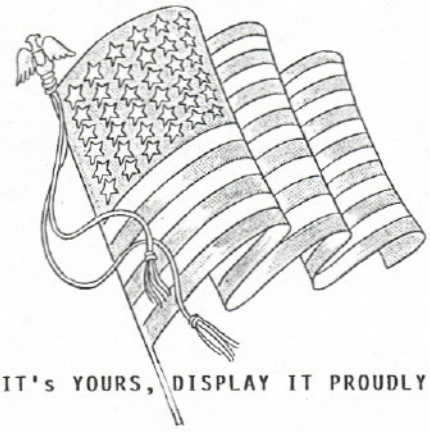
# SPLATTER

This Sardine Wrapper is printed from time to time and distributed to the members of the ***Tamaqua Transmitting Society*** Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

1994 EARLY SPRING ISSUE 1994



IT's YOURS, DISPLAY IT PROUDLY

## LIFE BETWEEN NOVICE AND GENERAL

Contrary to the belief's of that organization in the Northeast, we still condone the Novice Class to be "The Entry Level" into the realm of Amateur Radio. That Northeast organization would rather see a new-comer enter through the portals of No-Code Technician, and with good reason. If you recall in 1984 they were the first to say "NO" to the F.C.C."s suggestion for a No Code class, but in 1991 "Northeast" was the first to impregnate the idea to ye F.C.C. Then it was a good idea.

## OR WAS IT ?

In a recent survey by the RSGB (Radio Society of Great Britain) showed a very negative response. The RSGB has had a No Code license for more that ten years and found it to be a deterrent rather than an asset in getting more licensed operators. It did assist in getting an increase in activity above 30 Mhz. however the negative aspects out numbered any on the positive side.

Senior or Older licensed operators noticed a definite increase in the lack of courtesy, in addition to foul language, along with the lack of technical knowledge.

It was anticipated many of them would see the advantages of getting the higher class license and move onto the H.F. bands. England's HF licenses consist of Class B which is equal to our General class but only 5 WPM code test. Class A equivalent to our Advanced class but with 18 WPM code test.

Continued next page...

## WHERE HAVE WE FAILED



FROM WHERE WE SIT

Year after year as time goes on it seems to us that the concepts and meaning of Amateur Radio has approached a state of progressive deterioration and digression as each day and month pass us by. Perhaps a better approach is required to express my point of view.

There was a time when it was quite an event when someone acquired an Amateur Radio license. I recall our local news paper would print a feature article regarding that persons achievement. It was a time when that person was known to have passed a pretty stiff Federal examination, and that they knew something about Radio. They could tell when their transmitter was not in resonance and if another Amateur gave some friendly advice that something was wrong with your radio signal, you took great pains to correct it.

They took the Law to heart and those 4 - letter words were definitely Taboo. You had to know what plate dissipation was. (Today it's collector dissipation) or you blew up the final amplifier. Resonance was acquired by "Dipping the final plate". Today it is known as "Washing last nights dinner dishes in the sink". So much for being knowledgeable.

The language of Ham Radio was understandable. When you were answered with "Roger", that station was saying "Yes" or he had "Received" your transmission clearly. "QSL" was only used on C.W. to acknowledge that the message sent was received 100% When used on phone transmissions you were asking a station to swap QSL cards with you. To the uninformed, "QSL" does not mean, and it has never meant "YES" . Yikes and shades of T.O.M. My how they murder that "Q" signal today.

Then there was the time when you could determine which station was which. e.g. (heard on the air) "K3SLJ W3TI", end of transmission. Now, if I were unable to recognize the voice of either John or Al, I wouldn't know who was calling whom. What ever happened to those pro-words **"THIS IS" ? ? ?**

How about that signal report you just gave Harry ? "Loud and clear here in Skunk Holler, Harry. You're blowin' my speaker apart". Great for Harry's ego, but if you checked Harry's signal down the valley a mile of so it disappears completely. You see, Harry is using an H.T. which is emitting a whole watt of R.F. to a rubber duckie. That whole watt has just enough R.F. energy to trigger SAM's repeater located ten miles away atop of a 1600 foot hill and is running 150 watts to an 8 db. gain verticle antenna. Let's get realistic fellas. Harry's H.T. "stinks" ! It's because of SAM's repeater that Harry can communicate over the back fence with such a boomin' signal.

The same works in reverse. Harry's H.T. receives all kinds of repeaters in the area. By the same token, Jimmy's H.F. 100 watt "Big Blurb" transciever receives signals loud and clear. However, Harry's H.T. and Jimmy's "Big Blurb" are being run at a disadvantage due to a very inefficient R.F. emitting system, which is best known as a Good Antenna System.

Oh, I could probably go on to fill another dozen pages on how Amateur Radio operating and procedures have changed but we just ask, Where have those operators, that represent any of the above examples, gone awry ? Were they taught wrong from the start ? How experienced was their Elmer ? Did they actually pay attention to their class instructor ? When not sure, did they ask questions ? Then again, how many of these practices filtered thru the cracks by C.B. operations.

True, we could place the blame on the above. But let us not drop it all on the shoulders of our New Hammus Addictae. Remember when you as an Ole' Timer took Harry and Jimmy under your wing and got them started. After he got his license did you continue to inform him right from wrong, or did you drop him and left him to fen for himself ? Did you tell him that a Humma humma humma on an FM signal was a No-no ? Take a look at that license hanging on the wall. Has it been there 20 years or more ? Perhaps you like to gripe about the cruddy operating procedures on the bands today. Ole' Timer, STOP , Think how much time recently have you spent in giving some straight talk to that new operator. True, the new operator must be willing to learn, but in order to learn we must have teachers.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Item 4 in our Constitution's Specific Objectives state, " The TAMAQUA TRANSMITTING SOCIETY News bulletin will be printed from time to time etc. etc., and closes with the statement, "Society members are encouraged to submit items for publication".

The editorial staff was glad to see our newly elected president KB3ATA and the Membership committee chairman WY3K come forward with articles. THey made a start, how about some more ? The SPLATTER staff is always interested in printing new items, or a better way for an old idea. Some one suggested a Swap and Shop column but no one thought to start it out.

Oh ! we know all the excuses. "I don't have a typewriter, or my writing is very poor and hard to understand". BALDERDASH ! Any excuse to wrangle out of it.

You forget, the editor in chief was once a school teacher and can read written or printed English in at least 85 styles of kryptographic english. You might even try for Nr. 86. Oh, I can't speeal too gud. Don't worry, the new typewriter will help us out.

Topic items we do not print are the minutes or activities of meetings unless you wish to brief or make comment on or about a specific subject discussed at a past meeting. Reprints from CQ or QST publications are not used unless some portion is needed as a quote or to utilize it in part to get your point across.

Column space to make comment about past Society events take up valuable space that could be used to inform you of up-coming events. Put your most hair raising story into writing. A comical experience related to Amateur Radio is always good for printing. Use your own judgment, be original, we'll print it.

A valuable point to follow, when writing about an activity always make use of the 5 - W's. e.g.

WHO - is involved. Name the organization,leader, chairman etc.

WHAT - is going to take place. Name the event, e.g. Banquet, Hamfest, picnic, Burger Burning Contest, etc.

WHY - are they going to burn the burgers ?

WHEN - is the time and date they are going to be burned.

WHERE - Don't forget to give the location or no one will show up and you'll have to burn all the Burgers yourself.

If your topic is about a problem or complaint, just don't spout off about said complaint/problem. Take time to enter a few solutions in order to get the reader to thinking on his own. Who knows, between writer and reader you could come to some sort of viable solution. Again be original. Start writing about your pet beef now.

## *Tamaqua Transmitting Society*

### OFFICERS ELECT FOR 1994

Pres. Dave Olsen KB3ATA
V. Pres. Mandy Petrey KA3YZF
Secy-Treas. Al W 3 T I
Activity Mgr. Al Jr. K 3 N Y X
Chaplain, Wayne KA3SID

## LIFE BETWEEN Cont'd.

After ten years it has been very disappointing for the RSGB to see so few making the change over. Those that have ventured forth brought with them many of their CB tactics and previous mentioned traits which has been the cause of malcontent on our DX frequencies. The British Ham for many, many years has been known as the best Rag Chewers and the most courteous operators in Amateur Radio. The addition of these foul mouthed new comers has been just cause for starting a feud in the United Kingdom.

Back on this side of the pond, did you know Canada has had a No code license which began a few years prior to ours in the United States. Very little information has filtered out regarding how well it is working for them because they have been hampered by internal problems. The Department of Communications has been trying for years to dump the process of licensing on to the Amateurs. Amateur Radio also had a problem because of two factions or groups, each trying to out-do the other. Just recently they joined forces and are now known as the C.A.R.L. Canadian Amateur Radio League. Now they have been doing all the paper work regarding Amateur Radio licensing in Canada. Probably within the next year we'll get a report on how well their No Code licensing system is functioning.

As of February 14, 1993 Amateur Radio in the United States has experienced a NO Code Technician license and if you STOP - LOOK and LISTEN, we could be in for the same problems as our brother Amateurs have experienced in England. If it happens in Europe, What will our Ham Bands be like by the year 2000. Again we question,

**QUANTITY or QUALITY**



HE SAY: "BETTER GET NEW SIGNAL BLANKET. YOURS FULL OF CHIRPS AND KEY CLICKS!"

### THIS IS A "WHAT IS IT"

Klop Klop Klop -- Bang !
Klop Klop Klop -- Bang !
Klop Klop Klop -- Bang !
Klop Klop Klop -- Bang !

Find the answer on next page.



# ANTIQUE RADIO



## THE GILLETTE RAZOR BLADE DETECTOR

The recent SPLATTER survey indicated that 53 % of you liked items about Ole' Time Radio, so here's one you might not believe actually took place during those early pioneer days of Wireless, but it did, because ye editor tried it when he was in his teens.

First let us refer to the SPRING 1992 issue of SPLATTER where we described a 75 Year old Amateur Radio Station which included a Loose Coupler crystal detector receiving set which used a Galena type detector. Figure 1 is a reprint of that schematic diagram. For those who keep a file of back issues will notice a modification in the antenna coil connections. A taped inductor should be used to extend the frequency range, in addition to a good ground.

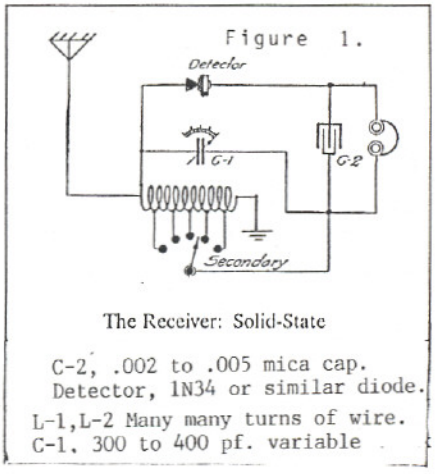
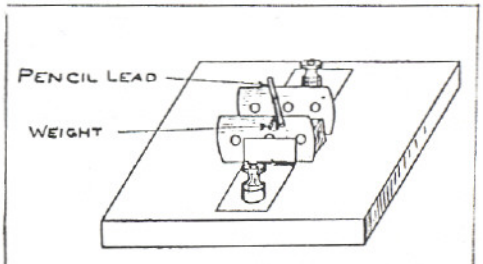



Figure 1.

The Receiver: Solid-State

C-2, .002 to .005 mica cap.
Detector, 1N34 or similar diode.
L-1,L-2 Many many turns of wire.
C-1, 300 to 400 pf. variable

The Galena detector or 1N34 diode is replaced with a "Razor Blade" detector described here. Figure 2 will give you an idea on how to build it. With 2 razor blades, a few blocks of wood, glue, and metal salvaged from a tin can, construct the unit as shown. Don't be afraid to improvise.




A razor-blade imperfect-contact detector,

Figure 2.

Continued next page...4.

## THE Wx FORECAST
### SNOW AND SLEET FOLLOWED BY WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY

By W Y 3 K

The weather is something that each and everyone of us has to live with. There are days when weather events have little or no significant impact on our daily lives, but then there are the days when we dread crawling out of bed and peering out the window to see what Mother Nature has thrown our way. Needless to say the weather during the past few months seemed to be the topic of the day for everyone.

Since we can not escape the effects that the weather has upon us, sure we could fly south for the winter, I thought that a column in the "SPLATTER" that relates to basic weather topics would be of interest to all.

SNOW was one of those bad four letter words for us this past winter. As I am writing this article, it appears that we are still not out of woods. To most of us snow is that terrible white stuff that falls from the sky, causing bad driving conditions and aching backs from moving it from one location to another. Yet we have all commented at sometime or another how beautiful the freshly fallen snow looks.

Here are some interesting facts, many of which we should all remember from our elementary school science classes, about that frozen precipitation know as SNOW.

Snow, which is nothing more than solid precipitation, forms in the upper atmosphere as frozen particles of water vapor. This solid precipitation then falls toward the ground in the form of white or translucent ice crystals of various shapes.

These ice crystals that mass together form flakes of snow. The most common snowflake is the six sided ice crystal known as Columns. Other shapes include Stellars, Plates and Needles.

In water content, about 10 inches of freshly fallen snow equals one inch of rain.

Snow can reach ground level at temperatures as high as 39 degrees F. At these higher temperatures the snow consists of large flakes because the partial melting allows the smaller flakes to stick together. At these higher temperatures the snow compacts easily resulting in a slippery surface. This is the type of snow storm that is common to our area. If the temperature is well below freezing, the snowflakes are small, dry and powdery. Because of the very cold temperatures experienced this winter, we had the opportunity to enjoy the powdery snow that skiers refer to as white champagne.

I hope that as you read this article the onion snow has arrived and has now watered your freshly planted onion sets. There have been many comments made about the Winter of ' 94, but it was summed up best by one of our Society members who said: "Enough is enough. I have shoveled my last shovel of snow. He who put it here will now take away".

## THE PRESIDENTS CORNER

By KB3ATA




It has been a difficult winter for all of us but there still seemed to be a good turnout at each of our early meetings. While I am on the subject of those meetings, let me again thank our Vice President Mandy, KA3YZF for her excellent efforts during my absence.

It is also good to see the continued enthusiasm for our Society but also the noticeable increase in membership. Our new members are reminded that their continued activity is expected. We also impart our thanks to our membership chairman Bob, NZ3W who keeps a running record of individual member activities. Our strength lies in each members participation in all club activities and initiating interesting, new qualified members. All of us should be on the lookout for such individuals.

We congratulate and welcome our newest members, Ernest N3RLS and Mark N3QJP.

Finally, as with all new activity let us all keep looking forward to upgrading our license, and in addition, don't forget to join or renew your ARRL membership via the Society. New members get a $ 5.00 discount and renewals save two bux. See our Society secretary W3TI for additional information. While you're at it, check your DX QSL's. We also have an out-going QSL burough which can save you more money.

## SOCIETY MEETINGS

The regular business meeting is held the first Friday of every month at the Tamaqua Italian Club in Tamaqua, Pa. at 8 p.m. Committee and technical meetings every Wednesday evening. All interested parties are invited to attend.




Did'ja ever notice, The Empty Cans make the loudest NOISE !

## IN CASE YOU'RE INTERESTED

Only a few (3) society members were inquisitive enough to ask, "What is all that extra stuff after our call letters on the SPLATTER address mailing label ?

No, it's not a secret code. X stands for Extra class, A = Advanced, G = General, T+ = Technician II, T = No code Teck, and N for Novice class.

The two digit number is the year you joined the Society. A Ch indicates a charter member who joined prior to 1959. A few are designated as X/c or A/c which shows their license class and the "c" says they receive a complimentary copy of SPLATTER.

In order to maintain ARRL affiliation we must maintain 51 % membership in the league. The ARL/NRL above your name is a running file on this info. Hereafter, when you up-grade, join or drop the ARRL inform ye secretary to change the files and mailing label. de, W3TI Secy

## FROM HERE'n THERE

A thumb nail sketch or one liner about our members Winter activities.

Were you fed up with the snow accumulation this winter ? K3NYX goes out looking for it with one of the Boro's snow plows...Job matters has caused KB3ACB to change QTH's and is planning to attend college come Spring...KA3ABY patiently waiting to see the ground poke thru so he can get started on Spring planting...Has anyone seen the where-abouts of our Chaplain KA3SID or Joe N3LBB ? Hope there're not under a snow bank somewhere...During the bad winter Wx KA3OPX trained his pigeons to come up on the back porch for their meals..Vicky was not to well pleased with the final results...N3HHH and KA3WGF spent the snowy nites on packet, going Ta-pockata - Ta-pockata - Ta-pockata...N3LBM shacked up in Carlisle instead of commuting during the snowy period...KB3ASZ plans to be a VE examiner before Thanksgiving time...WB2YVW burning the mid-nite oil studying for the next big step, General Class...Prexy KB3ATA has his finger nails chewed off up to the third knuckle waiting for the Society Antenna crew to show up...During the snowy season, W3TI accumulated over 25 pounds of scrap steel and aluminum shavings and saw dust in his lab/workshop and after 9 years of N3FXG kibitzing's, finally house cleaned his dark-room and basement workshop. All good things take time...Officially, Spring arrived on March 16 (not the 20th) when KA3WGG broke out of his cocoon and attended the Wednesday Teck session...

Two motorists met on a bridge too narrow to pass. "I never back up for an idiot", yelled one driver. "That's okey", said the other as he shifted into reverse, "I always do".

ANSWER TO "WHAT IS IT"

An Amish Drive-By Shooting.

ANTIQUE RADIO Cont'd.

As previously stated, replace the original detector with the Razor Blades. Salvage the lead from a lead pencil and place it across the vertical edges of the two razors. A point will be reached where rectification takes place and local broadcast stations will be heard in the headphones. A word of caution ! No one is permitted to do the boogie-woogie or rapp dancing while you are trying to find that sensitive spot on the razors edge.

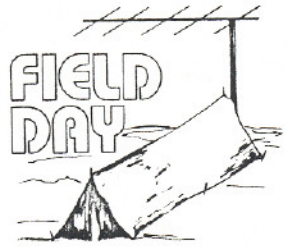
When ye editor made this detector he used the small carbon rod from a discarded carbon-zinc flash light battery. During depression days pencils cost money. Experiment, be original, use various hardness of leads. Use some from that Ever sharp mechanical pencil. You will fine some leads make better detectors.

This Razor Blade detector was first described in the January 1909 issue of Modern Electrics magazine. I didn't know Gillette made razor blades that early. Ye editor read about it in a 1929 issue of Hugo Gernsbacks publication called "The Boy Electrician", which at the time cost ten cents and QST was a quarter. In addition, Crystal, Galena, or Razor Blade detectors receivers do not require any batteries to operate.

FROM the files of W 3 T I

**"SPLATTER" the T.T.S. BULLETIN**

MEMBERS and CLUB SWAP PAPERS tell your friends about us. Permission is granted to reprint any article. Please say you Swiped it from the TAMAQUA TRANSMITTING SOCIETY SPLATTER.




## FIELD DAY '94

Before we take on the subject of Field Day let us begin by informing you that this up-coming Field Day event will in no way be similar to any of our Field Day exercises we've held in the past ten years. Why ? Because right off the bat it will take place at our alternate site. Yes, we have become accustomed to the Still Creek reservoir and the pine tree shaded area. During those years it has served us well but due to numerous modifications to the dam and valve house we won't be able to get into the area.

SOooo - - we move to our alternate site, The Owl Creek reservoir and that means a whole new plan of attack.

1. A different building and station(s) location and set-up.
2. Relocation of antennae, feed lines and power generator set-up.
3. Sleeping tents, kitchen and food accommodations.

And a lot more.

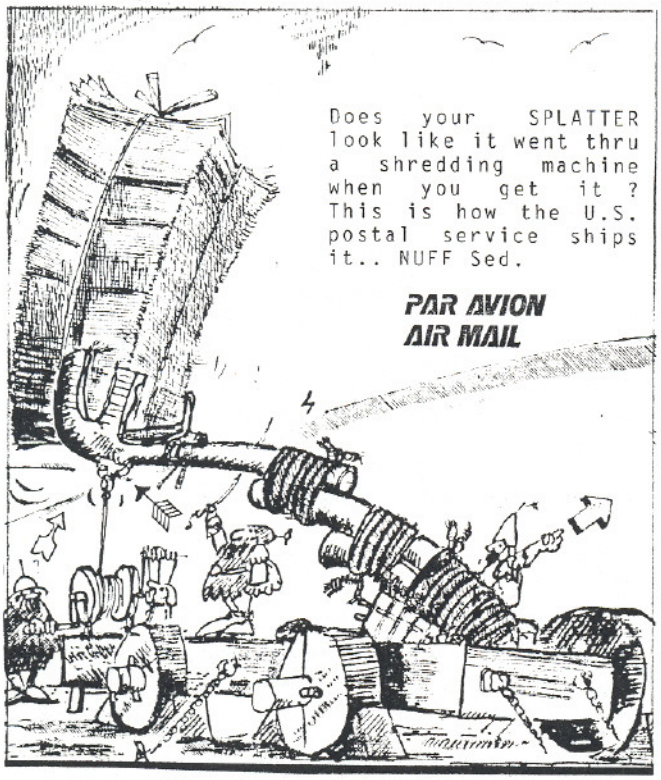
Therefore in order to get a head start on this years event there shall be some paper planing and meetings held in advance. Also a preliminary inspection of the site must be made no later than June 11. With most of the plans laid out at previous committee meetings, the on site session will be a partial work party. Lest we forget, every member is on the Field Day Committee. As always, we'll always come up with a successful Field Day 94. K3NYX - Activities Mgr.



**THE '94 GREAT TOMATO RACE**

Now is the time to get those seeds started for the Great Tomato Race. Last year we had 3 entries, let's try for 4 or better yet, 6 or 8.

This years spectacular event will be held at the September 2nd. meeting. The same ground rules as last year are in affect. Tomato sandwiches will be served after the meeting.




**ANOTHER BUILD-IT ARTICLE**

This project should produce an indispensable piece of test equipment very useful around any Amateur Radio shack or work-shop-lab.

How many times have you had to replace a pilot light in some piece of equipment around the shack but not sure if the lamp is a good one. If your Junk Box is like ours, you collect old pilot lamps from discarded radio's, TV's and what-nots and throw them in a jar of cigar box for future replacement use.

Then comes the time when you need one of those pilot lamps, but the question is..... Which are the good lamps. Fear not, Figure 1 is a simple schematic where by you can test each lamp before inserting it in your Transceiver.

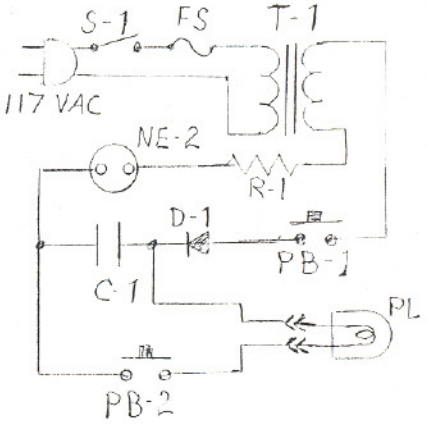



Figure 1.

Parts List:

| | |
|---|---|
| D-1 = 1N1001 diode | PB-1,2 Normally |
| FS = 5 amp fuse | open push button |
| C-1 2000 uf/100 v. | T-1 50 volt Sec. |
| NE 2 Neon bulb | R-1 102 ohm 25 W. |

The unit is very easy to use. Insert the pilot lamp (PL) in the test socket. Turn switch S-1 on. Press push-button (PB-1) and keep depressed until the little neon bulb stops blinking. Let up on PB-1 and press push-button PB-2. If your lamp under test blinks, then it was a good lamp.

If it does'nt blink, go to test #2. Depress PB-1 until the NE-2 stops blinking. Keep PB-1 depressed and push PB-2 simultaneously. If the lamp under test still does not blink, then it is a bad one.

NOTE*** For additional data and information on this tester look it up in the IEEE April 1833 monthly issue of their bulletin. Back issues can usually be found in any public library.

**FAMOUS LAST WORDS**

Don't unplug it. It will only take a moment to fix.
Let's take the short-cut, he can't see us from there.
What happens if you touch these two wires tog.....
We won't need reservations today.....
It's always sunny there around this time of the year....
Don't worry, it's not loa.....
They would never be stupid enough to make him manager....
FIRST AID always comes last.....