

September 2008

(www.k7id.org)

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

REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS:

Monday, September 8

Search and Rescue Building
Program: Kerry Fox, NWS
Spokane, Weather Spotter Training and SKYWARN
Refreshments: Leanne Carney

Monday, October 13

Search and Rescue Building
Program: KHQ TV-6 D-TV RV
Refreshments: Chris Monroe

Monday, November 10

Search and Rescue Building
Program: Vic, K3SHD, and Brad,
KA5PER, on GPS/APRS and GIS
Mapping on a computer
Refreshments: Gary Roth

SOCIAL EVENTS:

October - Date to be announced.
I-90 Highway Clean-up

December 8 - Christmas Party
with ARES/RACES

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Dear Club Members,

The presentation by Larry Telles (K6SPP) and Randy Carlson (KB6YAV) on the LINUX operating system was the highlight of our August meeting. Larry did the history part and Randy did the hands on demonstration of the system. Please go out of your way to thank these two for the effort and time they devoted to this presentation. I, for one, will download this OS when I add a second PC to our home by the end of the year after viewing this great demo.

Jeff has signed up two interesting and pertinent presentations for September and October, please check our Web site for details.

Summer appears to be winding down with cooler weather coming. The Ice Cream Social held this last Saturday slipped in between warm and cool days with the weather being perfect. Scheduled activities never really got off to a good start, but lot's of socializing was accomplished and Verda Siebenthaler, our 90 plus year old life member, enjoyed herself. This year the event was upgraded with hamburgers and polish sausage dogs served before the ice-cream. This change appeared to work well with good feedback on the quality of meat from Costco. We actually conducted a little amateur radio work and tuned my home made three-element beam antenna for 2meters. This simple project from "ARRL's VHF /UHF Antenna Classics", "7dB for 7 Bucks" worked well without the tuning extensions on the driven element and appeared to be directional sensitive which one would expect. The next activity is to check the gain when I find someone with the right equipment.

Please congratulate Ed Stuckey (AI7H) when you see him since he is now the ARRL Section Manager for Idaho. I am not sure of the official transition date, but I believe he takes office in a few weeks. I will ask Ed to tell us some more details at the next meeting.

Our Constitution states that a Nominating Committee shall be appointed before October of each year so that a slate of candidates may be presented to the membership at the November meeting. This activity is now in process.

Please bring ideas for next years monthly presentations to our September meeting. The Board wants to make sure we present information which

(continued on page 2)

interests the majority of the membership. I would still like to get into Silver Valley with some 2 meter equipment on my ATV in the next two weeks. Let me know of your interest in this activity.

The monthly "Problem Set Section" does not seem to be of much interest and will be dropped from the Newsletter. The last and final prize of the Singer Sewing Machine made in the U.K. for U.K. use will be given away at the next meeting. I only have three inputs, two are unsigned, who will compete for this unique prize. If you want to get in on this drawing then answer last month's questions and submit to me ASAP.

Ed Hannigan, KE7FOW (Extra class license awarded on 5/13/2008)
Club President



The September meeting will feature **Kerry Fox** from the National Weather Service in Spokane. Club members had asked for another Spotter training course and we got it for you!

See ya'll there- **73 KB7TIC**

Jeff

KARS VE REPORT

The August 11, 2008, KARS VE Testing Session was successful for all four applicants. Our congratulations to William H. Beatty, **KE7VNL**, Tandy (Ted) R. Graff **KE7VMM**, and Dale A. DuRee, **KE7VMN**, Bill and Ted earned their Technician Class license and Dale not only nailed the Technician Class Exam but went on to take the General Class exam and passed that as well. Nice going fellows. Timothy J. Fry, **KE7CJV**, upgraded to General Class by making quick work of that exam and has indicated he's going to try the Extra next month.. What was unique about these applicants is that they all joined KARS the same evening...so welcome these new HAMs when you hear them on the air.

The next exam scheduled is for **September 8th. 2008 at the SAR location. Send an e-mail to vetesting@k7id.org for an autorespond containing all the details.** Exams begin at 5:30PM and go till 7:00PM. Applicants should remember to bring a copy of their existing license (that we can keep), and cash or a check made out to the ARRL for \$14.00 for the exam fee. A reminder that as long as you keep passing the exams, you can take them all, one after the other, on the same \$14.00 fee!

We had a recent request to prepare and present a General Class Exam prep session as a regular program for a KARS meeting. Our VE team has looked into this and feel that we can certainly prepare such a program running about 90 minutes or so, that could cover the general subject areas and perhaps review some of the more challenging (difficult) pool questions. If you would like such a KARS program in the near future to assist you in your preparations to upgrade to General Class, e-mail Jeff Wall, KB7TIC vicepresident@k7id.org (who is in charge of programs) with your thoughts and he'll let you know when (or if) such a program can be scheduled for a regular meeting night. -N7JU.



The LDS church in Post Falls had a good turn out for their August 9th Emergency Preparedness Fair. Thanks **Ed AI7H** and the other club members who spent some time there.



Thanks to **Larry K6SPP** and **Randy KB6YAV** for their great Linux presentation at last month's meeting!

Ed and Marilyn Hannigan stepped up for the Ice Cream Social this year. We also had hamburgers and hot dogs! 24 club members spent a warm and pleasant Saturday afternoon out there, eating, talking, cooking, did I mention eating? We really appreciate them opening their home to us!

I would like to hear from club members what **you** would like to have for presentations in 2009!! E-mail your thoughts and ideas to: vicepresident@k7id.org, thanks.

SPOKANE, WA - Register to test in Spokane in September by calling **Mary, AA7RT** at 509-991-2192 or e-mail aa7rt@arrl.net for dates, locations and times.

Attention: Kootenai County ARES/RACES

Members! Don't forget! New meeting location for monthly KC ARES/RACES meetings, Civil Air Patrol, Sheprock Building, Coeur d'Alene Airport. The start time remains 6:30 p.m.

Refreshment Sign-Ups for the rest of the year:

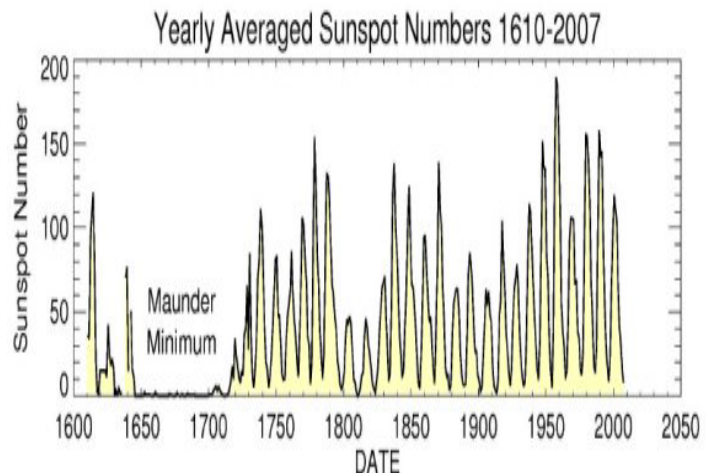
- 04/14/08 - Megan Barrett
- 05/12/08 - Cheryl Richmond
- 06/13/08 - Pre-Hamfest Potluck
- 07/14/08 - Lani Hopkins
- 08/11/08 - Jean Carlson
- 09/08/08 - Leanne Carney
- 10/13/08 - Chris Monroe
- 11/10/08 - Gary Roth
- 12/08/08 - Christmas Potluck

Where are ALL the Sunspots? – N7JU

NASA's solar physicist David Hathaway says: "There have been some reports lately that the Solar Minimum is lasting longer than it should. **That's not true!** The ongoing lull in sunspot numbers is well within historic norms for the solar cycle." Yes, *but David, I don't have that many years left for my last sunspot cycle round-up!* Recent reports keep showing there's nothing to report. The *Sun Goes Longer Than Normal Without Producing Sunspots* declared one recent press release. A careful look at the data, however, suggests otherwise. "The sun is now beyond the low point of its 11-year activity cycle," says Hathaway. "We call this the 'Solar Minimum.' *We also call it lousy DX on 10-Meters!* "But it's the period of quiet that separates one Solar Max from the next." During the Solar Max, huge sunspots and intense solar flares are a daily occurrence. Auroras appear in Florida. Radiation storms knock out satellites. Radio blackouts frustrate hams." *Bring it on!* The last such episode took place in the years around 2000-2001. Although the minima is a normal aspect of the solar cycle, some observers are questioning the *length* of the ongoing minimum, now slogging through its 3rd year. "It does seem like it's taking a long time," allows Hathaway, "but I think we're just forgetting how long a solar minimum can last." In the early 20th century there were periods of quiet lasting almost **twice as long as the current spell.**

Hathaway has studied international sunspot counts stretching all the way back to 1749 and he offers these statistics: "The average period of a solar cycle is **131 months** with a standard deviation of 14 months. Decaying solar cycle 23 (the one we are experiencing now) has so far lasted 142 months—well within the first standard deviation and thus not at all abnormal. The last available 13-month smoothed sunspot number was 5.70. This is bigger than 12 of the last 23 solar minimum values." In summary, "the current minimum is **not abnormally low or long.**"

The longest minimum on record, the **Maunder Minimum of 1645-1715**, lasted an incredible **70 years**. Sunspots were rarely observed and the solar cycle seemed to have broken down completely. The period of quiet coincided with the **Little Ice Age**, a series of extraordinarily bitter winters in Earth's northern hemisphere. Many researchers are convinced that low solar activity, acting in concert with increased volcanism and possible changes in ocean current patterns, played a role in that 17th century cooling. *Swell!* – N7JU



New MODE of Communications Catches Fire

I don't get excited about a **new operating mode** often, but this one is incredible: It's called WSPR - Weak Signal Propagation Reporter and uses a 4-FSK modulation called MEPT_JT which stands for Manned Experimental Propagation Tests - K1JT. It's a beacon **sender** and **receiver** from **your** station QTH. It's a bit on the high side of the learning curve but the results are phenomenal. I'd love to have a few around here give it a try and compare notes. Local testing with two or more stations can really sharpen operations quickly. Check out: <http://www.df9cy.de/ar/experimental/wspr/wspr.html> who has some *user notes*, reports, and some results

on a **world map** etc. Download the program at: <http://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/>

This mode has some unique tools. One is to send out a low power data package (I mean really low...like about -33dBm or about 2.0 Watts) and then check the *Internet Logger* to see **where your signal was received** around the world. Apparently activity is on most bands but on specific (precise) frequencies and times. WSPR can run unattended. I'm playing with 30 Meters (10.1387 MHz.). You'll recall that K1JT is responsible for WSJT, the weak signal digital mode used in meteor scatter and moon bounce. I've played with that one now and then but you never knew where the activity was at any given time unless you're checked the internet MS/EME guys.

When you master the WSPR beacon mode, you then tie the two programs (WSPR & WSJT-7) together for a dependable **super low power** two way QSO's *Too cool!* It's a **real mode so QSL's are valid**. **We don't need no stinkin sunspots!** Let me know if you want to test or play with this mode, or pass this along to anyone you think might like to give this new mode a try. – N7JU

What's A Section Manager?

As you may have heard, the writer has been elected as the next "Section Manager" of the "ARRL Idaho Section", effective 10/01/08. Upon hearing of this, many people (both hams and non-hams) have asked "what's the ARRL?", "what's a Section?", and "what does the Section Manager do?" Here are some brief answers to these questions.

The ARRL is a large membership association of Amateur Radio operators. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ARRL> for an excellent description. A very brief explanation is as follows: the ARRL is to Amateur Radio operators like the AAA is to people who drive cars. You don't "have to" belong, but there are a lot of benefits.

The ARRL has divided the US into 71 administrative "sections", generally organized by state. For example, Idaho is a "section", while Washington is divided into two sections ("EWA" and "WWA") because of their larger population of hams. The Section Manager is elected by the ARRL members within his/her section for a two year term. Since there are so many sections, the elections are staggered quarterly, and the Idaho Section Manager term begins on 10/01 of an even year.

COFFEE & DONUTS
EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING
8:00 A.M.
To
10:00 A.M.



Pleasant Land Books
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8052 W. Main,
Rathdrum, ID
(208) 687-3100

Bring a writing instrument. Pleasant Land Books has the napkins for our breakfast table engineering!

The Section Manager represents the ARRL's interests in a number of areas, including Emergency Communications, Club Coordination, Public Information Coordination, and governmental liaison. The Section Manager appoints a number of persons to his staff, including one or more Assistant Section Managers (ASM), a Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC), Public Information Coordinator (PIC), and Affiliated Club Coordinator (ACC). And of course the most important duty is to promote recruitment of new Amateur Radio operators and new ARRL members.

I look forward to serving my fellow Amateur Radio operators as the next Idaho Section Manager.

73,
Ed Stuckey, AI7H

A Social Success!

Once again the KARS axiom "If we feed them, they will come" was tested and proved to be correct!

On Saturday 08/23, a horde of 24 hungry KARS members and friends descended on the home of Club president Ed Hannigan (KE7FOW) and YL Marilyn, for a fabulous feast that included some great burgers, sides, and desserts (including ice cream, of course). The weather and the location were perfect, the stories were excellent and tall, and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. Our three living Charter Members – Verda (K7UBC), Marj (WB7UWB), and Walt (K7ETJ) were all there. Auxiliary activities included watching the large variety of birds that stopped by*, and testing of a homebrew Yagi antenna that worked. (*Note: The birds had their own picnic at several bird feeders and watering stations).

Thanks Ed and Marilyn for putting on such an excellent event!

Two Tests of Your ISP From Your Computer

These sites test certain service levels provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP).

“Transfer Rate” – Here is a site where you can measure how fast your computer transfers data from/to the internet: www.speedmatterswashington.org Click on “Take the Speed Test” to check your receive and send rates (my rates were 1835 kbps for receive, and 364 kbps for send).

“DNS Vulnerability” – This site tests “Source Port Randomness” and “Transaction ID Randomness”: www.dns-oarc.net After the (long) page loads, scroll down about 2/3 of the page and find a button called “TEST MY DNS”. Click on the button for your test (my test results were “great” and “great”). If your results are “poor”, call your ISP and ask them to install “The DNS Patch”.

Submitted by Ed, AI7H

Happenings Around the Area

September 5-7, 2008. Northwest Automatic Position Reporting System (NWAPRS) Summer Gathering. Friday evening and all day Saturday and Sunday morning for APRS-saturation, plus talks on other ham radio digital modes. Food, fun, and fellowship. RV spots, camping, bunkhouse, hiking, sight seeing. Donation. Valley Camp near North Bend, WA, off I-90 Exit 34. See nwaprs.info for updates. Contact Dave/K7GPS at k7gps@arrl.net or 509-244-8484.

September 6, 2008. Ham Happenings “2008”, Nanaimo Amateur Radio Association. Contact Murray VE7MUX to reserve your table. ve7mux@shaw.ca. (250)753-0373 Flyer at: <http://www.ve7na.ca/sites/default/files/Ham%20Happening%202008.pdf> (11K)

September 13, 2008. The 2nd Annual Clark County ARC Tail-Gate Swapmeet, New listing! Vancouver, WA. Salmon Creek American Legion Post, just north of the 134th Ave north-bound off-ramp from I-205. 10AM-4PM. Sellers in at 9AM. No charge. Bring your tail-gate, extra tables, chairs, pop-up shelters, whatever you need to be comfortable. This event will be held rain or shine. For info, contact Rob, K7JAO at k7jao@arrl.net

September 27, 2008. Spokane Hamfest. University High School, 12420 E 32nd Ave, Spokane Valley WA 99216. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* For information contact Betsy, N7WRQ n7wrq@aol.com. [Flyer in PDF](#) (50K) [Registration form in PDF](#) (28K)

September 28, 2008. ComFest 2008. Delta Amateur Radio Society, Delta, BC. <http://www.deltaamateurradio.com/>

October 3-5, 2008. Pacific Northwest VHF Society Annual Conference. *This is an ARRL Sanctioned event.* Moses Lake, Washington. For information, contact secretary@pnwvhfs.org. <http://pnwvhfs.org/>. Update: Joe Taylor, K1JT, of WSJT and WSPR fame will be the keynote speaker for this conference!

If you would like to use the club callsign, K7ID, contact Jerry Hooper, KA7RNX, or any of the KARS Board members. They have the approval forms available.

Volunteer Opportunities in the Area

September 6-7. MS-150. Contact Jim Linden, N7JIL, at n7jil@arrl.net. He still needs one person on the 7th as of press time.

September 13. Grand Columbian Triathlon. Contact Glenn Day, K7CPO, at flyt@turboisp.com for further information.

September 20-21. Tour de Lacs. Contact Jim Linden at above address.

Update on Bailey and Verena - We are happy to say that we have booked our return flight back to Coeur d'Alene for Sunday, September 14, and pray that all will go well and we won't have to make any changes. I am feeling a little stronger but it will certainly help to improve things when we are back home in our own little place. We miss everything so much or even more, we miss our family, church and our friends. We hope you are having a good summer and all your travels have been enjoyable. It has been quite cool here but we did not mind since they don't have air conditioning around here. Anyway, we are looking forward to seeing you soon.

September is almost here, and with it comes the Washington State QSO party. AKA “The Salmon Run” This is an event sponsored by the WWA DX Club and is one of the most fun times on the air you can have. (especially the Saturday night “slugfest” on 75 meters. If you are a seasoned contest veteran, or have never dipped your feet into the pool, we have a place for you in this event. The short and dirty overview is to work all 39 Washington counties, and other States and DX countries. To catch a “full stringer” you must work all 39 counties, and the rest count as multipliers. Many stations take this event on the road, and activate some of our states rare ones. The last two plus years we have had activity from all counties. The dates are September 20th and 21st. For more information go to <http://wwdxc.org>

In the event of evacuations due to Gustav, please make the following information known widely. It will save a lot of H&W traffic and is the new way that ARC and other served agencies are dealing with the issue. Remember, even if you yourself are NOT in the hurricane area, you may have family members or victims in your area. We can be seen as “the good guys” by being helpful no matter where we are.

The Red Cross *Safe and Well* site allows those directly affected by a disaster to let their loved ones know of their well-being. Residents of affected areas should be encouraged to take advantage of the *Safe and Well* website and you can use the site to post information *prior* to evacuation.

As you evacuate, if you have one call to make to before you leave home, call some one you love and tell them you are safe. Then, ask them to register you on the Red Cross *Safe and Well* site accessible at www.RedCross.org or www.SafeandWell.org For those that do not have internet access, call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to register yourself and your family. Follow the prompts for disaster information.

THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER QEX IS HERE

The September/October issue of QEX is out, and it is full of theoretical and practical technical articles that you don't want to miss.

In this issue, Mark Spencer, WA8SME, describes a VLF receiver system that automatically logs received signal data so we can learn about some propagation conditions such as sudden ionospheric disturbances

during Solar Cycle 24 in “SID: Study Cycle 24, Don't Just Use It.” Phil Anderson, W0XI, gives us a detailed analysis of crystal set receiver circuitry in “A Great Teacher: The Crystal Set.” Bertrand Zauhar, VE2ZAZ, brings us another great project that goes well beyond a simple battery charger with his “Rechargeable Battery Cyclor.”

Jim Kocsis, WA9PYH, presents “Press-n-Peel Circuit Boards,” a simple, reliable way to make your own circuit boards using Techniks, Inc Press-n-Peel Blue etch-resist material. Henry J. Rech offers some thoughts about, “Receiver Performance Measurement and Front End Selectivity,” and Frank Witt, A11H, describes “Optimum Lossy Broadband Matching Networks for Resonant Antennas,” in this reprint of an April 1990 “RF Design” article.

New HF Digital Protocol to Debut at September Conference: WINMOR, an HF digital protocol designed for use with the Winlink 2000 network, will be unveiled at the upcoming ARRL/TAPR Digital Communications Conference in Chicago September 26-28.

Wi-Fi or HSMM?

An upcoming article will describe the advantages for an Amateur radio operator when using 802.11b and 80211g for their communications system . . . it can even be used for emergency communications!

Hobby radio author Tom Kneitel, W4XAA, SK: Tom Kneitel, W4XAA, (ex-K2AES), died August 22 at age 75. He was a prolific author of articles and books on monitoring, CB radio and building electronics projects.

Deadline for submitting articles, stories, reports, etc., is the 25th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

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: _____

NAME: _____ CALL: _____ CLASS: _____

NAME: _____ CALL: _____ CLASS: _____

NAME: _____ CALL: _____ CLASS: _____

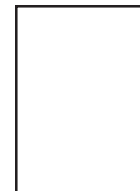
NAME: _____ CALL: _____ CLASS: _____

*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



DIRECTIONS TO KARS MEETING:

Take U.S. Highway 95 to Miles Avenue (Miles is about 1 mile North of Hayden Avenue). Instead of proceeding west from the corner of Miles and Ramsey, go north about ¼ mile, to the first building on the left (West) side of the road.

2008 CLUB OFFICERS

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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 sent 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.