Tamaqua Wireless Association

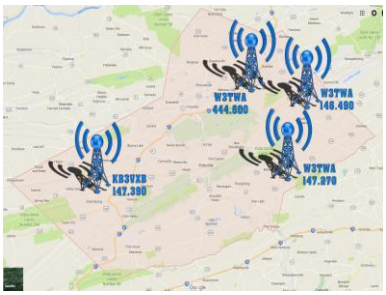
SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. II #12 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)



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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

December 2017						
Sun	**Mon**	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**	**Sat**
					1 ARRL 160M Contest	**2** ARRL 160M Contest
3 ARRL 160M Contest	**4**	**5** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**6**	**7** Club Announcements on 147.270 @7:30PM The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**8** SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center Pottsville 8PM	**9** TWA Christmas Party @ Chantilly's Cocktails start at 3PM with dinner @ 4PM, a business meeting will follow the party.
10 ARRL 10M Contest	**11**	**12** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS or N3RZI	**13**	**14** The Chew with Tom @8PM on 145.370 KC3CRS	**15**	**16**
17 ARRL Rookie Roundup-CW Contest	**18**	**19** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**20**	**21** The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**22**	**23**
24	**25**	**26** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 KB3FET	**27**	**28** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**29**	**30**
31	**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 2018

- April 7th
- June 2nd
- August 4th
- November 3rd



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: 146.520

REPEATER FUND

We really could use your help. 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:



- January 1st 2018 Straight Key Night
- January 6th Kids Day
- January 6th & 7th RTTY Roundup
- January 17th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- January 19th Club Meeting at The American Legion at 7:00PM
- January 20th & 21st VHF Contest
- February 12th to 16th School Club Roundup
- February 14th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- February 16th Club Meeting at The American Legion at 7:00PM
- February 17th & 18th CW DX Contest



- March 3rd & 4th SSB DX Contest
- March 14th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- March 16th Club Meeting at The American Legion at 7:00PM
- April 15th SSB Rookie Roundup
- April 18th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- April 20th Club Meeting at The Grove 7:00PM
- May 16th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- May 18th Club Meeting at The Grove 7:00PM

- June 9th to 11th VHF Contest
- June 13th Club Announcements at 7:30PM
- June 15th Club Meeting at the Grove 7:00PM
- June 16th Set up for Field Day 2018 11AM at the grove
- June16th Kids Day
- June 20th Rain date for Field Day 2018 6PM at the grove.



WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- November's meeting was attended by the following members: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, KA3FUL, N3OGG, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, W3OFD,K3ROS and KB3VXB
- Have you checked the Calendar of Events lately? This month is loaded with ARRL contests!
- On November 4th we offered a test session at the Tamaqua Borough. Unfortunately no one tested. VE's present were Frank N3OGG, Jim KC3DXS, WY3K, and K3TE.
- In this month's newsletter I have the attentive test dates for 2018. Bill will confirm at a later meeting.
- At the conclusion of the Christmas Party on December 9th, officers will be installed into their elected positions.
- We upgraded the Mountain Valley Repeater (MVR) with a new controller. Frank KB2MXV and K3TE spent an hour or two on a rainy Saturday morning at the site.
- Thank you to Frank, KB2MXV for donating two CDM750 UHF and one CDM750 VHF radios to use with the new controller. Tom, K3TE donated the "rack shelf" for the project.
- There was a discussion about TWA hosting its own NET. We will revisit this when all four repeaters are linked in Schuylkill County
- There was one new member that submitted his application. After a discussion KB3VXB, Francesco (Frank) Taormina from Hegins joined the club. Motion passed unanimously Thank You Frank and Welcome Aboard!
- All officers were approved for 2018. President Bill Dale, WY3K, Vice President Tom Smith, KC3CRS, Secretary Jim Shellhamer KC3DXS, and Treasurer Ed Boerner. Congratulations gentlemen and best of luck.
- Approved that K3TE will get petty cash for repeater repair. Anything greater than $50 must be approved by the officers
- Club approved a Deposit to Chantilly's for our Christmas Party
- WY3K thanked KC3CRS and KB2MXV for their work maintain the grove, and will have a Grove maintenance sign-up sheet for 2018.
- Bill WY3K and Tom K3TE went up to the high-rise to reprogram the controller. Now it should be a little more efficient with the tones and announcements.

Starting with the January Newsletter I will be referring to all the repeaters that are affiliated with TWA as the TWA Network. The Network consists of 146.490, 147.270, 147.390, and the 444.600 repeaters. Schuylkill County has now four linked repeaters and who knows maybe another repeater might be joining in 2018. You never know…

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Tis the Season to Give Thanks

As another year comes to an end, TWA had a very successful year. But the success we experienced does not come easy. It takes hard work by a dedicated, experienced, generous and talented membership. That is why it is important to take time to say Thank You.

Articles like this are hard to write because no matter how hard you try to remember all the good each member contributed, you always miss an important contribution. So, with that said, I'll apologize in advance for any omissions.
As I stated earlier, first and foremost, Thank You to all of the members. Without members you do not have an organization. Thank You to the current officers who help keep the organization running so smoothly. Partially through this year a new slate of officers was installed, replacing a team who spent many years keeping order. Thank You to the previous officers KA3FUL – President, KB2CFV – Vice President and N3OGG – Secretary Treasurer for a job well done.

A long-standing tradition of TWA is providing Amateur Radio licensing examinations. Once again, we conduced four sessions with many successful candidates either receiving a license for the first time or an upgrade to their existing license. Thank You to our team of volunteer examiners for their time, and to the Tamaqua Borough for the use of their facility.

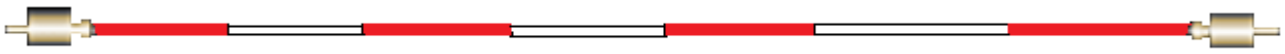
TWA conducts a regularly scheduled monthly business meeting, and I would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You to the Tamaqua American Legion Post for the use of their meeting facility during the winter months, and to the Schroeder Family Tree Farm for the land they provide for our use as a grove for summer meetings and related activities.

Several years ago, thanks to the foresight of Tom – K3TE, TWA embarked on an effort to install a repeater for use in the Tamaqua area. That initial endeavor has now grown to a system of four repeater locations. Thank You to ABC Tamaqua High-Rise, Inc. for housing our .49 repeater, and to Tom – K3TE and his wife for housing our .27 repeater at their home in West Penn Township. With two additional repeaters added to our system this year, we need to say Thank You to Ed – KB3AYY and Jim – WA3WIJ for finding and negotiating the use of the site that now houses our UHF repeater. But a special Thank You to Dean Padfield who turned over ownership of the tower that now houses the repeater, and to Mountain Valley Golf Course the land owners were the

tower resides. The newest addition to the repeater system is the 147.390 Mhz. repeater located near Higgins. Thank You to Frank – KB3VXB for your enthusiasm and partnering with TWA to create a repeater system to serve the needs of Schuylkill and surrounding counties. And of course, a big Thank You to all the members that have been supportive in assuring the repeater system continues to improve and grow.
If you haven't already noticed, TWA has a new Website. Thank You to Kevin – K3VNN, Jim – KC3DSX and Frank – KB2MXV for hosting, building and adding artist value to a great site.

In 2017 TWA became Tamaqua Wireless Association, Inc. Thank You to Jim – KB3FET for processing and filing the necessary paperwork to complete the process. And let's not forget the newsletter. Thank You Tom – K3TE for editing the publication month after month. And to all the members who submitted articles throughout the year. It's been a very busy year, as you can see, but we also need to remember and say Thank You to our Silent Key members who over the years help build and shape TWA. A special Thank You goes to Al Sr. – W3TI (SK) and Al Jr. – W3ZRQ (SK) who both spent the better part of their lives devoted to Amateur Radio and TWA.

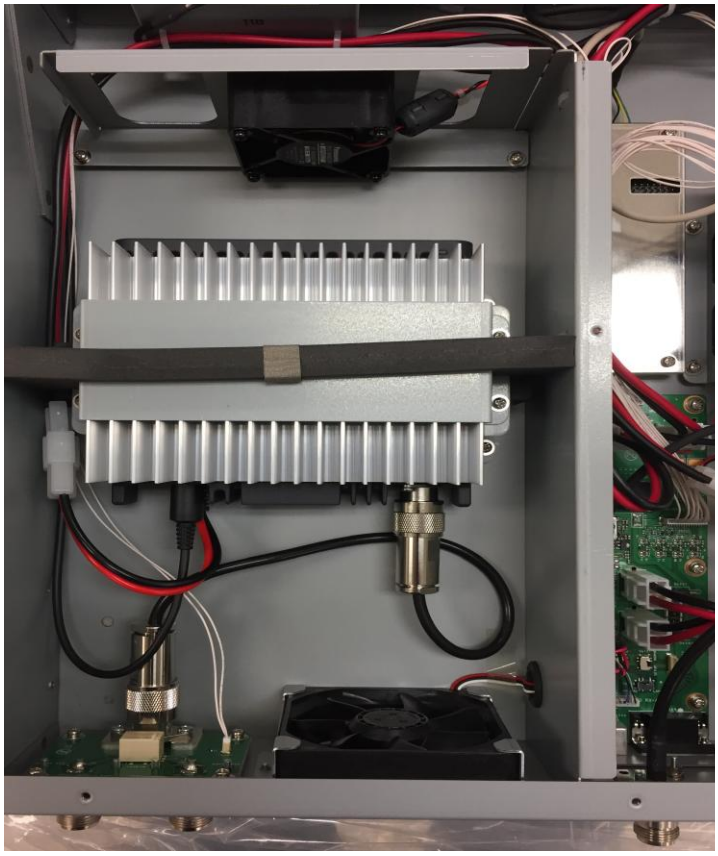
In closing, Merry Christmas and I hope you have a Happy Holliday Season, and once again Thank You.

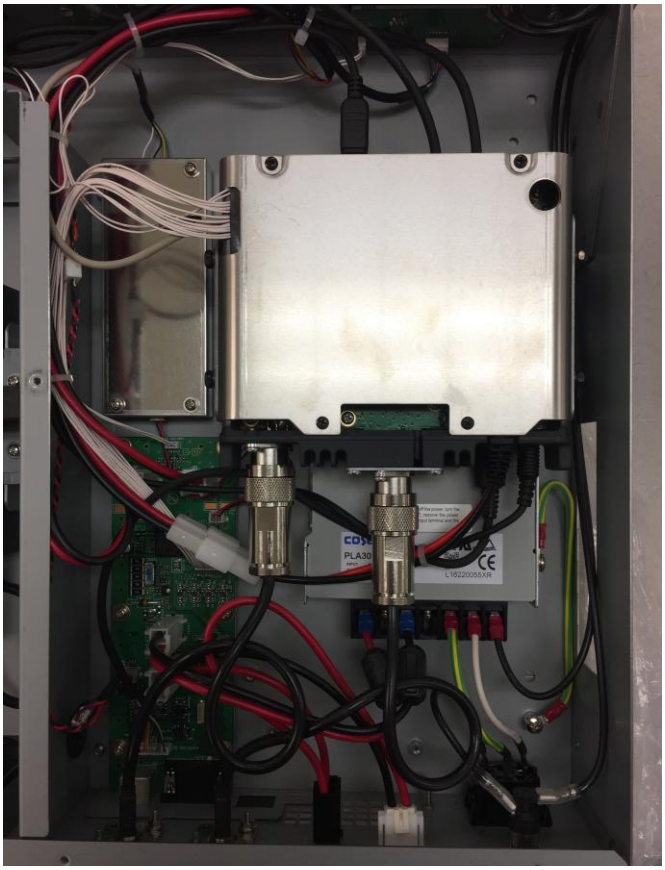


Our Newest Repeater

For those who don't know, TWA has a Yaesu DR-1x repeater. It is temporally installed in West Penn Township at an altitude of 1155' above sea level. It does a good job covering the southeastern corner of the county. The DR-1x is Yeasu's first mixed mode repeater. In August, Yeasu came out with an upgraded model and a new incentive to buy it. If we trade our DR-1x in we could get the new DR-2x for a few bucks more. After a club meeting in September we sent a check into Yaesu for the newer model. It arrived four weeks later and wouldn't you know it. Frank, KB2MXV said that Yaesu would modify our DR-2x to connect to an Arcom Controller for free! I don't think the repeater was in my house three days and it was already sent back to Yaesu for the modification. It was returned to us in three or four days.

Since we do not have an extra Arcom Controller I took the DR-2x to school to see how it would work on an external controller. After a few text messages with KB2MXV and calling Arcom I got it to work and boy does it work nice… I plan on borrowing the Arcom Controller for a month or two. If you are in the area and you key up the 270 you will be using an Arcom Controller. Below are pictures of the DR-2x. It is very simple inside. There is a TX radio, a RX radio, power supply, and Yaesu's control board. I had to change the back-up battery switch to enable because our 270 has battery back-up.





ANTICIPATION, IS MAKING US WAIT

In 1971 Carly Simon released a song called Anticipation. Well, we are anticipating getting our coordinated frequency from ARCC for Mountain Valley. Last time I heard anything from ARCC was July 15th, hopefully December is our month. Fingers crossed, I will keep you posted.

MONTHLY REMINDERS

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

1st Thursday of the month in December @ 7:30PM

Club announcements will be heard at this time.

Tune in to 146.490 or 147.270 or 147.390 or 444.600. . . .

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.

Check out who is hosting 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

CHRISTMAS LIST

Like your family, you have a Christmas List. TWA also has one as well. We are in need of a duplexer and amplifier. Our 440 repeater in Mountain Valley is lacking some punch. I received a quote from Tessco, it will cost $875.44 for a **NEW** duplexer. Please click-on the blue link and you can view the specifications and what it looks like.

http://www.sinclairtechnologies.com/catalog/product.aspx?id=76

We need to upgrade our duplexer first so we could add an amplifier down the road. The cost of a Henry Radio amplifier will be $700. This amplifier will take 5 watts in and produce 100 watts coming out. See blue link for specifications on that as well. Any donation you could give us would be greatly appreciated.
http://henry-radio.highwire.com/product/new-henry-c100d02r-uhf-repeater-amplifier

Our club is applying for non-profit status. Once we get it, we will be applying for grants. But those are not written in stone that we will receive any grant. If and when we get a grant it will go to our infrastructure to keep Schuylkill County linked. If you haven't been to a meeting lately please try to attend. Great things are happening with TWA, membership is up, Schuylkill County has 4 linked repeaters and we are open for more. Any donation would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Ed Boerner, his email is at the beginning of this newsletter. Thank you.

A HUGE THANK YOU!

I would like to thank everyone that helped make 2017 a successful year for TWA. From Ed and Kelly opening up their camper for "winter field day" to all the guys that set up the grove for field day and the eclipse. I can't forget the people that helped out with the Memorial Day Parade or the Halloween Parade. I would like to thank the club and members for donating food for our picnic and for Heritage Day.

Kudos goes out to Jim Munley, who got the club incorporated in 2017 and Kevin Marchetti for our new home page. I cannot forget all the people who wrote articles for *Splatter*. Without your support the newsletter would not exists. I would like to thank the maintenance crew (Tom and Frank) for keeping the grove in tip top shape. I could go on and on. The bottom line is TWA would not be successful if it did not have the talented people that make up the club. **Thank You for doing what you do best…**
Tom



Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be:

- December 9th @ 3PM

It is our Christmas Party at Chantilly's located at
15 Berkley Rd, Barnesville, PA 18214
Please contact Jim Shellhamer if you are planning on attending. A quick business meeting will follow dinner

Until next time de K3TE – See you next year