Tamaqua Wireless Association

SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. II #9 2017

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- 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

September 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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3	4	5 Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	6	7 The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	8 SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center 8PM	9 Club Picnic & Winter Maintenance Starts @11AM at The Grove ARRL VHF Contest
10 ARRL VHF Contest	11	12 Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	13	14 Club Announcements on 147.270 @7:30PM The Chew with Tom @8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS	15 TWA Club Meeting at The Grove 7PM	16
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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 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



Volunteer Examiner

Are you a VE and want to help out with a TWA's test session? Are you interested in becoming a Volunteer Examiner (VE)? If you answered "Yes" to either of these questions please contact Bill Dale. Bill has been our VE liaison for over 25 years and has the answers for you. His email is bdalejr@ptd.net. If you would like to become a VE, contact Frank D'Amato or Jim Shellhamer; these two recently received their VE credentials and would be the go to for answers. Their emails are Frank – kb2mxv@gmail.com and Jim - kc3dxs@ptd.net. We would love to see you at a test session…

REPEATERS

TWA maintains two VHF repeaters and one UHF repeater. One 2 meter repeater is located on top of the ABC High Rise building in Tamaqua the other is currently on top of the Clamtown Hill in West Penn Township. Our newest repeater is UHF. It is located on top of the Vulcan Hill near the Mountain Valley Golf Course. We are currently waiting on frequency coordination. 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 and the UHF is analog FM.

LINKED SYSTEM

In an effort to bring you better service, the Tamaqua repeater has been linked to the Mountain Valley repeater. So, when you key up either **please wait a second** before you start taking. One repeater has to turn on the other so simple one word answers may not make it through the linked system. Please be patient until we could get all the bugs worked out too.

TWA Repeaters

146.490 / 147.490 (PL 123.0)

147.270 / 147.870 (PL 131.8)

444.600 / 449.600 (PL 131.8)

147.270 is our Fusion repeater

Simplex: 146.520

REPEATER FUND

TWA has three repeaters in Schuylkill County. Two of the three are coordinated and we are still looking for a permanent home for the 270. We are looking for support to keep the repeaters operating. A repeater fund has been set up, please donate today. Contact Ed, KB3AYY at kb3ayy@kb3ayy.com and he will give you more information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:



- October 8th Heritage Day in Tamaqua, we need food donations and people to help man the tent from 10AM to 5PM.
- October 14th & 15th PA QSO Party
- October 19th Club announcements on 147.270 at 7:30PM
- 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 – is it time to upgrade your gear?
- December 1st to 3rd ARRL 160M Contest
- December 7th Club Announcements 7:30 on 147.270
- December 9th Club Christmas Party – Tentative
- December 9th to 10th ARRL 10M Contest
- December 17th ARRL Rookie Roundup- CW Contest



Did KC3CRS get a new SUV?

WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- Augusts' meeting was attended by the following members: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, KA3FUL, N3HHH, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, W3OFD, KB3FET, and K3TE
- A thank you letter was sent to Dean Padfield, see below for a copy.
- A thank you letter was sent to Steve Cotler, see below for a copy.
- There was talk about linking the Tamaqua repeater with the Mountain Valley repeater during a Technical Committee meeting on July 26th. After a discussion, it was decided to use a UHF mobile radio to link our 490 repeater to the UHF repeater. See article below.



- Andy, N3HHH brought in his club jacket from years past. I would like to know if there is any interest in buying jackets. If so please email Tom Lesisko and let him know what you think.
- Tom Smith and Frank D'Amato replaced the guy wire turnbuckles. At first they replaced the top ones and tightened them and then decided to replace the bottom turnbuckles. Then to protect them the anchors were painted with primer and paint.
- On August 1st we officially linked the Tamaqua repeater to the Mountain Valley repeater. There is an article below.
- Jim Munley gave an update on incorporating TWA.
- I received an email from John Matz on 8/5. He said there is a grant available from Williams Pipeline. It is worth $10,000.00 and according to their website it will be split between 4 organizations. I think the only thing that would be hurting us from getting this grant is they asked for our nonprofit ID number.
- TWA is going again! We would like to welcome KC3CEY, Reverend Walter Breiner and W3RC John Nemeth to the club. Thank you for your concerns about amateur radio and we look forward to your input. Welcome aboard!
- After the business meeting we had a brief technology committee meeting. There was more discussion on DMR, and upgrading our Fusion repeater. If you agreed to upgrade the Fusion repeater please forward your money to Ed Boerner. I would like to get a check from him and start the process of upgrading. There was a discussion on spending $500 or $300. Also, please save your money for the DMR repeater. I would like to have that up and running by November. We are looking for 12 people to donate $200. So far we have 10 people committed to this endeavor! Please bring your money to the next club meeting or when you can. Thank you to all!
- We are registered for the October 8th Heritage day event. If you can donate either your time, food, or drink it would be greatly appreciated. I put Ed Boerner as the contact on the form. If you have any questions email him please.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Tech Night, Meetings & More….

In case you haven't noticed, there is currently a flurry of activity within the TWA organization. So, this month's installment will be a mix, as you can see by the title of the article, of things that are happening.

With the second Tech Night now in the books, there is no question it was a good idea to reinstitute the program. In the many years that I have been an amateur radio operator, the one thing that I have always noticed is that amateurs are a very diverse group when it comes to their professional background, as well as, their other hobbies and interests. Sure, there can be endless Tech Night topics relating to amateur radio, but occasionally it might be interesting to learn a little about the other interests of our fellow hams. Just something to think about.

Last month I highlighted the important points in what constitutes a quality meeting. Well by putting these points into practice, our August meeting went very well. I want to thank all in attendance for helping keep the meeting on track and on topic. We were able to conduct all of our business and still have plenty of time for those who wished to have post meeting discussions.

So, what else is new? TWA is one step closer to becoming incorporated. Jim (KB3FET) completed all of the paperwork and obtained the necessary signatures. The next step will be publishing our public notice of intent.

The link between the Tamaqua repeater and the new Mountain Valley site is up and running and working great. There is no doubt our repeater system is growing and with a few additional upgrades being planned, funding these projects will continue to be a challenge. WA3WIJ (Jim #2) has an idea that might help raise some of the capital we need to complete these infrastructure upgrades. Jim is proposing we reach out to the business community, and even individuals, who would be willing to be a sponsor of local amateur radio. We will discuss the idea at our next meeting to see if the membership has an interest in the project.

On Monday, August 21 a handful of TWA club members setup three stations at the grove to participate in the scientific study on the effect of the solar eclipse on radio propagation. Two stations were setup to operate on the HF bands and the third station was operating JT65-HF. The bands were not the greatest, but it was a fun day, and as always, a learning event. Thanks to Kevin (K3VNN) and Tom (KC3CRS) for

supplying the radios, and to KC3DXS (Jim #3, boy we have a lot of Jim's in the club) for spear heading the event and supplying the dogs and burgers.

Finally, (I warned you this article would be a mix of topics) I am not sure how many are aware that the Schuylkill County Emergency Management Agency Website has a link to the TWA Website.
Check it out at http://www.scema.org/amateur-radio/

-WY3K



LINKED REPEATERS

After the 1st "Tech Night" in July we had a Technology Committee meeting, at the conclusion of the meeting I believe Ed Boerner asked if we could link the Tamaqua repeater.

On Tuesday August 1st Bill Dale, Tom Smith, and Tom Lesisko installed a Yagi antenna and Motorola UHF radio in the "Penthouse" at the high rise. I will tell you that with the oil burners on and a humid day; I was sweating doing nothing in that room. Anyway, Bill and Smitty worked on installing the antenna and I worked on programming the Arcom Controller for linking. Ed Boerner was called because we had some issues with the linking radio. Jim Moyer should up and gave us his two cents too. The process started a little after 1PM and we finished up around 4:00PM. I would like to thank everyone for helping out! I would also like to thank Ed for the Motorola radio and Bill for the Yagi antenna.

If you are in Tamaqua, please use 5 watts, outside the area you could use 50 watts. Also, please pause before talking into the microphone. The repeater is linked, so it takes a little time to send your information to the next repeater. Enjoy…

FIRST CONTACT

My first contact on a Shark RF was with KG7AG Merle, from Elk Washington. We were up at the grove just about ready to start our tech night when Kevin connected his Shark RF device to his cell phone. Prior to the tech night Frank D'Amato put an email out on what frequencies we will be demonstrating and one was 435.000. That's the frequency that Kevin had programmed. I didn't talk to him too much I just wanted to try it and see who came back to me. K3TE

NEW PRODUCT REVIEW BY JIM KC3DXS

Yaesu FT1XDR 144/430 MHZ Dual Band Digital Transceiver



This is one of the first models of HT radios that Yaesu produced to support their digital Fusion radios as well as Wires-X. Although this radio is still available from a number of retailers, it has been discontinued by Yaesu in favor of newer models. This radio is my first venture into the digital side of the Amateur Radio world and all I can really say about it is, "WOW!!!" Of course I don't have a previous frame of reference to compare this too, but even so, I am awed by its capabilities.

Yaesu really packed a metric ton of features into the small package. So much so that the manual for this radio is 154 pages. Digital and analog voice, Wires-X connectivity, GPS and ARPS and the list goes on. Most notably, this radio can even take and transmit color pictures.



The pictures aren't the best quality, 320x240 or 160x120, but we are talking about an HT that takes pictures. To actually utilize the camera functions you need to purchase a special microphone that connects to the radio's data port

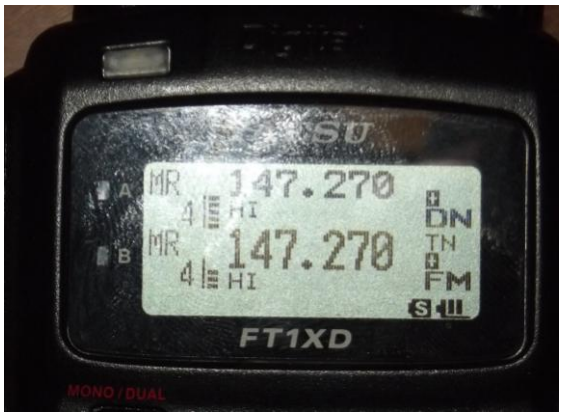
So let's look at the radio, its controls and functions.



On the left side we have the Power button on the bottom, Volume, Monitor and PTT buttons. Something I find peculiar about this radio is that the volume button works in conjunction with the rotary knob on top of the radio.

On the right side of the radio we have all the ports for connections. Starting from the top we have the connection for a regular microphone. The EXT DC IN port is for charging the radio and the DATA port is for connecting to a computer for programming (via software with the ***provided*** cable) or for the camera microphone. Finally on the bottom is the port for a micro SD card. This enables you to program the radio from the card, backup the radio's configuration to the card and store images taken with the





The main display is of course, dual VFO, but it can be set to display only 1 VFO at a time. It is worth noting that only VFO A has the capability of using the digital modes while VFO B is strictly analog.

One of the digital features is the display pictured at the right. When using digital modes it will display the GPS coordinates and distance to the remote station or your own GPS coordinates. In this case, our 270. There are many other features that use the digital modes such as creating a GPS Log, Smart Navigation and a Back Track function not to mention Wires-X.





As with most SDR's, there are enough buttons on the front to confuse almost anyone. Not to mention the button combinations that perform multiple functions. One of the most notable differences with this radio is that the rotary knob on top is not how you turn it on or off. Primarily, this knob selects your memory location or your frequency. Combined with the volume button on the left side, it will raise or lower your volume on the selected VFO. Both VFO's have independent volume controls, which I think is a nice feature. Something else I really like about this radio is that either VFO can be in memory mode and the other can be in frequency mode. Keep in mind that my previous experience with HT radios is limited solely to the Baofeng 5 and 8 watt models. Of course there is a huge difference between the two companies.

From my backyard in Tamaqua I can make into our 270 repeater (analog or digital) and be clearly understood, which I cannot do with my Baofeng 5 watt radios.

These radios can be had from multiple retailers ranging in price from $350 down to around $239. The Mic/Speaker/Camera is around $179 and extra batteries can be found for $79. In case of emergencies there is even a battery case that takes AAA batteries for $29.

Final thoughts – For my first foray into the digital side of Amateur Radio as well as my first "high quality" HT, this radio seems to be a solidly built, well-constructed workhorse of an HT. Battery life is very good, lasting about 72 hours when just left on, and I was surprised to learn that it is splash resistant.

- *KC3DXS*

MONTHLY REMINDERS

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

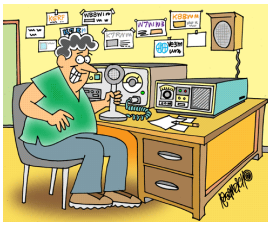
3rd Thursday of the month in September @ 7:30PM

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 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

THANK YOU LETTERS

Dear Mr. Padfield KC3AMN

Allow me break the ice by introducing myself. My name is Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS and I am the Secretary of Tamaqua Wireless Association.

Please allow me to express the shocked gratitude of the entire membership for you recent "sale" of your radio tower at Mountain Valley Golf Course to our club. What I will jokingly refer to as a bill was presented to the club at our July meeting. Out of the dozen or so members present, at least 90% will now have to let the bruises on their chins heal. There were more than a few shocked faces, I must tell you. Even now while writing this letter I'm personally shocked at the level of your generosity.

TWA is working very hard to build its membership and club, as a whole. To that end we have put up a total of three (3) Amateur repeaters and 1 GMRS repeater. We have been working to obtain grant funding for our Yaesu Fusion repeater and to find it a permanent home. I mention this only to acquaint you with the work we have been doing over the past two years. Unfortunately we have met with many setbacks in both finding funding and a permanent home. So at a time when, for the club, when things were looking dark, your generosity has both lifted spirits and renewed hope.

To that end, I am writing to inform you that by consent of the membership of TWA, both by motion and unanimous vote, the general membership has decided to offer you a Lifetime Membership to TWA. It is truly fitting that, as a club, we express our gratitude in this manner.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find both your membership card and a membership application. Please complete the membership application for our records and bring it to the next meeting. Quite frankly, the application is just to satisfy "the process". I have already verified your current Amateur Radio license so there is no need to attach a reference copy of your license. If you would like to scan it and email it, or mail it back to me that would be fine as well.

If you would like any more information on TWA, our website is always available at www.w3cma.org, you may email me at kc3dxs@ptd.net or call 570-590-4351.

In closing, once again, I would like to thank you for your extreme generosity to TWA and I look forward to thanking you in person at the next meeting.

73's

_____

Jim Shellhamer
Secretary – Tamaqua Wireless Association

Dear Mr. Cotler

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS and I am the Secretary for the Tamaqua Wireless Association.

I am writing this to express the overwhelmingly shocked gratitude of the officers and members of TWA.

I'm sure you are well aware of our use of the radio tower on the Mountain Valley property. But what you may not be aware of are the 2 years of setbacks and frustrations leading up to TWA acquiring the tower.

TWA is not a large club with a huge budget. Everything we do, with respect to our Amateur Radio Repeaters, has been largely funded by 5 members of the club. During our search to obtain a permanent site

we were getting "billed" to death. A few hundred dollars for the lawyer, and then a few hundred more for the engineer, and then another hundred here and there, let alone the cost of the equipment. Finally after almost 2 years, the property owners of the site we had been paying all this money to, denied our request. In addition, every source we reached out to for possible grants, also turned us down. More than a few of TWA's members were frustrated beyond description, myself included.

Enter into the picture, you and Dean Padfield. When the announcement was made at the clubs meeting that we had obtained a prime location, with a tower, and with power there was complete and shocked silence. Dropping a pin would have sounded like a ton of bricks hitting the ground.

The next days were a blur of activity. Moving and installing equipment. Linking our repeater at Mountain Valley with our repeater in Tamaqua. The coverage from the Mountain Valley site is amazing! Our repeater there reaches all the way down into Allentown! I can now sit in my kitchen with a small handheld radio and talk to someone driving through Allentown. That kind of radio coverage is unprecedented for this area and quite frankly, it is due to the generosity of yourself and Mr. Padfield.

So on behalf of the officers and members of the Tamaqua Wireless Association, once again, I would like to extend our sincerest appreciation and gratitude.

Sincerely

Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS
Secretary – Tamaqua Wireless Association

TWA IS GOING INCORPORATED

For those who might have forgotten, at the July meeting Jim Munley, KB3FET was given permission to get the club incorporated. Jim said, according to the Schuylkill County Bar Secretary, we need to fill out the paperwork, and advertise in the Schuylkill Legal Records and the Pottsville Republican. After the meeting Bill Dale filled out paperwork to complete the "contact" side of the requirement. Now Jim will have to advertise it. If you get the Pottsville Republican, keep your eye out for it. Take a screen shot of it and email me, Tom Lesisko at tlesisko@ptd.net and I will make sure it's in the newsletter.

DMR Simplex Frequencies

Here is something interesting I found on the web. There are frequencies just for digital mobile radio. If you have a DMR radio, program these frequencies in.



FREQUENCY	BAND	TG	CC	TS
441.000	UHF	99	1	1
446.500	UHF	99	1	1
446.075	UHF	99	1	1
433.450	UHF	99	1	1
145.790	VHF	99	1	1
145.510	VHF	99	1	1

Column Key: **TG** – Talk Group / **CC** – Color Code / **TS** – Time Slot

Reader Submission

THERE'S A NEW MODE IN TOWN!

News flash for all you JT9/JT65 fans! Joe Taylor K1JT has developed a new and faster mode than JT9 or JT65. A beta release of WSJT-X, version 1.8.0-rc1, includes a new FT8 mode, featuring a faster turnaround, and it's already showing up on the bands. According to the notes for the candidate release, FT8 offers "sensitivity down to –20 dB on the Additive White Gaussian (AWGN) noise channel," and contacts 4 times faster than JT65 or JT9. An auto-sequencing feature offers the option to respond automatically to the first decoded reply to your CQ. The beta WSJT-X also offers a new mode for accurate frequency calibration of your radio, improved CAT radio control, and enhanced JT65, QRA64, and MSK144 decoder performance.

Additive white Gaussian noise **(AWGN**) is a basic noise model used in information theory to mimic the effect of many random processes that occur in nature. The modifiers denote specific characteristics:

- **Additive** because it is added to any noise that might be intrinsic to the information system.
- **White** refers to the idea that it has uniform power across the frequency band for the information system. It is an analogy to the color white which has uniform emissions at all frequencies in the visible spectrum.
- **Gaussian** because it has a normal distribution in the time domain with an average time domain value of zero.

WSJT-X Version 1.8.0 includes a new mode called FT8, developed by K9AN and K1JT. The mode name "FT8" stands for "Franke and Taylor, 8-FSK modulation". FT8 uses 15-second T/R sequences, provides 50% or better decoding probability down to -20 dB on an AWGN channel, and maintains good performance on Doppler-spread fading channels. An auto-sequencing facility includes an option to respond automatically to the first decoded reply to your CQ. FT8 QSOs are 4 times faster than those made with JT65 or JT9. FT8 is an excellent mode for HF
DXing and for situations like multi-hop Es on 6 meters, where deep QSB may make fast and reliable completion of QSOs desirable.

Some important characteristics of FT8:

- T/R sequence length: 15 s
- Message length: 75 bits + 12-bit CRC
- FEC code: LDPC (174, 87)
- Modulation: 8-FSK, tone spacing 6.25 Hz
- Constant-envelope waveform
- Occupied bandwidth: 50 Hz
- Synchronization: 7x7 Costas arrays at start, middle, and end
- Transmission duration: 79*1920/12000 = 12.64 s
- Decoding threshold: -20 dB; several dB lower with AP decoding
- Multi-decoder finds and decodes all FT8 signals in passband
- Optional auto-sequencing and auto-reply to a CQ response
- Operational behavior similar to JT9, JT65

K1JT and K9AN, who partnered in developing this new mode, are still developing the software features for the new mode that are not yet activated in v1.8.0 of WSJT-X.

I download the new updated file on my PC. I had already had version 1.7.0 installed and the new file overwrote the existing file. For some reason though, I had to re-enter all my parameters to enable radio CAT and PTT. This may or may not happen to you --- I think it was just my setup. After installation I was receiving a whole lot of signals in the Receive Window. The software automatically tuned my radio to 14.074MHz on 20M. It seems that is the operating frequency for this new mode. Did not check what the frequencies were for other bands. The drop down box allows you select other bands/frequencies. The incoming signals were popping in at a very rapid rate. I saw a CQ come across the screen and decided to answer it. The CQ was from CO8LY Eduardo in Cuba. I had checked the auto sequence box and as soon as I double clicked on his call my transmitter immediately activated and started to respond to him. 15 seconds later my transmitter stopped and CO8LY was sending his report to me (I was -05db). At the end of his 15 second transmission my transmitter keyed again and sent his report (he was +01dB here). Following sequences sent the usually RRR and 73. All in all the total exchanges lasted about 1 minute --- a far cry from the usually 5 minute exchanges on JT9/JT65!

The mode is still considered experimental and K1JT and K9AN are still developing features. The instruction manual has not yet been updated to reflect the new mode. The ARRL LOTW (Log Book of The World) does not presently recognize FT8 mode and rejects log entries so coded. However, it was noted that if you log the mode as “data” and the person worked also tagged his QSO has “data”, LOTW will accept the entry.

The file you need is version 1.8.0. The file is here:

https://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/wsjtx.html

You want file named: wsjtx-1.8.0-rc1-win32.exe. (runs on Win XP, Vista, Win 7, Win 8, Win10, both 32- and 64-bit). Other files are also available for Linux, etc. Overheard that the file on source forge is not to be used. It may be buggy!

Give it a try… have some fun…enjoy the fast QSO turn-around time….

73 Rich W3OFD

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.

TEST SESSION

On August 5th TWA held its 3 Amateur Radio test session. Before I could snap the picture just about everyone was gone. TWA would like to congratulate the following:

- Ethan Chernock from Milnesville for obtaining his Technician license (KC3JQN)
- Glenn Sipple KC3JJJ from Glen-Lyon for upgrading to a General license



VE's present for the session:
Bill Dale, Jim Shellhamer, Jim Munley, John Denchak, and Tom Lesisko
We also had a guest: Tom Smith

ECLIPSE 2017

Thanks to Frank, KB2MXV for bring up "approved" eclipse glasses for the people to view the "partial" eclipse on August 21st. Below are pictures working 40 meters. I heard that digital communications was excellent. Enjoy, the next time will the moon plays havoc with the sun is 2024







Pictured above is Tom Smith KC3CRS

Pictured above and to the right is Jim Shellhamer KC3DXZ, also above are Kevin K3VNN, and Andy N3HHH. Is that a DMR radio on your hip Jimmy?



TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Let me review what conspired over the last two years looking for a high profile repeater site.

1. We were flat out rejected by a cable TV company
2. We were put on a "wait and see" list with a coal company
3. We were told the solicitor will not put together a lease because we would be in the way
4. We were rejected for three out of four grants that we applied for. Finally, finally, we have good news! Thanks to the efforts of Ed Boerner and Jim Moyer we finally have a high profile site (1700') that we are all very proud of. On July 8th we purchased a 60 foot tower from Padfield Plumbing and Heating. It is located on top of the Mountain Valley Golf Course in Brockton. Kudos also goes out to Steve Cotler, owner of the facility. Steve has agreed to allow us continuous access to the site. Thank you guys, this site will enhance communications to amateur radio operators!

Once we obtained ownership, we decided to take down the dipole antenna at the top (it was tuned in the 460 to 470 MHz range) we purchased a Station Master Antenna 455-5N from Commander Technologies. The antenna has a 10dB gain and it should help out in the fringe areas. I would like to thank Don Spivak for installing our antenna. Rather than putting a lot of money out for a new repeater, we are going to use KB3AYY's 440 repeater. It consists of two Motorola radios, a power supply and an identifier/controller. We are using a 40 watt mobile for the amplifier. Could there be DMR in the future… Maybe!



There was a Technical Committee meeting after our first Tech Night on July 26th, we discussed the future of the new site and what we would like to see done. Should we put another Fusion repeater, or put a DMR repeater up, costs of both and/or just leaving what is up there now. We talked about moving our 270 repeater there too. When the meeting ended the decision was to link the Tamaqua repeater to the new repeater and go from there.



FOOTPRINT REPORT - WE HEARD YOU ON OUR NEW 440 REPEATER

KC3GWA – portable, from Pottsville
K3TE – mobile, in Girardville
N3MSK – mobile, in Tremont (at the top of the hill with 81 going underneath)
KB3VXB – mobile, from Hegins
KC3GWA – portable, from High Ridge Industrial Park
WA3WIJ – mobile, Blackmans Street in Wilkes-Barre

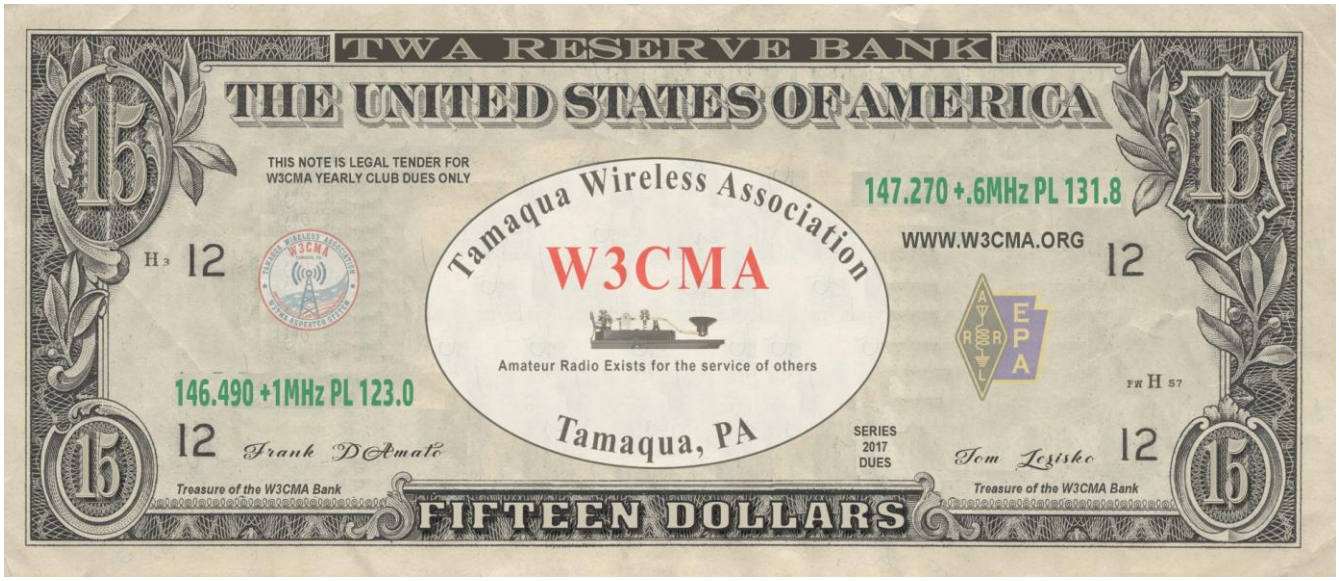
NEWS FROM ARRL'S WEBSITE

1. Revised FCC Form 605 will now ask applicant "the Felony Question"

http://www.arrl.org/news/revised-fcc-form-605-will-ask-applicants-the-felony-question

DUES FOR 2017-2018

Dues for the New Year are now due. Please contact our treasurer Ed, at kb3ayy@kb3ayy.com to make arrangements. The club has liability insurance that needs to be paid and general loss and theft too. The club also makes a donation to the American Legion and Schroeder's Tree Farm for the use of their facility. Thank you…



TECH NIGHT – INTRO TO DMR

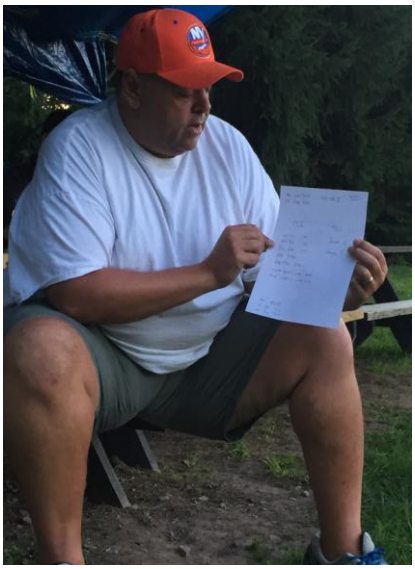
Members present were N3HHH, WY3K, K3VNN, KB2MXV, K3ROS, KC3CRS, and K3TE. I would like to thank Frank, Kevin, and Smitty for doing an excellent job educating us on the basics of digital mobile radio a.k.a. DMR. I made my first contact K7AX on an "open spot" device.



Kevin went over the differences between the three digital formats that are available and Frank went over the software on how to program a radio. I believe Frank will put together a YouTube video on the programming. Great job everyone! I am sure it will not be the last time we have a DMR tech night.

Above is KB2MXV Frank, KC3CRS Smitty, K3VNN Kevin, and soon to join the club is K3ROS Ross. Kevin is explaining the bandwidth issues of analog and digital.

To the right is Frank demonstrating the two paths for DMR. He talked about how the Wilkes-Barre DMR repeater can have 10 different talk groups on one frequency.



Wow! What a busy month…

Until next time de K3TE – 73's