Tamaqua Wireless Association Inc.

SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. III #1 2018

OFFICERS FOR 2018 ARE:

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)



Schuylkill County now has linked repeaters.

MISC. CONTACTS:

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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 you.

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

January 2018						
Sun	**Mon**	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**	**Sat**
	1 New Year's Day ARRL - Straight Key Night	**2** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 N3RZI	**3** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with KC3CRS	**4** The Chew with JD @8PM on 145.370 KB3JD	**5**	**6** ARRL – Kids Day and RTTY Roundup
7 ARRL - RTTY Roundup	**8**	**9** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 N3RZI	**10** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with WY3K	**11** The Chew with Roy @8PM on 145.370 W3TKR	**12** SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center Pottsville 8PM	**13** Harrisburg Hamfest 8AM to 11AM, see article in newsletter
14	**15** Martin Luther King	**16** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**17** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with K3VNN	**18** Club Announcements on the TWA Network @7:30PM The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**19** TWA Club Meeting at The American Legion Tamaqua 7PM	**20** ARRL - VHF Contest
21 ARRL - VHF Contest	**22**	**23** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 W3TRK	**24** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with K3TE	**25** The Chew with Roy @8PM on 145.370 W3TKR	**26**	**27** Winter Field Day 2018 – non ARRL event
28 Winter Field Day 2018 - non ARRL event	**29**	**30** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 145.370 K3VNN	**31** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with K3VNN	**Notes:** **If anyone attends a SARA meeting and want the information in this newsletter please email Tom Lesisko at tlesisko@ptd.net** **I will gladly include it.**		

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

(dates are confirmed)

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



Volunteer Examiner

Are you a VE and want to help with TWA's test session(s), 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. We just received a gift from Kevin Marchetti; he donated a Motorola XPR8400 repeater. We do have a location in mind but we do not have any paperwork signed yet. Therefore, as of now we hope to have it operational by May 2018. 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, the Clamtown location is a Fusion repeater that can do C4FM and analog FM, 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

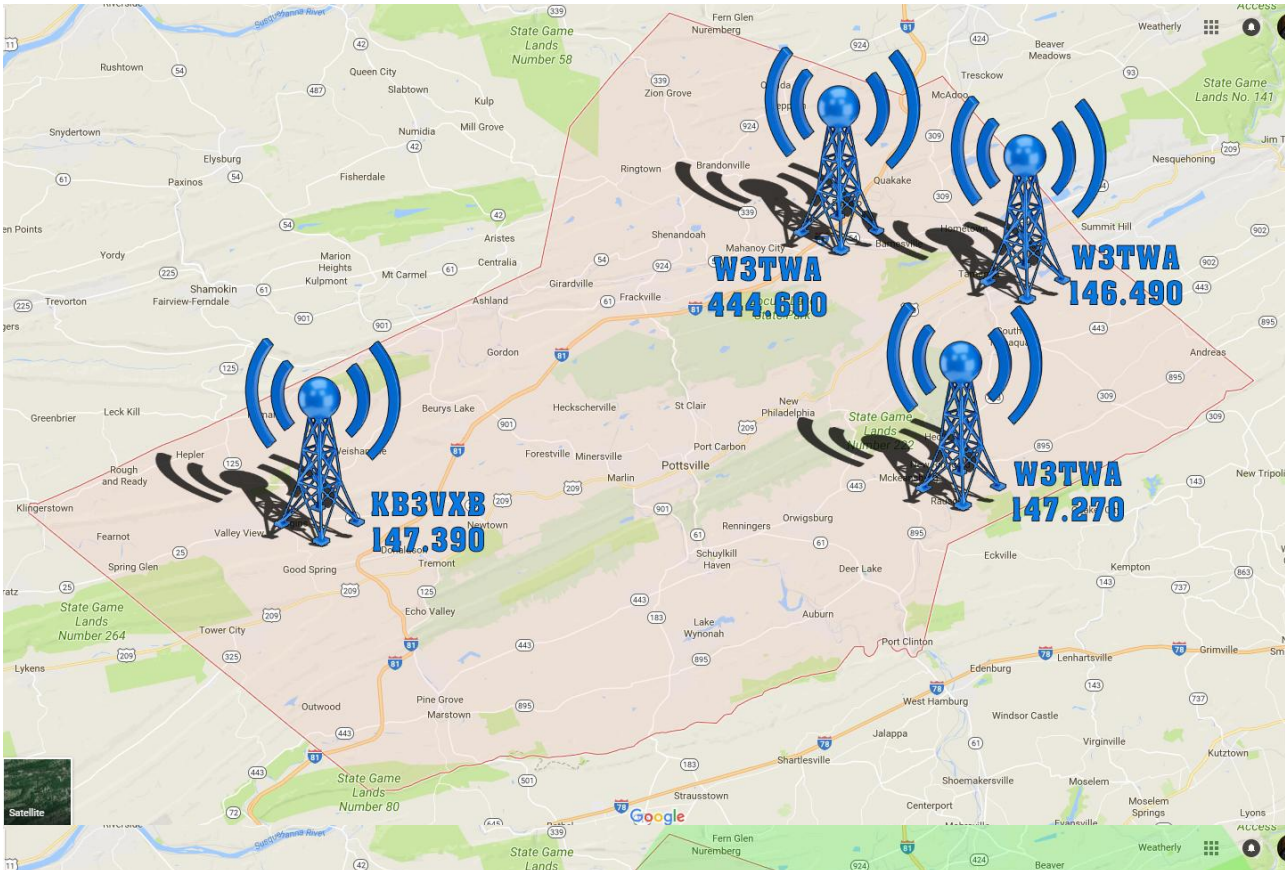
Simplex: 146.550

REPEATER FUND

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.

LINKED REPEATER COVERAGE

TWA has you covered in Schuylkill County, thanks to Frank KB2MXV for the coverage map of Schuylkill County if you are anywhere in the county now just tune to one of the frequencies below and you can talk to anyone, they are all linked. Please pause for a second before transmitting.



SCHUYLKILL COUNTY REPEATER NETWORK

Our network of repeaters links Schuylkill County with very good coverage. The repeater frequencies are listed above. If you feel we need to add another repeater to make our network even stronger in the county please attend a meeting and tell us about it. As you know, Schuylkill County is not flat. We are always open for better coverage in the county.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:



- February 12th to 16th School Club Roundup
- February 14th Club Announcements at 7:30PM on TWA's Repeater Network
- February 16th Club Meeting at The American Legion @ 7:00PM
- February 17th & 18th CW DX Contest
- March 3rd & 4th SSB DX Contest
- March 14th Club Announcements at 7:30PM on TWA's Repeater Network
- March 16th Club Meeting at The American Legion @ 7:00PM
- March 17th Girardville St. Patty's Day Parade
- April 15th SSB Rookie Roundup



- April 18th Club Announcements @ 7:30PM on TWA's Repeater Network
- April 20th Club Meeting at The Grove 7:00PM
- May 16th Club Announcements @ 7:30PM on TWA's Repeater Network
- May 18th Club Meeting at The Grove 7:00PM
- May 18th, 19th, and 20th Hamvention 2018
- June 9th to 11th VHF Contest
- June 13th Club Announcements @ 7:30PM on TWA's Repeater Network
- 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.
- July 19th Club Announcements @7:30PM
- July 20th Club Meeting at the Grove 7:00PM
- August 16th Club Announcements @7:30PM



WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- December's Christmas Party/Meeting was attended by the following: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, KA3FUL, N3OGG, W3OFD, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, KB3CFV, KC3ROS, and K3TE
- At our Christmas Party, officers were installed for 2018. See article in newsletter for more information
- Thanks to Kevin, K3VNN, he has purchased a Motorola XPR8400 analog/DMR repeater. We do have a site for it but we are waiting for approval. Look for TWA to have a working analog/DMR repeater sometime in 2018
- A few members are planning on going to the new site and checking it out. Stay tune…
- Starting in January, every Wednesday at 7PM TWA will be offering a Radio Roundtable NET on its Repeater Network.
- Tom, KC3CRS has volunteered to be the coordinator for our TWA Roundtable NET. If you are interested in being a Net Control Operator, please email Tom at tswizard@pa.metrocast.net. Better yet, you could find KC3CRS on our Radio Network and let him know.
- Ed, KB3AYY has asked to put our Repeater Network on EchoLink. After a discussion the motion passed. Ed did not say when he would have us on EchoLink but knowing him it will not take long. I am looking forward to it. Who knows what could be next? Maybe Shark RF?
- You could download the EchoLink Software at http://www.echolink.org/register_data.jsp it usually takes a day or less. They have to validate your license.
- Have you noticed the "Calendar of Events" lately? It filling up. It is nice to see more amateur radio activity in the county.
- We would like to welcome Brian Longenberger to the club. Brian is eager to get his ham radio license and is studying for is Technician License. Good luck Brian, if you need any help please contact Bill Dale at bdalejr@ptd.net and he would be able to guide you to a member for help.

A Huge Thank You to Beverly and Corey Bates for a delicious meal and a wonderful Christmas atmosphere for our party, everything looked great and the service was excellent. Thank you again!

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be:

- January 19th @ 7PM

At the American Legion, 206 West Broad Street in Tamaqua

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Looking Back and Forward

By the time most of you read this article the bulk of the busy Holiday season will be over. I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I also hope that Santa filled your stocking with some new Ham toys.

Last month I expressed my sincere thanks for all the contributions that the members made throughout the year. However, I also made a disclaimer that I would fail to acknowledge everyone, so I wish to thank Tom – K3TE – for refreshing my memory and acknowledging the contributions that I missed.

As we close out yet another year, looking back it was once again another very successful one. Just think, in just a little over two years, the TWA repeater network went from a single repeater located in Tamaqua running split antennas to a four-repeater system providing coverage throughout Schuylkill county and beyond. Membership continued to grow, as well as, the enthusiasm the membership displayed.

Looking forward into 2018, there is already several projects planned and ideas being proposed. First out the gate will be the "Round Table Net". The net format will be multi-faceted; providing an opportunity for check-ins to ask a question, pass along news of interest to the amateur radio community, make a general comment or just listen in. Do not forget, when severe weather events occur, to listen to your radio in the event there is SkyWarn activity or there are requests for assistance.

Ed – KB3AYY – is working on adding Echo Link to the repeater system. Kevin – K3VNN – recently purchased a DMR repeater and is looking to get it on-the-air and the club is in the process of negotiating another repeater site in Pottsville.

So, as you can see, 2018 is already shaping up to be another very successful year for TWA.

– WY3K



MONTHLY REMINDERS ON TWA REPEATER NETWORK



Starting in January, TWA will be hosting a Roundtable NET, stop by on Wednesdays at 7PM and check it out. The guys have been working on a preamble and a schedule to see who will be hosting the NET on Wednesdays. I will put in the newsletter who is working what Wednesday and who checked-in in the newsletter too. With the county finally linked, we felt it was time to start hosting a NET. You do not have to be a member of TWA to join in. With the addition of EchoLink to the network, you could check in using that too. Thank you to Frank KB2MXV for the Roundtable NET graphic.

TWA Repeater Network Frequencies:

146.490 + 1MHz Tone Squelch 123.0
147.270 + 600KHz Tone Squelch 131.8
147.390 + 600KHz Tone Squelch 82.5
444.600 + 5MHz Tone Squelch 131.8

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

Third Thursday of the month in January @ 7:30PM
Club announcements will be heard at this time.
Tune in to TWA's Repeater Network
If you cannot make the meeting, tune in and you will hear what will be discussed.

MONTHLY REMINDERS FOR SARA AND 145.370

Thursday Night Chew



Rag Chew with Roy, Kevin, or JD @ 8PM on 145.370 Tone of 123.0. Stop by and bend their ear for a while. Pictured to the left is JD, KB3JD. Pictured to the right is Kevin, K3VNN. You can find these guys running the Chew every Thursday. Check them out; they would love to hear from you. If anyone has Roy's email W3TKR, please forward it to tlesisko@ptd.net so I could include his picture too.



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

The Schuylkill Amateur Radio Association (SARA) meets every 2nd Friday of the month at the Schuylkill Medical Center on South Jackson Street in Pottsville. They meet at 8PM, walk in the main door and walk all the way back. Their website is http://www.vpnavy01.com/websites/sara/ for more information.

MOUNTAIN VALLEY REPEATER

The photo to the right is our 440 repeater on top of Mountain Valley Golf Course. It currently puts out 40 watts. Pictured at the top is a DuraComm power supply that handles 35 amps of continuous service, our Arcom Controller, two Motorola CDM750 radios and a CDM750 linking radio. The duplexer is on the shelf and thanks to Kevin K3VNN he is allowing people to use his GMRS repeater. Notice the 100 watt electric heater on the bottom. This picture was taken in November and it was time to turn on the heat for the winter. At the time of this writing, we are still waiting for a coordinated frequency pair from ARCC. We need to upgrade the duplexer and install an amplifier so this repeater has some punch!





I would like to thank Frank D'Amato KB2MXV for his artistic talent. Whenever I need something special in the newsletter I email Frank and say, "Could you make me…" Franks latest work is the Roundtable for TWA. Frank, thank you for helping me with the newsletter, I greatly appreciate it. Tom

Technology Committee Update

Tom Lesisko and Frank D'Amato gave a technology report at the meeting. Here is the latest. Tom Lesisko emailed ARCC and asked ARCC if there was any progress in getting our coordinated frequency. As of December 15, it will be 5 months since I submitted an application. There was a reply and they stated that they approved a frequency for us but met with resistance from another coordinating council. Therefore, they are going to send out a second frequency set to the area coordinating councils. If that frequency passes mustard then we should have our permanent frequency in January. I hope.

An RF amplifier was shipped back to TPL Communications in California. They will tune it to the 440 MHz range. The controller at Mountain Valley has a few sensors on it. They monitor the temperature, AC and DC voltage. There was some concern about the 102V ac that the repeater announced the other day. Jim Moyer would like us to remove the plug that connects the repeater to the electrical outlet and go to hardwire. I agree there should be some type of metal conduit installed so we could eliminate the "extension cord" power connection.

Ed Boerner asked to put our repeater network on EchoLink. I hope that by the time you read the newsletter you will be able to be in any part of the world, as long as you have cell phone coverage, and talk to someone in the county using our network.

Officers for 2018

At our clubs Christmas party, officers were installed into their elected positions. Pictured are President Bill Dale, Vice President Tom Smith, Secretary Jim Shellhamer, and Treasurer Ed Boerner. Congratulations everyone and best wishes in guiding TWA in 2018.



CHRISTMAS PARTY 2017



A snapshot of our Christmas party at Chantilly's in Barnesville. Pictured from the front left Frank Bobick, Ron Creitz, Ed Boerner, Bill Dale, Tom Smith, Ross Sheganoski Christine Lesisko, and Jim Shellhamer. Front right, Betty Bobick, Lynn Creitz, Kelly Boerner, Jim Moyer, Rich Mikulski, and Frank D'Amato. Missing from the photo was Christine D'Amato, Gary Fleischut, and Kevin Marchetti. Jim Munley checked in via Ma Bell. I hope I did not forget anyone. The evening was great, food was delicious and the night seemed to fly-by.

In the Lane, Snow is almost Glistening

At our Christmas party (12/9), we had our first snowfall of the season. At my QTH in West Penn, I measured 4 inches of snow. Now I cannot wait for spring…



News from ARRL's Website

1. FCC dismisses Amateur radio operators petition to revise call signs. http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-dismisses-radio-amateur-s-petition-to-revise-call-sign-rules
2. FCC Fines drone maker $180,000 for illegal ham band transmitters. http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-penalizes-marketer-of-ham-band-drone-audio-visual-transmitters

Goals for TWA in 2018

1. **Public awareness -** we need to get the public aware of amateur radio in Schuylkill County. People need to know we are here to serve them.
2. **Membership** – In order for amateur radio to continue, we need to get young people aware of what amateur radio is all about. No club will survive without people interested in amateur radio.
3. **Money** – we are actively pursuing nonprofit status in order to receive grant money to keep the infrastructure working. We need fresh equipment; we cannot keep installing used equipment and expect it to work without issues.

SPEEDY RECOVERY JOHN



WE HEARD YOU ON OUR REPEATER NETWORK

I would like to recognize

1. N1HNM, Dean from Quakake
2. KC3KEB, James, mobile, in Pottsville
3. AB3NE, Allen on EchoLink from Florida checking to see if his EchoLink was working, he said he could not get into the Lancaster repeater using EchoLink. He made it to TWA's EchoLink Node. Thanks Ed for connecting EchoLink!
4. KB3GWA, Mike from work
5. KC3GOK, Christopher from Lansford

It was nice to hear you on the radio; we look forward to another QSO

NET CONTROL OPERATORS

For the Month of January your Net Control operators are
January 3rd – Tom Smith KC3CRS
January 10th - Bill Dale WY3K
January 17th – Kevin Marchetti K3VNN
January 24th – Tom Lesisko K3TE
January 31st – Kevin Marchetti K3VNN

The NET starts at 7:00PM. Tune in to the TWA Repeater Network. Love to hear from you

W3UU - Harrisburg Radio Amateurs' Club – WinterFest

JANUARY 13th 2018(Saturday)

WINTERFEST

"A Harrisburg Pa. Hamfest"
Vietnam Veterans of America
8000 Derry Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
8:00 am to 11:00 am
TALK-IN 146.76 (PL 100 Hz)

♦ Admission, $3.00 per person.

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