SPLATTER

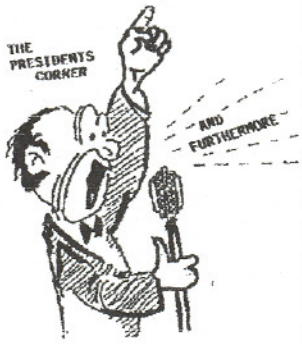
This bulletin is printed from time to time and issued to the members of the Tamaqua Wireless Association a Public Service non-profit organization

April-May-June-July | SPRING ISSUE | 2003

Another New EMA Director

By TWA President W3ZRQ

It seems Tamaqua has a hard time keeping EMA Directors. Since I've been involved in our local unit, I have seen seven people in charge of Tamaqua Emergency Management. I personally have been recommended by the first three to replace them when they resigned, the powers that be decided against it and the fourth also recommended me to replace him. Before I gave the powers another chance, I declined because three strikes were against them. Note: yes they wanted me to take the position but all my Harrisburg contacts were then retired.



The new EMA director for Tamaqua is Robert "Rob" Jones who also works for the Borough as supervisor of the Tamaqua Water Department. Rob approached me and asked if I would retain my position as Communications Director and keep things as is, and I said yes. When the machinery works, you don't fix it ! I assured Rob he will have the full backing of the Tamaqua Wireless Association when and if our services are required, and I wished him well in his endeavor as Director.

Now ! Let's change the subject -----we have always seen what happens after we advertise to sponsor classes and no one comes forth to apply for them, well this time is no exception, it never fails. After we closed the deadline for holding classes at the January meeting and decided not to run any this spring, earlier this week I received an email asking "when are we going to run another class", and is our club active? I answered him with all the information requested and invited him to our next club meeting.

If any club member has a different or better solution in the manner in which we advertise our TWA instruction classes, please step forward and give us your ideas. They might give us different results than what we've been having in the past, please let us know. Anything different has to be better.

As I am writing this column I am just getting over a bad cold. This past winter just doesn't want to let go and from hearing what other club members are saying, isn't it S P R I N G yet ! 73's W3ZRQ

"Field Day" What Really is IT

By Editor W3TI

The ARRL bulletin Nr. 14 released February 11 was meant to be a "Startling Addition" to the annual Field Day exercise rules. Having nothing else important to do, the Board of directors decided to add another entry class for the year 2003 Field Day, "Class F ". This addition is to renew emphasis of Field Day's origin as an emergency exercise as opposed to a routine contest".



I think the directors must have read some back issues (*Way Back*) of QST. When Field Day was originated in 1933 it was intended for amateurs to hold a week end of operating under simulated emergency conditions. Field Day at that time was an "Emergency Exercise". In 1964 a certain ARRL Section Manager from Tamaqua, Pa. put up quite a battle with ARRL's Head Communications Manager, Francis E. Handy W1BDI who , at the time, said," Field Day was a contest ",and the Section Manager argued, "it was a test for operating emergency radio equipment".

This reminds me of a Chinese Soccer game where the directors change the rules anytime they feel like it. We are now back to square-one, Field Day has been declared an exercise for emergency preparedness. The new Class "F" entry would be those who have Field Day at an emergency operations center (EOC). This idea is definitely nothing new for the Tamaqua Wireless Association because Field Day 1975 and 1976 were held in the Tamaqua Municipal building EOC and a number of years that followed we held Field Day at the Still Creek Reservoir and simulated emergency conditions in the event the breast of the dam gave away. Each year a special report was dispatched to the DEP, Department of Environment Protection in Harrisburg who requested the information on radiological and propagation conditions from that particular area.

In 1982 we switched from Still Creek Reservoir to the Owl Creek Reservoir and made the same annual reports to Tamaqua Borough and the DEP. Our last Field Day at Owl Creek was in year 2000 and moved to our present location in Locust Valley just below Locust Dam and close to Tuscarora Lake. Still Creek, Locust and Tuscarora are all headwaters of the Schuylkill River and upstream from Tamaqua.

Operating Field Day from a local EOC is nothing new for us. We were there a long time ago, Been there, Seen that, Done that. As a final comment, I don't believe our ARRL directors are to swift in the gray matter. Why Class F ? Sounds like "F Troop", why not backup one letter and make it Class "E" which stands for Emergency ! It wonders me how people like that get elected to such high officialdum.

By Law Additions



In order that our association keeps abreast with the present, we review the bylaws from time to time and see where there is need for change and/or addition. There are two items the judiciary presented at the March meeting reference to Membership and Dues

Article V DUES.

ADDITION ITEM 4: *Student membership is available at one half the regular membership annual dues. A Student member is anyone attending any public school up until age 18. An additional four years (age 22) will be granted for those who continue a college education. Upon graduation (High School or College) they revert to Regular membership*

ADDITION : Add Item 5. *TWA members entering the United States Military service shall be dues free and listed as inactive until they are discharged. .*

Due to the bad snow storm the February 21 meeting had to be canceled. After additions or corrections are made the above will be read off at the April 18th meeting, adopted and added to our By Laws.

We added another Benny

Off the top of your memory banks without checking the card case in your wallet, do you know the expiration date of your amateur license ? I doubt whether many of you can.

There was a time when your license was only good for five years and the FCC would notify you it was time to re-up. After they discontinued that practice the ARRL did it for a very short time and found the extra postage cut into their profits. During the 1960's the club secretary kept a file on the membership and a few weeks before renewal time would send the member a 610 form as a reminder to renew their ticket.

15 0r more years ago the FCC extended the license term to ten years and we had a couple members almost loose their ticket because they forgot to renew after the ten years were up.

You would be surprised how much the memory cells in you head change over a ten year period so it was proposed at the club meeting. Electronic computers do a terrific job at memorizing. If each member supplies the secretary with the necessary data it can be stored on a disc and each month the secretary checks the records and writes the minutes for the meeting, it only takes a few seconds to check the list. When your renewal time comes up we send you a notice and an FCC 305 renewal form.

The information can be copied on additional disc so other officers of the club can update the information. BUT this program will only work if **"you"** the member participate by sending us the necessary information.

Why belong to a Club

Why does anyone join or become a member of a club, for example the Local Fire company, Elks club, Lions, and what about the Amateur Radio club. There has to be some drawing card or reason you keep your membership year after year. There has to be something within us, a common bond, a yearning to learn, or some other reason to organize and join a club. Each of us probably have different answers to that question.

Yet ! On the other hand, if you've been around as long as I have you will notice that very small percentage who do not believe in joining anything. They can be better described as "a Loner". They try to extract as much information as possible from the joiner or club member while making no offer to reciprocate. .

As a member of a club you are associated with a group. A number of people who believe in sharing, not only their friendship but ideas and experience. In comparison, the "Elmers" in Tamaqua around 1930's and 40's would not teach a new comer anything and you had to learn it all by yourself.

Today the "Elmers" in our club deserve a good pat on the back, and our membership up grading is proof enough. In addition to Elmers, TWA has other benefits such as; the DX QSL card service. While we were typing up this article a package came from ARRL containing a CD ROM entitled *Amateur Radio Today,* another addition to our club video library. We have our own radio frequency interference investigation committee, our antenna construction/ erection group. Instruction classes made available to anyone. If you notice, we have the only volunteer examining team within a forty-five mile radius. How about the Wednesday nite teck sessions. Over the past decade there have been more shack and antenna problems discussed and corrected on Teck Nite then are in the ARRL Antenna Handbook. That only scratches the surface of why it pays to belong to a club group.

What you didn't know

When NASA first started sending up astronauts they quickly discovered the ballpoint pen would not work in zero gravity. To combat the problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and $ 21 billion developing a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down and even under water, on any surface and at temperatures below freezing to over 300 degrees C.

The Russians never had that problem, they use an ordinary Nr. 2 lead pencil.

To prove it to your self, stand a ball point pen in a glass with the tip pointing up. Let it set for a few days and you will find it will not write. The pen relies upon our earth's gravity to force the ink against the ball point before it will function.

A Nr. 2 lead pencil will write in any position, even under water. There is one problem, writing on glass.

KUDOS TWA VE Team

The Tamaqua Volunteer Exam Team was organized by the first Volunteer Examiner in the area. When the FCC and ARRL made the announcement, W3TI applied for accreditation and became a Volunteer Examiner. After reviewing the details involving a VEC, that idea was scrubbed and only applied for the Volunteer Examiner appointment. Our first VE exams were administered at the Tamaqua Hamfests held at the New England Valley Fire company.

Ever since then we've held exams four times a year at the Tamaqua Municipal building. When the VE program was first started we had an average of 5 to 8 candidates and at times 10 candidates taking advantage of our VE sessions. On April 15, 2000 our VE team processed over 170 license upgrades when the FCC introduced their license class restructuring. Since then there has been a notable down sizing of interest in amateur radio and we get two or three candidates at each session.

At present we have a very faithful group of Volunteer examiners, Bill WY3K as VE Coordinator, Al W3TI as contact person and VE's Ed W3ZHW, Bill AA3CU, Bob N3BWA, Joe N3LBC, Steve KB3FJJ and we just added Lou KB3DED and Ann KO3M. Four times a year these volunteers take time out and assure the public and the amateur fraternity in our area an easily accessible examining point.

The officers and members of the Tamaqua Wireless Association wish to convey their thanks and gratitude to the TWA Voluntary Examiners Team for their tireless efforts and continuance in behalf of Amateur Radio and the Association.

Changes in Exam Fee and License Questions

Starting January 1, 2003 the fee charged for all ARRL VEC coordinated test sessions will increase from $10 to $12. This fee is charged to anyone applying for a new license or up grading their present operating privileges.

The new question pool for Technician class Element 2 has been released by the QPC, Question Pool Committee and will become effective as of July 1, 2003. The Technician syllabus was completely revised during 2002 to allow for revamping of the new question pool.

The new element 2 question pool contains 511 questions, up from 385 and is available from ARRL web page. It includes all questions as well as graphics related to the questions for element 2.

The Question Pool Committee will now turn their attention toward revising the General Class license question pool element 3. They will become effective July 1, 2004 and the Extra class question pool element 4 will be revised and become effective as of July 1, 2005.

As each question pool is released by the QPC they are available on the ARRL web page. This is public information and free for you to get a print-out on your computer. It is not necessary to buy a new license question manual every time they change the rule book.

More on RFI

Swiped from ARRL Bulletin

Not all TVI or RFI comes from Amateur Radio transmitters. Jan Bowen from Gresham, Oregon received a complaint of RFI on February 3. An amateur in the vicinity filed the complaint with the FCC that Mr. Bowens Winegard amplified Television antenna was causing spurious radiation on 447.375 Mhz. An FCC agent investigating the interference tracked the interfering signal to the Bowen's RV in Portland. The FCC cited Part 15 rules and noted certain Winegard amtenna amplifiers "have been the source of radio frequency interference". Wingard has been notified to replace the defective units at no charge

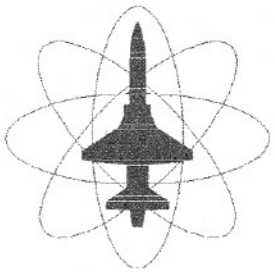
TWA Officers for 2003

President Al W3ZRQ
Vice Pres. Darryl N2DIY
Sect-Treas. Al W3TI
Trustee Chip NI3H
COMMITTEES
EC & VEC Bill WY3K
RFI Bud KB3FSU
Antenna Crew Steve KB3FJJ
Activities Mgr. Ed KB3DYJ
Awards Darryl N2DIY
Bulletin Al W3TI
TWA Web site Joe N3LBB



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



On Friday morning, January 31 while eating a late breakfast I turned the mahogany knot hole on around 9 a.m. to check what kind'a weather would be facing us during the day. At ten minutes after nine the screen showed an object falling from the sky and the news commentator indicated we were watching the Columbia space shuttle descending to earth when it burst into flame and a few seconds later began to separate and break up into pieces. As I watched, in disbelief, I recalled there were some members of that crew who were licensed Radio Amateurs.

In memory, we record the following Silent Keys who perished in the "Last Flight of the Columbia", Kalpana Chawla KD5ESI, David Brown KC5ZTC, and Laurel Clark KC5ZSU, also crew members Rick Husband, Willie McCool, Michael Anderson and Ilan Ramon.

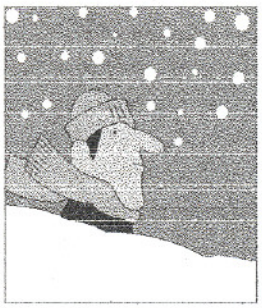
Lest we forget, closer to home, on January 10, KA3OPX Danny Yakubisin of Hazleton became a silent key. Danny took an active part in TWA during the mid 1970's and was well known for his pigeon flights at the Tamaqua. Hamfests.

The Winter of 2003



The Weather Forecast

We all know how to tell what the weather is like outside. If it's wet, then it is raining. If it's all white, then it is snowing. Then there's that in between weather prediction that I fail to grasp.



It seems all of us depend mainly on the Mahogany Knothole to inform us how to dress when there's a change in the weather. By now we know the difference between a shower and a heavy down pour, thunder storm, or a blinding blizzard. But what do they mean when the forecast is, a sprinkle, a dusting, a flurry, or just a snow shower.

At the time this article was being punched out on the computer, it was snowing and the previous 24 hour forecast indicated we were going to get a snow shower of about one to two inches but it's still snowing and close to four inches deep. The total depth of that snow shower was six inches.

On January 22 the prognosticator informed us to expect a dusting or very little snow cover. The following morning I had to shovel three inches of dustings off the side walk. During the early part of December we were to expect a flurry, very little accumulation. The next morning the snow blower removed six inches of flurries from the sidewalk.



On February 6, three different TV channels, 16, 28 and 44 expressly noted we were to expect a fast moving storm coming down from the Northwest mixing with something coming up from the South and should only have an accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Wow, were they off. My snow blower sputtered thru 9 inches of the white stuff.

Somewhere along the line my depth measuring guage don't seem to match with that of the weather prognosticator. They came pretty close with the Christmas day snow storm. Their prediction was six to eight inches and my snow blower had to work on removing ten inches. It wonders me, with all that satellite and electronic equipment they have today, will they ever get it right !

Then came the "Presidents Holiday weekend" snow storm which I think almost equaled the blizzard of '93. They got the timing correct but the depth in various areas were way out of kellter. If the following 2 week predictions hold true, we'll have snow piles in the back yard on the 4th of July. Oh well, If they practice long enough at throwing darts, one should hit the bulls eye sooner or later.

One thing for sure, we are at the mercy of the Weatherman and it always rains on Field Day. We are all looking ahead for Summer. Then we'll complain that it's to dingbusted HOT. One thing nice about that, we don't need to shovel it.

I Didn't Know That

How often have you read an article in one of the Amateur Radio periodicals where the author used a number of three or four letter acronyms, for example " at this point use a 7 pin DIN plug". I know it's some kind'a plug, but what's a "DIN" ?

While perusing through one of the monthly periodicals I came across the following information and definitions for some of those screwy terms. Perhaps they can help you understand what you're reading in those high level construction projects.

ALC. Automatic Level Control. Every SSB transmitter has one
ALU Automatic Logic Unit. An important part of your computer.
ATE. Automatic Test Equipment. Not everybody has one.
BIOS. Basic Input Output System. Part of a computer.
CPU. Central Processing Unit. Main part of your computer
CRC. Cyclical Redundancy Check. Corrects your mistakes
DARPA. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency
DAS. Data Acquisition System. Part of your computer
DIN. German *(Deiche)* Industrial Standard.
EEPROM Electrically Erasable programmable Read Only Memory
EMI. Electro Magnetic Interference. The stuff TVI is made of
EMR Electro Magnetic Radiation. Makes you glow in the dark
ESD. Electro Static Discharge. The stuff lightning is made of
ESR. Equivalent Series Resistance. How your body reacts when you stick your finger into a light socket.
FAT. File Allocation Table. The place your computer stores all that stuff.
GUI. Graphical User Interface. Another part of the computer
GPS. Geo Positioning System. Tells you where you are.
ISP. Internet Services Provider. The place where all your junk mail comes from, and more- - -
ITU. International Telecommunications Union. Part of the United Nations
IARU. International Amateur Radio Union. The outfit who tells us what Ham band frequencies we are permitted to use.
LASCAR. Light Activated Silicon Controlled Rectifier
MUF. Maximum Usable Frequency. The Frequencies sun spots allow us to use.
MOV. Metal Oxide Varistor. You should have one in your computer power supply as a lightning protection device.
(A good topic for future news bulletin.)
PLC. Programmable Logic Controller. Part of the computer
PPM. Parts Per Million. 1,000 ppm equals 0.1 %
PTO. Permeability Tuned Oscillator.
SI. Systems International. The metric system
SMD. Surface Mount Device. The way radios are made today
UPC. Universal Product Code. That Bar code on everything
UPS. Uninterruptible Power Supply, Not United Parcel service
UTC. Universal Coordinated Time. GMT or Zulu time
VXO. Variable Frequency (crystal) Control Oscillator

DX QSL Bureau

The sun spots are up and a number of our newer members got their first taste of DX and how it feels when you have made your first contact to a foreign country. To some of us this is old hack, but that doesn't say we shouldn't relate our experiences with the newly licensed.

Everyone likes to work DX but it is also nice to show that QSL card as confirmation you made said contact. Swapping QSL cards with foreign countries can become very expensive if you resort to the U.S. Mail service but not if you utilize the ARRL out going QSL system. It might cost you about 5 cents per card which is cheap compared to a buck twenty five each when you send them separately.



Our club has an out going QSL service. Each member gathers their cards to be sent and gives them to the secretary, he runs them thru the process. ARRL charges $ 4.00 for each half pound we send them. After the club secretary counts, bundles them up, and weighs the cards, you are informed of your share of the expense. As mentioned earlier the cost is about a nickel each.

The 3 Quarts + 5 Quarts Equals 4 Quart Problem

By now you should have figured out the solution for our sports car driver and got the required 4 quarts measured for his car. There are actually three different ways it can be done. The following is the shortest and most accurate way.

Fill the 3 quart measure and pour it into the 5 quart measure. Fill the 3 quart measure again and pour 2 quarts into the 5 quart measure, leaving one quart remaining in the 3 quart measure. Empty the 5 quarts back into the 55 Gal drum and pour the 1 quart from the 3 quart measure into the 5 quart measure. Fill the 3 quart measure and pour it into the 5 quart measure that has one quart. One plus three equals 4.

E N R O N Pledge of Allegiance

By Non other than W3TI

I Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United Multinational Corporations of the World, and to the profit for which it stands. One interlocking Directorate under no government, indivisible, with monopoly and cheap labor for all.

For Ur Information

One of the topics discussed at our Wednesday nite Teck session was about the origin of the Morse code. It was stated there were two Morse codes. The following data was dug out of our Splatter morgue and should clear up a number of unanswered questions. Your editor does not throw items like this in the waste basket because they come in handy at times.

TELECOMMUNICATION

Editor: Don de Neuf, WA1SPM

AMERICAN MORSE CODE vs CONTINENTAL

With equally skilled operators, the use of American Morse Code will provide somewhat faster transmission of information than will Continental (International) Code. Dr. Ivan S. Coggeshall KA1AVG some time ago made an exhaustive study of this subject in comparing two speed contests – one champion using American and the other Continental – both using as a text *COMMAND OF GIDEON.* He computed it took only 7978 pulses to send it in American but 9076 pulses to send it in Continental. Spaced dots in American instead of dot and dash combinations as in Continental makes a considerable difference.

The actual speed of letters in American Morse is often not constant since most skilled operators have a practice of slightly slowing down and "*emphasizing*" uncommon or difficult combinations of letters in some words. Some words sent in American can be made up solely with dots and no dashes – for example "SHE HOPES ERIE ICE CO SHIPS HORSESHOE ZIPPER SCOOPS". Try it in both codes and time yourself.

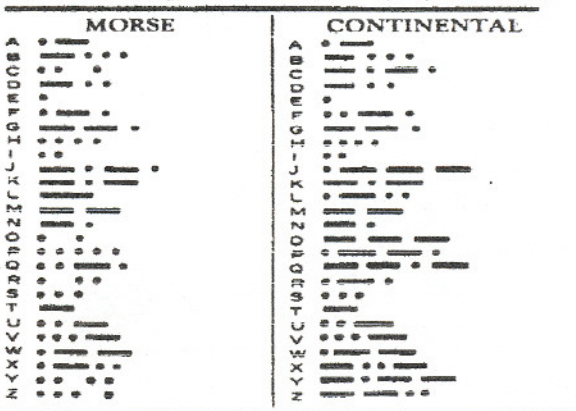
The spaced dots used for the letters C, O, R, Y, and Z and the long dash for the letter L in American Code sometimes used to get careless operators into trouble. In 1846 President Polk dispatched General Zachary Taylor to Texas to seize disputed land from Mexico. A press telegram arrived in Washington reading "*GENERAL TAYLOR SEEN IN NEW ORLEANS*". A move was about to start to oust him for deserting his post, until another telegram arrived which corrected the message to read "*SON*" instead of "*SEEN*".

In a second case a contractor sent his foreman to another city to inspect a building scheduled for renovation. The contractor received a message from him reading "*FOUND A LION VERY WEAK IN BASEMENT WHAT SHALL I DO?*". Confusion reigned when the foreman received a reply "*CALL LOCAL ZOO ASK FOR ASSISTANCE*". The message was supposed to read "*FOUNDATION VERY WEAK IN BASEMENT WHAT SHALL I DO?*".

If you were to transmit, say a military message, in cypher in which the word "OTLØ" had to be copied exactly per the original, just how would you safely send it in American Morse and how would the receiving operator assure you that he'd copied it correctly? Ambidextrous bi-code operators found that error-free handling allowed no mind-wandering or absentmindedness in the transmission of cypher words. One signal indicates a certain letter in American but the same signal when used in the Continental Code may indicate a different letter as is readily disclosed in comparing the two. Pity the operator who caused a disaster in copying a million dollar financial transaction cypher word as "CRFX" instead of "JFQL".

American Morse was always confined to the US, Canada and Mexico because the spaced-dot letters and the long L were not suitable for submarine cable operation and the early needle type telegraph instruments in Europe. The Continental code was compiled at the first International Telegraph Conference in Berlin in 1851.

TELEGRAPH CODES



Efforts were made at the turn of the century to induce American Code operators to adopt the new International (Continental) code but the steadfastly refused. However, in the early days of wireless, American Code operators aboard ships were forced to learn Continental in order to communicate with European shore stations and other foreign ships.

TWA Video Requisition

The TWA Video library is available to members free of charge. Video tapes are on loan from the club secretary for thirty days or from one meeting to the following meeting. Tapes are loaned on availability or first come basis. Enter first and second choice below.

Date _____

Name _____ Call Letters _____

List tapes requested by number and name

First choice _____

Second choice _____

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TWA Out-going QSL Service

Complete and attach this form with your ARRL sticker and QSL cards. Stack cards alphabetically by call prefix, *example* CO5, DL3, EA4, etc. Numeral prefix cards on the bottom of the pile.

Call _____ Number of cards attached _____

_____ Do not write below this line _____

Nr. Of cards _____ Cost per card _____ Total _____

========== Cut along dotted line ==========

Member License Renewal information File

Complete the following information if you want to have your license renewal data on file with the club. Each file will be reviewed monthly and an FCC 305 renewal application will be sent to you. ALL Amateur Radio License are free. The only cost to you is a postage stamp.

Name _____ Call _____

Street _____

QTH _____ Pa. ZIP _____

Class License Circle one (Technician) (Technician plus) (General) (Advanced) (Extra)

File Number _____ Date of license Expiration _____

TWA Calendar of Events
March 21, TWA meeting East End Fire Co. 7:30 p.m.
April 18, TWA meeting East End Fire Company
May 4, Warminster Hamfest, Wrightstown, Pa.
May 16, TWA meeting Weickers Grove 7:30 p.m.
June 7, VE Exams Tamaqua Municipal Bldg. 9 a.m.
June 14-15, VHF QSO Party, Wecikers Grove
June 20, TWA meeting Weickers Grove, 7:30 p.m.
June 27-28-29 Annual Field Day Exercise, Weickers Grove

Tamaqua Wireless Assn.
A.R. Breiner W3TI Secy
212 Race Street
Tamaqua, Pa. 18252

Time Limited Mail
Meeting Notice

TAMAQUA WIRELESS ASSOCIATION
W3CMA
Amateur Radio

TAMAQUA, PA