SPLATTER

May—June– July SPRING ACTIVITIES ISSUE 2002

The President's Comments

By W3ZRQ

Spring has sprung so they say, but where is the weather that is usually associated with spring? A few members have already been talking about correcting the damage to antennas caused by this past winter's storms.



Chip, NI3H suspects he has a broken coax center conductor at the base of his Butterball Antenna.

Al Sr, W3TI needs repairs to his 2-meter long boomer for starts.

By the time you receive this Splatter Edition, we will probably already have the club towers transported up to the VHF-QSO / Field Day site, then the fun begins to cleaning, sanding and painting them. I can foresee a few Wednesday evening tech sessions being held as the crew works on them and laying out plans on where we will setup antennas for Field Day.

Speaking of antennas, Walter, K3OQF has asked me to announce he will be starting an antenna class over the Internet. He will e-mail weekly sessions to interested members, along with a simple quiz, you answer the questions, return via e-mail and receive the next session. This will be similar to a correspondence course except you don't have to pay the high price (it's free). You may not receive a diploma but you will have access to valuable information when you build your next antenna project.

Another article we may see in the near future is the proper way to clean, sand, prime and paint towers. There are many paints on the market but which ones hold up better? We have a Paint Doctor in our club. Ed, KB3DYJ who can answer these questions better than I can, so wait for his forth-coming article.

Information to our couch potatoes who don't get to a meeting but will frequent our Field Day exercise. Our secretary informed us at the April meeting, the June club meeting is the Friday prior to Field Day. Hence, the club meeting will be held at the F. D. site on Friday evening June 21 usual time 7:30. There could be a weenie roast after the meeting. Wear your old burnt sneakers.

Off and Running

By W3TI

After our last expounding with the vocabulary I was prepared to have a number of the membership knocking down the shack door to take over the position as club bulletin editor. But to my surprise there were no takers. So here I sit again, alone with my thoughts and what or whom I should take over the coals in this issue.

When one gets older you begin to dread the winter months. I always get the anti-flu shot in the fall. I didn't get the flu this year but a slight chest cold which led to more complications and caused me to be hospitalized for five days. This is my third time to experience a stay in the hospital and I learned a lot during this trip.



(1). If you happen to black out for ten or twenty seconds, when you open your eyes there are eight pair of eyes looking down on you and each associated pair of hands working feverishly to get you conscious and back on an even keel again.

(2). You don't go to the hospital to catch up on your sleep.

(3) You don't need a clock or wrist watch to tell what time it is because every hour (*Plus or minus one minute*) some one wakes you up to get a sample of your blood.

(4). When your almost well enough, they kick you out because they need the room for some one else.

Well, I'm back at the PC again, it's zero degrees Celsius outside and spring is just around the corner. The March VE Exams brought forth a few surprises with upgrades to two of our members. Next exams will be held in June.

We were glad to see a fairly good turnout for the Emergency Communications operations class. But as usual, only the regular "Few" real actives stuck till the last class. The end result should produce experienced members in the art of originating radiogram messages and the proper methods of sending and receiving them. The ARL short form messages were covered extensively and proper use in the text of a message.

A few years ago W3ZRQ and W3TI had taken a course in Radiology given by the county and certified in Radiology and the use of dosimeters and various types of radiation Geiger counters. Although not qualified to pass certification onto others, each member of the class was given some hands on experience in the use of Geiger counters.

Moving along onto another subject, I received a few calls regarding the new ARRL membership rates. Seniors 65 or older still get a five dollar discount on the league membership. It used to be, if you belonged to a club you got another two dollar discount. Which meant $ 34 dollars less 5 less 2, you only paid $ 27.00 . As of July 2001 ARRL dues went to $ 39.00 but the 2 dollar club discount is no more. Hence, $ 39.00 less 5 dollar discount for seniors comes out to $ 34.00 straight across the counter. Others pay the straight 39 bucks Is anyone is interested, I can get you CQ Magazine subscription for $11. 95 a year.

TWA Officers for 2002

President Al W3ZRQ
Vice Pres. Lou KB3DED
Secy-Treas Al W3TI
Trustee Chip NI3H / W3CMA
Committees
ARES-EC-VE Bill WY3K RFI Bud KB3FSU
Antenna Crew Steve KB3FJJ Activity Mgr. Ed KB3DYJ
Awards Lou KB3DED TWA WEB Site Joe N3LBB
Club Bulletin Editor Al W3TI

TWA VE Examiners Sked

For those planning to upgrade, the Tamaqua VE team has scheduled the following time and dates for exams, 9 a.m. June 1, August 3 and November 2. We have arranged to have the exams at the same location, Tamaqua Municipal Building on East Broad Street. Exam fees are same as last year, $ 10.00

Last Minute Call up

By now the greater percent of our members received their Blue 2002 TWA membership cards. If You are one of the few who forgot , look at your mailing address if it is hi-lited RED , you may have a problem with the next issue of Splatter .

In order for the club to increase its membership in 2001 the charter was opened for one year in the event someone might be interested in joining our small group. Thru it we gained 4 new members, we also had two silent keys. This membership drive and charter addendum made to the minutes will no longer be in affect after the close of the May 2002 meeting.

Members are reminded if you have a friend who would like to be a part of TWA, their application must be submitted and will still be accepted at the May meeting.

Members who have not yet made their 2002 annual dues donation will also be dropped from the rolls at that time.

TWA Web Page

By N3LBB TWA Webmaster

Keeping in step with the times, Tamaqua Wireless Association has always been a group of progressives and been well known for being the "First" club in the area to have initiated a number of novel items. The newest and most recent idea is that of having our own Website. I have been working on all the information about our club and have designed the TWA Web Page.

The Tamaqua Wireless Association will have a web site presence! I have been working on creating a web site for TWA and I need your input! I am looking for your favorite ham radio related web sites (call sign look up, propagation, pet projects, etc...) to include on our web site. You can help by e-mailing me your favorite links, and as always please feel free to include any suggestions you may have to spur interest to other amateurs about the hobby and above all, our radio club. My e-mail address is N3LBB@arrl.net

Might you be interested in a different activity to take up the slack time during the following months. TWA members with 160-meter capabilities are invited to join in on "The 160 Net". We meet every night of the week at 2400z on 1.895 mHz. It's a rag chew net with a great bunch of guys from all over the country. Amateurs are invited to participate, so come join us on Top Band!

A Homemade Tuning Wand Antenna Tester

By W3TI

While perusing through the various amateur radio periodicals I ran across this item and thought it was the handiest gadget to get a quick setup for the mobile rig.

This handy device is made from a piece of aluminum foil and a wooden dowel. A substitute for the dowel is the top part of the xyl's broom stick. *(she probably needs a new one anyway)* . Wrap 3 or 4 inch length of foil around the end of the dowel as shown in figure 1. Secure it with a bit of electrical or scotch tap.

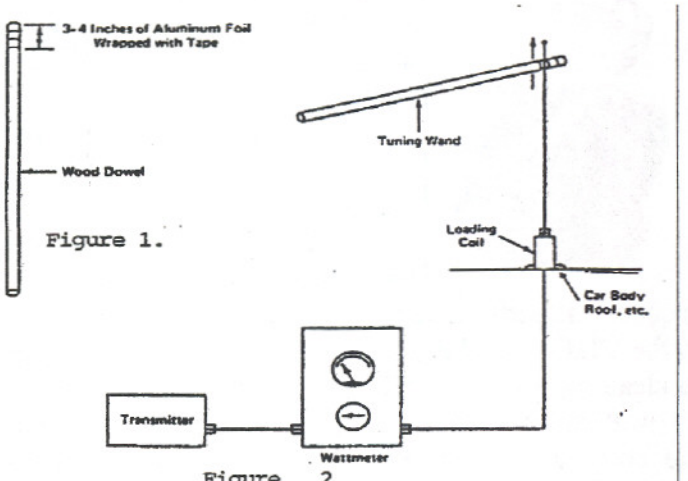


Figure 1.

Figure 2

HOW TO USE IT

Refer to figure 2. Key the transmitter while observing the reflected power reading. Place the end of the wand at a point below the tip of the antenna and slowly move the wand upward toward the tip of the antenna. If the reflected power increases as you move upward, the antenna is too long. If the reflected power decreases as you move upward, then the antenna is to short.

Mobile antennas usually have some type adjustment to lengthen or shorten them. When you reach a point where there is no change, you have then reached the frequency which the transmitter is set and your antenna is tuned. If you work the high end most of the time pick a frequency near the top. Visa-versa if you prefer the low end of the band.

Tuning the 10 and 6 meter quarter-wave antennas might require a larger piece of aluminum surface around the dowel. It is not necessary to touch the wand to the antenna. Direct contact will probably make your power meter jump and give you a false reading.

A tuning job like this will require a second operator. One to press the mic button and the other to handle the wand. Lest you forget, when ever the transmitter is keyed the antenna will be hot and RF makes nice round holes in your finger tips. Practice making the test with one hand in your pocket

Instruction Class Report

The September 11 incident brought up the idea for class instruction on how to handle third party messages via amateur radio. Everyone thought it was a good idea and we went to work on designing a handbook and text material Classes are now over and a half dozen club members are more informed and capable of becoming involved in the event of an emergency. No class is complete until the report cards are given. But before we get to that, there are always questions in the back of an instructors mind when he/she tackles a new subject..

Questions similar to : Is my text material proper for the presentation ? Will the students accept work-shop type of instruction ? Am I sufficiently prepared with the instruction ? These are a few of the questions that flash in a teachers mind when he steps into the class room.

These questions are usually answered at the first presentation. Starting with a pretest usually shakes the troops up a bit, but it gives us some idea of how much the student knows about the subject to be taught.

Secondly, most of the material would be a work-shop type instruction. Which means, every body gets into the act., a "Hands On " type of instruction. There is where we lost 50 % of the class. They come to relax and listen to the teacher talk. Such was not the case with our Emergency instruction classes.

One class night was used to learn how to put a formal piece of traffic together, and when to use the tactical type messages. To cover these points the students laid out a table top simulated emergency held in the large class room.

Listening to the Ham bands we hear the most idiotic use of "QSL". The use of "Q" signals and especially QSL was discussed in length. An equal amount of time dwelled with the ARL numbered messages and how they are used in an Amateur radiogram.

The final class was given to Radiology and the use of Geiger counters. W3ZRQ and W3TI have had training and certified in the use of radiation detection equipment. Each one in the class was given a hands-on crash course on the use of the Civil Defense Geiger counter. This part of the emergency training had little to do with traffic handling but it was thought some training in the use of the radiation detectors would be an asset in the event of an accident or highway collision which involved Hazardous Radioactive materials.

The following completed 20 hours of instruction and received certificates at the April club meeting. KA3FUL, N2DIY, KB3DYJ, N3LBB, N3HHH, W3ZRQ and KA3ATA. It was suggested a follow-up course be held around the ladder part of the year. Anyone interested ? ?

As you see this course covered the rudimentary parts of an emergency. Starting with a class of 12 and ending with only 50% was a big disappointment to the instructor. It leaves us with a number of unanswered questions. Was the teacher unprepared, was his presentation uninteresting. Did you expect something more ? Or, Was it - - - -

Just a Reminder

From time to time we dig back into SPLATTER's morgue and review some of the previous articles that have been very well put together and deserve print space in another issue. Such is the item which follows. ***"The Way I See It "***. The item is a great reminder that with in a club or organization there is a certain bond or friendship that you do not find by being a recluse or a "Loner".

The writer did miss one very special point, "That is attend your Club meetings ". Keep that bond together. Otherwise there is no good nor need for a club to exist.

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The Way I See It

Well the calendar has been changed again and the lights remain on as we settle into the New Year. The holidays often bring on a reminder of personal nostalgia and tradition as we reminisce our past, and perhaps more importantly, our future. Many will ask what we made as "New Years Resolutions ?" Remember, that oft last minute promise we make, we tend to forget shortly thereafter. I know, because I've done this more often then I would care to admit.

I'd like to make a proposal, lest we "consider" the following resolution as we continue throughout the year. "Be an Elmer" short and simple. In the beginning we all started out at the same place "The bottom". Perhaps we were more fortunate to have been given the beneficiaries of another ham's guidance? Maybe we received that little bit of encouragement to keep trying from our family and friends? For others, maybe it seemed to come "natural". Whatever the case, we all have something we can share. Be it moral support, technical, or encouragement for the new person to become involved with the hobby. The rekindling of an old fire for a seasoned member or perhaps just a personal sense of satisfaction by sharing our fortunes and yes, lest we forget our misfortunes, with those around us, who can and will learn from our experience.

As a club group, we share a special and common bond. One that is in a constant state of evolution, sometimes happy, other times sad, but always spirited and with a sense of individuality. As previously suggested, we all started at the beginning and now as licensed Amateurs and experienced trail hands, who could better lead those who are less familiar. Share your experiences, offer encouragement, and show renewed enthusiasm and may the New Year bring each of us the thrill and satisfaction similar to that of our "first contact", even if only through the eyes of another.

Quote by President Gerald Ford -

Things are more like they are now than they have ever been

License Renewal

A few of our elder members can recall when you had to renew your Amateur Radio License every five years. This wasn't much of a hassle because you always knew when the five years came around quite quickly. With the new Ten year renewal plan, one tends to forget and before you know it your license has long passed its expiration date. Should that happen you have a two year grace period for renewal. If you passed the 2 year grace period, you must take the license exam all over again.

As a suggestion, why not take a look at your license right now and check its expiration date. You can renew your license **90 days or less before it expires.** . So it's a good idea to take an occasional gander at that "Ticket" and check its expiration date.

A few issues back we informed you the FCC was not accepting any mail at the Gettysburg address. We just received word that has all changed and you can now send your renewal to FCC, 1270 Fairfield Road, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325-7245

Use the FCC form 605 for renewal, DO NOT use the NVEC 605 form. Don't forget to enter your FRN number. You can also renew your license at any of our VE test sessions.

More Why Is Its

Why is it you take your dog for a walk and you both use the same tree .... You can entertain yourself for more than an hour with a a fly swatter....Your property has been mistaken for a recycling center....Your boat has not left the driveway in 15 years.....You burn your yard rather than mow it.....The Salvation Army declines to accept your old mattress.....You offer to give someone the shirt off your back and they don't want it.....You come back from the dump with more than you took..... Your wife can climb a tree faster than your cat.....Your grandmother has "Ammo" on her Christmas list.... You've been kicked out of the Zoo for heckling the monkeys.... You think a Subdivision is a mathematical problem..... Your kids take a siphon hose to show and tell..... You take a fishing pole to Sea World.....You have a rag for a gas cap.....Your house doesn't have curtains but your truck does.....You consider your license plate personalized because your father made it.....Your lifetime goal is to own a fireworks stand.....You sit on your roof at Christmas time hoping to fill your deer quota.....The biggest city you've ever been to is Wal-Mart.....You think a quarter-horse is that ride in front of Wal-Mart.... Your neighbors think you're a detective because a cop always brings you home.....A tornado hits your neighborhood and does $ 100, 000.00 worth of improvement.... You missed the fifth grade because you had jury duty..... You think fast food is hitting a deer at 65 MPH.

How to be an Expert Ham Radio Operator

The knowledgeable clientele on the ham bands today really don't need to know what they're talking about. You only need to make people and the FCC think you do. You hear this happening every day. This is the way it works.

1 Read the ham equipment catalogues, memorize equipment names and model numbers.

2 Learn what the equipment is famous for, is it a receiver, transmitter, amplifier, antenna, etc...

3 Now this is important. Study only the best and most pricey equipment you can find. You don't need to understand the specifications you only need to make it sound like you do.

4 If your talking about Amplifiers, it will help if you know tube numbers used in the equipment. You don't need to know how they work, just the numbers will do.

5 Look at the Amplifier Advertisements and you will learn the tube numbers and the kind of power you can get out of them.

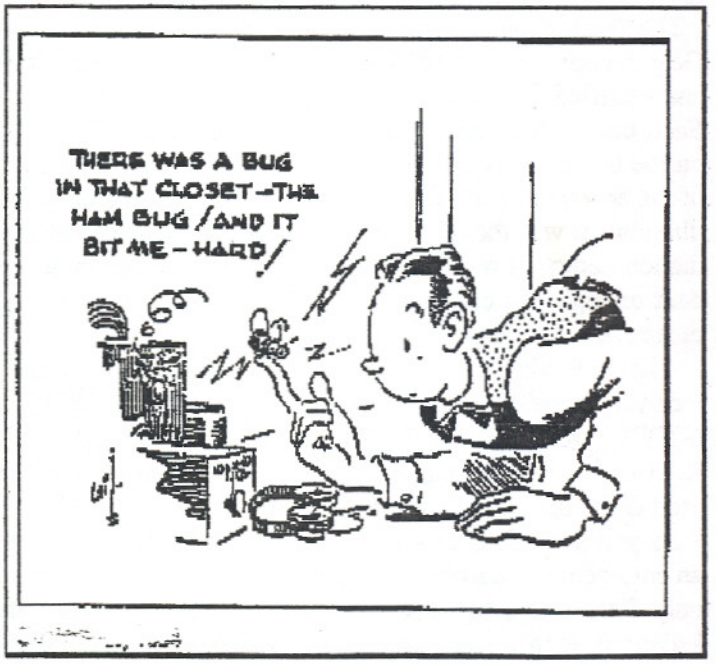
6 Study pictures of equipment, the location of knobs, meters, size and color etc. this all helps.

7 Don't talk about home brewing of equipment. That can get you into trouble'

8 Now you need to add age and vintage to your experience go to a hamfest and pick up a few thirty year old radio magazines, QST's, and catalogues. Getting an old "W" or "K" prefix vanity call sign is a big help.

9 Remember this, it's more impressive if it cost a lot, if it's bigger, has a famous name and you had one and sold it for something better.

10 It won't take long until someone realizes the game you are playing . If this happens, just get off the air immediately. Say you got an important phone call.



Do You Know Your Fellow TWA Member

What do you know about your fellow club member ? This can be a perplexing problem because we can only reiterate what we know. And since each member is very closed mouth about themselves, we can only report what they told us.

Edward Sheganoski KB3ACD, Teck plus lives in Maizeville, works in Reading as a welder. Operates all HF bands on CW. Does not attend meetings.

Andrew Kane KB3FSU, Technician, retired policeman, lives in Tamaqua with wife Anna Mae KB3GPM, Technician. Operates two meters. Attends meetings occasionally.

James Munley KB3FET Technician, Lives in Lost Creek. Retired. Operates 2 meters. Has not attended meetings lately due to knee surgery

Gary Fleischut KA3FUL, General lives in Pottsville, drives a delivery truck for Moyer Electronics. Very active on 2 meters and attends meetings regularly. President of the SARA repeater group.

Dave Olsen KB3ATA, General ,lives in Hazleton and self employed. Past president of TWA Attends meetings regularly.

Donald Schlier KB3DYI General, lives in Nesquehoning. Employed ? ? ? Have no info where he operates, does not attend meetings.

Andy Hitzel N3HHH, General lives in Pottsville, retired from an Electronics Firm. Operates HF and 2 meter bands. Attends meetings regularly.

Joe Chakan N3LBB General, lives in Tamaqua layed off from General Foods, going to College, operates HF and 2 meters.

Allen Breiner W3ZRQ, General lives in Tamaqua, is the zoning officer for the bourough, active on HF and 2 and 6 meters. President of Tamaqua Wireless Association. Attends meetings regularly.

Albert Larichiuta KA3WGG Advanced, lives in Tamaqua. Retired insurance broker, Operates 2 meters occasionally. Attends meetings occasionally.

Allen Breiner W3TI Extra, TWA Secretary, lives in Tamaqua with wife Evelyn K3NZD General. Retired Vo-Teck instructor. Volunteer Examiner, Operates HF and 2 meters. Attends meetings regularly.

Dave Christ NI3H Extra, lives in Tamaqua. Works for Tamaqua Water authority. Active on HF DX and 2 meters. Does not attend TWA meetings.

Darryl Gibson N2DIY Extra, lives in Lansford, we have no idea where he works. Active on HF and 2 meters. Attends club meetings regularly when his car keys work.

Walter Shulz K3OQF Extra, Lives in Jim Thorpe R.D. Retired from the U S Navy. Operates HF and 2 meters. Attends meetings occasionally.

William "Bill" Dale WY3K Extra, lives in South Tamaqua RD, Supervisor at Air Products Allentown. Operates 2 meters, VE examiner coordinator. attends meetings when working conditions permit.

Kevin Kasprzak AA3TL Extra, Lives in Summit Hill Employed at a machine shop, operates HF and 2 meters. A workaholic, does not attend meetings.

Ronald Creitz KB3CFV Extra, lives in Tamaqua, employed at a machine shop, Past president of TWA,and Volunteer examiner operates HF and 2 meters. Attends an occasional meeting.

Edward Weicker KB3DYJ Extra, lives in Tamaqua, Self employed as Interior Decorator. TWA Activities Mgr. Operates on HF and 2 meters. Attends meetings regularly.

Lewis Hoffman KB3DED Extra, Lives in Shenandoah. Owns and operates a machine shop. Vice President of TWA. Operates on 2 meters. Has not attended a club meeting recently due to surgery.

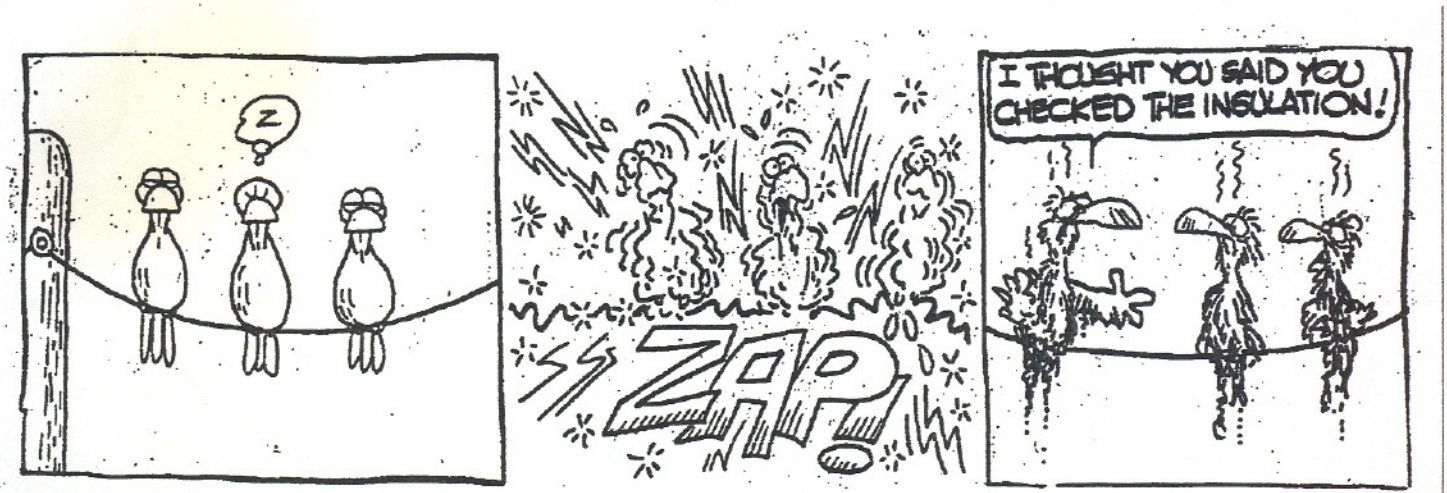
Steve Mahala KB3FJJ Extra, lives in Lansford. Retired from textiles. Volunteer Examiner, Operates HF and 2 meters. Hasn't attended any meetings in quite some time.

William Petrey AA3CU Extra, Volunteer Examiner, lives in Mahanoy City. Retired from TV cable company. No info on amateur activities. Attends club meeting once in awhile.

Tony Pavlock AA3TJ Extra, lives in Frackville. Does not attend meetings. No info on amateur activities.

Dave Evans K3NB Extra, Past president of TWA, lives in Frackville. Retired from the same Electronics factory as N3HHH. Active on HF. Does not attend meetings.

James "Jim" Graver KA3WGF Extra, lives in Hazleton. Works for a plastics company as head of shipping department. Is not active on amateur radio because he just got married. Does not attend club meetings.



TWA Calendar of Events
May 5, Warminster Hamfest
May 17, Regular TWA meeting 7:30 American Hose Co.
June 1, VE Exams Tamaqua Municipal Bldg. 9 a.m.
June 21, TWA Regular meeting, Weickers Grove 7:30
June 22-23, TWA Annual Field Day Exercises
July 19, TWA Regular meeting – Place to be decided
Aug. 3 VE Exams Tamaqua Municipal Bldg. 9 a.m.
Aug16. TWA Regular meeting.
Aug. 17 TWA Annual Family Picnic, Weickers Grove

Tamaqua Wireless Assn.
212 Race Street
Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

TIME LIMITED
MEETING NOTICE