SKYWARN TIMES

SKYWARN NET: Fridays @ 9 pm EST,   FREQ: 147.315 MHz, PL-100.0 Hz
NCS: DAVID TORREY, NCS OF THE FRIDAY NIGHT SKYWARN NET 483-4885
PACKET RADIO CHANNEL: 145.090 MHz.
PACKET APRS WX: 144.390 MHz
INTERNET: www.wxspots.com
MARQUETTE NWS: wx8mqt-1 (Use 145.090 Mhz Packet radio - AX.25)
PACKET LINK: c wx8mqt-1 v kwnw   (AX.25 Packet)
SPOTTER'S LINK TO NWS: 1-800-828-8002 (Spotter's only):
SERVING THE 5-COUNTY AREAS OF: Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, Marquette, Ontonagon
--   **NOAA WX**

HOME PAGE IN MARQUETTE: http://www.crh.noaa.gov/mqt/
AMATEUR RADIO STATION IN NEGAUNEE: WX8MQT
METEOROLOGIST-IN-CHARGE: Robin J. Turner: KC8TII (906) 475-5782 EXT. 642
WARNING COORDINATION METEOROLOGIST: Matt Zika , KD8EFY   (906) 475-5782 EXT. 726

NEW: U.P. SKYWARN PAGE (UPDATED AS OF FEB.-2008)
Please check out our newly revised U.P. SKYWARN PAGE. Credit goes to Mike, AA9VI, of Northbrook, IL, who works with us remotely to update these pages. Identical information is found on one of two web pages.

CCRAA (Copper Country Radio Amateur Association):   www.ccraa.net

KCRA: (Keweenaw County Repeater Assocation):   www.kcra-mi.net

A very comprehensive listing of Weather data for the radio amateur and others.   Thanks Mike!

OUR GOAL:
This newsletter published once monthly, at the end of each month is dedicated to all the volunteers who support NOAA weather as radio "hams" who are willing to report weather either by 'phone line, E-Mail, packet radio or by FM voice, amateur radio to the NWS in Negaunee. You provide a good source of weather information that the WSR-88 (Doppler Radar), cannot see, due to the hindrance of the Huron Mountains just east of the Keweenaw Peninsula. Please join us often, on the 147.315 MHz repeater each Friday night at 9 pm EST.

TYPE OF NET:
It is open to all radio amateurs, and especially those amateurs who have already attended one or more of the annual sessions put on by the National Weather Service Office of Negaunee in the Spring of each year.

SPRING-2008 SCHEDULE for SPOTTER TRAINING:
Matthew Zika (WCM for NOAA) and Amateur Operator KD8EFY has announced the new 2008 schedule, and it is printed here in its entirely. All counties of the U.P. will be covered. (We will provide updated information as we receive it.)

MONTH	DAY	DATE	CITY	COUNTY	TIME	LOCATION	BLDG
April		15 Tue	Menominee	MENO	6:30 pm CDT		
April		16 Wed	Houghton	HGTN	6:30 pm EDT	M-T-U	Fisher Hall
April		17 Thu	Ontonagon	ONTN	6:30 pm EDT	Airport	UNK
April		22 Tue	Escanaba	DLTA	6:30 pm EDT	Civic Center	UNK
April		29 Tue	Ironwood	GOGE	6:30 pm CDT	Gogebic Comm. College	Academic
May		5 Mon	Stephenson	MENO	6:30 pm CDT	Upstairs	Amer. Legion
May		8 Thu	Iron Mtn	DKSN	6:30 pm CDT	Sheriff's Ofc	
May		13 Tue	Manistique	SCFT	6:00 pm EDT	SCFT Co. Court House	
May		14 Wed	Newberry	LUCE	6:30 pm EDT	910 Washington Blvd	Luce Co. Amb. Bldg
May		20 Tue	Munising	ALGR	6:30 pm EDT	ALGR Co. Court House	
June		3 Tue	Eagle River	KWNW	6:30 pm EDT	Upstairs Court Room	KWNW Co. Courthouse
UNK	UNK	UNK	Baraga	BRGA	UNK	UNK	UNK
UNK	UNK	UNK	Iron River	IRON	UNK	UNK	UNK
UNK	UNK	UNK	Marquette	MRQT	UNK	UNK	UNK

WXSpots FAQ

Got a weather event in your area? Report it!

What is WXSpots?*WXSpots is a free, Internet based system designed to quickly disseminate observed reports of severe weather.*

What kinds of reports should I submit?*Generally, reports of severe weather as it is occurring, or reports of damage immediately following a storm event should be reported. Different groups and different areas of the country have their own expectations, so you should contact your local coordinator to find out the specific criteria for your area. You can also review the Basic Spotters Field Guide from* www.skywarn.com *for more information.*

I have a weather station. Can that data be automatically sent through WXSpots?*Measured data such as wind speed and rainfall is very welcome during a severe weather event, but should not be sent routinely through the system under normal conditions. For that reason, connecting automated stations to WXSpots is not in the plans at this time. If your wind speed is measured, please mention that in your report though!*

Do I have to be an Amateur Radio operator to use WXSpots?*No, all responsible weather enthusiasts are welcome! One of the biggest assets of this concept is that it enables many more spotters to send observed reports.*

With all the automated data available today, why are observed reports important?*Automated data is extremely valuable, but it doesn't provide a clear picture of what is happening on the ground as a result of severe weather. Actual observed reports are better able to describe specifically and precisely the location and magnitude of storm damage.*

Lyle, AB8CB writes:"I am really looking forward to using this exciting new tool. I retired from the NWS with 28 years of service as a forecaster, and know the importance of real-time reports!"

Is WXSpots intended to replace Amateur Radio SkyWarn communications?*Absolutely not! In a severe weather event, telephone and cable lines break and cell phone systems can lose power or be overwhelmed by demand. Amateur Radio requires virtually no infrastructure, provides communication when nothing else can and is the backbone of emergency communications. In a severe weather event, those directly in the affected area who lose Internet connectivity will be unable to access WXSpots. Amateur Radio is and will continue to be the best option under those circumstances! WXSpots is just another tool in the tool chest for the SkyWarn participant.*

How does WXSpots enhance severe weather communications?

WXSpots provides: - *The ability to disseminate observations quickly and efficiently anywhere.- The ability to add the eyes of SkyWarn enthusiasts who aren't Amateur Radio Operators.- An automated, historical record of recent observations.- The ability to keep tabs on current observations without necessarily being near a radio.- A messaging feature to allow for communication with other members of your organization (and other connected users).*

WXSpots is a tool in the tool chest for those interested in severe weather observations. By it's very nature of dependence on the Internet, it can't provide data from a severely affected area. On the other hand, WXSpots can quickly communicate data from those observers just outside it. It also provides the means to help monitor local severe weather as it unfolds with many more observers able to communicate what they are seeing.

I'm, only interested in severe weather. Can I screen out routine reports?*Yes, WXSpots displays all reports by default, but filtering out routine reports is easy. Just click Settings > Alert and Display Options and then click No under the Display Routine Reports question and you won't see routine reports.*

Who receives the reports I submit?*The reports that you send are distributed to every connected user; however, that doesn't mean everyone sees it. Many users have their Alert and Display Options set to only display reports for their state or county, and others are set to only display severe reports.While weather service offices are welcome to connect to WXSpots, the reality is that they either may not be connected or not have the resources to monitor all the reports flowing through the system. In many cases, the SkyWarn coordinator for your area may review and select reports to forward to NWS by other means as he or she believes appropriate. You should contact your local SkyWarn coordinator to find out how data is being distributed in your area.*

How can WXSpots be used along with over the air reports, especially from mobiles?*One option is to assign one of the stations on the Amateur Radio net that is at home to have the responsibility of entering in field reports for mobile operators. That is the safest option from the mobile operator's perspective.*

I'm only interested in reports for my immediate area. Can I still use WXSpots?*Yes, WXSpots can be easily configured to screen, display and provide alerts for reports for your state, county, or a list of counties.*

Can I use WXSpots to send messages to members of my SkyWarn team?*Yes, WXSpts provides a messaging feature that is easily configurable on the fly. Just add a group name for your organization, and everyone who has entered the name will receive any messages that you send to the group. If your group leaves WXSpots running full time, that is a great way to quickly alert them to developing events.*

I'm excited about WXSpots and I want to help. What can I do? *First, be sure to use the service. The more obervers that we have on line the more valuable it will be. Second, please spread the word! Please visit the* help spread the word *link for ideas to promote WXSpots*

including PowerPoint presentations and sample press release text.

One of the limitations of this system is that all the traffic is funneled through a single server. If the server goes down, WXSpots will not function until the server is back up. Are you going to make the server program available so that individual groups can run their own server? *I would love to, and if WXSpots catches on <u>and time allows</u>, I'll do my best to create a satellite server program. Here are the reasons that I'm not heading in the direction of multiple or local servers right now:1. Severe weather is often happening somewhere, but not everywhere at once. I'm operating under the assumption that for the most part, users will connect to WXSpots when they are expecting severe weather and then disconnect after the storm passes. I know that some users will stay connected, but that will probably be the exception (I certainly may be wrong about this and time will tell). If most users only connect during forecasted severe weather, local servers would sit idle most of the time consuming PCs, IT resources, etc. Since only text is being sent (no graphics or large files), one server can easily handle the type of traffic that we are talking about for many, many thousands of users.*

2. I started WXSpots with the hope that this idea will be a help to the Amateur Radio / SkyWarn community, but it has to be structured in a way that <u>minimizes my support time</u>. For that reason, so far, WXSpots has been designed to run pretty much on "automatic pilot".

In addition to WXSpots, I have a family, "real" job, N3FJP Amateur Radio Logging Software and many other commitments. Running a network of servers and/or supporting the type of questions that running a server will generate is not something that I have the time to take on. Users installing the server software would require a lot more support from me. While I hope to cover my costs for WXSpots through user donations and advertisements, I haven't approached this project with income as the primary focus. To cover my time in server support, I would have to modify the revenue generation strategy.

3. With the single server plan, NWS, EOC, or anyone else for that matter can log in and monitor as currently configured. Remember, the posts can be filtered down to county level. With that filter, it will be as if each county has their own service without the need to spend their time and money on setting up and maintaining a server locally.

4. With all the data collected and distributed at one server, everyone will have access to all the data without overlap and duplication.

That all having been said, since WXSpots is just getting started, it is too soon to tell whether the concept will take hold or not, and how it will be used. If it does continue to grow and there is enough interest in individual groups running their own server locally, I will certainly consider making it available. To cover my support time requirements, I would anticipate implementing an annual licensing fee for the server (the clients would still be free).

Once we see how WXSpots develops, how it is used and the amount of traffic that is handled, we will be in a much better position to decide how best to proceed.

CHECK -INS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY-2008 (5-weeks)

- **Honor Roll: Checked in all five Fridays this month**
-

N8CSE-Gerald-Watton	2
W8FMR-Terry-Laurium	1
• **KD8GBH-David-Dollar Bay**	**5**
• **W8FWG – George-Laurium**	**5**
KD8HRO-Randy-Aura	1
N8HZH-Jon-Dodgeville	2
• **W8KQB – Tom – Pelkie**	**5**
KC8OCK-Al-Ontonagon	1
NU8V-Bill-Atlantic Mine	1
W9VLM-Paul Christensen	1
KC8YDU-Mark-Hancock	2
AA8YF-Ted Trudgeon-Ewen	2
K8YSZ – Gary- Bumbletown	3

Total Checkins for February-2008   31

NEW NOAA RADIO STATION

The tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula in the U.P. will be the location for this new NOAA "All Hazards" weather radio station.

Matt Zika (WCM) of Negaunee has given us these statistics for the new station:
Operating Frequency: 162.500 MHz
Call Sign: WX2513
Power Output: 100Watts
In Service? "As soon as the Canadians agree to an on air test period."
(Matt says he hopes this **will** be within the next few weeks.) This information received on Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008. The Central Region (Kansas City) is coordinating two more stations, one near Crystal Falls and one near Marensico, serving the Central and Western U.P.

SOMEONE SAID, "THAT'S IN THE U.P."

There really is such a place…..It is near the Houghton/Keweenaw County line.
(Virginia…..XYL of W8FWG proves it!)

Gary (K8YSZ) and his XYL (Dianne) meet "Mr. Bear"
Good dining up at Copper Harbor's "Harbor Haus"

EC'S:
AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY COORDINATORS FOR YOUR COUNTY:

Baraga	James O. Phillips	KC8YTW	906-361-2041
Houghton	John C. Swift	N8WAV	906-482-0530
Keweenaw	Gary L. Hansen	K8YSZ	906-337-1436
Ontonagon	Alfred R. Trainer III	KC8OCK	906-884-2973
Marquette	Richard R. Schwenke	N8GBA	906-249-3837

EMERGENCY COORDINATORS FOR YOUR COUNTY (Not "Ham" Radio EC's)

Baraga	Duane Smith	906-524-7240
Houghton	Jack Dueweke	906-482-6400
Keweenaw	Jack Dueweke	906.337-0528
Ontonagon	William Johnson	906.884-6870
Marquette	Theresa Schwalbach	906-475-1134

The Citizen Weather Observer Program (CWOP) is a private-public partnership with three main goals: 1) to collect weather data contributed by citizens; 2) to make these data available for weather services and homeland security; and 3) to provide feedback to the data contributors so that they have the tools to check and improve their data quality. In fact, the web address, wxqa.com, stands for weather quality assurance.

There are over 6,000 registered CWOP members world wide and a graph of the number of North American CWOP stations sending data over the past four days is shown under the older name APRSWXNET. The number of world-wide citizen weather stations sending data through APRS-IS (Internet-Service) is shown for the past 4 years.

CWOP members send their weather data by internet alone and internet-wireless combination to the findU server and then every 15 minutes, the entire data set is sent from the findU server to the NOAA MADIS server. The data are checked for quality and then redistributed to users. There are over 500 different user organizations of mesonet data.

Here is a partial list:

CW5116	Kearsarge	Howard
CW4518	Atlantic Mine	Gordon
CW7966	Houghton	Bill
W8KQB	Pelkie	Tom
CW4865	Pelkie	Gale
CW9114	Big Bay Rd	Douglas
CW5764	Granite Is.	Frank
CW7359	Grand Marais	Grand Marais
CW9193	Paradise	Whitefish
CW5448	Marquette	Bill
CW4331	Negaunee	Thomas
KC9AMX	Marenisco	John
CW9536	Sagola	Bill
CW3768	Garden Corners	Rick
CW4880	Norway	Chris
CW9345	Menominee	Fritz