Tamaqua Wireless Association

Splatter Bulletin

Amateur Radio Club since 1967 Vol. I #8 2016

Officers

President: Gary Fleischut KA3FUL (ka3ful@yahoo.com)
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Tamaqua, PA

TWA Repeaters

146.490 / 147.490 (PL 123.0)

147.270 / 147.870 (PL 131.8)

147.270 is our Fusion repeater

Simplex: 146.550

W3CMA Home Page:
www.w3cma.org

- Need Emergency Service in Schuylkill County, dial 911
- Need Amateur Radio Service, contact one of the officers above



VE Test Sessions 2016

- ~~April 2nd~~
- ~~June 4th~~
- ~~August 6th~~
- November 5th

9am Tamaqua Borough Hall

VE's are needed for each session. Please contact Bill Dale at 570-386-2384 or email him at bdalejr@ptd.net if you are interested in any of these test dates.

Calendar of Events:



- September 5th Labor Day
- September 10th Club Picnic, 12 noon @ Grove
- September 16th Club meeting 7:30 Grove
- September 22nd Fall begins
- October 8th and 9th PA QSO Party
- October 9th Heritage Festival, Tamaqua
- October 21st Club meeting 7:30 Legion
- October 25th Halloween Parade – Volunteers needed for communications! This is a tentative date
- October 31st Halloween
- November 5th Ham Radio Test 9am Tamaqua Borough Hall
- November 5th turn your clocks back 1hour tonight!
- November 18th Club meeting 7:30 Legion
- November 24th Thanksgiving
- December 10th Club Christmas Party 3:00PM Chantilly's followed by our meeting and year-end report

Here is what's going on with the TWA this month.



- On July 26th WY3K, KC3CRS, KB3AYY, and K3TE retuned the duplexer and reinstalled the Omni-directional antenna on top of the high-rise. The antenna was retuned to the ham band and after a thorough test, it was determined that the Omni-antenna performed better then the dB220 antenna.
- The club will be participating in "Winter Field Day" on January 28th and 29th 2017. Weather Permitting!
- I received an email from Schuylkill County EMA Director John Matz. He expressed a wait and see approach to our proposed site on top of Summit Hill. He said he is waiting to hear from Lehigh Anthracites consultant for any possible interference of our 2 meter frequency to possible cellular phone frequencies.
- It looks like W3CMA will be at Heritage Day in October. After a motion the club gave permission for members to have a 10'x10' tent promoting amateur radio, TWA, and a fundraiser. We are now looking for food donations, and assistance manning the tent. Please contact KB3AYY @ 778-2322 for info!
- Thanks to Ron Creitz for setting up a meeting with an official from Lehigh Anthracite. We had an informative meeting at the American Legion.
- Met with the Summit Hill Water Authority, another informative meeting.

Famous ham radio operator:

Do you know who this operator is?



Dark Sarcasm:



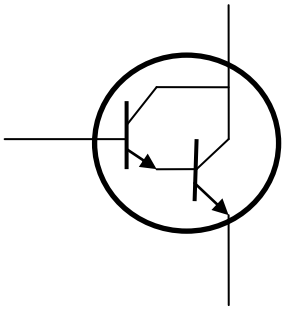
C'mon Tom, CW is easy!
Even I could do it.

dah-di-dit dit dit dah-di-dit dit dit

Test Your Knowledge:

1. What should you do when someone is getting an electrical shock?
    a. Beat them with a non-conducting stick
    b. Call 911
    c. Walk away
    d. Turn off the power
    e. Close your eyes and wait to they stop shaking

2. What type of component is pictured below?



Answers at the end

Emergency Communications & the NTS

In last month's installment I discussed the importance of traffic handling during emergency situations, and provided a snapshot of how traffic moves through the National Traffic System. This month I will focus on the segment of traffic handling at the local and section level. The majority of amateurs who participate in NTS are active at the local level. But what is important to understand, regardless of what level of participation the protocol remains the same. Becoming proficient and developing your skills at the local level will enable you to operate at the section and regional levels should the need arise.

Last month I also briefly mentioned the connection between nets and traffic handling. It is the formal structure of nets that enables traffic to move in a systematic manner.

As the name applies, a local net covers a small area. Most local nets operate on VHF and UHF (typically 2-meter FM and repeater) frequencies. The local net operates at the convenience of the operators. There can be many local nets in an area and since these nets typically meet only once a week, it's important to know the day, time and frequency of the nets to move traffic as quickly as possible.

TWA members should be familiar with three local nets. They are: Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net (Tuesday – 8:00 pm local – 145.370 repeater), EAETN (Thursday – 8:00 pm local – 146.640 repeater) and Carbon Amateur Radio Club (Wednesday – 8:00 pm local – 147.255 repeater). If you need to move traffic outside the local net coverage area and no liaisons checked into one of the local nets, you can take your traffic to a section level net. The EPA Emergency Phone and Traffic Net (Daily – 2300 UTC – 3917 KHz.) is a good outlet.

THE NET

So what is a net? I'm sure we all have participated in a net at some time in our amateur radio carrier, but do you really know the purpose of that net when you check-in. Nets have a variety of purposes. A net can be organized to discuss a common topic of interest, buy and sell used radio equipment, monitor severe weather events, move general traffic, move emergency traffic, prepare for emergency events, or to gather with friends for a rag-chew session. For the purpose of this article I will remain focused on general and emergency traffic nets. You should also know that the mode which nets operate varies. At the section level, there is a very popular CW traffic net. The use of digital modes is also very popular and we will be discussing this mode in a future article

For a net to be effective it must be conducted in a formal format. This format is often referred to as a directed net and a net control station (NCS) manages its operation for the session. The net control station opens the net at the scheduled time or when an emergency event warrants the operation of the net. When opening a net, the NCS announces the name and purpose of the net. This is often referred to as a preamble and is prepared by the net manager and supplied to all net control stations. The NCS then performs a call-up. There are typically two methods in the way a call-up is performed. The NCS can call for any stations wishing to check-in, or the NCS can call for stations from a roster. In either case the NCS will acknowledge and record the call sign of the available stations. The NCS will also call for stations wishing to list traffic for the net. There is a hierarchy assigned to the priority in which traffic is listed and moved (more on this topic will be discussed in a future article) and the NCS is responsible for prioritizing the traffic.

When checking into a net, stations need to remember that the NCS is there to maintain order and all requests for communications with another operator must be arranged through the net control station.

When an emergency event occurs, the net has the potential to operate for an extended period of time. Therefore, emergency traffic and communication nets must have multiple trained net control stations and a net manager to oversee operations. The net control stations should not be located in the disaster area where it would be subject to adverse factors. The NCS should also be prepared to remain on the air for at least a two-hour shift. Also, the NCS must never leave the net frequency. If it becomes necessary to obtain information from another net or agency, the NCS must assign a liaison to leave the frequency to gather the necessary information. When conducting a net on a simplex or HF frequency, the NCS may not be able to hear all of the stations. When a situation of this nature occurs, the NCS must rely on relay stations to obtain and move the necessary traffic and information.

As you can see, the net is a very important tool in assuring that general and emergency traffic is relayed in a structured and timely manner. And the net control station plays an important part is assuring a smooth operation.

VE Report For August 6th 2016 – Bill Dale

The club offered a test session on August 6th 2016 at the Tamaqua Borough Hall. The following person passed their test.

1. David White – Technician License from Wyoming PA

Congratulations and Welcome to the Hobby!

If you need any assistance or information on Amateur Radio, email one of the officers above and we will be happy to assist you. Our club meets every 3rd Friday of the month if you are interested in joining. VE's present for the test: Ron KB3CFV, John KB3JD, Bill WY3K, Tom K3TE – thanks everyone for your help!

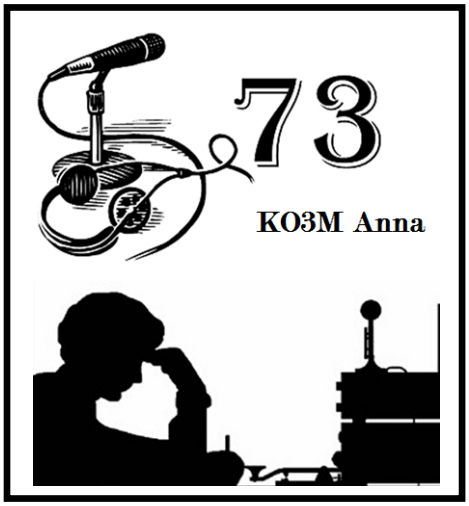


VE Testing held on August 6th 2016

The guys posing for their mug shot with David White. Thanks for your help once again! – Tom K3TE

Silent Key

Mrs. Anna M. Keiser 87, of Mahoning Township passed away on July 28 at home. She was the wife of Joel A. Keiser. They were married for 67 years on July 16th. Born in Mauch Chunk, she served as a U.S. Military Communications Specialist, assisting families of enlisted soldiers. She leaves behind a daughter and five sons, and many grand and great-grand children. Rest in peace KO3M



Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be:

- September 16th at 7:30PM

At the Grove, weather permitting. Hope to see you there!



To N3OGG and KB3CFV for all the work you did this summer to keep the grove clean, the grass cut, trees trimmed, etc. Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

September is back to school time… keep an eye out for the little ones, and watch for school buses!





I know it's only September but it's time to do an assessment of your antenna and/or connections. Check to make sure your connectors are properly insulated from the rain, snow and ice coming in the future. Does your antenna have all of its elements? It is easier now rather than later to fix and/or replace!

Club Picnic September 10th 12 pm

TWA is holding its annual end of summer picnic on Saturday September 10th, 2016 starting around noon. Members, friends and family are welcome. The club will supply the hot dogs, burgers, buns and condiments. Please bring a cover dish and your own beverages? Hope to see you there. It should be fun.

Tamaqua Heritage Festival

October is turning out to be a busy month for TWA. Not only do we need help for the Halloween Parade but we will be at the Tamaqua Heritage Day Festival. At the August meeting TWA decided to set up a 10'x10' tent for October's Heritage Festival. Here is what we plan on doing…

- Promoting Amateur Radio by setting up an HF rig.
- Using HT's to promote area repeaters.
- Promote TWA by tapping into the member's knowledge in amateur radio, what works and what doesn't. Where to study for the test, and where to take the test.
- Fundraising – we are looking for members to donate food, bake goods, refreshments, ice, utensils etc. How about bean soup or clam chowder?
- Looking for a generator to produce the electric to run the electronics and to keep our food hot!

We also are looking for volunteers to work from 9AM to 4PM. Heritage Day is from 10AM to 5PM. **If you could volunteer for an hour or two, or donate food please contact Ed at 778-2322 or Kelly Boerner at 778-6047. See you at Heritage Day!**

Schuylkill County Emergency Services NET

Check-In Every Tuesday Night

145.370 (PL Tone 123.0)

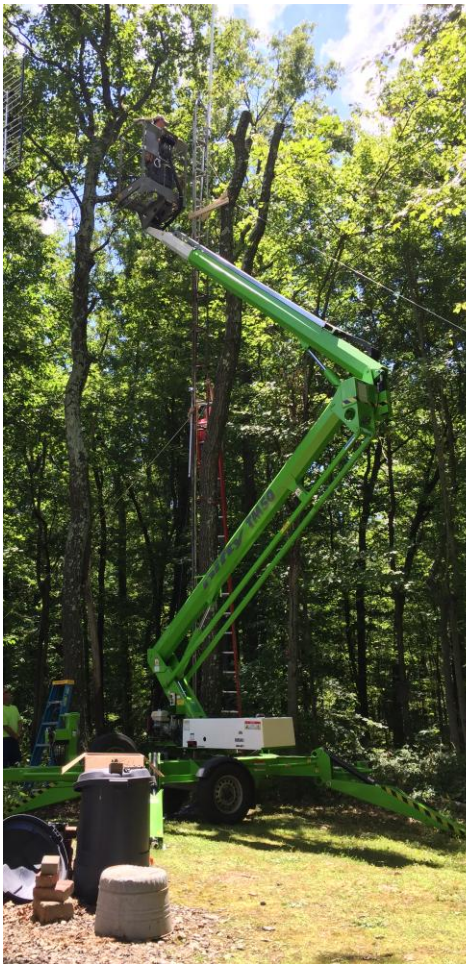
Alternate Frequency 147.345 (PL Tone 123.0)

The Net begins at 8:00 pm local time

The Net is hosted on SARA's Repeater



On July 11th our "270" repeater had some major upgrades. For one, the antenna has been upgraded. A PD220 fiberglass antenna from Commander Technologies was chosen over the CommScope DB224. This is a commercial grade antenna with a dBi gain of 7.4. Their website is http://www.commandertech.com/home click on the blue link and check them out, this antenna replaces our current Diamond X300 antenna. According to Commander's website, they make their own antennas down in Louisiana. We also replaced the RG-8 coaxial cable with Andrew 1/2" Heliax cable. This alone should be a big improvement over our current cable. Also, 6' 1/2" Superflex jumper wires were purchased to connect the amplifier to the duplexer and from the duplexer to the lightening suppressor. Finally, we were able to increase another 10' above our current set up by installing a 21 foot galvanized steel mast. Now the base of the antenna is at approximately 1200 feet. Below are some of the pictures of the upgrade. This repeater is a great addition to this area and a complement to other repeaters in the county. Although only temporary, it's the best we are going to get until we move the machine to its permanent location.







Pictured on the far left is a 50 boom we rented, it took 2 hours to hoist the mast and antenna eight feet up by hand. When the boom came we had the antenna, mast, cable installed and the boom was returned within 4 hours. Also, pictured are the guys attaching the antenna to the mast? Thanks for all your help: KC3CRS, KB3AYY, WY3K, and WA3WIJ – K3TE.

Footprint Report on our "270"



On July 11th WA3WIJ (Jim) stopped by in the morning and saw that we (KC3CRS, KB3AYY, WY3K, and K3TE) were installing the new mast and antenna to our 40 foot tower. It had to be around 9:30AM. Jim helped us plum the tower then left for work. He arrived back around 3:30PM and the work was done. I don't want to get into how much work had to be done between 9:30 and 3:30 to get the antenna raised to its new height but for Jim it was probably like a cooking show, one minute the cake is mixed, go to a commercial break, and come back and the cake is done.

As of this writing I have some footprint reports: WY3K was able to communicate with an HT inside his house; KC3CRS who lives in Mary-D was able to get into 270 on his HT inside his house. KB3AYY was able to contact 270 with a rubber duck antenna on the shadow side of Sharpe Mountain in Tamaqua from his backyard.

WA3WIJ took a ride with his HT and a Mag-Mount antenna. He visited Palmerton, Country Junction, 209 to route 534 (Kresgeville). The intersection of 534 and 903 in Albrightsville, just below the fire tower in Hickory Run State Park, White Haven, the next time I heard from Jim was at the intersection of 81and route 93 in Hazleton. Needless to say I was impressed with the coverage.

KB3AYY and KB3ASZ went to Lowes in Saint Claire, 209 was deceit, the 270 has a tough time with the "shadow" side of the mountain, Ed was copy able but it could have been better. When he got to Port Carbon away from the shadow side his signal was much better. When he got to 61, very good signal and when he got to Lowes, perfect.

KC3CRT (Kyle) was coming home from Reading and he heard us on route 222. When he got on 61 he said we were good in Sinking Springs and Leesport. As he got closer to the Blue Mountain it was spotty until he went around the mountain. Signal is perfect in Deere Lake from the beginning of 895 to 309.

Thank you to all that gave a report so far. Keep the reports coming; we love to hear where we could reach!

Meeting Locations:

- Spring & Summer: Grove, 555 Tuscarora Mtn. Road, Barnesville
- Fall & Winter: American Legion, West Broad St. Tamaqua
- Always 3rd Friday of the Month – 7:30PM



Do you want something published in this newsletter? Do you have anything you want to sell or looking to buy? I am looking for articles for the newsletter. Please email me at tlesisko@ptd.net if you have something in mind

FYI: Dues for 2016-2017

- $15.00 for individual
- $20.00 for family



Comm-Check

Have you used your portable radio lately? October 25th is a tentative date for the Tamaqua Halloween Parade. Maybe you need a new battery, microphone, or maybe you need a new portable radio. Now is the time to get your equipment up to par.

Just a reminder, the Tamaqua repeater has a 1MHz offset. If your radio is not programmed by now, set your TX to 147.490 and your RX to 146.490. The repeater has a tone squelch of 123.0.

We need your help to make this the smoothest parade ever! Stay tuned for any final updates in the October Splatter.



Tamaqua Halloween Parade Update

- Plan on meeting at the Tamaqua Municipal Building by 5:30 pm, remember, there will probably be some traffic at this time. Plan according!
- Please make sure your HT is capable of working for up to three hours. How is your battery?
- The Parade starts at 7:00 pm
- The staging area is located at the former JamesWay Shopping Center. Program 146.520 (simplex) for the staging area.
- **We need as many radio operators as possible**. Email Frank: fjbcab@ptd.net to let him know you will be participating.
- John Denchak and Tom Smith have been added to the list of volunteers.
- **KB3AYY is allowing us to use his repeater too! Program 444.600 with a tone of 131.8. We will be utilizing two repeaters for the Halloween Parade!**

Battery Backup

We are still looking for someone to sponsor a deep cycle marine battery or 2 or 3. We need to back up our 270 repeater. If anyone would like to help please email me at tlesisko@ptd.net in the event of power interruption we need to have uninterrupted service! FYI: our 490 is on a generator backup.



What we need: 3 deep cycle marine batteries, one for the Fusion and two for the amplifier

TWA will be participating in "Winter Field Day" 2017 (weather permitting). January 28th & 29th the start time is 2PM Saturday to 2PM Sunday.

Click on the blue link for more information.

- http://www.winterfieldday.com/index.html
- More information to follow in the October Newsletter

Tamaqua Halloween Frequencies

- 146.490 (+ 1 MHz offset) tone squelch 123.0
- 444.600 (+ 5 MHz offset) tone 131.8
- 146.520 Simplex

What's New in Ham Radio?

http://www.elecraft.com/W2/W2.htm

Click on the BLUE Link, and let the web do the rest!





http://www.mfjenterprises.com/Product.php?productid=MFJ-939I

Hot off the press – Just announced Yaesu's new FT-891 price - $899 at HRO
http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=71-002216

If you have anything you want to submit to the club newsletter please email Tom Lesisko: tlesisko@ptd.net

The Eagles Joe Walsh: WB6ACU

1. D
2. Darlington Transistor

Until next time – 73's