Tamaqua Wireless Association Inc.

SPLATTER

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER OF SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Since 1967 Vol. III #2 2018

OFFICERS:

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Schuylkill County now has linked repeaters.

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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

February 2018						
Sun	**Mon**	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**	**Sat**
				1 The Chew with JD @8PM on 147.345 KB3JD	**2** Groundhog Day	**3**
4 Super Bowl	**5**	**6** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 147.345 N3RZI	**7** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with Jim KX3DXS	**8** The Chew with Roy @8PM on 147.345 W3TKR	**9** SARA Club Meeting at Schuylkill Medical Center Pottsville 8PM	**10**
11	**12** ARRL School Club Round up February 12th to 16th	**13** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 147.345 N3RZI	**14** Valentine's Day Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with Ed KB3AYY	**15** Club Announcements on the TWA Network @7:30PM The Chew with Kevin@8PM on 147.345 K3VNN	**16** TWA Club Meeting at The American Legion Tamaqua 7PM	**17** ARRL CW DX Contest Amateur Radio Test Session 9AM Tamaqua Borough Hall. Use the back entrance please.
18 ARRL CW DX Contest	**19** Presidents Day	**20** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 147.345 K3VNN	**21** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with Smitty KC3CRS	**22** The Chew with Roy @8PM on 147.345 W3TKR	**23**	**24**
25	**26**	**27** Schuylkill County Emergency Services Net @ 8PM on 147.345 W3TRK	**28** Round Table hosted on The TWA Repeater Network 7PM with Tom K3TE	**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 sessions are 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

- February 17th –Just added in January
- April 7th
- June 2nd
- August 4th
- November 3rd



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 a 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, 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)

449.775 / 444.775 (PL 131.8)

147.270 is our Fusion repeater

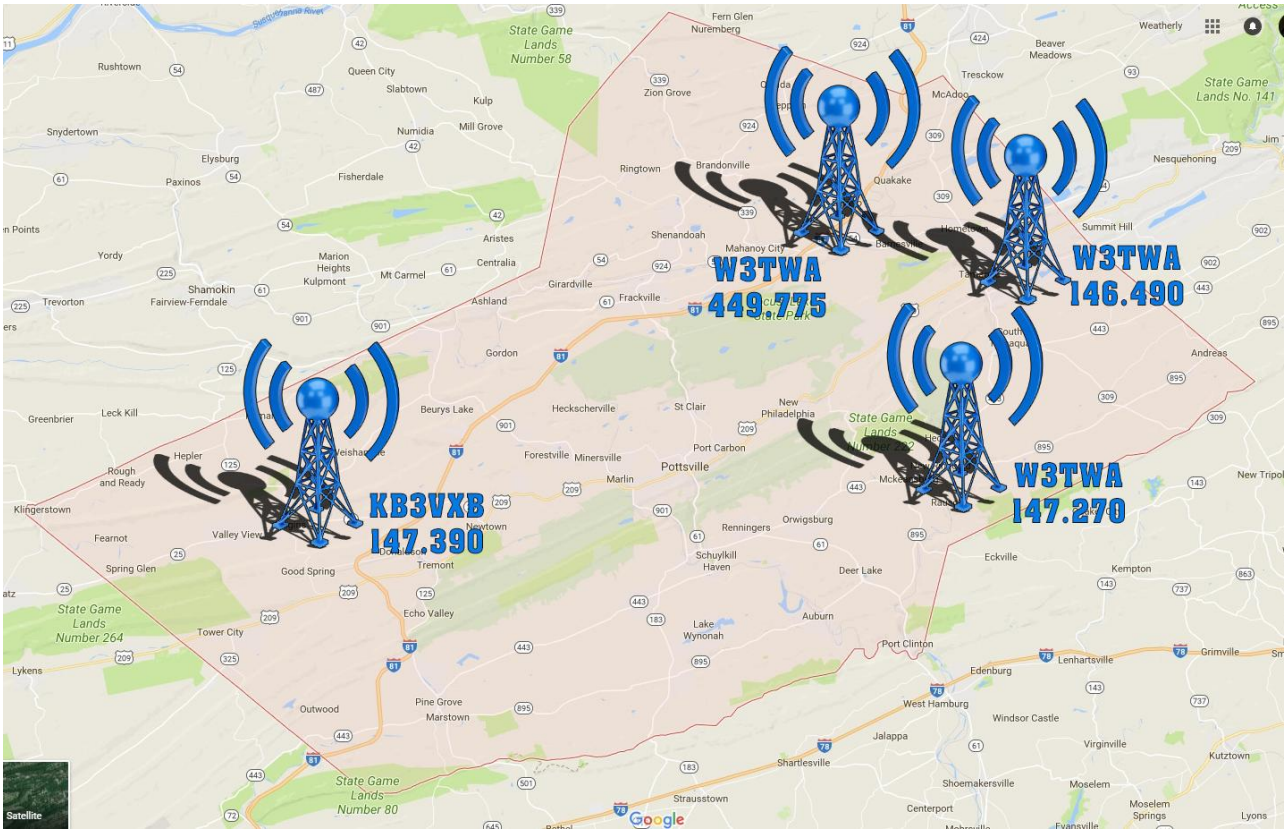
Simplex: 146.550

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, it takes time to turn-on all the repeaters with an RF Link**.



SCHUYLKILL COUNTY REPEATER NETWORK

Our network of repeaters links Schuylkill County with very good coverage. The repeater frequencies are listed above. Two of the three repeaters are coordinated through ARCC (Area Repeater Coordinating Council) 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:

- 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 24th Girardville St. Patty's Day Parade
- April 2nd Amateur radio test session
- 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 8th-9th IARU HF World Championship
- July 19th Club Announcements @7:30PM
- July 20th Club Meeting at the Grove 7:00PM
- August 5th - 6th 222MHz and Up Distance Contest
- August 16th Club Announcements @7:30PM
- August 17th Club Meeting at the Grove 7:00PM
- August 19th- 20th 10GHz and Up – Round 1
- August 20th Rookie Roundup – RTTY



WHAT'S NEW WITH TWA

- January's meeting was attended by the following: WY3K, KC3CRS, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, KA3FUL, N3OGG, W3OFD, WA3WIJ, K3VNN, KB2MXV, K3ROS, KB3FET, KB3CFV, and K3TE
- Have you noticed the "Calendar of Events" lately? It is being filled in. It is nice to see more amateur radio activity in Schuylkill County.
- You can now listen to TWA from the internet. Thanks to Frank D'Amato for streaming our repeater system to the internet.
- On December 28, members met at the White Birch Golf Course for a breakfast meeting. We discussed the Roundtable Net, repeaters, and more. See article below
- Have you checked the "archives" tab on our website lately? Thanks to Jim KC3DXS for uploading everything from the CD, everyone can now enjoy the archives.
- There was a request to do an amateur radio test session in February. We have some people interested in taking their test early and after a discussion, the club will be offering its first ever February test session. If you know of anyone who would like to get their license or upgrade their license, tell them to contact Bill Dale at bdalejr@ptd.net.
- Ed, KB3AYY gave his annual liability insurance report. There was a discussion on getting insurance on TWA's repeater sites. Ed will look into getting additional insurance coverage.
- We were informed that Jim Moyer WA3WIJ received his VE credentials. Thank you Jim for taking the time to get your credentials and welcome to the VE team
- The February NET control operators have been set up. See article in newsletter for the list. We would love to hear from you.
- There was a discussion about connecting our 270 repeater to Wires-X. Rich, W3OFD will provide the link to the repeater. There will be an over the air test session on Sunday January 21st
- With our new coordinated frequency of 449.775 (-5MHz) and a tone squelch of 131.8 the duplexer was tuned and delivered back to Mountain Valley. Stay tuned to the April newsletter for an article on how I tuned the duplexer.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Welcome 2018

I hope everyone had a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. Before we begin to focus on the upcoming year, I would be remiss if I did not comment on the success of last year.

I am sure most of us could not image what would be I store for TWA as we entered into 2017. With two up and running repeaters, an increase in membership, widespread enthusiasm and participation in events, all seemed well.

Little did we know that another repeater site was on the horizon; that we would begin linking our repeaters; and that TWA would partner with KB3VXB/R to provide a communications footprint covering all of Schuylkill County and beyond.

Public service events, Field Day, Solar Eclipse event, annual club family picnic, Christmas party, and most important, monthly club meetings were all well attended. Our Website also received significant enhancements and through the efforts of KB3FET, the Tamaqua Wireless Association received its Articles of Incorporation. Again, I cannot say Thank You enough to the membership for your contributions and continued support.

January is typically a month where activates tend to slow as folks recover from the activities of the Christmas season and the cold weather. But this January turned out to be anything but normal as TWA hit the ground running for 2018.

In the very first week of the New Year, KC3CRS served as net control for the very first TWA Round Table Net. With four nets now in the history books, participation is great with a check-in as far away as Florida.

Thanks to Ed, KB3AYY, TWA is now on Echolink (the reason we had a Florida check-in), and thanks to Frank, KB2MXV, the TWA repeater system can now be monitored live by logging onto the Broadcastify Internet site.

Rich, W3OFD, is currently working with several other members in setting up a WIRES-X node on the 147.27 repeater. Stay tuned.

Finally, after many months of paperwork, emails and waiting, TWA received a coordinated frequency for the UHF Mountain Valley site. If the amount of activity TWA experienced in the first few weeks of the New Year is any indication of how 2018 will progress, we can expect yet another outstanding year. - WY3K

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

TWA's Mountain Valley Repeater now has a coordinated frequency! Set your radio to:

449.775 -5MHz split

Tone Squelch 131.8

The Mountain Valley repeater is our main hub to link the three other repeaters in the county.



ROUND-TABLE DEBUT

On January 3, TWA held its first Round-Table Net. Tom Smith KC3CRS was our net control operator for the evening. We had a number of people checking in. Below is a summary of check-ins. Thank you to all that took time out of their busy schedule to check in.

EchoLink

K3VNN – Kevin, from Pottsville
K2BYD Benny, from New Jersey
K3ROS Ross, mobile somewhere in PA

Mobile/Portable

KB3AYY Ed, Tamaqua
KC3DXS Jim, Tamaqua
KB2MXV Frank, Barnesville
W3OFD Rich, Barnesville
K3TE Tom, New Ringgold
KB3GWA, Mike, Hide Industrial Park
KB3VXB Frank mobile from Harrisburg
KB3JD John, Gordon
WY3K Bill, from his QTH in South Tamaqua
WA3WIJ Jim, Tamaqua
K3TE Tom, New Ringgold

TWA Special Recognition



MONTHLY REMINDERS ON TWA REPEATER NETWORK

Check in every Wednesday at 7:00PM on the TWA Repeater Network. Check the schedule in the Calendar of Events to see who is running the Roundtable. We would love to hear from you!



Check-ins for January and the host
First week, KC3CRS, 16
Second week, WY3K, 12
Third week, K3VNN, 15
Fourth week, K3TE, 11
Fifth week, K3VNN, 9
Month total - 63

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
449.775 - 5MHz Tone Squelch 131.8

Monthly TWA Club Announcements

Third Thursday of the month in February @ 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 147.345

Thursday Night Chew



Roy
W3TKR



Kevin
K3VNN



JD
KB3JD

Check out the Rag Chew Crew @ 8PM on 147.345 Tone of 123.0. Stop by and bend their ear for a while. You can find these guys running the Chew every Thursday. Check them out; they would love to hear from you.

Schuylkill County
Emergency
Services NET

Check-In Every Tuesday Night

147.345 (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.

TWA ON THE INTERNET

Thanks to Frank KB2MXV for streaming TWA on the internet. Now you could listen to our network online. When you are surfing the web type in your search engine: https://www.broadcastify.com/listen/ctid/2294, then click on the play arrow and you can listen in. Pictured to the right are a Raspberry Pi and a scanner along with a FT-991a



HOW DO I GET ECHOLINK ON MY CELL PHONE?

If you have a cell phone, you could talk on our repeater network anywhere there is cell phone service. I have the steps below. If you need help, I suggest going to Ed Boerner, KB3AYY. He is our EchoLink Gooroo. You can email him at KB3AYY@KB3AYY.com

Steps:

1. Using your laptop get a copy of your "Original Copy" of your FCC license
2. Save that to your desktop.
3. Go to EchoLink.org, then on the left side look for "Validation"
4. Click on it. Type in your call sign. Then when it asks for
5. Upload your "Original Copy" and wait about 15 minutes to hear back from EchoLink.
6. With your cell phone go to your "App" store and search for EchoLink.
7. Download it to your phone.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE UPDATE

On December 22, Frank D'Amato and Tom Smith took a ride up to the Mountain Valley site and did some maintenance. Frank reprogrammed the controller so now we have one courtesy tone. Before we had issues with two Kerchunks it turned out to be the 270 giving us the second Kerchunk. Frank did some programming and now it really sounds great. If you are on the 270, there will be no squelch tail when you call into the network. You will get a one-second squelch tail on the return.

Tom Smith worked on cleaning up the rust and corrosion on the power plug. Thanks to Frank KB2MXV for the pictures. In the spring, we need to hard wire the power connector to the main box.

Pictured to the right is Tom Smith, KC3CRS cleaning up the contacts on the electrical plug.





In addition, to the left is the connector cleaned up and tape wrapped around the housing to keep the weather out. Nice Job Tom!

BREAKFAST MEETING

In attendance: WY3K, KC3DXS, KB3AYY, Sage, WA3WIJ, W3OFD, KB2MXV, KB3JD, and K3TE

a. Net Preamble was discussed and edited
b. Email K3TE with the amount of check-ins for the newsletter tlesisko@ptd.net

2. Net Control Operator was discussed; we picked operators for the month of January. At the January meeting, we will appoint operators for February.
    a. If you cannot work your assigned night – communicate!
3. Repeaters
    a. Pottsville site
        a. Waiting to hear from the Dioceses for our next move
    b. Tamaqua site
        a. Software for the controller was updated after the breakfast meeting
    c. New Ringgold site
        a. Looking for a new location for our 270 repeater also we are looking into purchasing an Arcom Controller, they are on sale in May
    d. Mountain Valley site
        a. Hardwire AC, Amplifier update was given, cabling and connectors were purchased
        b. Battery backup, painting, mounting the traffic box was discussed. We will be busy with MV site in the spring.
    e. Hegins site
        a. Franks repeater was knocked off line during heavy winds the last week of December. We hope that it is okay now.
    f. Miscellaneous
        a. Ed gave an update on EchoLink. Everything is working great now.
        b. Meeting over the repeater network due to inclement weather was discussed.
    g. Card to John Matz was sent

There is an Amateur Radio Test Session on February 17, 9AM at the Tamaqua Borough Hall. Use the back entrance

Until next time de K3TE – 73's