



# 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](http://www.branchcountyarc.com)

Club Repeaters: 2M 147.300+ 100 Hz 440 443.300+ 123 Hz

May, 2006

Volume 5, Number 5

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## *Foxhunt Scheduled for May 16*

On May 18, the BCARC will meet at the 911 Communications Center on Chicago Road near the airport at 7:00 PM to kick off our annual competitive foxhunt.

Once again our own wiley old fox, Arnie, NS8T will appear on the air to tease, cajole and otherwise periodically make his presence known on the air. It will be the job of the teams assembled to locate him by radio direction finding and close in on him. Each team will be competing with the other teams on the hunt. There will be cash prizes awarded to the first three teams to locate the fox. See Foxhunt Rules elsewhere in this issue for complete details.

## *Jim Voss, W8SST Hangs up His EC Hat*

Jim Voss, W8SST has tendered his resignation as Branch County Emergency Coordinator following some serious health problems. Fortunately, Jim is progressing very well and in order to continue his recovery has decided that less stress in his life would be better for him. We certainly cannot argue that even though we will miss his capable leadership. Jim has served with distinction and we all know that he will not be far from what is happening with our club and our community.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Jim for his many years of service.

## Area Hamfests

May 6 Cadillac, MI  
May 19-21 Dayton, OH  
June 3 Hudsonville, MI  
June 4 Chelsea, MI  
June 18 Monroe, MI  
July 16 Van Wert, OH  
Aug 6 Angola, IN

## 2006 Club Contacts

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## *Poor Propagation Torpedoes MI QSO Party*

Nine members of the BCARC made a valiant effort to work the Michigan QSO Party on April but poor propagation conditions made it nearly impossible to work more than just a handful of stations before giving it up about halfway through the contest time period.

While we didn't work many stations, we had an opportunity to play with some antennas and to make use of the club's TS-480 HF/6M rig. The best part was that we had 6 plus hours to yak with other club members about all things radio. Anytime that we can spend an afternoon talking radio with friends is an afternoon well spent. Working a lot of stations would have just been icing on the cake! We will try again next year.

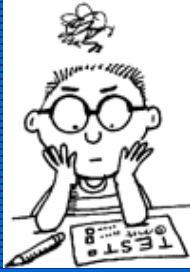
## *2006 Field Day Planned for June 24-25*

The 2006 ARRL Field Day will take place on June 24 and 25. We will be setting up shop at the 911 Center and will have both outdoor and indoor stations in operation.

Once again the rules allow us to make use of fixed antennas provided that they are in place as part of the Emergency Operating Center. Our Tribander and wire antenna fall into that category, so we are spared the "fun" of erecting those antennas on the spot. This also means that our indoor station is in an air conditioned environment and we have yet to spot a mosquito, gnat, or fly hovering around our operating position.

For those who like to brave the elements, we expect to set up an outdoor station complete with all the flying insects associated with June in Michigan. We will do our best to order moderate, dry weather, but we all understand that our order may be on backorder, so we will have to deal with what mother nature gives us. Bring your jacket, hat, sun blocker and insect repellent just in case!

We expect to be on hand at the 911 Center about noon on Saturday, June 24 to get things set up and plan to make the first radio transmissions at 2:00 pm when the contest officially begins. We will operate through the night and will be



## VE Test Session Schedule

### May 13

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Richard H McGuire  
(517)782-1430  
**VEC:** W5YI VEC  
**Location:** Jackson District  
Library  
244 West Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49204

### Jun 17

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Howard W Fuller  
(419)825-5443  
**VEC:** ARRL/VEC  
**Location:** Archbold Police  
Department, 405 E Lutz RD  
Pre-Registration Preferred  
If no answer, call 419-654-4044

### Jun 17

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Richard H McGuire  
(517)782-1430  
**VEC:** W5YI VEC  
**Location:** Jackson District  
Library  
244 West Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49204

### Jul 13

**Sponsor:** Goshen ARC  
**Time:** 7:00 PM (Walk-ins  
allowed)  
**Contact:** Paul F Corey  
(574)262-4414  
**VEC:** ARRL/VEC  
**Location:** Greencroft Retirement  
Center, Homan Building  
Greencroft Blvd  
Goshen, IN 46525

able to operate up to 2:00 pm on Sunday afternoon.

For those who might be hearing about Field Day for the first time, Field Day is an annual operating event whose purpose is to work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio. This gives us a great opportunity to exercise our club station as well as to give us practice setting up a station and antennas from scratch from a makeshift location.

This is a fun event where all hams can get together to have some fun, work some stations on the HF bands (even if you don't have the license to do so on your own!), learn some things about how to operate in less than the best conditions, and spend some serious ham time with your friends.

The complete Field Day rules can be found at:  
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2006/rules-fd-2006.html>.

Please make it a point to stop by at some point during the FD period and say hello, even if you can't stay very long. We will be glad to see you.

Your club will be providing cold drinks and some snacks to help keep us going. See you there!

## *Vanity Callsign Fee Proposed to Drop Slightly*

Vanity call sign fee poised to drop slightly later this year. The FCC wants to reduce the Fiscal Year 2006 regulatory fee to obtain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign to \$20.10 for the 10-year license term. The current vanity fee is \$21.90. The Commission proposed the new fee in a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2006," in MD Docket 06-68, released March 27. If ordered as proposed, the new vanity fee would become effective in August or September. The FCC is obligated to collect nearly \$289 million in regulatory fees during FY 2006 to fund its operations.

Jul 15

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Howard W Fuller  
(419)825-5443  
**VEC:** ARRL/VEC  
**Location:** Archbold Police  
Department,405 E Lutz RD  
Pre-Registration Preferred  
If no answer, call 419-654-4044

Jul 22

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Richard H McGuire  
(517)782-1430  
**VEC:** W5YI VEC  
**Location:** Jackson District  
Library  
244 West Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49204

Aug 19

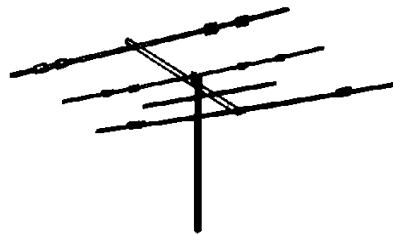
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Comments on the proposed fee schedule are due Friday, April 14. Reply comments are due Friday, April 21. The FCC has projected collecting \$171,188 in vanity call sign fee receipts from 8500 applications in FY 2006.

The vanity call sign fee has assumed somewhat greater significance this year as the renewal window is about to open for the first Amateur Radio licenses assigned vanity call signs in 1996. Applicants who wish to keep their post-1995 vanity call signs must pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee in effect at the time the renewal application reaches the FCC. Any Amateur Radio renewal application may only be filed within 90 days of the license expiration date.

Amateur Radio licensees holding vanity call signs granted prior to 1996 do not have to pay a regulatory fee when renewing. This is because Congress did not begin requiring the FCC to annually recover its regulatory costs until 1993. Additionally, such licensees are not specifically tagged as vanity call sign holders in the ULS. *(Information courtesy of ARRL)*



## DX on the Bands

(info courtesy of ARRL DX Bulletins)

**CYPRUS, 5B.** George, 5B4AGC has been active on 17 and 15 meters around 1440z most days. QSL via G3LNS.

**CHINA, BY.** Several Jiangsu DX Club members will be QRV as BY4RSA/4 from Tianheng Island, IOTA AS-150, from May 1 to 5. They will be active on 160 to 10 meters, including the V/UHF bands, using CW, SSB and satellite. QSL via BA4TB.

**CANARY ISLANDS, EA8.** Michael, EA8/DL3FCG, Lars, EA8/DL6FCB, Reiner, EA8/DL4ZF and Fred, EA8/DL8MG are QRV from Tenerife, IOTA AF-004, with two stations until May 5. QSL to home calls.

**JERSEY, GJ.** Chris, M0DOL is QRV as MJ0DOL until May 4. QSL to home call.

**SOUTH KOREA, HL.** Look for a large group of South Korean

## House Committee Okays Telecoms Bill with BPL-Interference Study Amendment

NEWINGTON, CT, Apr 27, 2006--The US House Energy and Commerce Committee's version of the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement (COPE) Act of 2006 includes an amendment requiring the FCC to study the interference potential of BPL systems. After spending two days marking up (the Ross amendment is No 25) the measure, the panel voted April 26 to send the much-talked-about "telecoms rewrite" bill to the full House for its consideration. "Outstanding news!" was the reaction of ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ.

"This is a major victory for the ARRL," he exulted, noting that the amendment "received significant opposition" from utility companies. Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR (D-AR), proposed the amendment, and, with the support of Committee Chairman Joe Barton (R-TX), the committee agreed by voice vote to include it in the bill.

A year ago, Ross sponsored House Resolution 230 (H Res 230), which calls on the FCC to "reconsider and revise rules governing broadband over power line

amateurs, and possibly others, to be QRV as homecalls/5 from Koje island, IOTA AS-081, from May 4 to 7. Activity will be on 160 to 6 meters using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL to home calls.

**OGASAWARA, JD1.** Hide, JM1LJS plans to be QRV as either JD1BLK or JM1LJS/JD1 from April 30 to May 6. QSL to home call.

**US VIRGIN ISLANDS, KP2.** Randy, ND0C will be QRV in his spare time as NP2/ND0C from St. Thomas, IOTA NA-106, from May 3 to 7. Activity will be on 20 and 15 meters using SSB. QSL direct to home call.

**GUAM, KH2.** Dave, N4ELM is QRV as KH2/N4ELM in his spare time until May 12. Activity is on the HF bands using CW and PSK. QSL direct to home call.

**LITHUANIA, LY.** Special event station LY15A is active during the month of May to celebrate the independence of Lithuania. QSL via LY2ZZ.

**BULGARIA, LZ.** Several members of the Bulgarian Federation of Radio Amateurs will be QRV with special event station LZ06KM from May 1 to 31 to commemorate both the brothers St. Cyril and St. Methodius, founders of the Cyrillic alphabet, and Bulgarian's Culture and Literature Day. QSL via LZ1PJ.

**SUDAN, ST.** ST0RM has been QRV on 17 meters around 1500 and 1900z and 20 meters around 0000z. QSL via T93Y.

**DODECANESE, SV5.** Mort, G2JL is QRV as SV5/G2JL from Lipsi, IOTA EU-001, until May 23 using only CW.

**TURKEY, TA.** Berkin, TA3J is QRV using special call sign YM125ATA until November 10 to mark the 125th birthday of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Activity is on 160 to 10 meters. QSL via TA3YJ.

**RUSSIA, UA.** Special event station RK50SAB will be QRV during the month of May to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the radio club at the Ryazan Radioengineering Academy. QSL via RK3SWB.

**UKRAINE, UR.** Special event station EM20U is QRV to

systems based on a comprehensive evaluation of the interference potential of those systems to public safety services and other licensed radio services." The non-binding resolution has six cosponsors.

"Hundreds of ARRL members who wrote their congressional representatives in support of Rep Ross's H Res 230 helped to achieve this week's success with the COPE Act amendment," Sumner observed.

(Information courtesy of ARRL)



**US Rep Mike Ross,  
WD5DVR, (D-AR)**

Editor's note:

US Representative Joe Schwarz (R-Battle Creek) refused to cosponsor HRes 230. Be sure to vote in the primary election August 8, 2006

### 2005 Fox Hunt Pics



commemorate the Chernobyl nuclear disaster 20 years ago. Activity is on 40, 30 and 20 meters at various times. QSL via UT3UZ.

**SYRIA, YK.** Saad, N5FF plans to be QRV as YK1BA from May 1 to 18 during his stay in Damascus. Activity is on 80 to 10 meters using mainly RTTY, but also with some CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

## *May 2006 Fox Hunt Rules*

- The hunt will commence from the parking lot of the 911 Center at 7:15 PM.
- Hunt timeframe will be a maximum of 1 hour 30 minutes
- The fox will be hidden within a 10-mile radius of the intersection of Marshall and Chicago streets in Coldwater.
- The Fox will be transmitting on 147.550 MHz.
- The Fox will transmit for one minute followed by 4 minutes of silence. All transmissions will take place at 5-minute intervals beginning at 7:15, followed by 7:20, 7:25, etc.
- The Fox may change power settings during the hunt.
- Time synchronization will be available from the Hunt Master prior to the start of the hunt.
- The hidden antenna will have 5 tags attached to or near it that bear numbers 1 through 5.
- When the Fox is located, the team locating it should not mention anything on the air or otherwise tell others where the fox is located.
- As each team finds the Fox, they should discreetly and quietly take the lowest numbered tag and return to the 911 Center and turn the tag over to the Hunt Master. The Hunt Master will write on the tag the time that the tag was received and sign the tag. If a team finds the Fox and there are no tags present, that means that at least 5 others have found the Fox before them.
- The person or team with the number 1 tag will be the winner of the hunt. Runners-up will follow the same procedure and be scored according to the numbered tags that they turn into the Hunt Master.
- Our primary concern during the hunt is for the safety of all participants.



- We will notify the authorities that we are conducting a hunt.
- If you drive slowly or stop your car in or near the roadway, remember to turn on your 4-way flashers in your vehicle.
- Be careful when exiting your car near the flow of traffic.
- Think safety all the time.

**June** In June, the focus of our meeting program will be on Field Day, which takes place on June 24 and 25. Old pictures and newspaper clippings will be part of the show and will be sure to rev you up for this year's Field Day!

**July** In July, our friends from the Ft. Wayne DX Association, Carl, K9LA and Vicky, AE9YL will join us. Carl will compare and contrast ham radio of 1926 with the current state of the art. This will be a program that you will not want to miss!

**August** In August we will hold the second of our annual Fox Hunts. This time, all teams will work together to find the fox. This is tougher than it sounds as last year the hunters were skunked by the fox. Remember, revenge is sweet!

*For Those Pesky Visitors to your Shack...*



**Poken Verboten!**

Achtung alles lookenpeepers.

Dies radiomachinen is nicht fur gefingerpoken und mittengrabben, Is easy schappen der springenwerk, blown fusen und poppen corken mit spitzen sparken. Is nicht fur gewerken by das dumkopfen. Das rubbemecken sightseeren keepen cotten-pickenen hands in das pockets -relaxen und Watch Das Blinken Lights!

**Arrow II Hand Held Portable**  
*If Simple is Good, then this is Truly Simply the Best*

The Boom & Elements have plastic end caps for safety.

The boom is square, but has rounded corners. The shock has a thick black foam grip for easy holding.

**Assembly Instructions**  
 Attach the elements to the boom, by screwing the elements together through the boom. Attach end line to the EMO connector. That's it. The antenna is pre-tuned and ready to go.

**SPECIFICATIONS**  
 No. Elements 3  
 Element spacing is 2 wavelengths.  
 Overall length 100 ft.  
 Minimum Power Required: The antenna is hand held power should be less than 100 Watts.  
 Boom 1 1/2" dia. (T6061 Aluminum)  
 Elements Elexon Aluminum Arrow Shafts  
 Gamma Match, is attached to back of the boom element (comes pre-tuned).  
 Connector, SWR Only.

**Model 146-3**  
 15 or 17 or 21  
 Only \$49.00