

**Empire Slow Speed Net**  
**Founded 1955 by**  
**KR2RA,**  
**ex-K2DYB (SK)**  
**\* \*\*\* \*\***  
**Daily**  
**6 PM local time**  
**3566 kHz**  
**7112/1815 alternates**

# The ESS Bulletin

## Pete Gellert W2WSS Memorial Net

### January 2024

Anne Fanelli, WI2G, manager  
 541 Schultz Road  
 Elma, New York 14059  
 (716) 652-6719 (mobile)  
 Email [afwi2g@gmail.com](mailto:afwi2g@gmail.com)  
<https://www.qsl.net/ess/>  
<https://groups.io/g/empire-slow-speed-net>



### Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
WB2GTG	WA2YOW	KA2GJV	W2RBA	AB2WB	W2ITT	WI2G

### DECEMBER ROSTER

AA2YK	Ernie	Modena	11	WI2G	Anne	Elma	16
AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	18	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	28
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	5	K2TV	Bob	Fairfax VA	1
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	18	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	28
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	7	WB2U	Vic	Gaithersburg MD	1
KC2FD	Rick	Coram	8	KA2YDW	Barry	Manchester Twp NJ	2
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	14	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	9
N2TQT	Colin	Brooklyn	13	KC3FQF	Rosti	Wilmington DE	3
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	1	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	6
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	26	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	3
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	10	N8AFT	Lane	Columbus OH	9
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	31	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	5
W2XS	John	Northport	17	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	30
WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	4	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	8
WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	4	VE3NUL	Rich	Toronto	24

**December totals:** QNI 360, per session 11.6 (Nov 12.2); QSP 69, per session 2.2 (Nov 1.8). Many thanks for the gift of more traffic for the hollydaze! Congratulations and thanks to VE3MVM and VE3NUL; Mary and Rich are our last two net-certificate recipients of 2023. If you want to get a quick start on the new year, the sole requirement for an ESS net certificate is 80 points in a calendar year; you earn one point every time you check in, and a bonus point for serving as net control. A couple of checkins a week is all it takes for most of us but it's trickier for the propagationally-challenged, who depend on darkness to hear and be heard. K2TV and WB2U spring to mind; Bob is running 10 watts to a magnetic loop antenna in VA, so ask K4ZXM (who recently spent a few days in hospital; we're glad Don is back) to call the net if he's around and you're the net control. It's very important to observe the Golden Rule here as elsewhere, and relay checkins as needed; if you hear something, say something! WA2WMJ emails that he's now having fun with POTA (Parks on the Air; K2EAG can tell you everything you need to know about the program) and will stop by ESS, time permitting. We certainly miss JB's help with Hudson Valley traffic. Jim, WA2IAX, hopes to track down (and hopefully eliminate) some neighborhood QRM in the new year. N2PEZ has steadfastly continued uploading newsletters to the website, despite a recent surprise bout of the covid. One of my New Year's resolutions is to work on learning enough HTML to start scanning and uploading our extensive archive. W2XS (compiler of the first ESS birthday list many years ago) has posted an updated net roster to our .io groups page. **Birthdays: January**—WA2YOW 18 and ye editor on the 30th. **February** (lots!)—WA3JXW 1, K2NPN 8, K2TV 12, VE3MVM 15, K4ZXM 22 and W2XS 27. Additions and corrections, preferably by radiogram, are always welcome!

## *New Year's Musings*

Since creative writing (or creative anything, come to that) doesn't come easily to me--unlike my better half—I was happy to see the December issue of the QNI Newsletter in my inbox a few days ago; it's available at <https://radiorelay.org/qni/>. Its content is always good (including an article about building and feeding a folded dipole antenna), and refreshed my memories of much of the following.

Divorce is rarely (if ever) painless, and many of us have experienced its effects on relatives or friends. We bystanders often find ourselves in the position (self-imposed or otherwise) of having to choose loyalty to one of two warring parties, which can be unpleasant and seem to make a bad situation even worse. I have to give the devil his due and credit the ARRL with helping me to finally get licensed in 1986. After a couple of decades of interest in radio and a cement-like mental block against CW, I saw an ARRL ad in *Popular Communications* with a photo of a guy smoking a pipe and looking like he was having fun. I wrote to Newington, and a couple of weeks later got a phone call from a local ham who was a volunteer examiner. After purchasing a study guide and a couple of cassette tapes, I passed both Novice exams and walked home on air; the Mets had just clinched the division title on their way to the World Series.

I joined the league, of course, and got into traffic-handling after upgrading to General—again, thanks to the ARRL's VE program. Over the years, though, I began to notice unwelcome changes (although I was bemused from the get-go that Newington seemed to assume that electrical engineers would be willing to work for a bowl of rice). The league seemed to go all corporate, trademarking this and that in ways that seemed inappropriate, and attention previously paid to CW operation and public service was replaced by new modes and equipment hard and soft (which generated advertising dollars). The kids always needed shoes here (college tuition later), and an ARRL life membership was never a realistic option as a result; I didn't understand the full meaning of "Blessed are the poor" until much later, although I took a couple of sabbaticals from league membership during intermittent fits of pique (usually over lack of support for CW, which I'd come to love deeply). W2WSS and I would argue about whether the ARRL was a net positive or negative.

In 2016, though, things went from annoying to weird. The league publicly humiliated Joe, W3JY (SK), removing him from his elected position as Eastern Pennsylvania section manager; it also removed one of its three NTS area chairs, persuading the remaining two that it was time to leave. Radio Relay International was founded as an alternative to the ARRL (for which many of us are grateful), establishing its own area-level RRIE traffic net. It seemed like we traffic-handlers were forced to choose; I chose RRI, and the irony of *not* being replaced as 2RN CW manager (an ARRL Field Office appointment supposedly requiring league membership; I'm also still on the books as an ARRL VE, despite not working a session in years) did not go unnoticed. The legacy organization, whose corporate motto should be "Inertia", has no one waiting in the wings.

RRIE is no more either, due to a shortage of warm bodies, although it was better than EAN at moving long-haul traffic; those few of us who worked both sides of the street for the greater good were well aware of which net excelled at what. But Newington has finally awakened and smelled the coffee; its much-vaunted NTS2.0 seems to want to adopt (and claim credit for) a number of RRI initiatives without the upstart organization's participation beyond kissing its corporate ... er, ring. This is a turf war, pure and simple; RRI demands an equal partnership in a traffic network which the ARRL has long seen as a brand to be exploited (and profited from) in this era of climate change and other threats. Neither side is totally blameless, but trying to realistically assess responsibility can be as simple as following the money.

It's a damn shame that new hams are exposed to a crash course in corporate America like this, but it helps to keep an open mind and remember that we have choices. I enjoy noodling around Wikipedia (improving existing articles, mostly); two things I've learned there are to avoid ad-hominem attacks where possible—the RRI leadership could benefit from this, since name-calling costs credibility—and to evaluate a source of information. Anyone can cook up a website, and I'm skeptical of an outfit that calls itself Auxcomm USA Ltd. I'd never heard of it until I read about RRI's memorandum of understanding with whatever it is, and I sense a global-generic (Ltd is not the American Inc), Acme-Disaster-Communications vibe. I see RRI as having a fire in the belly that the ARRL lost long ago, but decide for yourself!

*Wishing us all a good 2024! 73 de Anne WI2G*