

SwampNet

Summer 2024



Alternative and Autonomous
Communication Networks for
Bulbancha and beyond

www.swampnet.info

SwampNet is a collaborative project to bring alternative and sovereign communications systems to Bvlbancha and across the Gulf South. This zine includes some updates and news for Spring 2024!

Our motivation behind this work is to:

- Support mutual aid distribution and other community based projects in times of emergency, change, and uncertainty
- Consider relations between data, place, and memory
- Rethink relations to communication and digital technologies beyond capitalistic and extractive narratives / conditions

Visit us at www.swampnet.info!

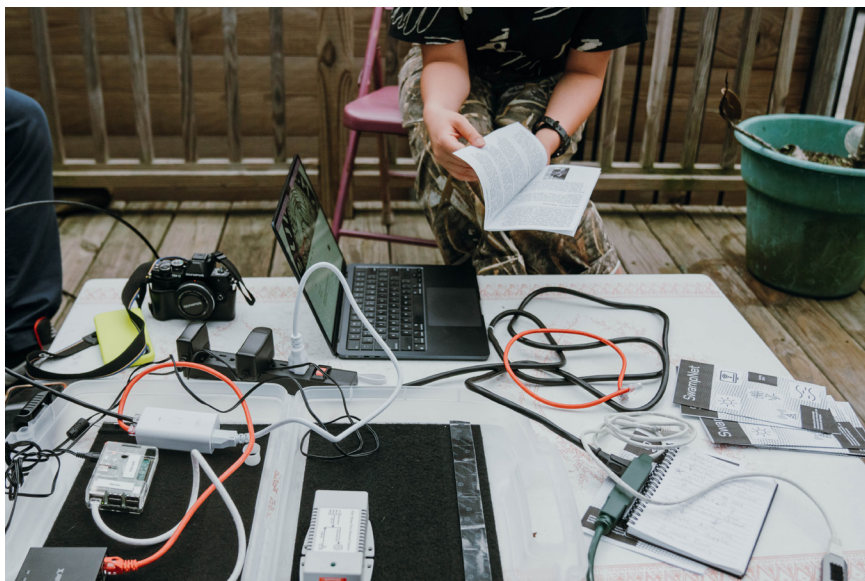


photo by Stephanie Tarrant

Our First Discotech

In early April we hosted our first DiscoTech, a community event to share our ongoing work with others. DiscoTech is short for "Discovering Technology" and comes from the Detroit Digital Justice Coalition. These are events where people can learn and engage with topics around digital technologies, Internet use, and communication infrastructures.

Our DiscoTech was held at Catapult in the Marigny and co-hosted with Bvlbancha Liberation Radio. We had a live broadcast, a solar social, and network demos. The event was in collaboration with the Gulft South Open School & Mondo Bizarro productions Invisible Rivers project.



Antenna at Nanih Bvlbancha

Network testing at Nanih Bvlbancha

In April, we tested our networking kit at the opening for Nanih Bvlbancha, a mound earthwork built and stewarded by an Intertribal collective of artists, educators, researchers, gardeners, herbalists, water protectors, land defenders, and culture keepers. Nanih is the Chahta word for hill and is also used to refer to earthworks. The mound was commissioned as part of Prospect NOLA's Artists of Public Memory series.

Similar mounds can be found across North America and have been constructed by Indigenous peoples for millenia. The location of the mounds follow the routes of rivers and networks of travel, functioning as sites for people to gather for

ceremony, trade, and other cultural activities. Nanih Bvlbancha is a new addition to this very old communication infrastructure.

For the test, we used the mound to place the antenna, not just for visibility, but also because it also happened to be one of the tallest points in the immediate area. In using the earthwork as a point to tether our network antenna, in a way we are continuing the legacy of mounds as sites of communication and connection.

We will be hosting our second DiscoTech "Sunday Signals" at Nanih Bvlbancha on August 25, 2024. During this DiscoTech we will be testing the range of our network to see how far we can send and receive a signal from our network.



View of antenna from the top of Nanih Bvlbancha



Antenna on Cherokee Lands for PME Conference

Portable Networking Kits

In late June, we returned to El Puente in Williamsburg, Brooklyn to attend a follow up workshop with our friends at Community Tech New York (CTNY). At this workshop, we built two more Portable Networking Kits (PNKs) and learned how to configure P2P antennas. The PNK is designed by CTNY to work as a way to extend an existing Internet connection and to also work offline to provide a local wireless network. The PNK is also used as a teaching tool to talk about how the Internet works.

We have since brought the PNKs to help supply Internet connection at the 18th Protecting Mother Earth Conference held by the Indigenous Environmental Network on Cherokee Lands on the Qualla Boundary in Cherokee, NC. The signal was able to be sent and received .25 miles through trees.

In August and September, we will be testing our PNKS in Bvlbancha, the prairie, and the bayou in conjunction with our solar trailers. We will be experimenting with different configurations of setting the network to work across these different landscapes and communities.

Propagation Workshop

In August, we will be hosting our inaugural Propagation Workshop: Seeding and Growing Autonomous Communication Networks. In this workshop, we invite members of community-based organizations to learn, experiment with, and imagine with our networking technologies. Workshop topics include: understanding basic networking concepts, setting up and operating a portable network, and discussing communication strategies for emergencies.



Building new PNKS and testing antennas at CTNY

Want to learn more?
Want to get involved?

We are always interested in
connecting with people to grow our
network and community!

Contact us:
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Visit us:
swampnet.info

