File Copy

SPLATTER

THIS BULLETIN IS PRINTED FROM TIME TO TIME AND DISTRIBUTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
TAMAQUA WIRELESS ASSOCIATION
TAMAQUA, PA. 18252

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER SUMMER VACATION ISSUE 1995

Whenever Hams (and for that matter even non-Hams) engage in idle conversation you can bet when we are finished complaining about the weather, the topic will change to the subject of"Time". How many times have you made the comment "If only there were 25 hours in a day" or how about "there isn't enough time in the day to get everything done". Sound familiar ? I know I'm guilty of using these phrases more than once.

"Tempus Fugit" is Latin for "Time Flies". Just so everyone does not think that I am fluent in the Latin language, I'll relate an interesting story about that phrase. When I was young I always enjoyed looking at the Grandfather clocks every time I was in the department store. Once I was asked by a sales person if I had any questions. Of course my answer was no, but I did comment that someday I would like to own one of those Tempus Fugit clocks. Well needless to say the salesperson had a good laugh and I received my first lesson in Latin. Little did I know the phrase which appeared on the face of most clocks was not the manufacturers name.

Now here is a question for those philosophers among us. Why does time appear to fly-by faster and faster as we grow older ? There are still only 24 hours in a day and 365 days a year. Could it be we get involved in more and more activities that requires more of a commitment than during our younger years ? My personal thoughts on this matter, as

Continued next page---

Our Amateur Call Letter System

So you plan to get yourself a Vanity Call ! But what do you know about the Amateur Radio Call letter system. After reading the rules, regs, and requirements to obtain a Vanity Call ye Editor got out the history books and dug up the following. It should enlighten you what a fouled up mess we Amateur Radio people are letting ourselves in for, read on ---



FROM WHERE WE SIT

All Amateur Radio Communications came to a screeching halt on December 8, 1941 when the United States declared war on Japan and for five years our Ham bands were quiet except for military use. Then when peace came the Amateur Fraternity, along with the Amaerican Radio Relay League, pushed Washington D.C. and the F.C.C. for permission to get back and use of the Amateur bands once more. By June 1946, with exception of 160, the rest of the Ham bands had been restored.

The licensing class structure was the same as before the war, class A, B, and C. The "A" ticket gave permission to operate 75 and 20 meter AM phone. Class B and C were permitted phone operation on 160 and ten meters. The F.C.C. was very strict at that time and did not hesitate to site anyone who tried to work frequencies not assigned to class B or C license holders. There was only one style of call letters issued to the three classes, 1 x 3. e.g. W3XYZ. You could find W3AAA, class A operator, W3BBB, class B operator, and W3CCC class C operator all located within a few miles of each other.

1949 was a year of changes in our licensing structure. Class A, B, and C was discarded and replaced with the Extra and General class. The Novice class ticket replaced the class C or Conditional class. The Advanced Class made its arrival in the early 1960's. (Editors note * Got my Extra Class in 1959, there was no Advanced class so went from General to Extra in one hop).

Extra and General call signs remained the same as before, all 1 x 3's, with the exception of Novice which had the N inserted between the W and district number. When the Novice up=graded to General the F.C.C. dropped the N and you ended up with a 1 x 3 call. This system soon began to fall apart when they began to run out of W and K prefix.

Meanwhile F.C.C. went out of the examining business and dropped it into the hands of the Volunteer Examiner Corp and the Amateur fraternity.

Meanwhile the Commission tried their luck to change the call letter distribution system, the one we have today, Whereby group A would be 1 x 2 for Extra class, Group B, 2 x 2 for Advanced class, Group C, 1 x 3 for General/Technician class, and group D, 2 x 3 for the Novice class.

GURRREAT ! Once again our F.C.C. is back on track. If you had a QSO with a 1 x 2 you knew that you were in communications with an Extra class Amateur license holder, **BUT NOT FOR LONG . . .**

Yes ! In the near future you could be having a QSO with the owner of a 1 x 2 call and find out he/she only has a Novice class ticket. How can that be ?

Hopefully by the time you read this the F.C.C. will have the Vanity Call sign system operating. (May 15) I had just received the June issue of QST and low and behold I was amazed at what I read therein. I give it to you word for word right from the Amateur's Journal.

QUOTE: The F.C.C. has made gate one available for Amateurs to obtain formerly held call signs, even if the original call sign doesn't reflect the person's current license class. UN-QUOTE.

Just how would you define that statement ? Yes ! You will soon be in QSO on 20 meter Side Band with W1ZZ who only has a No-Code Teck license. Yes, Mr. Dave Sumner, (K1ZZ) your counterpart, W1ZZ is an available call.

For a number of years ye F.C.C. had a good thing going for them and the Ham fraternity. We could tell by the call what license class he or she was. Within the next five years we'll be back to square one again. Isn't it amazing what politics will do for money, we mean the seventy $$$$$$$.

An Editors Dilemma

Being editor of a radio club bulletin poses a multitude of problems. The Main and numero uno is getting items of general interest for our members. Two years ago the Association joined ARNS, Amateur Radio News Service so ye editor could get some input and ideas that might make our news sheet a little better. We are in the middle of the second year and received 15 ARNS bulletins to date which have given us a few good ideas and some not so good. Shall we say, it left us with mixed emotions. To mention a few.

One writer tells us "Don't print articles in narrow columns". Another says, "Don't print articles that are continued on the next page". "Don't capitalize headlines", "Don't use small print". Don't do this, don't do that !

If we'd listen to all their suggestions our bulletin would look like a Pennsylvania Dutch Patch-work quilt with lots of empty spots. Whereas, we try to compose SPLATTER in such a manner so as to make use of every nook and cranny and fill it with some bit of information.

We swap bulletins with other club editors. Each vary greatly regarding composition. Yet ! They get the necessary points and info across to the membership, which is what a club bulletin is for. Some use large (Pica) type and print strait across the page, 7½ inches (190 mm) others have narrow columns with small print and continued articles and fill up all the nooks and crannies. Some have it done up by a professional print shop, still others are blessed with a few grand worth of specialized computer gear which in turn produces a very nice job. While our Sardine Wrapper is printed on ye ole' Smith Corona and run thru the Xerox printer.

Some print the minutes of every meeting, give scores of contests entered by their members, list DXpeditions and QSL managers, detail word for word what happened at the latest Fox hunt or even quote an article from the latest QST.

[SWAP BULLETIN EDITORS Please Note] THe previous comments are not intended to find fault nor down grade any bulletin or editor.

Our Association tries to print items that are not covered in the monthly Amateur journals. Members interested in DX, Nets and traffic handling, packet or Satalite communications will find them covered in QST or other publications.

The basic fundamentals or objective of our Association does not call for a large membership, but is stated in our Constitution and By laws, "To acquire a group of licensed Amateurs each having a mutual or common interest in Amateur Radio Communication". Whereby observing our primary objective of increased education while having fun and above all, Good Fellowship.

So how does the editor of SPLATTER arrive at some of the items in the bulletin ? The publication tells us to get some input from the members. We didn't need to subscribe to ARNS to tell us that. As an editor, one has to be extremely versatile and have access to numerous inputs, in addition to keeping the ears open at meetings and Association activities. The real answer of course is, get it from the members.

President Cont'd.

we grow older we begin to develop a time-line. What I mean, as the years pass our memory assembles a vast database of events. THen as we reminisce we quickly begin to realize how many years have passed since that event occurred. Here is another phrase used from time to time. "I remember that. I can't believe It happened so long ago. It seems like it was just yesterday".

By now I'm sure you are wondering just what is the moral or objective of this story ? It is actually twofold: First, Time moves on, we cannot stop it, slow it down, or turn it back. At best, we can only attempt to manage it. With all there is to do in Amateur Radio, it is almost impossible to do it all. So let us set our goals, establish our priorities, manage your time so it will become the best at what interests you most. Don't get discouraged if you can't master it all at one time. Remember, when you reach your goal and become the best, manager your time so you can find time to share that knowledge from your goal with others less fortunate in obtaining their goals.

Secondly, You may have noticed by now this is no technical article. It won't help you understand electronics or make you a better operator, but hopefully you will think about improving your time management skills. So, why not try your hand at writing an article for your club bulletin, it doesn't have to be technical. Just submit a few paragraphs about a subject you have been pondering about. I'm sure it will stir-up some interesting discussions and who knows, someone out there just might have the answers for you, give it a try.



The first photograph made in the United States was taken by Samuel F. B. Morse in 1839.



The Great Tomato Race

Lest ye forget, the T.W.A. Great Tomato Race will be held on September 15 following our regular business meeting. Bring your largest tomato or

T_1 = 50 ft. T_2 = 20 ft.

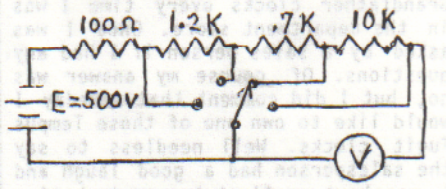
T_3 = The unknown tower height.

$$T_3 = \frac{T_1\,T_2}{T_1 - T_2} = \frac{50 \times 20}{50 - 20} = \frac{1000}{30} =$$

T_3 = 33.3 feet.

As mentioned in previous bulletins, these little Teck-Quiz's are not intended as a check on how well educated you might be in electronics or Amateur Radio practices, but rather as a review and to reinforce our radio and technical knowledge.

For your next brain buster, work on this one. With the rotary tap switch in the position shown, what is the voltage reading on the meter



Complaint Dept.

It has been brought to the attention of the Circulation and Mailing department that the staples used on this Sardine Wrapper are made from recycled armor plate and as a result has caused broken finger nails and minor finger tip injuries. Hence, in order to avoid any liability suites the mailing department will use a gummed sticker on future issues of SPLATTER. Hopefully it won't gum up the post office cancelling machine. Editor...

DUNNER UND BLITZEN
(translation)
THUNDER and LIGHTNING

By W3TI

The time was Monday evening into early Tuesday morning of July 4 th. 1995 between 11:15 p.m. and 12:45 a.m., A thunder storm passed thru the eastern portion of Schuylkill county, and from information gathered a similar storm was experienced at various times in all neighboring counties, Dauphin, Lehigh, Carbon, and Luzern. The thunder was a continuous roar which reminded one of a military barrage of canon fire. The lightning flashes were non-ending which lit the sky almost like day light and lasted for more than an hour. There were a few strikes very close but the balance seemed to surround us in a complete circle.

Later on Tuesday morning accounts and information about the storm was the topic of discussion all up and down the 75 meter band with additional data filtering in on two meters, each story accounting for wide spread destruction. All was not from the strong wind but due to lightning strikes.

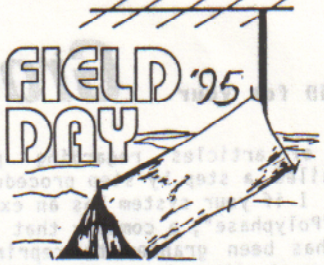
Amateur stations in Harrisburg, Williamsport, Wilkes Barre, Hazleton, Pottsville, Mcadoo, Jim Thorpe, and Orwigsburg, just to name a few, had encountered lightning damage. To my knowledge the only strike in Tamaqua area was to the local fire alarm system which required a replacement line fuse.

This brings us to the objective for this article. Previous editions of SPLATTER had articles on Amateur Radio Station Grounding Systems with another printed else where in this issue. From the statement made in the previous paragraph we are not condoning that the Ham shacks in Tamaqua have perfect ground systems. The point we would like to stress is that you should take some time out and take a closer look at your own shack grounding system. Any additional improvement could make a difference. A stray static charge from a close strike could be bled away by good grounding. Nothing can be done about the destruction from a direct hit, but a good system would definitely bleed a portion off to ground and reduce the amount of damage. One $allor worth of prevention would be worth Thouand later.

While writing this article the pony express dropped off another interesting six page bulletin from PolyPhaser with one article on Tower grounds and another on power line SID Silicon Avalanche Diode or Glitch protector as we call it. It could make interesting reading for those with towers.

Officers of the TAMAQUA WIRELESS ASSOCIATION

WY3K President
KA3WGG Vice Pres.
W3TI Secy.-Treas.
K3NYX Activities Mgr.



Our recent editorial shed some light on "Why Field Day". Our T.W.A. F.D. went off without a Hitch, Glitch, or Bitch. Here are some quotes from those attending.

(KB3ACB) "I finally got to make my first on-the-air contact"

(KB3ACD) "If you didn't have a good time it was nobodies fault but your own, or you didn't attend"

(WY3K) "Would you believe it, this is my wedding anniversary and I'm at Field Day, The wife will kill me"

(K3KNL) "Every one had plenty of operating time" [editor] Mike is very soft spoken and shy, but a Turrific operator.

(KB3ABY) "I learn something new every year"

(W3TI) "WOW ! What an 80 meter antenna"

(K3NB) Famous last words "DO you think it'll work"

(AA3AJ) "These vacuum toobe rigs seem to put out more power than my Brand "K" transistorized job"

(N3HHH) "I hate to leave you fellas but I gotta go to work"

(AA3DZ) "I can't understand why the power supply circuit breaker keeps kickin out"

(NI3H) 8 a.m. "Time out for some Skinny Dippin" He only had a 7 million gallon swimming pool.

(K3NYX) "It was great to be awakened at 7 a.m. to the smell of bacon frying, eggs and home fried spuds" [editor] He wanted an Old Fashion Field Day and got it for his birthday which always falls on Field Day week end.

In so far as the technical aspects there were two stations manned around the clock to make 1235 QSO's. Bands used were 80, 75, 40, and 20 meters. Not counting the press who interviewed the operators and took photos, we only had 12 operators attendance which averages out to 102.9 contacts per member. At least that is what my slide rule reads.

While wrapping things up Sunday afternoon the gang was already making plans for Field Day 1996.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
By Activities Mgr. K3NYX

A judiciary meeting is held every 3rd. Wednesday of the month. Committee and Teck sessions are held every 1st. 2nd. 4th. and 5th Wednesday evenings.

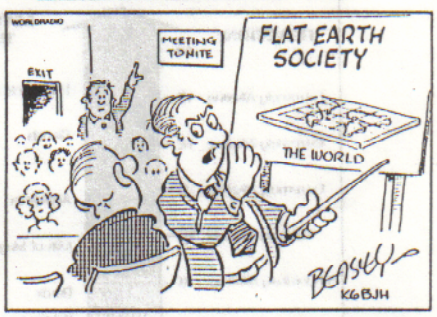
August 5. FCC Exams by the VE Team. Tamaqua Municipal Building.
August 18. Club meeting. American Hose Fire Co.
August 20. Annual Club picnic.
September 15. Club meeting American Hose Fire Co. and Great Tomato Race.
October 20. Club meeting American Hose Fire Co. Nomination of officers for 1996.
October 31. Tamaqua Annual Halloween parade.
November 4. FCC Exams by the VE team at The Tamaqua Municipal Building.
November 17. Club meeting. American Hose Fire Co. Election of officers for 1996.
December 15. Club meeting American Hose Fire Co. Installation of officers for 1996.

The TWA, as always, has additional activities that pop up between bulletin announcements. Attend the meetings regularly to keep your activity calendar up to date.

VOLUNTEER EXAM DATES

The Tamaqua Wireless Exam team will give Novice, Technician, General, Advanced and Extra exams at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 9 a.m. on the following dates.

August 5 - November 4



We better start keeping Hams out'a here...This guy wants to know if the Earth is flat. Why isn't every Radio transmission line-of-sight ?

Tamaqua Wireless Asso. Membership July 1, 1995

W3TI	X	Allen R. Breiner	212 Race Street	Tamaqua	18252
K3NYX	T+	Allen R. Breiner Jr	127 Market street	Tamaqua	18252
K3NB	X	Dave Evans	18 N. Balliet St.	Frackville	17931
K3KNL	A	Mike Cuttic	750 West Pine St.	Frackville	17931
NI3H	X	Dave Christ	406 Pine Street	Tamaqua	18252
KA3WGF	X	Jim Graver	327 Thirwell Ave.	Hazleton	18201
KA3WGG	A	Albert Larichiuta	RD 1, Box 100	New Ringgold	17960
KB3ABY	G	Anthony Sfarra Sr.	RD 2, Box 225	New Ringgold	17960
KB3ACB	T+	Jeffrey Kunkel	R D 1, Box 1008	Tamaqua	18252
KA3FUL	G	Gary Fleichut	803 Norwegian St.	Pottsville	17901
AA3CU	X	William Petrey	130 Park Place	Mahanoy City	17948
KB3ATA	G	David Olsen	P.O. Box 2156	Hazleton	18201
WY3K	X	William Dale Jr	RD 3 Box 56	Tamaqua	18252
N3FXG	T+	Evelyn A. Breiner	212 Race Street	Tamaqua	18252
KB3ABY	T+	Ed Boerner	210 Penn Street	Tamaqua	18252
N3LBM	T	Andy Catchmark-Comp	RD 2 Box 2725	Pottsville	17901
KB3ACD	T+	Ed Sheganoski	P O Box 93	Maizeville	17949
N3HHH	G	Andy Hitzel	R D 4, Box 4025	Pottsville	17901

TESTING the GROUND for your Grounding SYSTEM

This is the third in a series of articles regarding proper grounding of your Amateur station equipment. The first article detailed a step by step procedure for measuring the resistance of your ground. The second was curing R F I if your system has an exceptionally long ground (lead) wire. Third of this series is a reprint from "Polyphase", a company that designs and makes grounding systems and lightning arresters. Permission has been granted to reprint and distribute any of their bulletin material. Should it by chance prevent the destruction of valuable electronic equipment and most importantly, prevent electric shock or even death by lightning. Then our efforts would not have been in vain. W3TI editor.

Do You Know Your Soil's pH?

When constructing a tower, soil analysis should be done to determine the structural integrity. But do you know that both soil resistivity and pH can also be done at minimal cost?

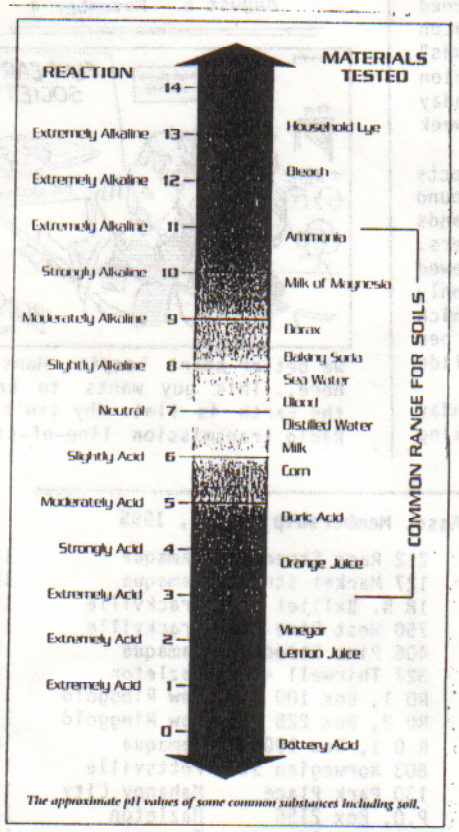
Knowing soil resistivity is helpful in designing the grounding system while the pH can determine what materials should be used for maximum longevity. Copper is the most often used material for grounding. Copper is attacked by acids which have a pH of less than 7. Most soils east of the Mississippi range from pH 7 (neutral) to less than pH 4. West of the Mississippi, generally the soil pH is higher (alkaline) than pH 7. Copper in Western soil will last a long time.

It is interesting to note that aluminum is not used in the Eastern United States, yet it is not attacked by acids. It would, however, be attacked by Western alkaline soils. Acidity in soils is a result of the natural processes of weathering under humid conditions. In areas of high rainfall, soluble salts and colloidal bases are removed from the soil which results in increased acidity. The amount of acidity is a function of rainfall, drainage, vegetation and the nature of the soil present.

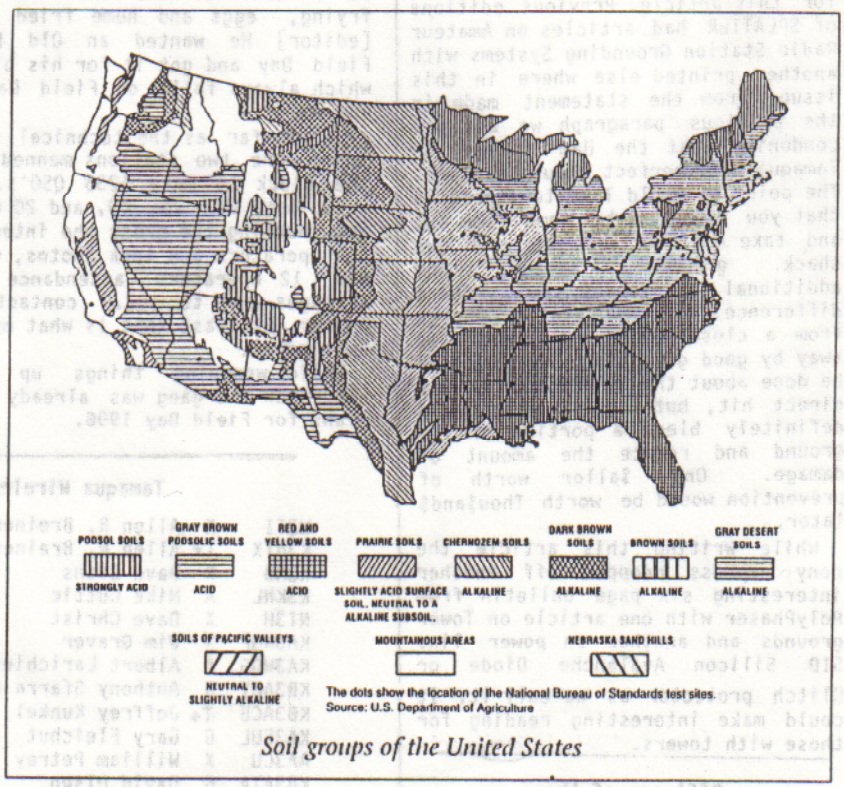
Soil Testing Steps

Testing soil pH at an existing site is simple. You will need a swimming pool pH tester, some clean cloth, a glass and distilled water. Take one teaspoon of soil at your grounding system depth. Place in a clean glass and add water to cover the sample by 1 inch and mix well with the spoon. Let sit for ten minutes, then, keeping the sediment in the glass, strain the liquid through a double or triple thickness of the clean cloth into the pool tester container as per the test equipment's instructions. Test normally. This should provide a course level of soil pH.

If you have a pH of 4 and are using copper, the soil will make the materials short lived. Typically, good ground rods only have about 0.02 inch of copper cladding. Additionally, corrosion or galvanic (mixed metal unions) will also reduce the life of a metal in soil. Knowing the soil pH is a start to determining how long your grounding system will last. ■



The approximate pH values of some common substances including soil.



Soil groups of the United States

"I've gone where the hand of man has never set foot"
By Samuel Goldwyn.

"Are you any relation to your brother Marv ? "
By a TV sports commentator.

TAMAQUA WIRELESS ASSOCIATION



Annual Family Picnic

Sunday August 20, 1 p.m. till ? ? ?
Rain date August 27th.

Our July meeting brought forth numerous versions regarding "What is a Picnic"? Also ideas as to what the T W A Family picnic should consist of. Webster defines "Picnic" A pleasure outing at which a meal is eaten outdoors.

The "Pleasure" part at our affair are many, to name a few; Volly ball, 2 meter QSO's, Side-line QSO's (eyeball style), group discussion, Horse Shoe pitchin', 7-11 game (bring a prize) we might even have a watermellon contest, plus more...

The "Meal eaten outdoors" from the past has changed a bit. During the 60's, 70's, and 80's each family brought a picnic basket and everyone spread it out on a long table (50 feet) and at meal time you could go around the table and sample every one's set-up. It was a joint affair where everybody shared what they had. During the 80's the club supplied corn-on-the-cob enjoyed by all. Last year 1994, Hot dogs and burgers were added to the list supplied by the Association. Liquid refreshment has always been supplied by the club.

After the brief history lesson, let's bring you up to date. Sixty-five percent of the membership made the unanimous decision the T W A picnic be funded from the Association's treasury.

The committee will have Hamburgers, Hot Dawgs, Cobby corn, Soft drinks and Beer. **Any and All** additional food will have to be supplied by each individual family, or as in the past **Bring your own picnic basket.**

CHECK LIST You supply the pencil

( ) Complete the registration form
( ) Stuff in an envelope
( ) Mail it or deliver it
( ) Wrap up a prize for the 7-11 game
( ) Pack a picnic lunch
( ) ZIGGY out to the picnic

THE HEAD COUNT



Similar to last year, the committee MUST know in advance how many members plus family to prepare for. If you plan to attend this Gala event **You Must, You Must** (we repeat) **YOU MUST** return the family registration form shown below. The committee must have it on or before Saturday August 12.

---------- Cut along dotted line ----------

Return this portion before Saturday August 12.
Too:Jeff Kunkel KB3ACB Committee Chairman
R D 1, Box 1008
Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

I have checked off the information below and plan to arrive around _____ p.m.

☐ Husband
☐ Wife
☐ Girl Friend
☐ I'll have a prize for the 7-11 game
☐ Soda pop drinkers (number)
☐ Beer Drinkers (number)
☐ Children (number)

Members name _____