

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

December 2022



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Net Control Stations

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

NOVEMBER ROSTER

AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	11	WI2G	Anne	Elma	16
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	9	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	24
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	7	KA2YDW	Barry	Manchester Twp NJ	1
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	6	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	27
KN2X	John	Wurtsboro	1	WB2U	Vic	Gaithersburg MD	1
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	13	K3YAK	David	Mendham NJ	2
N2YHQ	Marcelo	Penfield	1	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	9
N2ZX	Curt	Mechanicville	5	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	11
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	16	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	17
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	27	W4VLL	Vic	Narrows VA	1
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	11	N8AFT	Lane	Columbus OH	11
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	29	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	14
W2XS	John	Northport	23	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	30
WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	3	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	4

November totals: QNI 331, per session 11.0 (Oct 10.3); QSP 49, per session 1.6 (Oct 2.2). A good month overall, with traffic back down to earth but more checkins (due, perhaps, to improved propagation). Every silver lining has its cloud, though, and long-skip season has again begun. Long skip, usually a later-evening phenomenon (it's become a factor on the Eastern and Central Area Net, which meet at 8:30 and 9:30 respectively), doesn't usually affect ESS; it sometimes does, however, and 160-meter capability is especially useful this time of year. The traffic-handling community has recently experienced a couple of losses. Dedicated Ontario Phone Net manager Shawn, VE3PSV, became a silent key much too young on September 29th (<https://ontars.com/sk/index.html>). Longtime NJN manager Gene, AG2R, passed away on November 9th in Ohio. Gene's obituary is at <https://tuttlefh.com/tribute/details/6204/Eugene-Filipponi/obituary.html#content-start>; condolences may be sent to his daughter, Tamara Finn, at 8599 Countryview Drive, Broadview Heights OH 44147. Many thanks to net-certificate recipients K2EAG and W2LC for their support of ESS. It's good to see N8AFT joining us from Ohio, and the return of K2NPN; Phil injured his leg, and his shack is upstairs. KY2D is getting settled in Maine; Jim is on 2 meters, and plans to be back on HF soon. Thanks to NJVN manager K3YAK for its newsletter; David reports that the net is in very good shape. The 80-meter range war (CW ops vs. the space cadets) continues apace, and it's beyond me why the digital modes are considered narrowband. NYS manager KT2D was forced to move NYS from 3569 to 3566 due to QRM; when the QRM seemed to follow the net, Bob has tried 3577 in desperation. That's had mixed results as well, so he advises checkins to try all three frequencies and asks NCSs to keep net sessions open a bit longer. **Birthdays: December**—WA2IAX 10 and WA2WMJ 29. **January**—WA2YOW 18 and ye editor on the 30th. Additions and corrections always welcome, preferably by radiogram!

Year-end Musings

The local Winter Triple Crown (white Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, the latter rare but not unheard-of) got off to an exhausting start, but at least we were pretty much dug out by travel time; the weather could have been worse, and the electric fence we have for insurance was speedily repaired yesterday when the snowpack was down to a foot and it was finally possible to wade out to the solar charger. Thanksgiving is in the rear-view mirror and Hanukkah (December 18th) and Christmas are still a few weeks off, so it's probably time to get ready for the hollydaze.

It's a busy time of year, I know, but traffic will probably be up and we have fewer nets and traffic-handlers around to manage it. Try to check into a couple more nets if you have time; NYS meets at 7 pm (an hour after ESS) on 3577 kHz, which paradoxically is usually free of digital QRM. Don't worry at all about your sending or copying speed; if you can manage ESS, you'll do fine on NYS as well and KT2D will be grateful for your presence—Bob's digital station is the Outlet of Last Resort much too often. If you live outside New York, your section CW net (and voice net) will surely appreciate your support; Ohio's Buckeye Net, I believe, now meets on 3579 shortly before NYS. Don't forget your local net, too, if you have VHF capability; in addition to the training function it shares with ESS, it's a good place to talk up HF nets in general and CW nets in particular.

One of the great appeals of traffic-handling is that it enables its participants to do a good deal of hamming in a relatively short time—if we let it, of course. Although protocol varies to some degree among nets, one constant is usually efficiency—particularly the efficient use of time. When you check into a CW net, there's no need to send QNI; the net control station knows that that's what you're doing. The quantity and composition of radiograms are other ways to improve our efficiency. As for quantity, the Goldilocks approach seems to work best—enough traffic to keep our skills sharp, but not so much that we find ourselves avoiding nets to keep from getting slammed with gobs of traffic or an inconvenient, too-frequent expectation to fill in as a liaison or NCS.

When composing a radiogram, brevity (without sacrificing clarity) is key; your relaying station on a VHF net may have armchair copy, but further up the line (especially now that contest season has begun in earnest) may be a very different story. There's usually no need to reach the standard 25-word message limit, and it's not much fun to struggle to copy THIS MESSAGE IS TO SHOW OUR APPRECIATION OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN FILLING THE NEED TO REACH THE LAST MILE FOR RADIO TRAFFIC 73 (from an NTS official in the Southeast—only 23 words, but you get the idea) through contest or DXpedition QRM; THANKS FOR YOUR HELP says essentially the same thing and time being what it is, we can handle more traffic if each message is shorter.

Speaking of QRM—not causing it, as well as avoiding it—put your rig's filters to good use. When you're looking for a station (or a clear spot to run a net), keep your filter as wide as possible; use your narrower filters to reduce adjacent QRM as much as necessary, but only after you've found your spot (or your station). Nothing says “lid” more, frankly, than a ham who tunes around on a 500 Hz filter and plops down too close for comfort to a QSO or a net; considerate operation is more important than ever as our available spectrum shrinks.

“Keeping the system greased” is fine, but can be carried to extremes; I sent new-member traffic for FISTS for a while, but was unaware of any garment-rending when I gave it up. Handling instructions are intended to be used judiciously, and are unnecessary on every single message. HXG, in my opinion, has outlived its usefulness; HXC is probably overused, and HXE is unrealistic. I always offer to originate a reply when delivering traffic (including by voicemail), but very few recipients take me up on it. Receiving a radiogram by telephone is usually unexpected (even for new hams), and a brief explanation of How the System Works is often all a recipient can absorb.

Originating stations are starting to use Radio Relay International's message list—an updated, expanded version of the familiar ARRL list. The list, available for download at <https://radiorelay.org/publications> (the last item on the “Operating Aids and Reference Materials” list), largely mirrors the ARRL list with RRC instead of ARL in the preamble and text.

Have a wonderful holiday season! 73 de Anne W1ZG