

December 2007

(www.k7id.com)

P.O. Box 5222 Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816



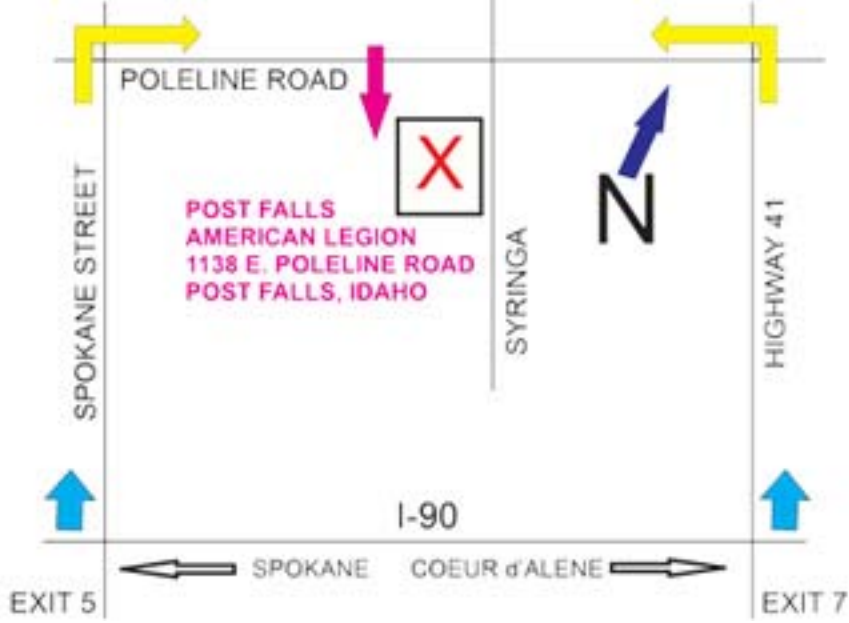
# CHRISTMAS PARTY POTLUCK DINNER

**DECEMBER 10, 2007**

FOOD SETUP BEGINS AT 6 P.M.  
DINNER AT 6:30 P.M.

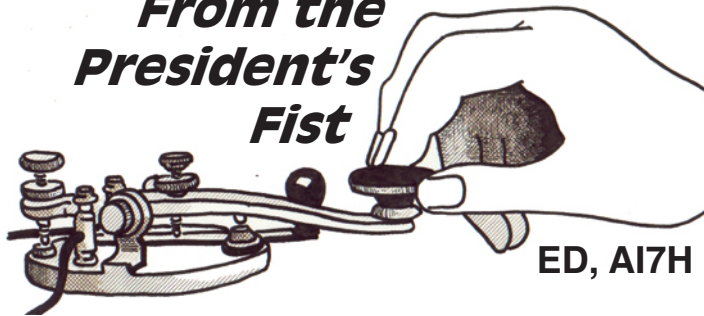
EVERYONE BRINGS A DISH OF FOOD OR DESSERT

ARES/RACES...OUR GUESTS AGAIN THIS YEAR!



**SEE PAGE 2 FOR DIRECTIONS TO DINNER...**

## From the President's Fist



## It's That Time of Year Again (Plus Much More!)

Dear Club Members and Friends,

On Monday, December 10, the Club will celebrate the holiday season with our traditional pot-luck dinner. This is an excellent way for attendees to meet a few new people, and make some new friends. More details about event logistics are included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Events like the holiday pot-luck are an excellent place for hams to do a little networking. Club members might want to ask new friends if they would like to attend Club meetings; new hams may want to ask questions about getting on the air; novice antenna builders should ask about how long that antenna should be; and everyone involved might want to exchange phone numbers and e-mail addresses. I really enjoy social events like this because of the many flavors of ham radio that can be experienced in one short evening.



Now, a few words about the current and future Club officers. During the past two years, the writer has had the privilege of serving as Club President. The current officers have really stepped up to the plate and worked hard on a number of projects, and I am thankful to have such dedicated people working with me. Of course, we didn't solve all the world's problems, and we are turning that unfinished business over to the 2008 officers. I know they will hit the ground running, as we have already held a joint board meeting, and the 2008 board scheduled a second meeting to nail down all the details. So to recap, a big "Thank You" to the retiring officers, and "Best of Luck" to the incoming officers.

73 and best Holiday Wishes to all,  
Ed Stuckey, AI7H  
Club President

## Holiday Pot-Luck Details

This year, the KARS Holiday Pot-Luck will be held on Monday, December 10, at the American Legion Hall in Post Falls. The Legion Hall is located at 1138 E. Pole Line Ave. See below for directions and a map.

The doors will be open for Setup at 5PM. Everyone not on set up should arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 PM. We will begin dining at 6PM. There will be a very short business meeting around 7PM (probably just before dessert).

Male Club members, remember to mention this event to the YL before the event date! Single male Club members who have questionable cooking skills are invited to call one of the following Arrangements Committee members for some ideas on what you could bring:

Cheryl (or Tom) Richmond: 772-0907

Bonnie (or Bob) Kesson: 772-6745

Directions to American Legion Hall in Post Falls:

From CDA area via I-90 Freeway – Take I-90 West to Exit #7 (Idaho Hwy 41). At bottom of off-ramp, turn Left on Hwy 41. Proceed just over 1 Mile to Pole Line Ave, where you will turn Left. Follow Pole Line just over 1 Mile to the American Legion Hall. The Hall is located on the Left side of Pole Line, just after you come to a recently installed roundabout at Syringa Ave (Caution!).

From Hayden via Hayden Ave or Prairie Ave – Proceed West on Hayden or Prairie, and turn Left at Hwy 41. Pole Line is 1 mile South of Prairie, and 2 miles South of Hayden.

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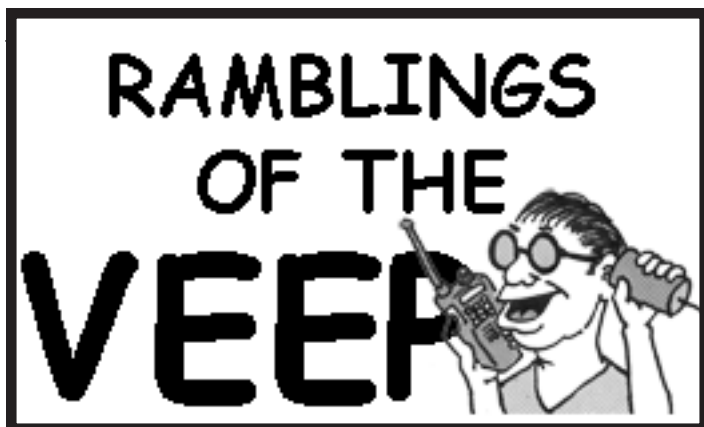
**COFFEE & DONUTS  
EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING**



**8:00 A.M.  
TIL  
10:00 A.M.**

**RATHDRUM  
SUPER ONE**

**All problems solved at the table on a  
maximum of two napkins.**



Well ...my term in office is *up* on December 31<sup>st</sup> 2007 after two very pleasant years as your KARS *VeeP*. I've enjoyed working with our current Board (and the many past board members and officers and KARS members at large) all of whom have given freely of their time, advice, and efforts to make our tenure very rewarding. I'm also thrilled with our new board-elect. A fine group of dedicated amateur radio operators. We certainly wish them every success, and I pledge my continued help, support, and service to them in any capacity that may be needed in 2008.

On a personal note and with barely enough time before the first snow, I was able to complete construction of my own 80 thru 6 meter *Delta Loop* antenna and get it in the air and operational with only a few issues. One of them was a rather nasty RF squeal in the microphone on the HF bands at full power. Owing to the fact that I was using a switching power supply (with the RF unit stacked on top) and a 17' control head extension cable to the microphone at my operating desk, is it any wonder there wouldn't be some rf coupling and grounding issues? An Internet investigation came up with a ton of remedies but primarily not to use a switching power supply (as it floats) when using tuned and balanced antenna systems. The *Delta* is a big wire triangle, 40' on a side. Connected at the feed point is an **Icom AH-4** automatic antenna tuner. The top of the antenna is about 80' up on a pine tree with the antenna tuning unit also mounted on the tree in a decoy-birdhouse. Two cables are routed back to the shack. One is a shielded CAT-6 cable to control the antenna tuner and the other is a low loss 50 Ohm shielded cable buried in the ground. This antenna design was published in QST magazine in May of 2002 with apparently over 400 of them being constructed around the world in the past few years. Steve Ford, WB8IMY, and an ARRL technical staffer, designed the original project. I e-mailed Steve, to let him know how well it seemed to work. One bonus was that being in town, I am beset with a higher than average level of power-line noise (that you country folk seem to avoid). Because the loop is completely shorted at DC potential, it was so quiet that when I fired up the rig I thought I had a short in the cable. So far,

I've been able to work everything I can hear. Now it appears I have the ultimate in QSY operation. Select a frequency, push the tuner-button for two seconds and ...*blam* full power out with an SWR of 1.1. If I could have increased the length of the legs to 80' feet I might have been able to load up on 160, but that's a big stretch for a city lot. My thanks to **Ed Hannigan, KE7FOW**, for his assistance in erecting the antenna and to **Ed Stuckey, AI7H** for his suggestions in adding a counterpoise system and the use of a few well placed in-line rf chokes. Now, if only I could keep the XYL's corner cupboard (SCR activated) light from blinking while I transmit, I'd be *allowed* to operate during the winter months.

## LOGBOOK

**No VE Testing for December 10<sup>th</sup>** has been scheduled as we won't have a private room at the Annual Christmas Party location. However if we do get requests, I will try to schedule another evening, weather permitting, at the Sheprock building for a local test. Let me know if there is any interest, otherwise our next scheduled exam will be on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2008 at 5:30PM in Coeur D Alene, ID. Also our congratulations to last month's successful candidates for the Technician Class license: **Kenneth Chapin, KE7PXM; Natasha Henkoski, KE7PXN; Alexander Henkoski, KE7PXO; Joseph Nicholes, KE7PXF; Douglas Arndt, KE7PXQ; Mathew Arndt, KE7PXR; Matthew Conner, KE7PXS; Kellie Falconer, KE7PXT; and Christopher Arndt, KE7PXU.**

### REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS:

#### Monday, January 14

Sheprock Building

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Speakers: Chuck Green, N0ADI.

Program: Photo guided tour of the OSCAR/  
AMSAT Project

Refreshments: Need volunteer

#### Monday, February 11

Sheprock Building

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Speakers: To be announced

Program: To be announced

Refreshments: Need volunteer

**Dues for 2008 are due!!!**

# Yea and Verily

The phone Did ring and ring again, apparently without ending like the stars of the firmament. And this the brow of the Chieftain of Hams did cause to furrow deeply since he was sore afraid of the Pestilence of Telemarketers, yet he Did answer the phone, not sure of what he was thinking, and spake. "H'lo?"

A voice familiar Did answer unto the Chief. 'Twas Gerald, deposed patriarch of a small family of Hams, not seen for lo these many days and considered possibly lost for the ages. And the two made many pleasantries and talked wistfully of past epochs when their Boys were but hairless youths and did play together at Multi-Op in the Chief's Radio Tent. Only when they had tired and the receivers did smite uncomfortably their ears, did the One and True Nature of Gerald's reappearance be made known. "I have to clean out my garage," lamented Gerald. There was a great Raising of Hair on the back of the Chief's neck, since he knew with great foreboding what hath transpired and what must surely cometh next.

Gerald did sweeten the Pot with the generous Honey of Donation to the Chief's tribe of the many wondrous Treasures his Garage did hold. Gerald did sing the praises of the HF yagi possessing nearly all its many pieces, and a multiband vertical so, too, nearly complete. He Did tell of a 450 MHz yagi of commercial quality tuned just above the band, colored gold like unto the desert sand, a rare and fabulous thing. Yea and there was a mountainous pile of cable, some quite good and seasoned with the finest connectors and some not quite so good. Tower sections he would give, with a pair of top sections and one rotator. A collection there was of aluminum pieces without number and probably useful for something. A venerable and worthy brace of radios from the Legion of Drake, still with their original shipping baskets and not a scratch on them, were the last of the Treasures and Gerald became still, awaiting judgement.

The Chief did smile, not being entreated to help Clean the Garage of Holding, nor to bear the burden of carrying the Treasures across the trackless wastes past many hazards and over an infinitude of potholes. And the Chief did say unto Gerald in soothing and sympathetic voice, "Yea and verily, Gerald, I can take that stuff. Bring it on over." And it was done, arriving in disarray from its long journey and springing forth in a limitless cornucopia from the back of an SUV the size of a war elephant and weary of its heavy load. Sawhorses were brought forth and the Treasures were made to lay upon them, side by side. And Gerald and the Chief were pleased, one to have and one to have not.

After a suitable feast and bidding Gerald a safe journey home, the Chief did call the Elders and spake to them of the Good Fortune with which they were smitten and what a Good Deal for the Tribe this would be. And the Elders did come and stroke their beards in Wonder for some of the Treasures were mystical, indeed. And lo, like a miracle, even more treasure had appeared silently in the night from Gregory of the North who was also cleaning his tent! A decent R-5 bearing its matching network, but also an ancient Halo for the Band of Magic, bearing much corrosion and rust and not being worth a doggone. Yet the Tribe did celebrate and blow upon their Horns of UHF and confer for the distribution of treasure among the multitude, all making tithe to the Tribal Coffers, with only a little haggling, in appreciation of these wondrous gifts.

To the House of Bob went the Vertical of Gerald. Phil of the Large Truck bore away the many tower sections, forgetting only the rotator control box and returning immediately when summoned by the Horn of UHF. And one by one, the tribe came forth to receive their treasure, the Technicians Without Code and the Extras of Wisdom alike. They left the tent of the Chief laden with magnificent things not seen since the Spring Fest of Hams, leaving only the halo and the aluminum pieces in a sorry and lamentable pile.

And when they had convinced their Matriarchs and Others of Significance that verily, this was a Good and Worthy Thing, the projects Did commence. The members Did smite the airwaves like locusts and Did make contacts without number and rejoiced, for new bands were now open unto them, carrying signals from far and distant lands.

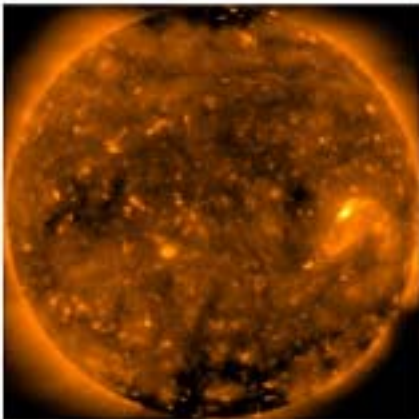
What then of the Chief? He praised and Did put away the sturdy sawhorses, rendered the halo into salvageable bits, and cleansed the yard of forgotten hardware. He spent a happy fortnight amongst the aluminum pieces, assembling unusual and difficult antennas not seen heretofore, discovering a 2-meter Ringo Ranger amongst the ruins and a perfectly useable vertical pipe mount, too. And he was Pleased because it was the Way of Hamdom.

(Printed with permission of the ARRL)

# THE WORLD ACCORDING TO JOHN

On Saturday and Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> was an international CQ-test contest. I wasn't paying much attention to the contest but I was amazed at how many active stations filled up the 20-meter band. I pushed the MUF up as far as 15 meters and found plenty of activity there also. Then for fun, I tuned 10-meters and sure enough, quite a few stations making QSOs in the Technician portion of the 10-meter band from 28.300 MHz. down. I figured there were some pretty active solar flares causing this kind of activity but was shocked and amazed to discover nothing!! In fact, I don't believe I've ever seen a more *quiet* sun. It just goes to

## Coronal Holes:



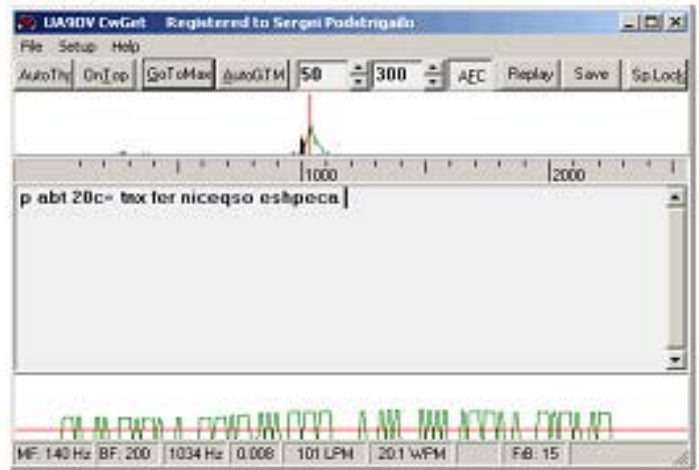
There are no large coronal holes on the Earth-facing side of the sun today. Credit: Hinode X-ray Telescope



**ABSOLUTELY NO SUN SPOTS!**

show you that inactivity on the ham bands can't be totally blamed on lack of solar activity. You need to get on the air it seems.

**Another CW program discovered!** While scanning some of the new entries in the CW world I came upon yet another computer cw decoder that really works. This one is free and available from <http://www.dxsoft.com/en/products/cwget/> written by Sergei Podstrigailo, UA9OV, and called CWGet V1.60. Man does it work! Built in sound card audio filters and a simple tuning system. It's better than fidgit and works in Windows...give it a try.



**Another outstanding story** in the Spokesman Review Handle Extra (Kootenai County edition) covering **Verda Siebenthaler, K7UBC**, (well done Larry Telles K6SPP). I hope you all had an opportunity to see it. She'll be attending the KARS Annual Christmas Party this year. And by the way...**she needs some help**. She would very much like to get back on the air (98 Repeater) even if it is on a limited basis. She has a KLM VHF transceiver (on a switching supply) with a Ringo Ranger in the kitchen (under a cabinet). It appears (hopefully) to have a tone control, CTCSS encoder. Verda is still looking for the manual. She also owns an Atlas 210, 100 watt SSB rig on 20-meters in the computer room. Neither is working at the moment and both systems need to be checked out and made operational. She has a 3-element 20 meter beam about 60 feet on a tower pointing SE, but two of the elements, (driven element and director), are out of alignment. Anyone wanting to help her out for a couple of hours at her place to determine what needs to be done and to do it in a subsequent weekend work party, please contact me [N7JU@arrl.net](mailto:N7JU@arrl.net) ...she bakes outstanding cookies I am told.

**January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Meeting & Program** will be a photo guided tour of the OSCAR/AMSAT Project by **Chuck Green, N0ADI**. You won't want to miss this outstanding presentation with some spectacular shots covering the construction and launch of AMSAT cutting edge technology. And by the way,, all you Technicians, **you are authorized to use** AMSAT facilities so start checking out what it takes to "work hams through a real live earth satellite".

## December Repeater Report

The 146.98 KARS repeater is holding its own with only a few issues still to be addressed. **Gary Roth, KE7IAT**, is refurbishing the back-up 40 watt Power amp and I've completed the Executive II test board, for aligning and modifying Master Exec II sub-modules. We now have two complete receiver modules, two exciter modules and two PA strips, one 40 watt, and one we'd like to install at 60 watts. We also have two back-up SAS boards but one still has a problem. EBay got me again! I thought I had purchased a manual from a fellow in BC, Canada as a complete GE Master Executive II Manual but it turned out to be a Low Band Manual! The front of the picture (after I looked at it a bit closer) was out of focus. Wishful thinking I suppose. Caveat emptor and all that jazz. But I was able to procure a MVP VHF transceiver on our way to a voting receiver package. We already have two UHF control receivers to use with the auxiliary input option on the logic board. One problem recently emerging however was a bit puzzling. Our repeater logic board got scrambled and did some crazy things until **Jim Monroe, N7ESU** and **Pat Murphy, N7UVH** were able to do a power-down reset and everything came back as if nothing had happened. This kind of problem is not that uncommon in a high static electricity environment, but **Chuck Green, N0ADI**, suggested that a *watchdog circuit* be added if it was not already a part of the logic circuit. As soon as I can get him a circuit diagram we shall see if we need to add the function. I've worked out an auxiliary power-down reset circuit into the control system, an easy add, that may save some grief in the future. Since the control command tone comes up on a UHF frequency, we need only power a UHF receiver separately for a few minutes to effect the power-down and up sequence. Lots of winter projects for sure. N7JU



### TOWER WANTED

30 to 50', Rohn 25g or what have you.  
Denny W7BKZ, (208) 660-1573

If you haven't joined the ARRL yet, now is the time. We would like to be an ARRL Affiliated club again. There are a lot of benefits for you and the club.



## LEAGUE BULLETINS FROM NEWINGTON

DECEMBER 2007

**ARISS Antennas Set to Launch on NASA Mission in December** (Nov 30, 2007) -- Columbus, the laboratory built by the European Space Agency (ESA), is now packed inside space shuttle Atlantis' payload bay. It is the culmination of years of design and engineering work aimed at creating Europe's primary component for the International Space Station (ISS). At 23 feet long and 15 feet in diameter, the cylindrical segment is designed to host specialized experiments examining how humans react to microgravity and the effect of space on various fluids and objects such as crystals. Two Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) antennas have

been installed on the nadir side of Columbus. NASA is currently planning on a launch date of Thursday, December 6 for Atlantis.

**500 kHz Experiment Charting New Territory** (Nov 29, 2007) -- The evening of November 13 saw the first transatlantic contact on 500 kHz between amateur experimental stations. US experimental station WE2XGR/2 (Jay Rusgrove, W1VD, in Connecticut) and GI4PDE (Finbar O'Connor, EI0CF, in Northern Ireland) communicated by standard-speed CW for about 15 minutes. On that same night, US experimental stations WD2XSH/12 (Mike Mussler, AI8Z, in Colorado) and WD2XSH/20 (Rudy Severns, N6LF, in Oregon) made the first contact in the western half of the USA. Two days later, WE2XGR/2 and GI4DPE repeated their feat and WD2XSH/12 had contacts with WD2XSH/6 (Pat Hamel, W5THT, in Mississippi) and WD2XSH/13 (John Oehlenschlager, K0JO, in Minnesota). The ARRL 500 kHz experimental license, WD2XSH, was issued in September 2006 and has 19 active stations. Fritz Raab, W1FR, of Vermont, serves as experimental project manager for The 500 KC Experimental Group for Amateur Radio.

(Complete stories available on ARRL website)

# Kootenai Amateur Radio Society (KARS) YEAR 2008 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Member: \$12.00  Renewal: \$12.00  Family Membership: \$18.00

Information Update Only

**New! Two year membership Rates:**

New Member: \$22.00  Renewal: \$22.00  Family Membership: \$33.00

## ARE YOU AN ARRL MEMBER? YES NO ( Please Circle One)

CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRATION: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS1: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS2: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ OK TO PUBLISH? YES/NO (CIRCLE ONE)

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

OK TO PUBLISH EMAIL ADDRESS? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE, PLEASE)

**NOTE: IF THIS IS A FAMILY MEMBERSHIP, (All members with the same address),  
PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION FOR YOUR FAMILY.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

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*RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR DUES, (CASH OR CHECK), TO THE KARS TREASURER OR, MAIL TO:  
KARS TREASURER, P.O. BOX 5222, Coeur D'Alene, ID. 83816.*

(Office use only.) CK: \_\_ CSH: \_\_ Mbr Spreadsheet: \_\_

***PASS THIS ON TO A FRIEND!!!***

**KOOTENAI AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY**  
**P.O. Box 5222**  
**Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816**



NILUG (North Idaho Linux Users) will meet at noon on December 8th. Contact Randy, KB6YAV for the details.

## **2007 CLUB OFFICERS**

President: Ed Stuckey, AI7H  
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1st Vice-President: John Hollar, N7JU  
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2nd Vice-President: Larry Telles, K6SPP  
208 762-2548 ltelles@icehouse.net

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Treasurer: Chris Monroe, N7ZUJ  
208 687-2251 ckay@my180.net

Newsletter Editor: Position Open

Repeater Tech: Jim Monroe, N7ESU  
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Webmaster: Larry Telles, K6SPP  
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## **Notice**

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

All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not the radio club as a whole.

KARS operates a voice repeater on 146.98 and a packet repeater on 145.510 Mhz.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is welcome to join. Dues are \$12.00 (individual) and \$18.00 for a family membership. Contact the Treasurer if you wish to join.

If you know of anyone interested in joining KARS, you can notify the newsletter editor as to that parties email address. A copy of this newsletter will be send with no obligation to join.

Material can be submitted for publication in Propagation. The deadline for articles, etc., is the 25th of each month for the following month's issue.