SPLATTER

This Bulletin is printed from time to time and distributed to the members of The Tamaqua Wireless Association, Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

Jan-Feb-Mar-April | Ground Hog Issue | 1998

The Presidents Corner

By W3ZHW

PROCASTINATION FOOTNOTES



What does it mean ? Well it means to be Dilatory, to put off or defer. So how long are you planing to remain in that mold ?

Here is an idea that could help you break out of that mold of procrastination.

The next time you are out driving in your car For any long distance, think about all that idle time you are wasting while just sitting behind the wheel and just steering. And how about the time you are wasting while waiting for that traffic light to turn green. Did you ever consider practicing those Morse code characters by whistling or voicing them out loud. Oh, don't worry, nobody will be listening if you're alone and if the XYL is with you she won't mind because she'll think you are thinking out loud or possibly making ready for the funny farm.

Now, what do you whistle ? How about that vanity license plate on the car ahead of you. How about all those bill boards you'll be passing along the highway ? The available items are fabulous.

Let's venture into another area. How long does it take you to write a letter or note to someone ? *If you can't write, then you do have a problem.* You say you don't have the time to write a letter or note to someone or can't seem to find time to study for that higher class amateur ticket. Of course if you can't chew gum and walk at the same time, then you DO have a problem and this idea may not be for you.

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And Now E M R



FROM WHERE WE SIT

As mentioned in our Splatter editorials many times, "Does anyone really read our articles ". In the last issue we made an attempt to put our members on the alert regarding emergency preparedness . We are very fortunate to have one of our members willing to take an interest to the effect that he volunteers his services as Emergency Coordinator for the county.

Our next attempt will be to bring you up to date with the next brain-storm that someone in congress planted in the gray matter of the Federal Communications Commission. Even though at the time of this writing over half of the commissioners have resigned and have been replaced with people who have no previous experience nor training whatsoever in the art of radio communications. These new appointed commissioners are left holding the bag for an item called **E M R.**

That item is **Electro Magnetic Radiation** . It's that's stuff we know as RF Radiation , that stuff, those invisible electric wave that are emitted from your half wave dipole, or from the tip of your Rubber-ducky.

As of July 1997 every new amateur radio examination element has had additional questions added pertaining to EMR and RF Safety. Now are you ready for this one. Beginning January 1, 1998 every licensed amateur radio station will be required to have an RF Safety evaluation checkup on Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields. *I'm sure each of youl understood everything about what I just said !*

To date I have been able to gather just about everything printed on the requirements for a "Station RF Radiation Evaluation test". When this was first made public the FCC required a special RF radiation test be made with very special test

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With the ARES

By WY3K EC

With 1997 now history, let me first say Happy New Year and thank each of you for supporting the Schuylkill County ARES program. With your continued support and dedication, I'm sure 1998 will be even better.

Our neighbors in Carbon County will be under leadership of a new Emergency Coordinator as we begin the new year. Sam Rodock, WB3JYY, recently resigned as EC. Sam held that position for many years and was very instrumental in getting the RACES/ARES program back on track in that county back in the 80's. Citing an increase in his occupation as reason for the resignation. Sam assured us he will still be around and will retain his position as net manager and net control for the Wednesday evening RACES/ARES net. Sam helped introduce many amateur operators to the world of Amateur Radio Emergency Services. On behalf of the many RACES/ARES members in the area, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sam for a job well done.

EDITORS NOTE – Sam was one of nineteen who was licensed during our 1976 Novice class

"AJ" Spitzer WB2VBR, has volunteered to take over the reign's has accepted the appointment as EC. AJ is no stranger to the RACES/ARES program. In recent years he has worked closely with the county EMA officials and currently is the SKYWARN contact person for the county. I'm sure many Schuylkill County ARES members will remember AJ for his participation in several of our past events. We're looking forward to working with him in his new capacity and the coordinated support which exists between our organizations will continue.

I think we all agree, we live in an area which is somewhat unique and tranquil when it comes to extreme weather conditions. With the exception of an occasional thunderstorm or heavy snow fall, things are pretty uneventful, or are they. Statistics listed in a recent SKYWARN newsletter viewed 1997 as a relatively mild year. There were 164 severe storms, 10 tornadoes, 24 floods for a total of 198 weather damaging events. In comparison, 1996 had 281 severe storms,21 tornadoes, and 223 floods totaling 525 damaging events. This rounds out to 1.4 weather related events each every day.

Continued next page

It's That Time Again

Yep ! It is that time of the year again when your club treasurer must remind each of the members that it takes a certain amount of finances to continue with the operations of the Tamaqua Wireless Association. The TWA fiscal year ends in November and begins the first of December

For a point of information, did you know last year your club spent $ 8.55 on every member. You may not have noticed all of these benefits directly but they where spread out over the whole year

This leaves $ 1.45, as your balance as we go into the new year and by the time Field Day rolls around that is all chewed up in bulletin postage.

At one time it was suggested the club's fiscal year should begin in June and dues collected at Field Day. Let's think on that one and bring it up at the next TWA meeting.

Dues still remain at $ 10.00 a year but if the U. S Post office increases the cost of First Class letter this year, we will have to consider a dues increase.

Check the mailing label on this issue. If it has been color highlighted you have not taken care of dues for the New Year 1998.

While we are on the issue of dues, did you know you could save yourself $ 2.00 by sending your ARRL membership dues thru the club.

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T W A VE Exam Schedule

Your TWA Volunteer Examining team, under the leadership of Bill WY3K has scheduled the following dates for Amateur examination. They will be held at the Tamaqua Municipal Building 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua starting at 9:00 a.m.

March 7, June 6, August 1 , November 7

Candidates are reminded to bring a pen and supply of lead pencils. Also a means of personal identification such as social security number, drivers license, etc. The cost for exams in 1998 will be $ 6.35 All Morse code exams are administered at 9 a.m. Pre-registration is not required. Additional information is available by calling 386-2384 or 668-3098 after 7 p.m.

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Have you ever noticed—Anybody going slower then you is an Idiot, and anyone going faster then you is a Maniac !

Words from the V. P.

By KB3ABY

Here we are starting a New Year, just where did last year go. You all heard the saying "Wait until I retire I'll have a lot of time to do things I would like to do". Well I've been retired five years and I don't seem to be able to find that time to do all those things I had planed. Granted , I move much more slowly and things don't get accomplished as rapidly as they used to a few years back. (Maybe it's EL NINO)

During the past year I enjoyed many of the clubs activities and wish my successor good luck, good health, and success with any endeavor he chooses to lead our Association toward the future.

I shall try to be active and hope the club is successful in the many projects they become involved. I would like to see more young people getting involved in Amateur Radio. Probably we should design a promotion of what Amateur Radio is all about, but I guess it is easier and more interesting for the younger generation to take the easy way out and get on the internet.

May I wish all our membership Happy Holidays and please make a New Years resolution to try getting to our club meetings regularly. For your information, we still meet at the American Hose Fire Company on the third Friday evening of the month.

FAR Scholarships

The Foundation for Amateur Radio has 60 scholarships available to high school students that have an Amateur Radio license. If you know of a student that will be graduating in 1998 and planing to pursue full time study beyond high school and enrolled or has been accepted at an accredited college or university , have them contact the following address for details.

F A R Scholarships
6903 Rhode Island Ave.
College Park, Md. 20740

Scholarships range from $ 500 to $ 2500 and application must be made prior to April 30, 1998

"Get this straight once and for all. The Policeman isn't there to create disorder. The Policeman is there to preserve disorder"
By R. Daley, Mayor of Chicago.

E M R Continued

equipment that would cost in the neighborhood of $ 900.00 The rules have since been changed and been replaced whereby the amateur operator makes a few simple measurements and fills out a form that will suffice as your station EMR evaluation. As previously stated, EVERY AMATEUR RADIO STATION will have to be RF evaluated.

It has not yet been determined nor a deadline stated when you must have all this completed. But reading the handwriting on the wall, it will come to pass. Ye editor has made copies of the RF Safety Evaluation forms and will be willing to have a number printed for members use.

After reviewing the above at the January meeting of TWA it was decided that a special program would be held at the regular monthly meeting of the Association on Friday February 20, 1998.

You will be required to supply certain information that is only indicative of your radio station.

1. Type of Antenna (s) if more than one.
2. Type of transmitter and amplifier
3. Maximum transmitted power (PEP)
4. Type and height of your antenna (s)
5. Distance of antenna to your shack
6. Distance of antenna to your closest neighbor

Armed with that data you will be able to determine and make your own Station RF Safety evaluation.

This is another one of those items where it pays to belong to an active Amateur Radio group such as the Tamaqua Wireless Association.

This is not an April Fools Article

Prez Korner continued

Any way or means you use to cut the pittza, or any ideas you seem applicable in order to improve your own ability is worth a lot more than all that lost energy it takes to put it on the back burner and forget about it. It only takes that much longer to back to the starting line again.

So how about giving it a shot and we'll be looking for you at the next VE exam session.

EDITORS NOTE - A list of the TWA VE sessions can be found elsewhere in this issue.

ARES continued

We should count our blessings on how little our area has been impacted by these severe weather related events. The real Moral of this story is "Be Prepared" for the day when the odds could contribute to these statistics.

Special Release

By W3TI

If you happen to be like the average Ham operator you will try to save a few bux when and where you can. Be it for groceries or for a can of paint for your tower. We all try to get the most'est for the least'est cash layout.

It's with that thought in mind our club wants to aquaint you with a real bargain that we just happened to latch on to. It was during a trip to the Government Surplus depot in Harrisburg where we ran across eight wooden crates (*Boxed military style*) . Each crate contained 24 quart cans wrapped separately for over- seas shipment.

One of the crates had been opened for inspection and benefit of anyone interested in purchasing a crate or the whole lot. Being naturally nosy, or was it inquisitive, we had to check the contents of one of the cans and to our surprise, there it was printed on each container. "MIL . SPEC-5606-A "

I recall the last time I saw that item was in 1939 just prior to WW II. It was invented by a Swedish professor working on a compound that would be used by electric power companies. In the meantime the product was perfected further and introduced into the market by Du Pont in Delaware. Electric power companies all around the country began making use of it. One of our club members who worked for the power company brought a sample of it to club meeting and explained in detail on how it is used.

HOW IT WORKS

We Ham operators have been taught that electron flow in a conductor (*wire*) moves or flows along the surface of the wire conductor at the speed of 300 million meters per second. *(186,000 miles per sec.)* This liquid compound when applied to the surface of the wire, by rag or dubbing type applicator, would increase the speed or electron flow by 35 % , therefore increasing the speed of electricity up to about 405 million meters per second. *(over 200,000 miles per sec.)* All this meant an increase in electric power sales due to the lower power line resistance. The results, of course, was more income for the company stock holders.

At the same time the club member donated a partially used container of MIL. SPEC-5606-A to the club and we rubbed it on every one of our Field Day antennas. Our Field Day scores for that year were humongus . So you see it not only works on electric power distribution lines but also increases R. F. Radiation on transmitting antennas by reducing the skin affect to less than 5 % on the outer surface of each antenna. It reduced the radiation resistance so much that by further experimentation we found that each antenna could be shortened by 15 %.

Time marches on and the next time we came across MIL SPEC-5606-A was during WW II. The Army Signal Corps was having reception problems with their mobile and portable hand held radios. Du Pont came to the rescue and suggested they use MIL SPEC-5606-A by rubbing it on their vertical mobile whip antennas. The results were fantastic.

(*Let's not forget us Hams used it many years before on their Field Day antennas*)

It was at this point in time Du Pont changed the name to "MIL. SPEC.-5606-AW" Signal Corps Antenna Wax". They added the "AW" for Antenna Wax.

The Tamaqua Wireless Association is proud to announce they purchased all eight crates and now have 190 quart cans of Du Pont MIL. SPEC–5606 AW for sale on a first come first serve basis.

NOTE Due to the Extreme low Flash point of the compound it cannot be shipped via mail or UPS. It does becomes completely stable and safe 15 minutes after having been applied to your antenna wire, or vertical, and works great on Yagi beam elements.

Long since, those early times, power companies have discontinued the use of MIL SPEC-5606-A . Because as time went by they found out the life span of the compound was only ten years when it would require another application of the compound. However, Ten years is a long time for us Hams and with Sun spot cycle-23 just around the corner, you might want to get your antennas ready for the action.

Kar-Korner

By Jeff KB3ACB

My first intentions for the continuation of this series was to explain the use and diagnosis of the various fault codes as they relate to the computer sensors, but due to a recent occurrence, I felt that I should discuss the diagnosis of your ignition system, i.e., that part of your car which controls the spark plugs.

To begin, what occurred two days before Christmas the family and I were on our way to the Mall for some last minute Xmas shopping. We had just got on the interstate when without warning the car just shut off, Stopped, Kaput, Nogo. The first thing I checked was whether it was getting gas through the carburetor. That checked okay. Next was a spark check, it was nil, nix, nothing. *Nice time to be with out 2 meter rig.* We managed to push the car off the interstate and drifted down hill to the next town, Mahanoy City and a garage which I was familiar and gave a call for help.

DIAGNOSIS

First, a simple check of the coil that requires a .33 uf. Capacitor, 2 alligator clips and 3 wires (*detail in Figure 1.*)

1. Disconnect the coil wire from the distributor and insert a plastic handled screw driver in the wire making sure it fits securely.
2. Disconnect the negative wire from the coil and connect your home brew tester as indicated.
3. Turn the ignition switch on, hold the screw driver near a clean metal area of the motor that is a known good ground and momentarily touch the open lead of your tester to ground.
4. If you get a spark , the coil is good.

NOTE – DO NOT use the negative terminal of the battery for your ground touch point.

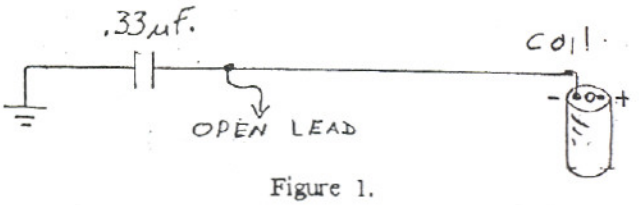


Figure 1.

When you are satisfied the coil is good, the next components to test are the ignition module and pickup. For the purpose of saving space, this issue will be dedicated to General Motors vehicles.

Reconnect the negative wire to the coil and remove the distributor cap. Inside you will see a flat, plastic "half-moon" bolted horizontally to the base. That is your ignition module. Located directly under the rotor mounted to the shaft is the pickup that resembles a star with as many points as the number of cylinders in the motor. For the next test you need a 12 volt test light.

1. Locate the wires connecting the pickup to the module and disconnect them. This will be your test point.
2. Connect one terminal of the test light to ground and turn on the ignition switch.
3. Touch the other test wire to the open terminals on the module and look for a spark. If you notice a spark, the module is good. If not it needs replacement. *$ 50.00*

These newer computerized ignition systems don't seem as difficult to understand as we thought. We hope the data given will be sufficient to help some one stuck in a similar situation. Special thanks goes to K3NYX for his assistance during our dilemma.

Pre-Exam Stress Management Diet

BREAKFAST

1 Grapefruit 1 slice whole wheat toast/dry
8 oz. Skim milk, 1 Oreo cookie

LUNCH

4 oz. Lean broiled breast of chicken
1 cup steamed spinach, 1 cup herb tea

MID AFTERNOON SNACK

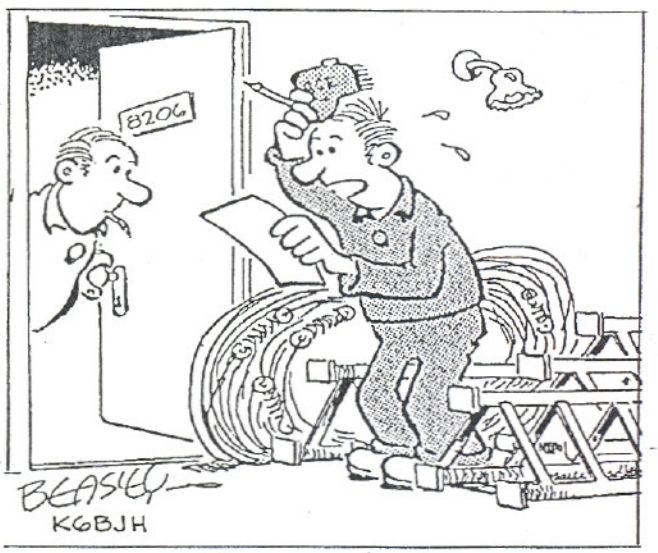
Rest of Oreos in the package
2 pints favorite ice cream, 1 jar hot fudge
nuts, cherries, marshmallow, whipped cream

DINNER

2 loaves garlic bread with cheese
Lrg. Sausage, mushroom, cheese pizza
2 liter bottle soft dring
3 Milky-way or Snickers bars

LATE EVENING SNACK

Large peperoni pizza, Bag of chips
2 liter bottle of soft drink



82nd floor apartment 8206 ? I'll bet you're not the party who ordered the 160 meter Rhombic Kit and four 125 foot towers ? ? ?

ON APPLAUSE:

They gave me a standing observation.

ex-Houston Oiler and Florida State coach Bill Peterson

TWA CALENDAR

Tuesday January 27, 7 p,m. A presentation on what SKYWARN is all about will be given at the Pottsville Communications Center. Everyone is invited.

Monday February 2, GROUND HOG DAY. Get out there a celebrate with your favorite Ground Hog.

Saturday February 14. HARRISBURG Hamfest. The bus leaves Tamaqua at 7 a.m. Reserve your seat early - First come first served.

Friday February 20. At 8 p.m. The Regular meeting of the Tamaqua Wireless Association. The location for this meeting ONLY will be held at the Tamaqua Municipal building. A special program has been prepared to assist you with the FCC EMR radiation evaluation form(s). Read the details on the front page about Electromagnetic Radiation. Please come prepared with pen and hand calculators for your convenience. This session is open to all Amateurs in the Carbon, Luzern and Schuylkill county area. Pass the word .

Wednesday February 25, 7:30 p.m. The regular monthly ARES planning session will be continued. The January session was canceled and the SKYWARN presentation took its place.

Saturday March 7. 9 a.m. The Tamaqua Wireless Association Volunteer Examining team will be giving exams at the Tamaqua Municipal Building. See announcement elsewhere in this bulletin

Sunday March 15, Keystone Hamfest, York (No details available at press time)

Friday March 20, 8 p.m. Tamaqua Wireless Association meeting. American Hose Company, Tamaqua. As of January 1998 we have relocated our meeting room facilities to the Fire Company basement meeting room.

Wednesday March 25, 7:30 p.m. The regular ARES planning session will be held in the Tamaqua Borough Building

Saturday April 4. Appalachian Amateur Radio Group, (Pine Groveo Hamfest)
The bus leaves at 7 a.m.

Friday April 17, 8 p.m. Tamaqua Wireless Association Regular monthly meeting at the American Hose Fire Company

Saturday April 25. Columbia-Montour Hamfest, Bloomsburg
The bus leaves at 7. A.m.

Additional TWA activities could pop up any time. They will announced on the Tuesday night ARES net on the 145.370 repeater.