Tamaqua Wireless Association

SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. II #11 2017

OFFICERS:

President: Bill Dale WY3K (bdalejr@ptd.net)
Vice President: Tom Smith KC3CRS (tswizard@pa.metrocast.net)
Secretary: Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS (kc3dxs@ptd.net)
Treasurer: Ed Boerner KB3AYY (kb3ayy@kb3ayy.com)



Tamaqua, PA

MISC. CONTACTS:

Facebook Editor: Kelly Boerner (EKboerner@yahoo.com)
Splatter Editor: Tom Lesisko (tlesisko@ptd.net)
Website Graphics Editor: Frank D'Amato (KB2MXV@gmail.com)
Website: Kevin Marchetti (k3vnn.73@gmail.com)

- 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

November 2017						
Sun	**Mon**	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**	**Sat**
			1	**2** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**3**	**4** Our last scheduled amateur radio test session this year. 9AM at the rear of the Tamaqua Borough Hall
5	**6**	**7** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**8**	**9** The Chew with Tom @8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS	**10** SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center Pottsville 8PM	**11**
12	**13**	**14** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**15**	**16** Club Announcements on 147.270 @7:30PM The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**17** TWA Club Meeting at The American Legion in Tamaqua 7PM Election of officers meeting	**18** TWA's 50th Anniversary with ARRL
19	**20**	**21** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**22**	**23** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**24**	**25**
26	**27**	**28** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KB3FET	**29**	**30** The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**Notes:**	

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 "kurchunking" 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.

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: 146.550

REPEATER FUND

TWA has three active repeaters in Schuylkill County. Because of the terrain the club installed three repeaters. 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:



- December 1st to 3rd ARRL 160M Contest
- December 7th Club Announcements 7:30 on 147.270
- December 9th Christmas Party – cocktails at 3PM, dinner at 4PM where: Chantilly's Restaurant in Barnesville
- December 9th to 10th ARRL 10M Contest
- December 17th ARRL Rookie Roundup-CW Contest
- January 1st 2018 Straight Key Night
- January 6th Kids Day
- January 6th & 7th RTTY Roundup
- January 19th club meeting 7PM at American Legion in Tamaqua
- January 20th & 21st VHF Contest
- February 12th to 16th School Club Roundup



- February 16th club meeting 7PM at the American Legion in Tamaqua
- February 17th & 18th CW DX Contest
- March 3rd & 4th SSB DX Contest
- March 16th club meeting 7PM at the American Legion in Tamaqua
- April 15th SSB Rookie Roundup
- 20th club meeting at the grove, weather permitting

- May 18th club meeting 7PM at the grove, weather permitting
- June 9th to 11th VHF Contest
- June 15th club meeting 7PM at the grove
- June 16th Field Day 2018 set up at the grove 11AM
- June16th Kids Day
- June 28th and June 29th Field Day 2018, starts at 2PM and continues to 2PM on Sunday



WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- October's meeting was attended by the following members: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KA3FUL, W3OFD, N3HHH, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, WB3CFV, and KC3ROS
- Numerous members assisted with the Tamaqua Heritage Day Festival on Sunday October 8th. See article below for more details. Thank you to all that help make it a great day!
- I received an email stating that there will be a Technology Committee meeting following our regular business meeting on October 20th
- November is election of officers meeting. See below who is running.
- I received an email from Jose Perez from Yaesu. Our new DR-2x repeater was shipped on October 11th
- Received the new DR-2X repeater on October 12th.
- I talked to KB2MXV Frank, on the radio and he said that Yaesu will modify the DR-2x repeater so we could install an Arcom Controller on it. Stay tune…
- KC3DXS will get a letter out to Steve Cotler asking permission to trim branches around the guy wires.
- Following the business meeting the Technology Committee met to discuss the controller at Mountain Valley. After a discussion, the committee voted to purchase an Arcom Controller at a cost of $349.95 plus shipping. Also, there was a discussion on linking Mountain Valley Repeater (MVR) to KB3VXB repeater in Hegins. The reasoning is that we could get into Pottsville better. I think we should just upgrade the duplexer and put an RF amplifier on the MVR.
- After a discussion, a motion to elect the current officers for 2018 was passed unanimously



TEST YOUR HOLIDAY KNOWLEDGE:

1. According to the Butterball Corporation, they recommend that you thaw a wrapped turkey in the refrigerator how long per 4 pounds of bird?
2. Thanksgiving is celebrated only in the United States. True or False?
3. The Greek Goddess of Corn is:
4. The first department store to hold a Thanksgiving parade was:

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

SEASONS CHANGE……

As another summer comes to an end, it was a busy one for members of TWA. By now everyone knows of the addition of the Mountain Valley repeater (444.60 MHz) and the link to the Tamaqua repeater. But as our membership grows, with members from throughout the county, the real challenge is to expand our repeater system to provide access for all. Well with that said, TWA is now testing another link to Frank's (KB3VSB) repeater near Hegins. Early reports indicate the link now provides good access from Pottsville and points west. So, what about the 147.270 MHz repeater? Stay tuned, Tom (K3TE) has some irons in the fire.

It was also a great summer for use of the grove. Although we started out with questions if we were going to continue using the grove, the membership came together and Andy (N3HHH) found us a good lawn tractor at a very reasonable price, Ed (KB3AYY) repaired the picnic tables, and Tom (KC3CRS) and Frank (KB2MXV) volunteered to perform the grove maintenance.

The weather was also on our side this year. Although we had a few close calls with the threat of rain, by meeting time the skies parted and the sun appeared. To the best of my knowledge this is the first season we were able to have all of our summer meetings at the grove. Even extending the season to include the month of October, albeit, it did get a little chilly.

In addition to Field Day and the annual family picnic, we also used the grove for the Solar Eclipse QSO party and Tech Nights.

As always, we owe a special Thank You to the Schroeder family for the use of their property.

TWA members were also active in community events providing communications for the Memorial Day and Halloween parades, and setting up a stand at the Fall Tamaqua Heritage Festival to promote Amateur Radio. Thanks to all, and let's keep working to grow our organization.

WY3K

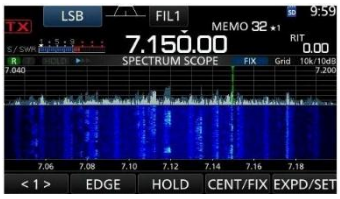
Icom IC-7300 Review

By: Frank C. D'Amato – KB2MXV





The IC-7300 is the first Software Defined Radio (SDR) HF Transceiver that Icom has produced. It's a compact unit measuring 9.45×3.7×9.37in and weights just under 10lbs. The radio operates RX: 0.030–74.800 & TX: 6M-160M with a built in antenna tuner. The built in antenna will handle tuning up to a 3:1 mismatch very quickly and memorize that setting for future use. One interesting feature with the tuner is the Emergency Mode; by activating the Emergency Mode the IC-7300's antenna tuner can tune a 10:1 antenna mismatch at the sacrifice of output power. Output power will be reduced to a max of 50W from its standard 100W. Operating modes are SSB, CW, RTTY, AM, FM. There is a large 4.3" color touch screen display a real-time spectrum scope. It also has a SD card slot to record QSO's, record up to 8 pre-defined voice messages, and capture screen shots of the LCD display. This radio has a MSRP of $1349.





I have had my IC-7300 for 5 months and enjoy its simple interface and well laid out knobs and buttons. I have received great audio reports with this unit using a 52ft center fed dipole strung up in my attic. I upgraded the standard HM-219 hand held microphone with the Icom SM-30 desktop microphone. Audio reports are usually full sounding and a bit punchy once I turn on the compression to help me stand out in a pileup.

Icom has an optional RS-BA1 Remote Software package ($100) that will give you the ability to display the IC-7300's spectrum / waterfall display on your larger PC screen. The RS-BA1 software is really meant to allow you to control your IC-7300 from a remote computer. There are basically two components to the RS-BA1 software, a server program and the control program. There is no need to worry about the server program if you just want to use the control program with an IC-7300 connected directly to your computer. The spectrum / waterfall display feature will let you click and tune signals that are displayed on a direct connected computer just like software based SDR systems. By installing the server component on the PC connected to the IC-7300, you



can use the RS-BA1 control software installed on a second PC / Laptop to access the IC-7300 remotely with transmit and receive audio.

There is still a learning curve to get familiar with all the IC-7300's bells and whistles, but not a very steep one. For those that wanted to get involved with SDR technology but didn't care for the potential complications with a computer driven system, then the IC-7300 is for you.







HERITAGE DAY WRAP-UP

A huge thank you goes out to everyone that helped make our 2nd heritage day a success. We raised a little money, got some people interested in amateur radio but most importantly we got our club's name out there for people to see that TWA is alive and well! Pictures below are from Andy N3HHH and Jim KC3DXS. Enjoy!



Looks like Jim Shellhamer and Ross Shanoskie doing all the work while Ed Boerner decides what picture to use…



Nice assortment of radios for people to look at. Thanks to all that brought in equipment. Jim Shellhamer looks like he needs reading glasses… Need mine!









After the setup was complete, pictured from left to right are Kevin K3VNN, Tom KC3CRS, Ross K3ROS, Jim KC3DXS, Frank N3OGG, Ed KB3AYY, Bill WY3K, and Jim WA3WIJ. Missing from the photo is Andy N3HHH, and Kelly KB3ASZ. Thank you again to all that donated time, food, and your expertise. If I missed anyone I apologize. – K3TE

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be:

- November 17th @ 7PM

At the American Legion, 206 West Broad Street in Tamaqua

Monthly Reminders

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

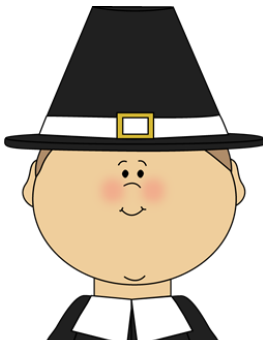
3rd Thursday of the month in November @ 7:30PM

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

Election of Officers:

Officers for 2018:

1. President – Bill Dale - WY3K
2. Vice President – Tom Smith -KC3CRS
3. Secretary – Jim Shellhamer – KC3DXS
4. Treasurer – Ed Boerner – KB3AYY

Happy Anniversary TWA



According to ARRL's website TWA affiliated itself with ARRL on November 18th 1967. Talking to some members of TWA, the club has had a somewhat contentious time with ARRL. But, no harm, no foul, as long as we keep our yearly update with ARRL we are affiliated with it. Congratulations everyone!

Technology Committee Update

The committee agreed to purchase a repeater controller for the 440 machine at MV. An Arcom Controller costing 349.95 will be ordered. It was noted that this controller is the same one that is used on our 2 meter frequency in Tamaqua. Once installed we will link it to the 27 machine.

The new DR-2x was shipped, however, with some investigative work by Frank KB2MXV, he found out that Yaesu will modify our DR-2x so it could easily be connected to an Arcom Controller. The new repeater arrived on October 12th and sent back to Yaesu to be modified. Ross, K3ROS donated a VHF radio, WY3K has hard-line cable and KB2MXV has Omni directional antenna. Stay tune to our 147.270, 146.490 or 444.600 for the latest…

I emailed ARCC to see where our club stands on getting a frequency for MV. I did not hear anything back. However, Frank, KB2MXV emailed another person and Frank was told that our application is with a UHF coordinator.

THANK YOU, TO ALL

The family of Helen Mikulski, wife of Rich W3OFD, would like to thank all the members of TWA for their thoughtfulness in expressing their condolences on her passing. Helen passed away on 12 Oct 2017 with her family at her bedside. Helen faced a long hard journey but fought back with her very soul. In the end however the cancer won. We now know that she is at peace and will suffer no more. Again, thank you TWA members for your thoughtfulness.

Rich W3OFD



INCORPORATION ANNOUNCEMENT

A letter was prepared by Jim (KC3DXS) to announce our recent Incorporation. Jim Munley (KB3FET) delivered copies of the letter to the Schuylkill County Commissioners, State Representative Neal Goodman and Schuylkill County EMA Director John Matz. Jim personally met with John Matz and Rep. Goodman's aid. Below is a copy of the letter.

The Tamaqua Wireless Association, Inc. wishes to inform you that our amateur radio association recently received its Articles of Incorporation as a nonprofit corporation from the Pennsylvania Department of State.

The Tamaqua Wireless Association, Inc. is comprised of predominately Schuylkill County FCC licensed radio operators. Our organization also owns and maintains three repeater systems. These systems currently support auxiliary radio communications in the central and eastern portion of the county, as well as, eastern Carbon and southern Luzerne Counties.

Tamaqua Wireless Association, Inc. radio operators are available to provide both emergency and public service auxiliary radio communications for events.

Please refer to our Web Site at www.w3cma.org for additional information pertaining to our organization and for contact information should our services be required.

TAMAQUA HALLOWEEN PARADE

A Huge Thank You to all that helped make the 2017 Halloween Parade a success.
WA3WIJ, KB3AYY, KB2MXV, KB3CFV, KB3CRS, KC3DXS and WY3K

Test Your Knowledge from page 6

1. *One Day per 4 Lbs.*
2. *False, Canada also celebrates Thanksgiving*
3. *Demeter*

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