credit, and who now know more about computers than ninety percent of the people on the planet Earth.

My students were not the only learners released upon society. Larry Telles, Ed Stuckey, and Randy Carlson were busy teaching another group of students what they needed to know to earn their general class amateur radio license; and John Hollar and the KARS-sponsored ARRL-accredited Volunteer Examiner team were busy breaking in a couple of new volunteer examiners--I was one of those new volunteer examiners.

I am thoroughly impressed with both the instructors and the students in Larry's licensing class. A number of these people went from zero to passing the Morse Code test in three weeks. After my own struggles with the code over the years, that says a lot to me--both about the instructors and the students. Since I had the privilege to serve as an examiner at the session where code tests were given, I saw with my own eyes that the code students were solid learners--a review of their exam session code copy showed rock-solid ability--perhaps not 100 percent copy, but close to it.

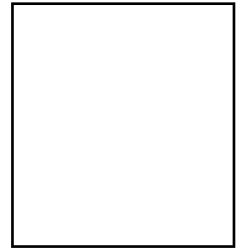
As best I could gather the info, here is a summary of the successes for Larry's class and for a couple of "walk-ins" at the two recent exam sessions: Steve Armstrong (K7ASL) upgraded to General class. Bailey Barrett (now AD7IP) earned his Amateur Extra class license. Jerry Blythe (reinstated as KE6RVZ) earned his General class license. C.J. Rose (call sign pending) earned her General class license. Annie Welle (KE7ADK) upgraded to General class. "Walk-ins" Philip Garner and Gary Roth earned their Technician class licenses, and are awaiting their call signs. Congratulations to all.

For those who tried, but did not achieve success this time: bully for you. Bully for anyone who doesn't just sit on the sidelines. Bully for your efforts. I hope you will keep trying, and I hope your efforts will be rewarded. You know the old saws: "if at first you don't succeed..." and "when the going gets tough..."

See you at the next monthly meeting--now its your turn to lament.

--Steve McQuiston (WO6LF)

KOOTENAI AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
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Deliver to:



This is the June 2006 Issue.

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Webmaster:	Larry Telles 208-762-2548	K6SPP

KARS CLASSIFIED ADS

This time we are not joking. These are legitimate items, and one of them is free.

- ESTATE: Free 40 foot tower for the "taking." In fair condition. Needs to be dismantled (tower only). Can be seen at 1415 Harrison & 15th St. CDA. Call Jay Molitor at 509.928.3116.
- ITEM YOU NEED: Go marine mobile! Old Town Discovery 133K Canoe. Only \$350. Fine condition except for one cane seat (easily replaceable). Red in color. A great canoe for beginners. Suitable for lake or stream (wide beam). Seller will toss in paddles and safety flotation vests. Contact Steve McQuiston at wo6lf@arrl.net.

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.