SPLATTER

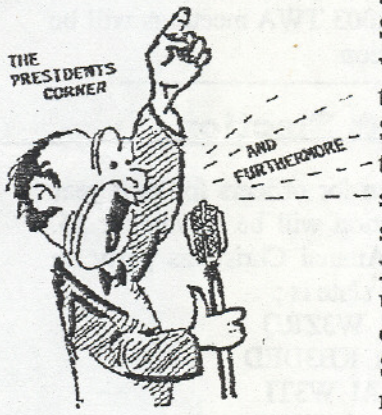
This bulletin is printed from time to time and issued to the members of the Tamaqua Wireless Association

November December | Early winter Issue | 2002

Do the Math

By W3ZRQ President

By the time you read this column you will have heard what ARRL is about to do beginning with the January 2003 issue of QST. I believe this time the Directors of ARRL pulled a Big Boo-Boo. In order to save space and time their plan is to cut the Section News column, which covers 71 Sections throughout the United States. This will include traffic net reports and will stop printing Contest Results, except Field Day. If you wish to read these columns you will have to go on the Internet to see your Section news and traffic net reports or the results of your favorite contest. All this is being done to make space for more advertisements so they can sell amateur radio related publications printed by the League.



If you have a problem and ask ARRL a question they will tell you what book to find your answer and how much the book is ! Years ago they would tell you the answer and help you without trying to make money from your question.

Those who are presently ARRL members can read it all in the October 2002 issue of QST on page 55. As I read that article it struck me funny to see if they were correct on what they said in the 9th paragraph, stating ,"Although more than 90% of the ARRL members have Internet access", so I did the math.

I would safely say Tamaqua Wireless Association is an average club in the United States with most of its members interested in the different facets of amateur radio. Out of 26 members, 78% are members of ARRL. Or about 17 currently read what is going on in QST. I calculate 53% members are connected to the Internet, which leaves 15 who have the capability to connect to the ARRL Web site. Whether they do or not I do not know. As for myself, I do not. Why ? Because of the hassle you have to go through to find anything on those web sites can drive you completely NUTS! After January I probably would not either because I could think of a better way to spend my time.

Continued last page

The Lure of Radio

By W3TI

What peculiar force is it that affects alike the boy of 16 and the man of 70 ? The wealthy man and the poor man ? The college graduate and the uneducated boy ? What is it about their common interest that can bind together such classes and types ?



Perhaps the "urge of distance" has something to do with it. Or the pleasures that come from friendships made over the air, or is it the spirit of adventure ?

The affect or lure has been the cause for over nine hundred-thousand (male and female) to take that first step in getting a license.

Then again, there is always that certain few who after becoming licensed seem to have lost that initial "spark", or interest and they just fade away into the sunset.

For example would you be interested to know the recent Amateur Radio Call-Book lists 44 licensed amateurs in Tamaqua alone. Yet, out of our 26 total club membership only eleven are from Tamaqua. Another point of info "Pottsville" has 35 amateurs but where are they when we hold an emergency drill, you always see that same certain few who are there to give a hand.. Frackville is next with 21 amateurs on the list. We only hear the usual four or five active on the air

It wonders me *(Pennsylvania Dutch expression)* at times why we don't see a lot of our members taking part in club activities, the head count taken at each function indicate only 55 per cent of our members participate. Ill health or working conditions are perfectly good excuses for lack of participation. Or has that original "Spark" been lost and the ignition switch turned off. Personally, the spark struck me 70 years ago and so far hasn't gone out yet.

The Tamaqua club is not just a new kid on the block. It's been active since 1954, just about 49 ago years. Its name may changed a few times but its objective has always been to maintain an organization of trained radio operators. Our group is not specifically oriented to only one subject. Our interests dwell in practically every part of Ham Radio. Experimentation, VHF, FM, AM, SSB, how about PACKET, PK 34, ATV, you name it. One or more of our club members are into it.

Continued next page

SEASONS GREETINGS

A poem by W3TI

If we were all alike, what dreadful Ham Bands there would be
No one would know which one was you or which one was me
We'd never have an FET , a Y3K or Ho Ho Ho
We'd all be SM's or NC's and Extra class
No one would QRM the nets for FUL to harass

If we all looked the same and talked alike
I wonder how we could call each other every night
There would only be one type receiver and transmitter
And the kind of emission would have to be F3E
And maybe we'd all have XYL's who were fond of TV
Which would cut our operatin' time to watch "Harry"

At times I think it's funny when I hear some Ham say
Mine's a Kenwood, why don't you get one today
Or some lid who doesn't like sideband, which I think is fine
I'm glad we're all different so we can QSO from time to time
And if all reports were Q-5 and S-9, - Oh Gee
No more troubles to spur the Hamming spirit for you and me

Now a personal note to you from K3NZD and Me
Isn't it fun to be different, or don't you give a "hang"
Special Seasons Greetings to all of the TWA Gang
Cheers and thanks to Bill for our TWARES
The Nine-fifteen group plus what's left of C.D.
To our many station calls which went unwritten here
Each and everyone comes our wishes for a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Editors note - This poem was first printed in the 1963 winter issue of SPLATTER.. The only changes were the call letters used during that time period.

Is It Class Time Again

At the time of this writing, winter is just a few week away. There will be days and nights when we'll be looking for something to pass the time. Did you forget about the clubs free VCR technical library ? All you need do is contact the secretary and you can borrow them for a month.

Winter is the time to perk up on our book learning. It's usually around that time the club sponsors their Amateur License class ? We still have a few technicians who could use some schooling for upgrading to General class. There might be some General class who would want to go for the Extra. Don't wait till the middle of April 2003 and say "Boy I wish we would have had that class of instruction last winter". Now is the time let the club know what you want.

CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE

For those with 40/40 vision we printed this large enough so you won't be misinformed.

With the start of the new year, January 17, 2003 the Tamaqua Wireless Association will hold their regular business meetings at the East End Fire Company, East Broad Street, Tamaqua, Pa.

At the September meeting the president informed us that we have an invitation to use the meeting room facilities of the East End Fire company. The group accepted unanimously. Starting January 17, 2003 TWA meetings will be held 7:30 p.m. at the new location.

Nomination & Election

As per our Bylaws, nomination for officers for next year will be held October 18, election will be November 15. Officer installation is at the Annual Christmas party on December 14. The present slate is ;

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 Activities Mgr. KB3DYJ
Awards Lou KB3DED TWA Web site Joe N3LBB
Club Bulletin Editor Al W3TI

The Lure Continued from page one

Some of us like to spend our time operating in the traffic nets, some like contests, some just like working DX or rag chewin', while other experiment with various arrays of antennas. We all share our experiences together as a group of Amateur Radio enthusiasts who meet once a month. Our meetings are open to anyone interested.

Information recently received about a group of Amateurs in the Carbon county area who have organized a club with specific interests are operating in contests. That is a terrific idea if your mainly interested in operating contests. If you monitor the bands on week ends there is always a contest somewhere on the globe to become involved.

Getting back to our original intent of this article. Amateur Radio is so diversified today and has so many different facets to whet ones interests. So vast are the number of subjects we cannot understand why so many took the time to study and pass the exam and in a short time lose interest. Surprisingly, our files show we have twenty-eight burn-outs or inactive licensed amateurs in Tamaqua.

2003 Dues Are Due

My oh' my, didn't that year roll around fast. For the past two years, 2000 and 2001, the U.S. Postal Service increased their costs for mailing your club bulletin. And for those two years we were able to hold the line, we had no need to increase your Tamaqua Wireless Association membership dues.

In reviewing the club annual treasurers report we are glad to announce that we are still financially well enough and need not have an increase in dues. TWA membership dues are ten dollars ($ 10.00) a year and payable between October 2002 and January 2003.

ARRL Membership Dues

We are sorry to report the club can no longer accept your League membership dues anymore. Prior to July 2001 if you paid your membership through the club, you got a discount of $ 2.00.

As of July 1, 2001 the Directors at ARRL voted to discontinue that two dollar rebate if you made your renewal via the club. This was the last of a long list of benefits received as an ARRL affiliated club.

Looking Ahead

If you're planning to take an FCC exam next year, the following is a tentative schedule of exam dates for the Tamaqua Wireless Association exam team.

March 1, June 7, August 2, and November 1.

Exams will be held at the Tamaqua Municipal building starting at 9 a.m. unless changed in the meantime.

Brains Vrs. Computer

A lab technician using a voice translator on his computer gave verbal instructions on the tuning procedure of a superhetrodyne.

"In the superhetrodyne receiver, connect a one-tenth microfarad condenser from the screen pin to the cathode return point and an isolation resistor of about 4700 ohms in the B-plus line, to discourage regeneration."

This is what the computer read and typed out.

"In the super cat-o-nine receiver, connect a one-tent mackeral head dispenser from the green pit to the cattoes return point and an occupation-free list of about 4700 homes on the flea bus line to discourage three generations."

Field Day Pins

ARRL Field Day pins were issued to W3ZRQ N3HHH KB3DYJ KB3DED KB3FLJJ W3TI N2DIY KA3FUL NI3H

TWA Annual Xmas Party

December 14



The idea for our TWA annual Christmas party originated back around 1964 and has gained notoriety over the years as the Social event of the year. It is not only the last activity of the year, it also gives us time to review the past and enjoy a festive gathering of the members and their families.

The first four were held at Martha's place, then called Gibas Café. Later we had it at Vitalie's Country House in Hometown and twice at the Tamaqua Italian club. Since 1990 we went back to our original stomping grounds, now called Martha's Place.

We always reserve the same date from one year to the next, the second Saturday in December. The room in the restaurant only has a certain number of table spaces and each year we were able to fill the room. For the past four years the club secretary asked for a head count in order so Martha could complete the table settings. This year you are asked to make your reservation before December 8.

Reserve your spot before December 8

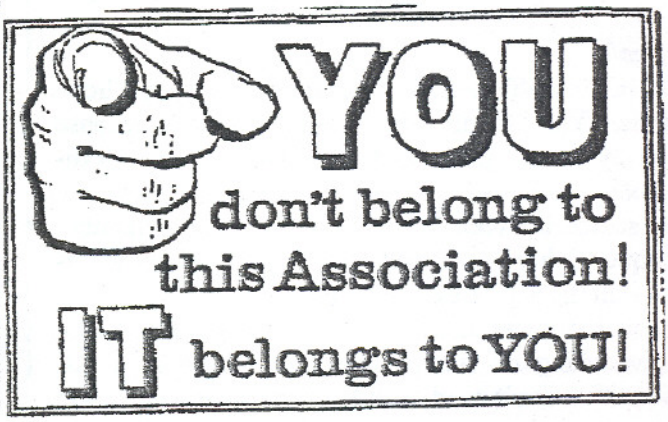
There is NO advance fee or cost for attending this affair. As always, come early, order from the menu and have a good time.

Teck Quiz

In the Handy Talkie article *(next page)*

1. Why cut the wire 19 inches when the rubber duckie is only 8 inches long ?
2. What electrical factors makes your arm and hand the other quarter wave ?
3. Why connect the 19 inch wire to the BNC connector
4. In Trick # 3, why cut the wire only 14 inches long ?
5 Why connect it to the black wire ? Why not the red one ?

If you carry an extra battery, never put it in a pocket with your keys or loose change. It can short out and get hot enough to explode. To make it safe to carry, cut a piece of plastic from the side of a plastic milk jug, 1 by 2-1/4 inches and slide it over top of the battery terminals. There are two slotted groves made especially for that purpose



The TWA Clique

It's time for another self evaluation of your Amateur Radio activities for 2002. A Clique is defined as "A small group of people" or those members that seem to be everywhere and anywhere when there is activity or work to be done. We developed a "self-evaluation" quiz to assist in determining your own *Clique Quotient* **C Q.**

Keep score in the column provided and see how active an asset you were to the club. Enter zero for those functions you did not attend

1. We had eleven club meetings (*none in December)* multiply 5 points for each one you attended. [ ]
2. We had five classes of instruction on Emergency operating procedures. Add 10 points each [ ]
3. We had 4 VE test sessions, Attending as a monitor counts. add 10 points each session . [ ]
4. VHF QSO Party (2 days) 5 points each day [ ]
   2002 Grave Dig Scavenger Hunt 5 points [ ]
   PP-L Evacuation drill 5 points [ ]
   Tamaqua Halloween parade 5 points [ ]
5. Made up an article and entered it in the club news bulletin. 10 points each article.

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

6. Birthday parties and weddings. 1 point, *maximum 5* [ ]
7. Bar Mitz-Vahs and wedding anniversaries 1 point each, *maximum 5*
8. Funerals, Surgical operations, Jury duty [ ] 1 point each *maximum 5*
9. Take one point for an excuse we had'nt thought of. [ ]

Total A _____

Check mark any of the following statements you used to rationalize your non-participation. Five points each.

10. I don't have two meters [ ]
11. I only operate CW. [ ]
12. I'm busy every Friday night. [ ]
13. I don't like operating contests or Field Day [ ]
14. They already have enough help. [ ]

Total B _____

Subtract Total "B" from Total "A". Enter Score _____

Rating Scale

If you scored 140 to 175, You are definitely a Clique Commander. You probably don't get much sleep because you're always on the radio, and probable candidate for divorce. Rotz'a ruck

If you scored between 125 and 140, you're a member of the clique. Either you attend all meetings and no activities, or—— all the activities and no meetings.

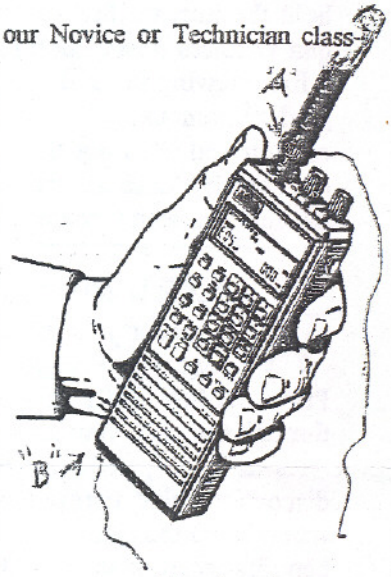
If you scored lower than 75 , start thinking about taking up bird watching or stamp collecting. This is a self evaluation. You don't need to tell anyone what your ***"CQ"*** might be.

That Wonderful Handi-Talkie

A technical article by W3TI Say you saw it in the TWA SPLATTER

Just about every new amateur today is brain washed into buying an HT as their first rig with the belief they can work the world. It doesn't take long for them to learn their first lesson in radio propagation.

If you paid attention during our Novice or Technician class instruction, The R.F. radiator or transducer, better known as the antenna works best in half-wave lengths. Looking at an HT, the Rubber Duckie is no way close to a half wave in length for two meters. In fact, it's only a quarter wave coil of wire wrapped around some insulating material and covered with a rubber hose..



Remember, it should be a half-wave, so where is the other quarter wave ? The answer is easy, when you pick up the HT you become the other quarter wave.

Actually, there is a mismatch, your arm and hand make up a length much longer than a quarter wave but it works. If you want it to work better we have three solutions for you.

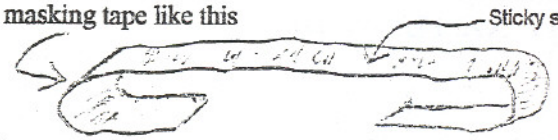
Trick Nr. 1 Cut a piece of # 14 or 16 insulated solid wire about 22 inches long. Scrape 2 inches of insulation from one end and wrap it around the BNC connector and twist it tight as shown at "A" in the photo above. Trim the wire length to about 19 inches. You will be surprised at the results.

Trick Nr. 2 Depends on what make HT you have. Radio Shack and Yasue models with the slide off battery packs as shown at "B" above, have two exposed screw heads on the very bottom of the battery pack. They are used to make contact with a drop-in type battery charger. One will be marked negative - and the other positive +. Loosen the negative or minus screw just enough to slip a piece of Nr 16 or 20 wire under it. Compensating for the length of the HT from the BNC to its bottom. Cut the wire length so it measures about 19 inches from the BNC connector to the end of the wire.

Trick Nr 3. solution is a bit more complicated but it eliminates any dangling wires. Slide the battery case from the HT and examine it closely. Remove the four small screws holding the metal plate to the top of the battery. The larger batteries have 5 or 6 screws. Carefully remove that top metal plate. This should disclose a slit or crack where the two halves of the plastic shell come together. Remove the plus and minus screws on the bottom. Use a sharp pocket knife of razor blade to separate the case. Sliding the case apart and look for the black covered wire, this will be the ground or negative polarity.

Cut a piece of scotch masking tape 4 inches long. Fold the tape with the adhesive part outside as shown below.

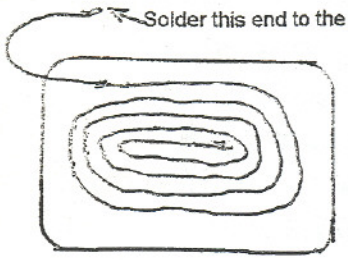
Fold masking tape like this — Sticky side up



Continued next page

Place the masking tape on the flat side of one of the battery shells with the adhesive part facing up. This will make it easy for the next operation.

Cut a piece of number 20 or 22 plastic covered solid wire 14 inches long and form it into a spiral coil as shown.



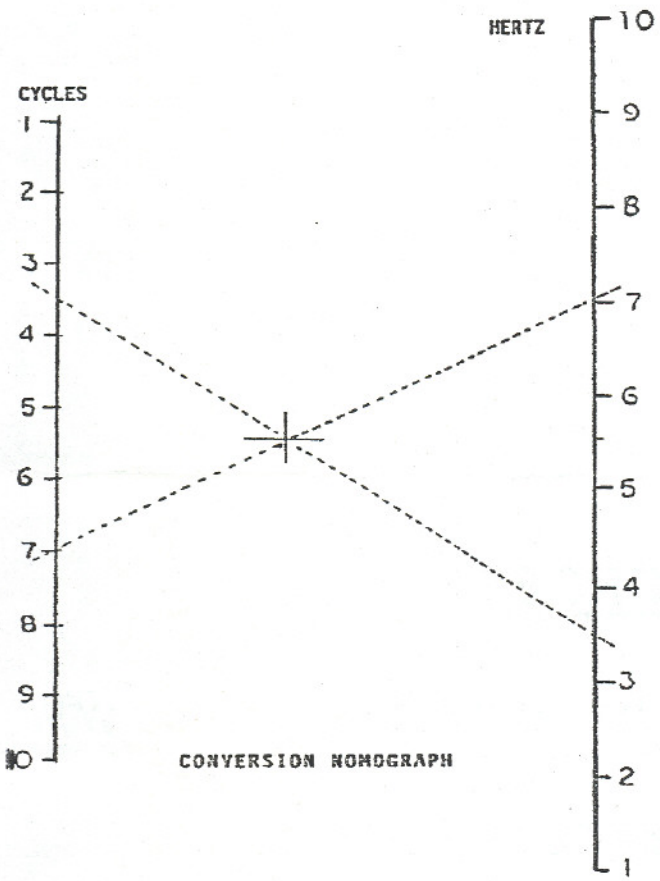
Carefully remove the scotch tape and fold both ends back over the coil to keep it in place. Strip the insulation from the end of the wire and solder it to the same terminal with the black wire. Slide the coil along the inside of the battery case. Do not connect the other end of the wire to anything. Put the battery back together again. This eliminates the dangling wire but gives your HT that missing quarter wave length of antenna

I thought this hobby is Amateur Radio, not Amateur Computer? Sure, they have come a long way since the transistor and chip and I am in no way against progress and advancement in the state of the art, a lot of good has come from it. But don't tell me I must own a computer and pay extra to go on the Internet to become involved in the hobby .

If the League continues at its present pace, just to be a Book Club with QST listing the Books they have for sale, along with the additional advertisements, there will be a large drop in membership. I predict within one year our club alone will drop their ARRL membership below 47%, if not more and I will be one of them. What you received from ARRL years ago compared to what you get today, which is little or nothing, and must pay extra, it's not worth it. I can get just as much information right now out of an AES Catalog and don't have to pay for it.

It will be interesting to see what the next year will bring. I predict the formation of a new organization to give ARRL competition in order to keep the Amateur Fraternity together rather than tearing it apart one piece at a time.

Lest you forget, this an editorial, the opinions of one person "The club president". and not necessarily those of the membership.



A note about the author. Wilhelm Von Slusch, IT7W, a well known Italian Physicist, invented the tail wheel on the airplane so it could run backwards on the runway

Converting from Cycles to Hertz

If you are one of the younger members you may not remember when our transmitters and receivers were all calibrated in Kilocycles. It was the Society of International Electrical and Electronic Engineers who got the bright idea that some sort of recognition be given to the Great Grand Daddy of Wireless communications. Heindrick Hertz, a German Physicist. He actually sent the first wireless signals through space from one side of his laboratory to the other side, a distance of six metres, about 18 feet where his crude receiving apparatus picked up the RF transmissions.

In 1968 the IEEE made the declaration henceforth the frequency in cycles shall be called HERTZ. And equipment manufactured after that date was calibrated in Hertz.

There is still a lot of older equipment around that is calibrated in cycles, so for your convenience we have designed a "Cycles to Hertz" Conversion Nomograph. The only tool required to use it is a ruler or straight edge.

Determine whether you want to convert from cycles to hertz or from hertz to cycles. Cycles are listed on the left and hertz on the right. Also notice, the hertz bar is longer. The reason for that is because Hertz's are bigger than cycles.

(1) To convert from 3.5 kilocycles to Kilohertz align the straight edge with 3.5 on the left scale and cross the "X" mark, and where the line crosses in the hertz column it is converted to 3.5 Kilohertz.

(2) It can also be used in Megahertz or Megacycles. Convert 7 Mhz. to Megacycles, Place the straight at 7 on the hertz scale and crossing the "X" mark will indicate it as 7 Megacycles.

TWA Calendar of Events
Oct. 18 TWA Meeting American Hose F.C. 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 20 RF Hill ARC Hamfest, Sellersville Fire House
October 26 Grave Dig Scavenger Hunt
Oct. 29, Tamaqua Halloween Parade, 5:30 p.m.
Nov. 2 VE Exams, Tamaqua Municipal Bldg. 9 a.m.
Nov. 15 TWA Meeting American Hose Co. 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 14 TWA Xmas party, Martha's Place

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

TIME LIMITED MAIL
MEETING NOTICE

DON'T FORGET

Starting January 17, 2003, The new meeting place will be at the East End Fire Co. East Broad Street, Tamaqua Meeting starts at 7;30 p.m.