Nation's Weather 100 Years Old On

When you read Monday's weather forecast, pause just a moment and remember when and how it all began.

For on that day just 100 years ago, President Ulysses G. Grant signed into law a bill by Congress authorizing establishment of a national weather service.

"Later in 1879, the first, practically, automated, synchronous weather observations ever taken in the United States were made by "observers-surgeons" of the Army Signal Service at 24 stations and telegraphed to Washington."

Marquette's Weather Bureau apparently was authorized at the same time, but it wasn't until May 1, 1871, that the station actually was opened to begin taking daily recordings. Today it is a part of a system of approximately 250 first-order stations linked by a nationwide teletype network.

The exact reason for the delay in setting up the Marquette Weather Bureau station is not known, but apparently the Army Signal Service -- the first agency in charge -- had to train its personnel before they could staff a station.

The weather service remained under direction of the Army Signal Service until 1891, when a July 1 transfer was made to the control of the Agriculture Department. Since June 30, 1948, it has been part of the Commerce Department.

F.R. Mueller is meteorologist in charge of the Marquette station, with Emil Ellingson and Earl Hoffman employed as observers for the meteorological staff which spends 16 hours a day taking tests and making observations to tell area residents about present conditions and what kind of weather can be expected.

Automatic recording devices keep track of temperatures, wind velocity and general weather during the eight hours at night when the office is closed.

That's in sharp contrast to earlier days of the Weather Bureau, when such automatic recordings could not be made. Six daily observations were taken in those days.

Only two Weather Bureau stations are located in the Upper Peninsula: at Marquette and Sault Ste. Marie. Others in Michigan are at Alpena, Flint, Muskegon, Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids and Houghton Lake.

Special Events Planned

Special events are scheduled throughout the year in observance of the Weather Bureau's 100th anniversary, according to U.S. Commerce Secretary Charles B. Robb.

He noted that more than 200 years of weather observation and study in this country predates the creation in 1870 of "the Division of Telegrams and Reports for the Benefit of Commerce" (the earliest name for a weather service).

Only 24 years after the Peninsulas landed at Plymouth Rock the Rev. John Carpenius laid a "chapel for the settlement" on the present site of Wilmington, Del., began making systematic weather records. His "diaries" for 1644 and 1645 form the first continuous weather records in what is now the United States.

Other men kept "weather diaries" from time to time, in many parts of the country, including Jefferson in Virginia and George Washington both had a more-than-casual interest in weather studies. Benjamin Franklin kites flying in a thunderstorm is well known, and he was the first to deduce the presence of static electricity.

Hearings For NMU Black Students To Begin Monday

Hearings for 22 black students, charged with breaking university regulations during the sit-in in the office of the dean of students on Dec. 17-18, are scheduled to begin at Northern Michigan University Monday.

The university originally had charged 26 of the students, but six have withdrawn from school since the charges were filed and will not be tried by Northern's judicial process.

According to university rules, the office will be closed to the public, unless the individual being tried requests an open hearing.

David Mengelhmel, chairman of the academic senate, stated that "if the hearings are open, a schedule will be followed for seating of seats, as space is limited." This schedule would allow for attendance of students, eight members of the Black Students Association, eight members of Northern's Student Government, and a majority of the academic senate, three members of the Human Rights Commission and three persons from the university's administration.

Initial hearings will be held from 7:30 to 10 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.