

Empire Slow Speed Net
Founded 1955 by
KR2RA,
ex-K2DYB (SK)
*** *** ****
Daily
6 PM local time
3566 kHz
7110/1815 alternates

The ESS Bulletin

Pete Gellert W2WSS Memorial Net

July 2024

Anne Fanelli, WI2G, manager
 541 Schultz Road
 Elma, New York 14059
 (716) 652-6719 (mobile)
 Email 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
W2ITT	WA2YOW	KA2GJV	W2RBA	AB2WB	*open*	WI2G

JUNE ROSTER

AA2YK	Ernie	Modena	3	WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	1
AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	16	WI2G	Anne	Elma	18
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	1	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	28
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	6	WB2U	Vic	Gaithersburg MD	3
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	12	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	4
N2TQT	Colin	Brooklyn	25	N3AAK	Bob	Levittown PA	3
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	22	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	15
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	13	VA3AG	Aldo	Courtice ON	1
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	4	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	5
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	28	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	24
W2XS	John	Northport	19	VE3NUL	Rich	Toronto ON	1
WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	4				

June totals: QNI 257, per session 8.6 (May 9.5); QSP 50, per session 1.7 (May 1.6). Many thanks for another decent month. **Help Wanted Department**--Although I'm grateful for not having had to hang up the sign for many a moon, WB2GTG's license expired at the end of May; Bill is off the air until he can renew, and has asked me to find a replacement NCS for the Friday slot he recently swapped with W2ITT. If you'd like a spot on our net-control roster, let me know as soon as possible by email or radiogram; I've been trying to cover Fridays until we get a permanent NCS, but two nights a week is way too much fun for one person. Please don't think that you have to show up every week, no matter what. Life happens; send a QNC on the net or email me if you know ahead of time that you won't be around, and I trust that our members know to pick up the net if the scheduled NCS isn't around at 6:02. Different nets have different "cushions"; many have three minutes but, since ESS meets at supertime (and had to wrap up by 6:30 for 3RN/3, on the same frequency, back in the day; even now, some stations—including NCSs--hope to make 2RN or local nets at 6:30), two minutes seems to work well for us. It's discouraging, however, to bust one's buns getting to the rig 30 seconds after net time only to find that you needn't have bothered. Remember the Golden Rule! A couple of reminders--when you check into a traffic net, you're expected to stay for the duration unless you ask to be excused (QNX); unlike other types of nets, it's poor form to QNI and disappear. If you know when you check in that can only stick around for a few minutes, it's fine to send SHORT TIME or OUT IN 10 (or however many minutes) along with your callsign and traffic list; the NCS will probably ask the net if there's any traffic for you and then promptly send you on your way. When collecting a reply from a recipient, additionally, that reply doesn't have to be sent verbatim--the shorter, the better. Congratulations to N7RMP, this month's net-certificate recipient, after Ralph's return to ESS earlier this year. **Birthdays:** **July**--VE1FAS 1 (Canada Day) and VE3DCX 25. **August**--W2RBA 12. Additions and corrections, preferably by radiogram, are always welcome!

Those Crazy Days of Summer

It may be too soon to say but ESS, barring unforeseen circumstances, will probably survive the summer. The net is hardly thriving, though; the checkin count is way down (despite the number of regulars who have said that they can operate on 40 meters, where we're enjoying good propagation), and we're shy a net control since WB2GTG went off the air when his license expired. As I told Bill, "Where's N1IQI when you need him?" Unless your license is hanging on the wall and you actually look at it from time to time (yes and no here), Loren--with his idiosyncrasies (the most serious of which is his stubborn refusal to check the Social Security Death Index before composing his traffic; Lord only knows how many former traffic handlers have delivered an N1IQI message to a widowed spouse, sometimes widowed for a number of years)--is the only notification system we have. Amateur radio is hardly a priority with the FCC, and I find it ironic that we receive an email notification that our truck's registration needs to be renewed; the Friendly Candy Company also has our email addresses and license-expiration dates, but we're on our own when it comes to keeping track of when a 10-year license will expire.

Bill has served ESS faithfully for decades since when he lived in Brooklyn and relayed net reports to W2WSS after the Fanelli Westward Migration of 1992, when I learned to my chagrin (with three kids rapidly approaching college age) that long distance from Elma to Manhattan was 25 cents per minute and Pete's and my weekly hi-how-ya-doin' phone calls were now cutting into the grocery money. Bill became a net control and was an ESS mainstay through a move to Middletown and another to his present QTH in eastern Pennsylvania, the latter complete with HOA antenna restrictions. Nevertheless, he has remained on the air.

That degree of dedication, however, seems to be increasingly rare. Never having served in the military, I don't know how many of my colleagues have. I can hazard a guess, though, by the increasing level of indifference on the part of traffic-handlers who are perfectly content to check into a net but do little (or nothing) more; it reminds me of the wry army joke about everyone taking one step back in response to an appeal for volunteers. It's a shame that stations who would be perfectly capable of holding their own at the region- or area-net level won't step up to help the dogsbodies who have burned out, or are well on the road to burnout (which is in the opposite direction from the road to Utopia).

Not all of that reluctance, though, is due to laziness or inertia. Traffic nets need traffic to justify their existence, of course, but a handful of gung-ho mass originators—I see no need to mention callsigns here, since we (and they) know who they are—have made the rest of us hesitate to check into any net where our presence is not required.

There are two schools of thought about traffic volume, and one was noted in the previous paragraph. The second is a throwback to the iron-man mentality that doomed the United Trunk Lines, and made the ARRL aware of the importance of a big-tent approach when it developed the National Traffic System during the resumption of amateur operation after World War II. According to the iron-man view, it's not enough to know how to format, relay and deliver traffic; we also should be available to chain ourselves to our rigs at a moment's notice, at the whim of a mass originator (other obligations and hobbies be damned), to copy gobs and gobs of traffic in preparation for a disaster situation which never seems to actually occur.

Time is finite for us all, and a traffic-handler who is insensitive to the time constraints of their colleagues does far more harm than good to the system; our best, most dedicated operators bleed themselves dry, and ultimately run out of the room screaming. CW nets are particularly vulnerable, because that mode—my favorite, as a former poster child for "I can't learn Morse"—has "evolved" from a matter-of-fact licensing requirement to the Final Frontier. Voice nets are not immune, because their unreasonable time demands are similar; it may just take them a bit longer to go belly-up.

Just about every problem has a solution, though, and this is no exception. Mass originators have an ethical obligation to avoid overburdening a net or an individual station. Traffic-handling is a team sport, as it were, with no room for ops who consider themselves the straw that stirs the drink.

Frankly, we don't need them. We have jobs. We have families. We have other interests, and the right to pursue them. "The amateur is balanced" is more than a trite phrase!

Don't forget ESS over the summer! 73 Anne