



Branch Signals

The Official Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
Founded in 1960. An ARRL Affiliated Club since 1961
www.branchcountyarc.com

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Skywarn Training a Huge Success

Our annual Skywarn training session presented by Mike Skipper from the North Webster office of the National Weather Service (IWX) was the best attended Skywarn training session in your editor's memory. Over 50 hams, Public Service personnel and the general public attended the two hour training session on March 15. It was very nearly standing room only as we used every single chair available in the 911 Center training room and EOC. Thanks to all.

Michigan QSO Party Date Correction

The eagle eyes of potential ham Jan Hayden caught an error in last month's *Branch Signals* as the date for the Michigan QSO Party was incorrectly listed as April 12. The correct date is Saturday, April 16. Thanks, Jan. (would you like a job proofreading the newsletter every month?)

The BCARC will once again put Branch County on the radio maps by participating in the Michigan QSO Party, an on the air activity that brings national attention to the hams of Michigan by making contacts with all counties of the state possible.

We plan to have our club station on the air Saturday, April 16th from noon to midnight to make as many contacts as possible. We will have a SSB station on the air for those hams who prefer voice operation and we intend to have a CW station for those who prefer to 'Dit and Dah' their way through life. Because we will be using the club call sign and will have extra class licensees on hand as control operators, hams of all license classes are welcome to participate. We will not only need operators, but we will need help running the computer logging software. This would be a good chance to get a non-ham friend involved in one of our activities as non hams can also get on the air as third party participants.

Please set time aside to join us even if it is just to encourage the ops!



March 2005 Meeting Pictures



Large Crowd at Annual
Skywarn Training Session

2005 Club Contacts

President:

Larry Camp, WB8R

517-278-0406

wb8r@arrl.net

Secretary/Treasurer:

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI

517-639-4390

wkubiak@wmconnect.com

Board of Directors:

Jim Voss, W8SST

517-278-4636

w8sst@arrl.net

Arnie Hayward, N8ST

517-278-8507

ns8t@arrl.net

Steve Williams, N8CTI

517-369-7194

shadowman405@charter.
net

Emergency Coordinator:

Jim Voss, W8SST

517-278-4636

w8sst@arrl.net



2005 Club Dues are Due

2005 Club dues are now due and payable. The grace period ended in March and this means that unpaid members are no longer eligible to vote on any procedural issues that come before the club. Any club officer will be happy to take your dues payment for you. 2005 dues are \$15.00 and family members can join for \$3.00 each. Student members that do not qualify for family membership can join for \$7.50.

April BCARC Meeting Announcement

The April meeting of the BCARC will be held on April 19 at 7:00 PM at the 911 Center near the airport in Coldwater. Our guest speaker will be Dale Williams, WA8EFK, Michigan ARRL Section Manager. Dale will bring us up to speed on recent ARRL happenings as well as what is currently happening in amateur radio. Dale is an interesting speaker (when he is not telling tales out of school about your editor) and is sure to leave you knowing more than you did when you came in. Be sure to join us to hear the latest from Dale.

QMN Net Plans 70th Anniversary Observance

The Michigan Net, QMN, will celebrate its 70th anniversary this autumn. Founded in late 1935 by members of the Detroit Amateur Radio Association, QMN is the nation's oldest spot frequency traffic net, and is responsible for a number of innovations in public service communications.

Before QMN, message traffic was handled through individual schedules between stations. Radio Amateurs who were not part of the ARRL Trunk Line system would typically maintain a schedule with stations to the North, South, East and West. When traffic was destined for a location in a particular direction, it was transferred on schedule to the station closest to the addressee. The non-systematic nature of these methods often resulted in delays to message delivery.

A Committee of the Detroit Amateur Radio Association, with an eye toward improving public service communications, took advantage of a number of improvements in radio technology in the 1930s, such as stable crystal controlled transmitters and calibrated receivers, to implement single-frequency traffic net. This new method permitted stations throughout a State or Region to meet on a specific frequency, at specific times each day to exchange traffic, resulting in more reliable traffic flow and consistent message originations and delivery. This concept of the spot-frequency traffic net would become "QMN" and has served as the predominant model for all traffic nets to this day.

At a QMN meeting in Detroit in 1939, a Committee developed the well-known "QN-Signals," which were eventually adopted by the ARRL for all CW traffic net use. QN-Signals are widely distributed in ARRL publications and handbooks, and continue to be used throughout North America. QMN also pioneered in the field of disaster response, deploying QMN

Area Hamfests

April 16 Milford, MI

May 7 Cadillac, MI

May 20-22 Dayton

June 4 Hudsonville

June 5 Chelsea

June 19 Monroe



VE Test Session Schedule

April 9

Sponsor: Eaton County ARC

Time: 12 Noon (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: John A Dewey
(517)543-0398

Email: detta@ia4u.net

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Eaton Cty Sheriff's
Dept-EOC
1250 Independence Blvd
Charlotte, MI 48813

April 14

Sponsor: Goshen ARC

Time: 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: Paul F Corey
(574)262-4414

Email: paul.cory.b@bayer.com
work

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Greencroft Retirement
Center
Homan Building
Greencroft Blvd
Goshen, IN 46525



emergency response teams in an era before the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps (predecessor to today's ARES and RACES) was a commonplace fixture.

Today, QMN continues to serve as Michigan's Section CW Traffic Net. In addition to handling NTS message traffic, QMN operates a statewide rain gauge network in support of the National Weather Service, having implemented innovative methods for automated message delivery and interface with NOAA computer networks.

QMN members take great pride in the efficiency and reliability of their CW traffic net. In recognition of its long-time role in public service communications, QMN wishes to announce the creation of a new operating award in honor of its 70th year: The QMN Emergency Preparedness Award. The award is open to any licensed radio amateur who meets the following requirements: He/She must deploy a portable High Frequency station, operating on emergency power, and check-in to the QMN CW Nets a minimum of five times in a calendar year. Each time the portable station is deployed, a message must be originated to the QMN General Manager (WB8SIW) indicating that the station is deployed in the field and from where the portable station is operating. This message must be properly transmitted in standard NTS message format. Upon completion of the necessary requirements, the participant will receive a handsome certificate suitable for framing, which attests to his/her level of emergency preparedness and operating skill.

For more information on the QMN Emergency Preparedness Award, please visit the QMN Web Page at: www.qsl.net/w8ihx. One may also contact the QMN General Manager via phone at 269-673-8845. QMN meets on 3663 kHz at 7:30 and 10:00 pm Eastern Time. *(info courtesy of Michigan ARRL Section News page)*



QMN Certificate celebrating the net's 50th Anniversary in 1985

April 16

Sponsor: Cascades ARS
Time: 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Richard H McGuire (517)782-1430
Email: dickki8c@juno.com
VEC: W5YI VEC
Location: Jackson District Library
244 West Michigan
Downstairs Auditorium
Jackson, MI 49204

April 16

Sponsor: Fulton County radio Club
Time: 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Howard W Fuller (419)825-5443
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: Archbold Police Department
405 E Lutz RD
Pre-Registration Preferred
Leave message on machine
Archbold, OH 43502

May 14

Sponsor: Cascades ARS
Time: 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Richard H McGuire (517)782-1430
Email: dickki8c@juno.com
VEC: W5YI VEC
Location: Jackson District Library
244 West Michigan
Downstairs Auditorium
Jackson, MI 49204

May 21

Sponsor: Fulton County radio Club
Time: 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Howard W Fuller (419)825-5443
VEC: ARRL/VEC
Location: Archbold Police Department
405 E Lutz RD
Pre-Registration Preferred
Leave message on machine
Archbold, OH 43502



DX on the Bands

(info courtesy of ARRL)

MALAWI, 7Q

Joe, G3MRC and Janet, M0JMP are now QRV from the lakeshore at Nkhotakota as 7Q7BP and 7Q7YL, respectively. Activity is on most HF bands. QSL via operators' instructions.

BOTSWANA, A2

Hans, DL7CM and Sid, DM1AYO will be QRV as A25/homecalls from April 6 to 20. Activity will be 160 to 6 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. QSL to home calls.

BHUTAN, A5

Stig, LA7JO will be QRV as A52JO from April 4 to 15. QSL via operator's instructions.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, A6

Ghis, ON5NT is QRV as A6/ON5NT and has been active on 17 meters around 1430z. QSL to home call.

BOLIVIA, CP

Rene, DF9GR is QRV as CP6/homecall until April 15. Activity is on 80 to 10 meters using CW, RTTY and PSK. QSL to home call.

SCOTLAND, GM

Andre, GM3VLB plans to activate the Isle of May, IOTA EU-123, from April 2 to 9. QSL via operator's instructions. Meanwhile, MM0BQI/p will be active from the Summer Isles, IOTA EU-092, off the Northwest coast, from April 2 to 9. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters, and possibly 60 meters, using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL to home call.

SAUDI ARABIA, HZ

Thomas, HZ1EX is here until the end of June. He is usually QRV on 40 meters using CW on most days. QSL via SM0BYD.

ITALY, I

Members of the MDXC will be QRV as IB0CW from Ventotene Island, IOTA EU-045, from April 2 to 4. Activity will be on 80 to 6 meters, using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. QSL via IK8RRY.

DENMARK, OZ

In celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Hans Christian Andersen, special event station OZ5HCA is active until April 30 from Odense, Fyn Island, IOTA EU-172. QSL via OZ3FYN. Meanwhile, DJ4MG and DL1TM are QRV as OZ/homecalls from Vendsyssel-Thy, IOTA EU-171, until April 14. Activity is on 160 to 15 meters using SSB and PSK31. QSL to home calls.

FCC Issues 3rd Party Traffic Change

The FCC is expected to soon update its Web site listing of countries with which US Amateur Radio Service licensees may exchange third-party traffic (ie, messages on behalf of a party other than the control operator). The updated list will include all amateur stations in the United Kingdom (the UK, the Channel Islands, including Guernsey and Jersey, Great Britain, the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland). The change is already effective.

2 M Repeater Suffers Power Supply Failures

The Club's 2M repeater has experienced two power supply failures in recent weeks. We are not sure of the cause yet, but the backup GE repeater was fired up and placed into service.

We have received a fresh power supply and plan to install it soon. Once the Motorola is back in operation, you will hear the familiar voice ID instead of 20 WPM CW ID.

The second failed supply will be going out for repair in the coming days.

Thanks to NS8T, WB8R, WD8MGF, and KC8PWB for their help in keeping us on the air.

SOMALIA, T5

Joe, VA6JWT, is QRV as 6O0JT from Galkayo. He has been active on 20 meters around 2015 to 2315z. QSL to home call.

NETHERLAND ANTILLES, PJ2

Andy, W9NJY will be QRV as PJ4/W9NJY from Bonaire, IOTA SA-006, from April 2 to 12. Activity will be on 40 to 10 meters using mostly CW with some SSB. QSL via WD9DZV.

BELIZE, V3

Bill, W4TXL will be QRV as V31WC from Placencia from April 4 to 11. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters, including the newer bands, using mostly SSB. He may concentrate activity on 17 meters. He is here on vacation, so his operating time varies. QSL direct to home call.

NORFOLK ISLAND, VK9N Jim, VK9NS has been QRV using RTTY on 15 meters around 0100z. QSL direct.

SOUTH COOK ISLANDS, ZK1

Rick, AI5P will be QRV as ZK1APX from April 4 to 12. Activity will be on 40 to 10 meters using mostly CW. QSL to home call.

Texas BPL Pilot Project Shuts Down, League Withdraws Complaint

NEWINGTON, CT, Mar 30, 2005--An Irving, Texas, BPL pilot project that was the target of an ARRL complaint two weeks earlier has shut down and removed its equipment. In mid-March, the League called on the FCC to shut down the system and issue fines for causing harmful interference to Amateur Radio communications. The ARRL's March 15 filing to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, its Office of Engineering and Technology, system operator TXU and equipment manufacturer Amperion supported a complaint from ARRL member and North Texas Section BPL Task Force Chair Jory McIntosh, KJ5RM, who regularly commutes through the BPL test zone in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

"I just got back from reviewing the site and can confirm that the BPL installation in Irving, Texas, has been removed and is no longer operating," McIntosh told ARRL this week. "Things are so quiet you can hear a pin drop. Definitely quite a change!" He said when the system was running, interference in its vicinity was 20 dB over S9 or stronger on all amateur bands from 40 through 6 meters.

The ARRL became involved after FCC failed to respond to a formal complaint McIntosh filed last fall. ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, also took measurements at the Texas site that verified McIntosh's observations. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, thanked McIntosh for his help in bringing the situation to a head. "I hope your example inspires other amateurs facing similar situations to get involved," Sumner added.