SPLATTER

This Bulletin is printed from time to time and distributed to the members
Of the Tamaqua Wireless Association

November - December | Holiday Issue | 1997

A Word from the V.P.

By W3ZHW



An emergency trip to Hershey Medical Center gave me a chance to stay off my feet and confined to bed for a few days. That is what prevented me from attending the Tamaqua Halloween parade exercise and the resent SET Berwick evacuation drill . However , it did give me time to monitor all the activity from the comforts of my bedside.

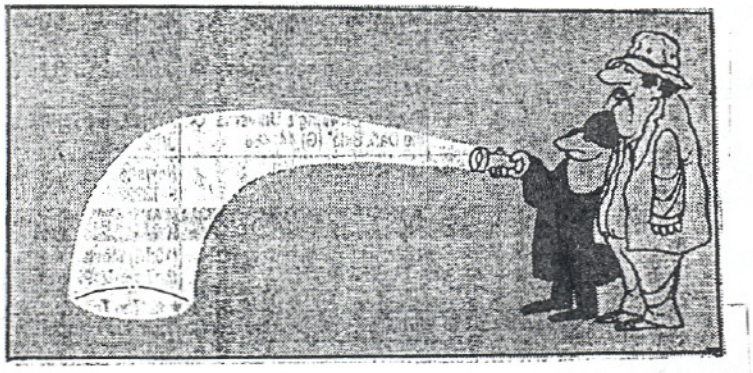
Signals from the Tamaqua Municipal building, Marion and Tamaqua High schools were all 5-9 good copy as I lay there taking notes and listening. But, I couldn't help wonder, what would really happen if all of our land line wire and radio communications suddenly went kaput. Would we still be able to communicate ? If so, How ?

At night a blinking light would work and wigwag signal flags would suffice during daylight hours. It works for inter-ship message handling at sea and the Boy Scouts still practice it.

Have you ever given some thought to that possibility. It may be old fashion so don't knock it. It could work with a little practice and training. They are trying to tell us that Morse code is obsolete but it still gets through when all other communication modes fail so why not signal flags ? Anyone interested in a short course in Wigwags ?

Heads up gang, ideas are beginning to fly so get ready to duck. This is my first attempt to write for the bulletin. I guess you thought I wasn't interested.

Editors Note - You'll be hearing a lot more from Ed. He's our el presidente for 1998 and very active in club functions. Why not give him a treat and attend the club meetings.



Bill, I think your batteries are getting weak

Volunteers Anyone !



When one reaches a certain age in life they seem to reminisce or get into that "Nostalgia Kick", like, "I can remember when- - - ", or , "I can recall when we had - - -" etc. Yes, this is definitely indicative that old age is creeping into one's memory cells. As editor for this rag you get many many articles that have been fostered from previous activities and club functions. That saying made many times by a former member of the club "Nobody's that Old ", ah YES, there is. Just go take a look in the mirror and what do you see !

The youngest member in our group is around 23 and licensed about 5 years. The elder are in their 60's and 70's and licensed between 35 to 45 years. Now let's backtrack about 15 years whenever there were activities planed by the club we could always count on at least 80 % were willing to lend a hand.

But my how times have changed. Those who attended Field Day this year know exactly what I'm talking about. From another area, a large club in the Lehigh Valley has to scratch their annual Hamfest due to lack of members to run it. A neighboring club had barely enough workers to handle car parking at one of their public service functions. Tamaqua Amateurs have been assisting 30 years with the annual Halloween parade. This year there were not enough member turn-out to cover the main spots. Other years we always had more that enough but were always put to good use.

The county ARES/RACES Nuclear plant evacuation drill experienced the same results. What is everyone waiting for ? If the real thing should ever happen we'll have all kind'a do-good-nix poppin' out of the wood work who can't talk into the microphone properly. The Grave-Dig scavenger hunt has only been one of our activities for three years. This year there were not enough operators to man each check point.

Just what is happening to us ? It's not leadership because you always see the same ones on the organizing list. As I have just illustrated, it is not just our group. It's happening all over. Volunteer fire company's are having the same problem.

Usually when we write an editorial we always offer some sort of solution but in this case we're at a loss for words. Do you have the answer. Perhaps we should take another look in the mirror. Do you remember the article we printed about three years ago about **Eddie Everybody, Sam Somebody , Al Nobody,** and **Bill Anybody.**

The club had an important project and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it. When **Nobody** did it **Everybody** got angry because it was **Everybody's** job. **Everybody** thought that **Somebody** would do it but didn't realize that **Nobody** would do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody when Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done it in the first place.

Does this remind you of someone . 73

Behind the Diamond

By W3TI



I was questioned recently when club members could expect to be covered by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997. Details of that item were covered in a back issue of Splatter. For those members who have received one or more Field Service appointments should have received the Field Forum publication from ARRL a few weeks ago. Complete details are given on page 6. In brief, for those few who have not received that publication. President Clinton signed it into law on June 18. The Law known as Public Law 105-19 became effective September 16, 1997.

The FCC has revised the 610 license application and renewal form. Be advised after January 1, 1998 FCC will no longer accept any old 610 forms. Those, which carry the edition date September 1997, are the only one's accepted. Use all those old 610 forms to stoke up the fireplace this winter.

A few weeks ago I was privileged to be a guest of a large club. There were more than 100 members in attendance. One of their greatest concerns was Hamfests. For openers, they, as well as other Hamfest groups have noticed a continuing decline in their attendance over the past two - three years. If you have attended as many such affairs as I have, then you should have noticed the same. Even the number of tailgaters has dwindled and no one seems to come up with the answer "WHY".

Some possible answers could be ; (1) No one is building hamgear anymore. (2) The state of the economy, nobody has the bux to spend. (3) State of the art equipment today doesn't break down as often as the old tube equipment did. And as a final note, The newer breed of amateur is in a rut and not advancing as rapidly as previous years, hence, no need for upgraded equipment. Perhaps you may have other reasons and answers to the problem. We'd like to hear them and so would the clubs running Hamfests.

I am receiving the 1998 listing of Hamfest in our Section and at present none of the regulars have canceled for next year. Let's see how the turnout will be in '98.

ON THANK YOUS, HEARTFELT:

I cannot tell you how grateful I am—I am filled with humidity.

Gib Lewis, speaker of the Texas House of Representatives

With the A R E S

By WY3 K

I was undecided as to the title for this article, "Food for Thought " or "Where Do We Go From Here ". As you read on you will soon discover this is not much of an ARES article, but I hope you do not view it as a message from a sour grape.

October was a very busy month for a few, and I mean a few amateurs. Unless of course you were busy sitting back in your easy chair listening to "The Few" amateurs trying to provide communications for all of the various events of the month.

One of the reasons I feel a bit guilty about writing this article is, for the most part the people who will be reading it, are among the ranks of those "Few" amateurs who are always there to help when help is required.

Although we got each job done, it was a tremendous burden on a "Few" individuals. So, "Where Do We Go From Here ?". It doesn't take long before the "Few" become even "Fewer" because of mental fatigue and the increased responsibilities for each exercise.

It seems almost everywhere we turn the "Few" are becoming "Fewer". Club meeting attendance is down. There are times when we have a problem even getting a qorm in order to conduct the club's business. Attendance of V.E.'s at testing sessions is down. The test session for November was almost canceled due to lacking one VE. A telephone call rectified that problem. We were hurting this year with assistance for the annual Halloween parade. We could have used three additional operators. The Tuesday night ARES net is becoming a ghost town (*net*) . I'll say it again, participation in public service events is becoming as torturous as a trip to the dentist.

Now comes the "Food For Thought". Are we doing something wrong ? Are we missing the boat ? Do we need to turn to other types of activities to rekindle the interests ? At this point your guess is as good as mine, or do you have the answer ? We'd appreciate hearing your side of the problem.

In closing, I do want to thank the "Few" for their continued support and I guess we'll just have to wait and see as to "Where Do We Go From Here".

ON ATHLETES, UNUSUAL TALENTS OF:

Arnie [Palmer], usually a great putter, seems to be having trouble with his long putt. However he has no trouble dropping his shorts.

golf broadcaster on the air during a tournament

TWA 1998 Officers

The following members were nominated as officers for the Association next year.
President W3ZHW, V. Pres. KB3ABY, Secy-Treas. W3TI and Activity Manager KB3ACB. There being no contested offices, they will be elected by acclamation at the November meeting.

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Member Evaluation

The following is a self evaluation of your Amateur Radio activities for the year 1997. Keep score in the column provided and see how active an asset you were to the club.

1. There were 10 club meetings (*none in July*) Add 5 points for each meeting you attended Score [ ]
2. There were 9 ARES instruction sessions.
   (*none in June or November*)
   Add 10 points each Score [ ]
3. We had 4 VE test sessions. 5 points each [ ]
4. Field Day (2 days) 5 points each day [ ]
5. Tuscarora Fly club impound , 5 points [ ]
   97' Grave Dig Hunt 5 points [ ]
   Tamaqua Halloween Parade 5 points [ ]
   PP-L Evacuation Drill 5 points [ ]
6. There were more than 25 Hamfests. Take 5 points for each you attended .
   (*No more than 30 points*) [ ]
7. Other Ham club meetings attended
   Take one (1) point each meeting Score [ ]

The following items will give you credit for legal excuses for not attending club functions.

8. Birthday parties and Weddings
   (1) point each (*Maximum 5*) [ ]
9. Bar Mitz -Vah's and Wedding Anniversaries.
   (1) point each (*Maximum 5*) [ ]
10. Funerals, Surgical operations, Jury duty
    (1) point each (*Maximum 5*) [ ]

How did you do . Total Score _____

If you scored 350 or more, you probably don't get much sleep because you're always on the radio.

If your score was between 150 and 200, either you attend all the meetings and no activities , or --- all the activities and no meetings.

If you scored 100 or less, start thinking about taking up stamp collecting or bird watching . Those with a score around 300 , you're a pretty active member. We need more like you. The main purpose for this evaluation was to show you just how many activities our club participates in each year, and is not intended to point any fingers for non-participation. We all have our priorities

A TWA Christmas

Swiped and modified from another bulletin

T'was the nite before Christmas and all thru the Shack
Not a creature was stirring, not even a rat
Our stockings were hung by the chimney with care
With hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there
The item I had asked for was not very big
Only an All band solid state synthesized rig
Then about mid-nite , to the window I went
To check on the arrival of that fat bewiskered gent.
And what to my wandering eyes should appear
A tiny red sled pulled by eight tiny reindeer .
I noticed the fat gent was taking a snooze
In his right hand was a half-empty bottle of booze.
With no one to guide them on this cold winter night,
The reindeer first staggered left , and then to the right.
They start heading for our house and I wanted to scream
The sled just knocked over my tri-bander beam
The racket they made as they came to rest on my roof
Just managed wake up that fat pudgy goof.
When he stepped from the sled he fell flat on his face,
And scattered the presents all over the place !
Then he picked out one package intended for me
containing a Kenwood 23 Channel CB.
I shook my fist at him as he drove out of sight
Merry Christmas Good Buddy 10-100 and Good Night



T W A Christmas Party

The final TWA activity for the year will take place **6:30 p.m. Saturday December 13 at Marthas Place.** Same location as last year. Please be on time to give the cook a break in making up your order.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING TWICE

1. Reservations **MUST** be made before December 6.
2.. This is the only notice you will receive .
3. Reservations can be made by calling the President, KB3ABY at 386-5206, Vice Pres. W3ZHW at 622-3874, or Secy. at 668-3098. Let us know how many will be with you. We must have a head count by Dec. 6th.

Will we have the pleasure of seeing you at the Party ?

- -

The greatest gift we can give to others is a good example

The secret of getting ahead is getting started

To Charge- Or Not to Charge

By W3TI

This article is intended for those who feel the Hand-held transceiver is the ultimate in amateur radio communicating devices. (*The editor has other thoughts on this device.*) It seems every new operator must have an HT and after investing a few C-Notes find it does NOT make two-way contact with stations in Gold Coast, South Africa or the hinterlands of Australia. Another point that was not driven home before making the purchase is the fact that it runs on batteries and batteries have that inherent tendency to discharge and do so sooner then you think.

We have now illustrated step Number (1) Purchasing and Step number (2) Battery discharge. Now you go to step # 3 and plug the unit into the charger that came in the box with the HT. You do like the instructions say and leave it on charge overnight (approximately 12 to 15 hours. The next day your HT is perkin' like a good fella again. Step # 4 .Right about now ye ole gray matter goes into overdrive and tells you, "I shouldn't let the battery discharge all the way" I'll use it today and before I retire (*In case you don't know– that means go to bed*) I'll put it back on charge and have a fully charged HT again tomorrow. For the time being that seems to work fine, Step # 5, if we continue to do that we'll be assured of a charged battery in the HT every day.

You're young and have a good memory so you keep applying step # 3 and # 4. Hey ! this HT is doing fine and I'm getting excellent results. This goes on for three, four, mebe six weeks and one day around 2 p.m. you are right in the middle of a QSO with your girl friend and that umpteen hunert bux HT just up and quits on you. Now waa hoppen ? "I know I charged it last night, Maybe It wasn't on long enough". I'll put it on charge now and give it a few extra hours overnight. That should clear it up.

WRONG my friend. That excellent memory of yours has just been matched by the Ni-Cad battery memory. The first day, for example, you only used about 45 % of the full charge leaving 55 % charge left in the battery. The next day you only used 30 % leaving 70 %. What this means your charger only needed to replace a charge of 45 % then 30 % . In the days and weeks that followed you only used up about 25 to 30 percent of the fully charged batery. The battery remembered you didn't use the whole charge so it decided to recharge only that portion that was used. Shall we go on. Sooner then you think you'll be down to an hours use before the battery is ousgersphieled.

I guess by now we've got your attention. How does one cure such a problem. Step # 1. You must completely discharge the battery, down to 1 or 2 volts. Leaving the HT turned on will not accomplish this. It will only discharge down to the memory voltage of the cells. First disconnect the battery from the HT. Then devise some sort of resistive load to discharge the balance of the battery voltage. HT battery packs are usually 10 Or 12 volts. Wire a sufficient number of 2 cell flash light bulbs in series to sink the balance of the charge off gradually. See diagram in Figure 1. Four bulbs in series should do the job. A direct shorting strip across the battery will also work but you take a chance that the battery could reverse polarity . That's another pecularity of the Ni-Cad battery.

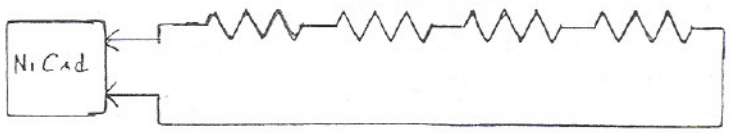


Figure 1.

It may take a few hours to completely discharge the unit. Take an occasional voltage check and when the battery has reached about 2 volts place it on the charger **for SEVENTEEN HOURS .**

Nope- Not Yet ! To make sure you erased that battery memory go through the same routine again . Use the series flash light bulbs and completely discharge the Ni-Cad . Yes, a 17 hour charge again. This should clear up most memory cases and you just saved yourself the price of another battery pack. Some hard core cases might require the third discharge and 17 hour charge treatment. If your battery does not take a full charge then it could have a bad cell and in that case needs replacement. Single cells in the battery pack can be replaced but we suggest only the experienced venture into that phase of Amateur Radio Electronics.

TAMAQUA WIRELESS ASSO.

	First Name	Last Name	CALL	Address	City	State	Zip
1	William	Petrey	AA3CU	130 Park Place	Mahanoy City	PA	17946
2	Allen R	Breiner Jr	K3NYX	127 Market Street	Tamaqua	Pa.	18252
3	Evelyn A	Breiner	K3NZD	212 Race Street	Tamaqua	Pa.	18252
4	James	Graver	KA3WGF	327 Thirwell Street	Hazleton	PA	18201
5	Albert	Larichiuta	KA3WGG	RD# 1, Box 100	New Ringgold	PA	17960
6	Anthony	Sfarra, Sr.	KB3ABY	RD# 2, Box 225	New Ringgold	PA	17960
7	Jeffrey	Kunkel	KB3ACB	213 Penn Street	Tamaqua	PA	18252
8	Edward	Sheganoski	KB3ACD	P.O. Box 93	Malzeville	PA	17949
9	David	Olsen	KB3ATA	P.O. Box 2156	Hazleton	PA	18201
10	Edward	Boerner	KB3AYY	210 Penn Street	Tamaqua	PA	18252
11	Andy	Hitzel	N3HHH	1407 Chestnut Street	Pottsville	PA	17901
12	Andy	Catchmark	N3LBM	83 North Maple Ave	Pottsville	PA	17901
13	Dave	Chirst	NI3H	406 Pine Street	Tamaqua	PA	18252
14	Allen	Breiner, Sr.	W3TI	212 Race Street	Tamaqua	PA	18252
15	Edward	Russell	W3ZHW	913 Mt. Hope Ave.	Pottsville	PA	17981
16	Russ	Stevenson	WB2YVW	RD# 1, Bahundy	Owrigsburg	PA	17961
17	William	Dale, Jr	WY3K	RD# 3, Box 56	Tamaqua	PA	18252
18	Dave	Evans	K3NB	18 N. Balliet Street	Frackville	Pa.	17931