SPLATTER

This Bulletin is printed from time to time and distributed to the Members of the Tamaqua Wireless Association

Feb. Mar. April | Ground Hog's Issue | 2000

The Presidents Corner



By W3ZRQ

In the last issue of Splatter we were getting all hipped up for the Y2K catastrophe. Practically every county ARES unit was in preparation for some sorta dooms day to come about when the clock struck 12 midnite. It was similar to the previous week when we sat around and waited for St. Nick to arrive. I recall dads old poem, "Hickory Dickory Dock , two mice ran up the clock, the clock struck one, the other got away with minor injuries".

Only this time after all the privious planning and preparation for Y2K to get here, nothing really happened. The clock struck twelve, no mice were injured, the New York Times Square ball came tumbling down, The electricity and lights stayed on and the telephone continued to operate and the typical hard coal region gun fire salute throughout the neighborhood announced the arrival of the new year which sounded like world war three had started.

The real startling news came the day before on December 31 when the FCC released the restructuring rules for Amateur Radio licensing. By now each of you will have read them over and over again. This operator has only been licensed since 1959 but from what I gather by listening to the old timers, the new rules have not shown any means that will assure an incentive for the promulgation or the future continuity of amateur radio. Instead of taking two steps forward, we seem to have regressed and taken three steps to the rear.

January began as any normal month until club meeting night was canceled due to a freezing rain storm. Then things began to happen, W3TI called 1:30 in the morning to take him to the hospital. He ended up with open heart surgery and 3 weeks in the hospital. I had a week off from work with the flu. When I did get back to work we had three snow storms back to back. Now that things look like they might get back to normal again, my main computer went belly-up causing the hard drive to crash.

The geese are flying north again and I'm waiting for the arrival of spring and seeing you at the next TWA meeting.

De W3ZRQ el presidente

Something to think about

This article was swiped from another article

The FCC has demonstrated a very obvious trend in cleansing itself of the problems related to the amateur service. So if you are in a hurry to go to the funeral, let's come up with a bunch more wonderful rule changes, band plans, vanity call sign systems, club calls, and whatever else we can burden an under budgeted, under staffed government agency and see how fast we can make them dig the hole for the funeral.

Try this. Go to work tomorrow morning and tell your boss that there are two dozen things in the office that need to be fixed. And then every day make sure you whine and complain about them and at least once a week try and come up with something else that needs fixing, no matter how trivial. Encourage 2,000 other employees to send written comments to your boss. Create as many problems for your boss as you can. Won't be too awful long until he fixes the problem. Hope you can find a new job.....

Has anyone else noticed the obvious point raised by the above paragraphs? It hit me how profound the last 2 paragraphs were, when I realized it sums up the "representation" we have received for our ARRL dues. QST has been full of editorials and information for months telling us all about the work the League is doing on our behalf with the FCC. It has told us of various proposals the ARRL thought would enhance and improve ham radio for its members. ie:

1) The League proposed 4 licenses.....The FCC gave 3

2) The League proposed 12 words per minute code.....The FCC gave 5

3) The League proposed "reconsideration of sub bands"...The FCC ignored.

Can anyone tell me the last time the FCC followed any League advice or recommendation ? How long would this type of ineffectual lobbying track record be tolerated in your industry or business? I realize that not everyone is an ARRL member, but don't you think maybe some of our problems are directly attributable to the FCC's total lack of respect for those we have representing our interests? I also realize the FCC must remain independent and avoid the perception of impropriety by following the ARRL's proposals to the letter, but to virtually IGNORE them on a routine basis suggests something far more sinister at work. We are paying for a service that is not being provided. Its obvious the FCC has little or no respect for those charged with protecting our interests. If the FCC scoffs at a relatively minor thing the League proposes with respect to code speed and number of license classes, how much influence can we expect when we are fighting for frequencies, allocations of bandwidth, and other critical things? Is a BIG change in ARRL management and leadership warranted? Would Coca Cola and General Motors stockholders tolerate this ineffective leadership? shake the foundation enough to get rid of the dead wood and hangers on? How many "VE's" would have to resign or sit down to get results?

The Clock of Life

The clock of life is wound but once
And no Man has the Power
To tell when the hands will stop
At late or early Hour.
Now is the only Time you own,
Live, Love, and Toil with Will.
And place no Faith in "Tomorrow"
For the clock may then be Still.

It is with deep regret we record the passing of Anthony Sfarra, better known amongst the members as "Tony". Born in Italy he became interested in Amateur Radio following World War Two but didn't become licensed until 1992 when he participated in our Tamaqua Novice class and received the call KB3ABY. He had a record of perfect attendance as president from 1995 to 1997.He was Exceptionally active in every club function and never missed a Field Day. He Accepted the Secretary-Treasurers position for the newly organized Tamaqua Repeater Group.

Tony became a Silent Key Dec. 7, 1999. He will be missed by the members of TWA

Y2K Dues R Due

Yep ! It's that time of the year again when we must prevail upon the members to keep TWA solvent and financially operational. Expenses were higher this past year not wholly because of inflation but because we had more members taking part in 25 % more club activities. We had a year end balance of $ 49.37 which was $ 43.39 less than the balance for 1998. At the present dues rate the anticipated expenditures for Y2K we will still be able to draw the line at our present rate for the years dues at $ 10.00.

Those who took an active part with Field Day 1999 were deserving of special mention and a portion of the 50/50 receipts were spent to get a Special ARRL Field Day 1999 pin. If you would like to have one we'd be happy to see you at Field Day 2000 in June ? In case you missed it in the previous paragraph, Y2K dues are $ 10.00 payable to the TWA Treasurer. We accept cash, check, or money order. Sorry no VISA. Check your mailing label, if its RED, your dues are due.

Y2K TWA Officers

Al W3ZRQ President
Ron KB3CFV V. Pres.
Al W3TI Secy-Treas.
Chip NI3H/W3CMA Trustee

Committees

Bill WY3K EC-ARES
Ron KB3CFV RFI
Jeff KB3ACB Activities Mgr.
Ed KB3DYJ Antenna Crew
Al W3TI Bulletin Editor
Bill WY3K VE Team

Early Spring Activities

In the Spring a mans Fancy turns to - - - - It has always been a mystery to me, What or where is a man's Fancy ? Oh well, the Fancy for TWA is to begin with our Spring activities and for a starter your club judiciary and activities manager have already prepared a list that will keep us hoppin' till it's Field Day time.

Baring the advent of inclement weather, our regular club meetings will be January 19, February 16, and March 15th in the Tamaqua Municipal Building 320 East Broad Street starting at 7:30 pm local time.

Excuses - Excuses !

We usually find fault with the weather when we can't keep regular schedules. This issue of SPLATTER is a few week late due to the editor being in the hospital and the printer had the flu. We couldn't think of any other excuses.



Saturday January *1, 2000*

It was 7:23 a.m. We depressed the start up button on the NCR 486, crossed our fingers and hoped for the best. As the various phrases began to race across the video screen it was evident our computer was going to attempt the crossover into the year 2000 and it happened. It just STOPPED and displayed a big box with the statement,

"Please enter a correct date".

If that's all it wanted, I entered " 01-01-2000" and it took off again and in less than 5 minutes we were typing up this article.

If you read the news media articles about TWA and our emergency contingency plan for Y2K, you will have noticed our small group had done their homework. The first press release was given to three news papers a few weeks before Christmas and two papers called later to have an interview and follow-up article which they printed the day before New Years.

Back to reality, New Years eve came and went without a hitch here in the Eastern part of Schuylkill county. There were a few reports in various countries where Cellular phones became inoperative for a few hours but none were reported in the immediate vicinity.

At 10:00 p.m. Friday evening Assistant Emergency Coordinator W3ZRQ made a special Y2K callup of the TWA ARES group with the following checking in; KB3CFU, KB3DYI, KB3DYT, KB3CFV, WY3K, and W3TI. KB3FAD had called in earlier and informed the net he was going to deliver his XYL to the Coaldale Hospital and acknowledged that he would establish a communications link from there in the event it was required.

The rest is all history. By 10:30 p.m. W3ZRQ and W3TI had our Eastern Schuylkill county TWA ARES net establish links with eastern area RACES in Hamburg and PEMA in Harrisburg. In so far as the preparation of our own county RACES, I wouldn't ask if I were you, Tst, tst, tst !

My views and observations as one of the "Grunts" and the top of the heap as Section Manager, it was noticed a number of county RACES and ARES groups were standing by in readiness for what ever would happen. Recorded were Carbon, Montgomery, Union. Berks, Lebanon, York, and Schuylkill counties.

There were probably other county ARES/RACES set up but didn't bother to contact PEMA. They didn't miss much because had we required assistance from Harrisburg they would have been as helpful as the wart on the tip of your nose. I can read the future, in the event of a County or State emergency we will be better off working all the details out for ourselves.

KUDOS ,my Hat's off and thank you for volunteering your time . I congratulate all the county Chiefs , the braves and Warriors for a job well done.

TWA *VE Special*

By this time you should have heard all about the FCC's license class restructuring and the elimination of element 1b *13* and 1c *20* word per minute code tests keeping the 5 WPM code test. Well, your Wednesday Teck nite committee on budget and finance reviewed the class structure of TWA and noted the following. The membership consists of 8 Extra, 1 Advanced, 7 General, 9 Teck + and one No Code Teck.

Beginning April 15, 2000 there will only be the *5* WPM code test and it was the committees finding that by taking the 13 and 20 WPM test before the closing date, you can save quite a bundle.

To wit; The VEC cost for administering all amateur license class elements for year 2000 will be $ *6.65* and when broken down into simple mathematics we have formulated the following costs per each code test exams.
5 wpm = 25 words = $0.27 ea. Or 125 letters = $0.05 each
13 wpm = 65 words = $0.10 ea. 325 letters = $0.02 each
20 wpm = 100 words = $0.07 ea. 500 letters = $0.01 each.

In the interest of saving money the committee strongly suggests the seven General class and one Advanced class members take advantage of the March 4 VE session and go for the one cent per word savings. It is further suggested the ten Technician class take advantage and go for the two cent savings because after April 15 every code examination, you will have to dig deeper into the piggy bank and pay a whole nickel per letter with each Morse code exam. You won't have a choice.

Gods e mail Message

One day God was looking down at Earth and saw all of the evil that was going on. He decided to send an angel down to Earth to check it out. Upon her return she told God, yes it is bad on Earth, 95% is bad and 5% is good.

Well, he thought for a moment and said maybe I had better send down a second angel; to get another point of view.

So he called another angel and sent her to Earth for a time. When the angel returned she went to God and told him yes, the Earth was in decline, 95% was bad and 5% was good.

God said this was not good. So He decided to E-mail the 5% that were good and wanted to encourage them and give them a little something to help them keep going.

Do you know what that E-mail said ? ?

You didn't get one either,.....huh?

March 15,TWA Regular meeting 7:30 Tamaqua Municipal Bldg.
April 15, VE Exams (Tentative – Not scheduled yet – double check)
May 17, TWA Regular meeting 7:30 Tamaqua Municipal Bldg.
June 3, VE Exams 9:30 a.m. Tamaqua Municipal Bldg.

Tamaqua Wireless Association
212 Race Street
Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

STAMP HERE

TIME VALUE
MEETING NOTICE