Tamaqua Wireless Association

SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. II #8 2017

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Tamaqua, PA

- Need Emergency Service in Schuylkill County, dial 911
- Need Amateur Radio Service, contact one of the officers above
- We are here to serve the community. If you need radio communications for an event email one of the officers above and we will gladly help

W3CMA Home Page:
www.w3cma.org
Facebook:
TWA Tamaqua Wireless Association
YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqHQWwP6--piClV-YiiNzfA

August 2017						
Sun	**Mon**	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**	**Sat**
		1 Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**2**	**3** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**4**	**5** Our 3rd VE test session for 2017. Please use the back entrance of the Borough Building. Testing starts @ 9AM
6 ARRL 222MHz and up Contest August 5th and 6th	**7**	**8** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**9**	**10** The Chew with Tom @8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS	**11** SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center 8PM	**12**
13	**14**	**15** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**16**	**17** TWA Club Announcements @7:30PM on 147.270 K3TE The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**18** TWA Club Meeting at The Grove 7PM	**19**
20 Rookie Roundup – RTTY	**21** Solar Eclipse QSO party from 1400-2100 UTC	**22** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KB3FET	**23** It's Back! The New Tech Night 7PM at the grove: DMR Presentation	**24** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**25**	**26**
27	**28** Schools reopen, drive safely	**29** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**30**	**31** The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**Notes:**	

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:



Dog Days of Summer!



- September 9th to 11th ARRL September VHF Contest
- September 9th is the date set for grove work party/picnic. It's time to put the equipment away until April 2018.
- September 14th Club Announcements on 147.270 @7:30PM
- September 15th Club Meeting 7PM Grove
- September 20th Tech Night at the grove 7PM
- October 8th Heritage Day in Tamaqua, we need food donations and people to help man the tent.
- October 14th & 15th PA QSO Party
- October 20th Club Meeting 7PM American Legion
- October 24th Tentative Halloween Parade
- October 25th Tech Night at the American Legion 7PM
- November 4th Amateur Radio Test Session 9AM
- November 16th Club Announcements 7:30 on 147.270



- November 17th Club Meeting 7PM American Legion
- November 22nd Tech Night at the American Legion 7PM
- November 23rd Thanksgiving
- November 24th Black Friday
- December 1st to 3rd ARRL 160M Contest
- December 7th Club Announcements 7:30 on 147.270
- December 9th Club Christmas Party – Tentative at Chantilly's Restaurant in Barnesville 3PM Cocktails, 4PM Dinner
- December 9th to 10th ARRL 10M Contest
- December 17th ARRL Rookie Roundup- CW Contest

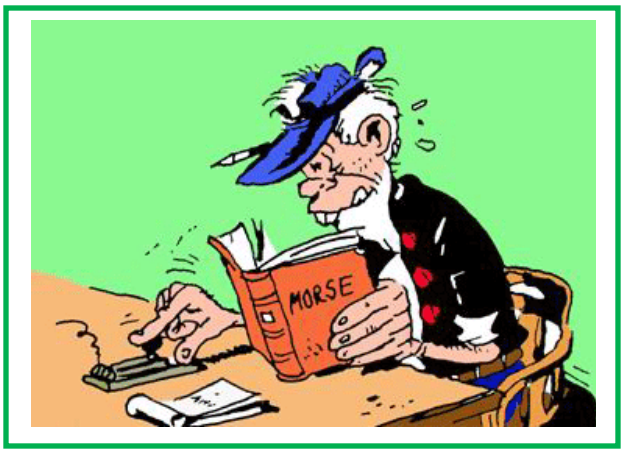


Amateur Radio Tests

Tamaqua Wireless Association offers amateur radio test sessions four times a year. If you are unable to attend one of the regularly scheduled test sessions our VE team is available to register and conduct additional test session(s) to accommodate individuals or groups if you cannot make one of our test sessions. Please contact Bill Dale at bdalejr@ptd.net. Otherwise, our tests start at 9AM on the dates given below. The tests are held at the Tamaqua Borough Municipal Building 320 East Broad Street in Tamaqua. If you are new to amateur radio and need help studying for the technician test, our website www.w3cma.org has a study guide posted on it or you can contact Bill and he will put you in touch with a member to help you. Just so you know you do not need to know Morse code anymore. Cost is $15.00 for an FCC license that could last you a lifetime.

Test Sessions 2017

- ~~April 1st~~
- ~~June 3rd~~
- August 5th
- November 4th



Repeaters

TWA maintains two VHF repeaters. One is located on top of the ABC High Rise building in Tamaqua and the other is currently on top of the Clamtown Hill in West Penn Township. Anyone with a valid amateur radio license can use them. We encourage repeater etiquette and limit your "kerchunking" with your call sign to a minimum please. The Tamaqua site is strictly analog FM and the Clamtown location is a Fusion repeater that can do C4FM and analog FM.

TWA Repeaters

146.490 / 147.490 (PL 123.0)

147.270 / 147.870 (PL 131.8)

147.270 is our Fusion repeater

Simplex: 146.520

WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- July's meeting was attended by the following members: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, N3OGG, N3HHH, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, W3OFD, KB3FET, KB3JD and K3TE
- KB3AYY almost gave a summary of our 2017 field day report. See below for the report. We will have him on the agenda for August meeting.
- Operation: Get the Word Out was started by KC3DXS and K3TE. Both thought it was important to let fellow hams know about TWA and what is going on with it so they decided to send a letter to all local hams. The Letter is located below. Jim also emailed area club officers.
- A number of members visited possible repeater sites on July 3rd. More information to follow.
- Kevin KV3NN and Jim KC3DXS updated our new website. If you haven't checked it out lately, the guys have done a great job!
- TWA is now on YouTube! I can't say enough about the people behind the scenes here at TWA, Kevin, Jim, Frank, and Kelly getting our new webpage up and running, our Facebook operational and now we have a YouTube Channel. Thank You to ALL!
- We received an email from Micah Gursky, we were denied a grant from the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation. The letter is below
- **On July 6th TWA finally has a high profile site!** Thanks to Padfield Plumbing and Heating for selling us his tower, housing, and power supply near the Mountain Valley Golf Course. We now have an 80' tower at 1720' on MVGC property. Thank you Dean!
- We also would like to thank the owner of Mountain Valley Golf Course, Steve Cotler for access to the tower and his generosity in using his electricity. Thank you Steve!
- A Station Master antenna was purchased to get our signal out (and in). It has a 10 dB gain, and installed by Don Spivak on July 13th. Thanks to Ed KB3AYY for loaning us his 440 repeater.
- K3TE will look into getting a 440 MHz frequency coordinated for this site.
- I emailed Jeff DePolo at ARCC and asked W3TWA be removed from the 2 meter waiting list. I told him we will be applying for a 440 MHz frequency. We are no longer on a waiting list.
- On July 13th we formally requested frequency coordination. A letter was sent via snail mail and via email. Now we wait…
- There is now a fund set up for our three repeaters. We would like to update our newest 440 repeater and maintain our two 2 meter repeaters. The "grove electric power" will now be called "repeater fund."
- Jim Munley KB3FET gave his report on TWA becoming a nonprofit club. He said we need to get incorporated first before we can get nonprofit status. After a discussion Jim was given permission to get TWA incorporated. Jim will get the paperwork ready for next month's meeting.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Third Time's a Charm

After two failed attempts to secure a site for our repeater, TWA has finally secured an excellent site. Thanks to eagle eyed Ed (KB3AYY) who spotted a tower at Mountain Valley golf course while attending an event at the facility, and to Jim (WA3WIJ) and Ed who then followed up with the owner to secure access to the site. Of course, none of this would be possible if it were not for the generosity of Dean Padfield, who owned the tower, and the owners of Mountain Valley, who provided access to the site. Although the site will be used for UHF and GMRS repeaters, TWA continues to work toward securing a permanent site for our VHF repeater. Details of TWA's new repeater site are spelled out in another section of the newsletter.

On another subject, I will refer to another famous quote, "You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time". With that said I am referring to our monthly business meetings. My observation over the years shows there is a faction of the members who faithfully attend our meetings, but leave after the meeting adjourns and would like if the meetings were briefer and to the point. Then there is the faction of members that remain behind and continue to discuss many of the issues that were address during the meeting, in addition to just discussing generalities. Regardless of which group you fall into, TWA appreciates your participation and attendance.
So how do we resolve this issue? Well remember way back when you were in school and had to learn "stuff" that you thought was useless, and would never use, only to find out later in life you put some of that "stuff" to good use. Well back in the 90's "Quality" was the rage throughout industry, and a segment of the endless training I received ("stuff" I thought I would never use) was how to conduct a "Quality" meeting. Of the many points that were stressed, I will briefly address several that we can apply to our monthly business meetings.

1. Did the meeting start and end on time?
2. Was an agenda presented prior to the meeting?
3. Was there a facilitator present to assure the meeting progressed orderly?
4. Did the facilitator provide the opportunity for attendees to express their ideas and provide comment?
5. Were reports or briefings precise and to the point?
6. Were the proceedings of the meeting documented?

Well after reading the above six points, do you think TWA conducts a "Quality" meeting. My guess is the answer is no.

So, in an attempt to "please more of the people most of the time", I will begin to apply these principles at the next meeting. For individuals who present committee reports, please be precise and to the point, and you can conclude with a statement if anyone would like more general information I'll be glad to talk to you after the meeting. As the facilitator of the meeting I will make sure we remain focused on the topic and discourage drifting into non-related discussions.
Jim (KC3DXS) does a great job of preparing the agenda in advance and documenting the proceedings.

The goal will be to conclude our business meeting in approximately one hour. This will give everyone plenty of time to discuss generalities with other members, and also get on the road in a timely manner.

-WY3K

TECH NIGHT

In attendance for our first tech night in a long time… WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, K3VNN, N3HHH, KB3MXV, and K3TE. On Wednesday Tom Smith did a wonderful presentation on "Slim Jim" antennas. He had three examples to show us and talked about how to make them and what kind of SWR's he got on them. After the presentation he was asked many questions. Tom did a great job on our first tech night in many years!





MONTHLY REMINDERS

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

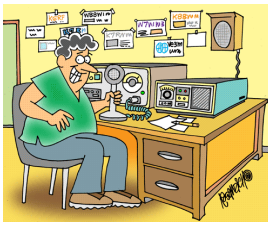
3rd Thursday of the month in August @ 7:30PM

Club announcements will be heard at this time.

Tune in to 147.270. . . .

If you can't make the meeting, tune in and you will hear what will be discussed.

Thursday Night Chew



Rag Chew with either Tom, Kevin, or JD @ 8PM on 145.370 Tone of 123.0

Stop by and bend their ear for a while. There is a new schedule, check out who is running The Chew in the calendar!



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

CLUB T-SHIRTS

At our club meeting in April we voted on new club t-shirts. These are custom T-Shirts with **Your Name and Call Sign** on the front and the TWA logo on the back. If you would like to order one, or two, or more please contact Ed Boerner at kb3ayy@kb3ayy.com or you can contact Ed on our 270 or 490 repeater. It is not too late to contact Ed to get yours. Please email him ASAP!



$$ Cost $$

- **Small to X-Large = $15.50, with pocket $17.50**
- **2x = $17.50, with pocket $19.50**
- **3x = $19.50 with pocket $21.50**
- **4x = $21.50, with pocket $23.50**
- **5x = $23.50, with pocket $25.50**

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

1. In the movie ***Frequency***, which manufacturer's radio was used?
   a. Hallicrafters
   b. EF Johnson
   c. Heathkit
   d. Collins

2. In the movie ***Independence Day***, military officers used which mode of ham radio?
   a. SSB
   b. AM
   c. CW
   d. RTTY

Field Day 2017 Wrap-Up

Below is a list of the contacts and points that Ed submitted to ARRL. Great job everyone. I have last year's totals listed below too.

2016 Results			
Band	CW Contacts	Phone Contacts	Total Contacts
80 Meters	12	11	23
40 Meters	35	30	65
20 Meters	26	24	50
15 Meters	3	0	3
6 Meters	0	6	6
GOTA	0	24	24
Grand Total	76	95	171



2017 Results				
Band	CW Contacts	Digital Contact	Phone Contacts	Total Contacts
80 Meters	0	0	7	7
40 Meters	17	12	62	91
20 Meters	4	0	42	46
15 Meters	6	0	8	14
10 Meters	0	0	4	4
6 Meters	0	0	1	1
GOTA	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	27	12	124	163

Thanks to Frank, KB2MXV for this wonderful design. This was the talk of field day. Nice job Frank!

	CW	Digital	Phone	Total
Total QSO's	27	12	124	163
Total Points	54	24	124	202
		Total Claimed Score		404

READER SUBMISSION

Quicker-Turnaround Digital Modes in Experimental Stage for *WSJT-X* Suite

Recent sporadic-E propagation openings on 6 meters and elsewhere have demonstrated the need for a digital mode with a faster turnaround time than what is offered by currently available software versions. A recent WSJT-X reflector discussion allowed that, while the slow 'JT modes like JT65 and JT9 have excellent sensitivity, their nearly 1-minute-long transmissions may not permit completion of a contact when evanescent signals pop up and quickly disappear under certain E-skip conditions. MSK144 and the fast JT9 submodes allow much shorter transmissions, but they do not offer the multi-decode capability that JT65 users find so effective. Iain MacDonnell, N6ML, was among those remarking that, while the use of JT65 for working E-skip on 6 meters has really taken off, it's too slow to be practical for openings that only last a couple of minutes or so.



Joe Dzekevich, K1YOW, of Harvard, Massachusetts, sounded a similar theme. "A few days ago we had a great opening on 6 meters, especially here in the New England area, given our latitude," he noted. "I often find that often one cannot complete a QSO due to QSB and the ins and outs of E_s. Yet, being a propagation buff, I love the idea that I can leave the rig on 50.276 in JT65 mode and then see who I hear throughout the day via *PSK Reporter*."

WSJT-X developer Joe Taylor, K1JT, weighed in to express his appreciation to all who shared their ideas and experiences using JT9 and JT65 modes during recent multi-hop E-skip openings on 6 meters.

"We are very much aware that a mode with most of the excellent characteristics of JT65, but with faster turnaround time, would be a big winner in such situations," Taylor commented on behalf of the *WSJT-X* development team. "We are experimenting with several such possibilities. Tentative goals include 15-second T/R sequences, sensitivity around S/N = -20 dB, occupied bandwidth less than that of JT65, and capability to decode as many as 10 or 20 signals in a 2-kHz bandwidth."

But, Taylor added, developing new modes takes a lot of time, and results are not guaranteed. "We will report significant progress if and when available," he pledged.

(Article courtesy of The ARRL Newsletter for 15 June 2017)

-W3OFD

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Jim Shellhamer and I thought it was important to get the word out about what is going on with TWA. Below is the letter that was sent to fellow ham radio operators in the area.

Tamaqua Wireless Association
W3CMA 110 Pitt Street Tamaqua, PA 18252

Dear Fellow Amateur Radio Operator:

The Tamaqua Wireless Association (TWA) would like to let you know what is going on in the area. The 145.370 repeater in Delano is still operating with a tone of 123.0 and will continue to do so. But some people in the club thought it was time that TWA get its own repeater on-line. Recently, TWA installed a 2 meter repeater in Tamaqua. If you live in the Tamaqua Area you can now use a portable radio to communicate. The repeater is located on top of the ABC High Rise building and the frequency is coordinated with the Area Repeater Coordinating Committee (ARCC). The frequency is 146.490 with a +1 MHz offset and a tone squelch of 123.0. It gets decent coverage from Lansford to Hometown to Leiby's and to Tuscarora. For our second repeater we purchased a Fusion repeater from Yaesu. Currently this repeater is located on top of the Clamtown Hill (1155') in West Penn Township. We are looking at getting this installed at a higher altitude. In the meantime, we are using 147.270 with a +600 KHz offset and a tone squelch of 131.8. If you have a C4FM capable radio, try out our 270 repeater in digital mode. It will also do analog but digital gets the best coverage for us right now.

TWA publishes a monthly newsletter called ***Splatter;*** it can be found on our website at **www.w3cma.org,** Also, we are now on Facebook at TWA Tamaqua Wireless Association. Our club meets on the third Friday of the month and we now have Tech-Nights on the Wednesday after our meeting date. Both are at 7PM. You are welcome to attend any of the meetings. We are located at 555 Tuscarora Mountain Drive in Barnesville at the Schroder Family Tree Farm for the summer months, and we hope you will attend.

Finally, TWA members assisted with the Girardville St. Patty's Day parade, the Memorial Day parade, and we provided communications for the Tamaqua Halloween parade. We recently had several members attend the Sky Warn training in Tower City this May and had a terrific turnout for Field Day in June.

Simply, this letter is to let you know what is going on locally in amateur radio. TWA is growing in size and, once again, pushing forward to expand Amateur Radio in the area. If you are interested in joining TWA or would like more information you can find us on our 270, or 490 repeaters, or you can email me, the club Secretary, at KC3DXS@ptd.net. Hope to hear from you soon.
Sincerely,

Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS
Secretary, TWA

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www.sacfoundation.com

June 16, 2017

Micah Gursky
Tamaqua Area Community Partnership
125 Pine St
Tamaqua, PA 18252

Dear Mr. Gursky:

Thank you for submitting a grant application to Schuylkill Area Community Foundation for the project entitled Tamaqua Wireless Radio Repeater Tower. We regret to inform you that your proposal was not selected for funding. We recognize the time and effort that you put forth in completing the proposal and appreciate the good work that your organization does for our community.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.sacfoundation.com for grant cycle information in the future.

Sincerely,

Sharon Koszyk
Program Manager

The official registration and financial information of Schuylkill Area Community Foundation is registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State and may be obtained by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

October 8th is Tamaqua's Heritage Festival. At last month's meeting we voted on having another stand at the festival. It starts at 10AM and goes to 5PM. We are looking for food donations and support to man the event.

NEWS FROM ARRL'S WEBSITE

1. Amateur radio poised to retain full76-81 GHz Band, sharing with vehicular radar http://www.arrl.org/news/amateur-radio-poised-to-retain-full-76-81-ghz-band-sharing-with-vehicular-radars

2. August 21st is the Solar Eclipse QSO party from 1400 to 2100 UTC. Because we are in "daylight savings" the time is from 10AM to 5PM EDT.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be:

- August 18th @ 7PM

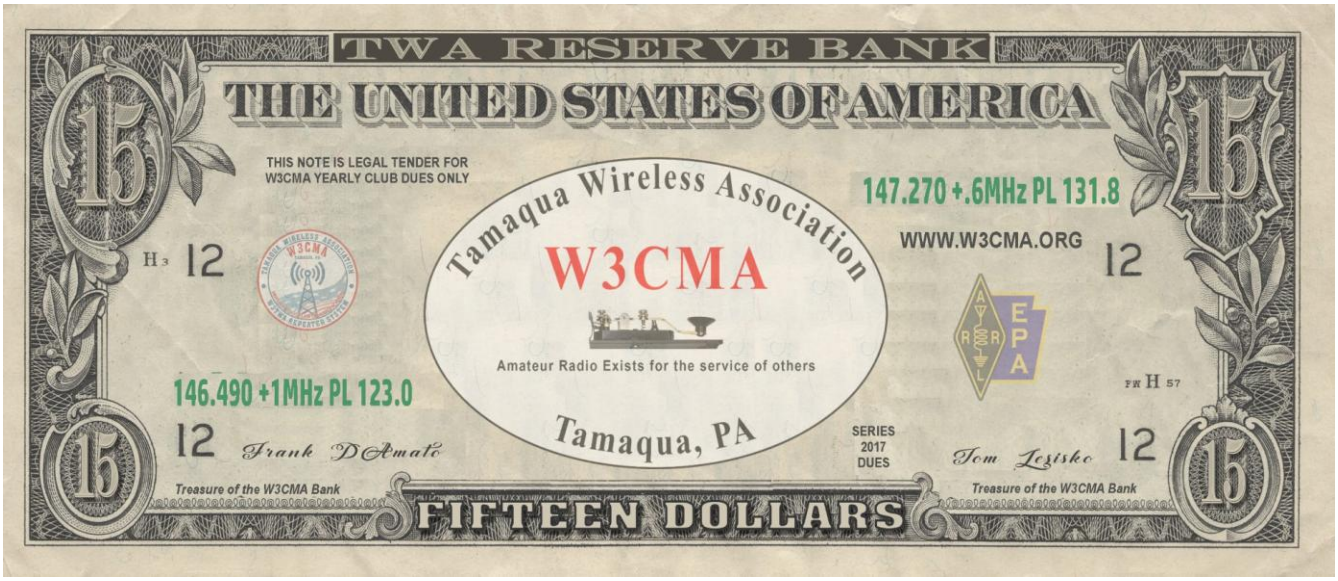
At the Grove, 555 Tuscarora Mtn. Road, Barnesville

Tech-Night will be August 23rd this month. On the agenda is:

DMR (Digital Mobile Radio)

DUES FOR 2017-2018

$15 for the whole year gets you repeaters, newsletter, a fantastic website, Facebook, and YouTube. More fun than a barrel of monkeys… I used to have that game.



WHAT'S NEW IN AMATEUR RADIO

Yaesu FT-2980R



Yaesu released the upgrade to the FT-2900 from 75 watts to 80 watts.
http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-015771

HYTERA MD782G-U1



The new Hytera MD782G-U1 is a UHF radio. The problem with this rig is its UHF. Around here UHF is tough to get your signal out with all these mountains. I would love to see this radio in VHF.
https://www.gigaparts.com/hytera-md782g-dmr-mobile-radio.html

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

Test Your Knowledge
Answers from page 9

1. C
2. C

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

Until next time de K3TE – 73's