

THE COAX NEWSLETTER



March 2024

P O Box 792, Ponderay, ID 83852-0792

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www.facebook.com/bcarck7jep/

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Calling all SPUDs!

The Idaho QSO Party is **March 9-10**, and BCARC, operating as *K7D*, has the honor of putting the 'D' in 'SPUD' as one of 4 special bonus stations for up to 500 bonus points! But we can't do it without you! So if you would like to participate, please contact johnnykludt@gmail.com for details on how to sign up for a shift.

Feeling Lucky?

Don't forget our monthly 50/50 fundraising raffle at each meeting. For \$1 per ticket, you have a chance to win 50% of the pot, with the other 50% going to help support Club activities. Last month's pot was again \$66! The more you buy, the more you could win!



MARCH MEETING PRESENTATION

Amateur Radio Goals, Paper Chasing and the QSL Process

Presented by John Kludt, K7SYS, BCARC Activities Manager

One of the things that lends amateur radio to a lifetime of enjoyment is the seemingly never-ending plethora of activities to pursue. Setting goals based around some aspect of amateur radio is one way to keep the hobby alive and to keep you "radio active." Please join us as we discuss "paper chasing" – the pursuit of the many awards available. Be it *Worked All States* or *DXCC*, the *DX Century Club* or maybe working all the 3,244 counties in the United States. Maybe it suits you and your station better to try and work 100 grids on 6m. How about working the grids in the United States via satellite? Maybe your goal is to become a fully functional ARES station or a good CW operator. Maybe you just like to talk on the radio. Maybe you are collecting Ten-Ten numbers. Whatever your goal, having a goal and tracking progress toward that goal helps keep you involved and active in amateur radio.

One thing all of these and more diverse goals have in common is the need to track your progress through a logging program and we have discussed that in previous programs. However, another need for almost any of these goals is the need to be able to prove that the contacts occurred and were acknowledged by both stations. We will take a little deeper look at the QSL process and the many ways it can occur. There are paper QSL cards and their processes. There is eQSL. There is QRZ.com. There is the Logbook of the World, LoTW. We will go over these in a little more detail as we discuss the many awards available and how the QSL process relates to each.

We would like to keep this presentation as interactive as possible, so if you are currently pursuing a goal, we would like to hear about it and share it with the club members. If you have recently (within the last year) achieved a milestone and/or received a certificate of some sort, please share it with other members of the club. Please get your goals and accomplishments to John Kludt, K7SYS, BCARC Activities Manager at johnnykludt@gmail.com so we can better plan the presentation and share your story.

We hope to see you either in person or via Zoom the 2nd Wednesday in March.

NEXT MEETING

March 13, 2024

(2nd Wednesday of the Month)

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Board Meeting

5:00 PM

Eyeball QSOs

6:00 PM

General Meeting

6:30 PM

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Location

VFW HALL

1325 Pine Street
Corner of Pine &
Division
Sandpoint, ID

MEMBER NEWS

Extra, Extra.... Read All About It!

By Curtis Gillespie II, K7LOM

Hi everyone... I received my Amateur Extra License today! I do not know where to begin in sharing about the excitement and feeling that I have for accomplishing this goal, but I will try. This is one day where a little explaining can be a good entry for my logs.

My fascination in radio began in my early years, back when I was in grade school in the 1960's. My grandfather gave me a crystal radio kit, purchased from Radio Shack. I remember questioning the workings of a cat's whisker detector and rewarded by sound heard from the earpiece. The station was KMOX, a strong AM radio broadcast heard from across the river. Also, I sat for hours in front of an antique Phillips shortwave radio console, day after day, listening to far-away stations like China and Mecca. Walkie-talkies were part of my everyday fun as I played with friends, and I broke a few antennas along the way. When anyone had a new transistor radio, the first thing among friends was to open the back and count the transistors. Somehow, the measure of a good radio was based on the number of transistors.

Skip forward to my first technical employment at McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis, Missouri, as an electrical assembly technician, working on aircraft and aircraft test equipment. Then years later after gradual progress in my education and various technical assignments, I came to the point where I made my first QSO, a contact that I did not ask for nor plan or arrange. I did not even have an FCC License. What happened was, my mother had my telephone number, for reaching me in case of an emergency. She passed on my telephone number to her brother, my Uncle Coram K9CI, who lived in Illinois. I was on assignment somewhere, not reachable and basically not available, intentionally. My telephone rang and it was a HAM operator in Scotland with a phone patch, talking over an HF frequency... "Over". He had my Uncle Coram on the line... "over". I had to say "over" when finished talking for proper keying. My first QSO... I had some explaining to do. Our conversation was about the weather and the family.

Years have gone by now, and I retired from a tremendous career in electrical design, electrical engineering, and programming. I moved to Mesquite, Nevada, and met HAMs having fun. Johnny K7ZZQ invited me to his station setup on a Sunday night for the Utah 2-meter SSB Roundtable. After just a few minutes listening to the call-ins, during Johnny's turn to talk, he handed the microphone to me, telling me to say something. Unprepared and no plan for words, I told the moderator, Kelly KV7V, my name and that I was studying for the FCC Technician level license. This was my second QSO, me talking over amateur radio waves without a license... "over".

I received my Technician Level and General Level licenses in 2020. Now, February 21, 2024, I obtained the Amateur Extra Level license. Wow!

Thank you, Uncle Coram, for introducing me to HAM radio and keeping the flame going by encouragement. Thank you, Johnny, for putting the microphone in my hand when I least expected. Thank you David WA7KQS and Lew KF7HP for "Elmering" me. Thank you, members of the Virgin Valley Amateur Radio Club, Los Vegas Repeater Association, Kootenai Amateur Radio Society, and **Bonner County Amateur Radio Club**. Thank you, Dixie Amateur Radio Club, for providing testing. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for letting me to stretch a wire from the house to the garage to serve as a shortwave antenna. Thank you China, Mecca, Mexico, and Chile and well, "73's".



CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

February 2024

TOTAL	41
EXTRA	10
GENERAL	21
TECH	10

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

\$25 Individual
\$35 Family *

* includes all licensed family members living in the same household

To join, please remit with a [membership form](#) at the next meeting or send to:

BCARC
PO Box 792
Ponderay, ID
83852-0792



February Monthly Meeting

Love wasn't the only 4-letter word in the air at our monthly club meeting on February 14th. As attendees participated in a lively roundtable discussion on the upcoming Idaho QSO Party with experienced BCARC IDQSOP operators David Immel, *KE4EW*, Mike Olson, *N7HDD*, and John Kludt, *K7SYS*, it was announced that BCARC has been invited to host the bonus call of **K7D**, one of four special calls in Idaho to spell **'SPUD.'** This is quite an honor and we are looking for members to sign up and help support the effort! Special Valentine's Day cookies, chocolates and coffee & drinks were also enjoyed while members perused the deals available during our 2nd Annual BCARC Swap Meet!

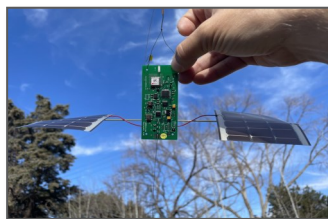


This and past presentations can be found on the club website at K7JEP.org.

Up, Up and Away...Pico Balloon Update

With spring weather on the horizon, preparations are in full swing for the club's first Pico balloon launch! To date, our focus has been on identifying a launch site and procuring helium fuel for the balloon.

After evaluating several options, we believe a promising location has been identified. Thank you to everyone who offered suggestions and ideas. The primary site we have chosen is in the Selle Valley with a small knoll from which to launch the balloon and ample clearance to get it up and over the trees and mountains (we hope).



Although a launch date has not been set, pending weather conditions and testing, we are eyeing a Spring launch and possibly another launch in the Fall. As weather dependencies play a crucial role in determining the feasibility and timing of the launch, we are currently evaluating wind patterns, atmospheric pressure, and precipitation forecasts in order to select optimal dates.

The purpose of the Pico balloon launch encompasses several objectives, including experimentation with amateur radio, remote tracking technologies, weather patterns, and educational outreach within the community. It serves as an opportunity to engage members in an interesting and enjoyable hands-on learning experience.

Stay tuned for updates and if you are interested in additional information, please contact Ken Conradi, *KF7FDN*, kkconradi@hotmail.com.

BCARC BREAKFAST

March 23, 2024

9-10:30am

Location

Connies Café
323 Cedar St
Sandpoint, ID



**FOR THE LATEST
CLUB INFO,
CHECK US OUT
ON FACEBOOK!**



[www.facebook.com/
bcarck7jep/](https://www.facebook.com/bcarck7jep/)



CONTESTS, NETS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

How Will You Get Your Party On?!

The Idaho QSO Party Spud Run - March 9-10, 2024

By John Kludt, K7SYS, BCARC Activities Manager

Many states have an annual event called a QSO Party. While there is some variability in the rules state to state, the basic idea is the same across all QSO parties - for *in-state* stations the goal is to activate as many counties as possible and work as many stations both within and outside the state as possible and for *out-of-state* stations, it is to work as many Idaho stations as possible. Counties, therefore, become very important during QSO parties. Idaho has 44 counties, and we are trying to get them all on the air. Other states have a much larger number... Georgia for instance has 159 counties. Be it 44 or 159 counties, getting them all on the air is a major undertaking!

There are two ways to approach the Idaho QSO party - either as a "Fixed Station" or as a "Rover":

Fixed Station: Using your home station or a friend's station, you basically begin calling "CQ Idaho QSO Party" and let everyone come to you. It is rather interesting to be the Dx. Instead of hunting for other stations, it frequently works best to find a clear frequency on the classical bands (160/80/75/40/20/15/10m) and let them come to you. Be sure you know your county abbreviation (<https://www.idahoqsoparty.org/MAPcountylist.htm>). Ours here in Bonner County is BNR. By the Idaho QSO Party rules, you can only work the same station once on any band but you can work them more than once using different modes. Most of the activity will be on SSB or CW. Digital is allowed but not FT8/FT4 as they don't support the exchange. The exchange is simple: your county or three letter county abbreviation if on CW.

Rover: The goal of a *rover* is to activate as many counties as possible. The rules for Idaho are very specific when it comes to rovers: "*Mobile/Rover is a station that is self-contained (radio, antenna, power source) capable of motion.*" The big advantage to being a rover is every time you enter a new county you get to "start over" like it is new log. That means you can work the same stations all over again using the same mode you used before in a different county! There are 16 counties that due to the scarcity of participating hams are worth either 500 or 1,000 bonus points (<https://www.idahoqsoparty.org/>). Rovers can help the cause by putting as many of these counties on the air as possible.

This year, BCARC members have a special opportunity. We have been invited to put **K7D** on the air for this running of the Idaho QSO party as one of four bonus station operations.

K7D: Spell "SPUD" and it is worth an extra 500 points or 100 points per letter. Bonus stations get no points themselves nor are they eligible for any awards. Rather it falls to us to make sure the K7D is available to the rest of the QSO party community. We can have multiple instances of K7D on the air at the same time. The one thing we can't do is have two or more stations on the same band at the same time on the same *mode*. So if you would like to participate, please contact johnnykludt@gmail.com for details on how to sign up for a shift. At the conclusion of your shift, if you would like to function as a station in your own right, under your call that is fine. Just remember to submit a **separate log** from your K7D log. This is a big deal and an opportunity to work some real pileups.

To fulfill our obligations as K7D we need more operators willing to take a one to two hours shift (more is okay!) as K7D. See you all on the air!



BCARC NETS



K7JEP HooDoo Mtn VHF Repeater / North Idaho Repeater Group Net

145.490 MHz
(-0.6 MHz offset,
136.5 tone)

Sunday at 7pm



Simplex Net

145.600MHz Simplex

Sunday -
immediately
following the
Repeater Net



X-X Panhandlers - 10M Net

28.460 MHz

Sunday at 2pm



2024 Field Day - Join the Team!

The 2024 ARRL Field Day is being held the weekend of **June 22nd and 23rd**. Under the new call sign of K7B, we will be partnering with BCARES as a 2A station setup with one SSB and one FT8/FT4/CW transmitter, along with Satellite and 6m at a location in Oldtown. We will be starting an operator sign-up sheet soon for members to sign up for modes and shifts - make sure to check back!

But it takes a team to pull this off. Please consider joining our planning team—we are looking for help in all areas. If you are interested, contact Jim Morford at jimmorford.jm@gmail.com.

School Club Roundup Update

Our local Forrest M Bird Charter School (FBCS) had a very successful School Club Roundup this past February 12-16th. Thanks to support from club members Dave Immel, *KE4EW*, Dan Parkin, *W7BID*, and John Kludt, *K7SYS*, along with lead Mark Webber, *KJ7YOZ*, more than 27 students logged over 375 QSOs! And thanks to all of you who checked in to help make those QSOs. While it will take a while for results to be finalized, so far they are ranking **6th overall and 1st in the High School division**. What an amazing feat for only their second year! Once results come out in April, the school plans to have a celebration assembly for the school's performance and the official presentation of the trophy to the student with the most QSOs and the framed ARRL Participation certificate. The latest results can be found at <https://hamdash.affirmatech.com/>.

International DX - Phone - March 2 – 3

To encourage W/VE stations to expand knowledge of DX propagation on the HF and MF bands, improve operating skills, and improve station capability by creating a competition in which DX stations may only contact W/VE stations. One contest period is CW-only and one is Phone-only. Use only the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. <https://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx>

Rookie Roundup - SSB - April 21

To encourage newly-licensed operators (“Rookies”) in North America (including territories and possessions) to operate on the HF bands and experience competitive Amateur Radio operating. Experienced operators (“Non-Rookies”) are strongly encouraged to participate and help new operators – either on the air or in person. Rookies exchange information with as many other stations as possible on the 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter HF bands. <https://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup>

More information on contesting can be found on <http://arrl.org/contest-calendar> and <https://contestcalendar.com/>.

VE Testing - March 9

This is your next local opportunity to sit for the Technician, General or Amateur Extra License Exam. Provided free of charge by our local BCARES group. Testing begins at 10:00am at The Library—Sandpoint Branch. <https://bonnerares.org/wp/license-exams/>

HF Activity Group - Daily

Have you ever struggled to determine your stations propagation? The HF Activity Group is open to anyone and its sole purpose is to check out your stations propagation. Simply give your call sign at the beginning and wait to be called upon, make your CQ call and then listen as to where you are being heard.

Daily Schedule:

17M on 18.157.5 MHz at 1730 - 1830z

15M on 21.383 MHz at 1830z

12M on 24.970 MHz at 1915z

10M on 28.570 MHz (when time/band allows)

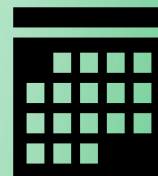
UPCOMING EVENTS

BCARC often participate in and supports local events.

2024 Events:

- ♦ Sandpoint 4th of July Parade
- ♦ Long Bridge Swim
- ♦ Emergency Preparedness Expo

For more information, check out the Club calendar on our website by clicking the icon below.



*The COAX is edited and published by
[Colleen Conradi, KK7KNL](#)*