

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

January 2023



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Net Control Stations

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

DECEMBER ROSTER

W1ALI	Alice	Poughkeepsie	1	WI2G	Anne	Elma	17
AA2YK	Ernie	Modena	3	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	25
AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	19	W1FEA	Pete	Concord NH	1
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	2	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	29
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	7	WB2U	Vic	Gaithersburg MD	4
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	5	K3YAK	David	Mendham NJ	1
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	13	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	12
N2ZX	Curt	Mechanicville	4	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	10
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	19	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	17
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	18	W4VLL	Vic	Narrows VA	1
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	13	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	15
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	28	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	30
W2XS	John	Northport	20	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	7
WA2WMJ	J. B.	Walden	1	VE3NUL	Rich	Toronto	7
WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	4				

December totals: QNI 331, per session 10.7 (Nov 11.0); QSP 72, per session 2.3 (Nov 1.6). A good end to the year, with checkins holding steady and traffic up (reflecting the holiday season). Last month was even more of a blur here than most Decembers are, as evidenced by my printing net certificates for K2EAG and W2LC early in the month and then forgetting to mail them almost until New Year's; pain from a nasty fall on the ice between snowstorms has been a bit of a distraction, but a CT scan will hopefully soon reveal all and I now use a ski pole outdoors to keep my feet where they belong—good thing too, since most of the snow is gone (for now) and mud is again the order of the day. Global weirding, indeed. My better half has been providing help beyond measure; a fallen tree took out a pasture-fence rail and its accompanying electric-fence wire, and Mike learned the fine (and annoying) art of electric-fence splicing. The wire (inside the top rail, to deter any beaveresque tendencies on the part of bored hay-burners) has many, many splices and the colder the weather, the harder it is to work with. This is what they don't tell you in the brochure. Many thanks to W2XS for picking up an orphaned session, and it's very good to see WA2WMJ on the net roster again. Winter means generally-better propagation on 80 meters; for that reason, it also means contests and DXpeditions. No net frequency is carved in stone; if 3566 is busy at net time, slide up or down a bit if you're the NCS—up is easier for stations looking for you to hear. The net control's frequency, whatever it is, *is* the net frequency! Zero-beat them as closely as you can; QRM may be forcing them to use a narrow filter, and they may not hear you if you're on the "official" net frequency. **Birthdays:** **January**—WA2YOW 18 and ye editor on the 30th. **February**—WA3JXW 1, K2NPN 8, VE3MVM 15, K1NN and K4ZXM 22, and W2XS 27. Additions and corrections always welcome, preferably by radiogram!

Interesting Times

Friedrich Nietzsche said, “That which does not kill us makes us stronger” (which I first heard from ESS founder K2DYB many years ago), and the 19th-century German philosopher may have had a point. You may have heard that my corner of the state has had a fair amount of snow so far this winter—not just the Big One but two storms before that, the first a week before our Thanksgiving. The second storm, ten days before Christmas, began with a nasty bout of freezing rain. I’m careful on the ice after learning the hard way that wet pavement and black ice look exactly the same, but went down hard (you always do on the ice) while replacing the CoCoRaHS gauge. CoCoRaHS is a citizen-science group which measures precipitation, proving—as if anyone needs proof—that no good deed goes unpunished. No fracture on the X-rays, but trying to mildly-exercise my way through several injuries was a miserable failure and obtaining medical care (a CT-scan appointment, and don’t get me started about pain relief) had become almost impossible in the triple whammy of COVID-19—soon to be COVID-23—post-blizzard whatever, and the hollydaze. A sobering aspect of the recent blizzard was that of its several-dozen victims, a handful died simply because an ambulance couldn’t reach them; the same thing happened during the 2014 Big One, which had been the worst in the 30 years we’ve lived in God’s country.

Anyway, forced and unaccustomed inactivity has a way of making you think (or ruminate). The urge to help, to be (or at least feel) useful, is a basic component of human nature. That aspect of amateur radio broadly known as public service appeals to the same urge, and has always been part of the *quid pro quo* by which the radio authorities allow us to pursue our pleasant hobby. Another part of that *quid pro quo* is the continuing expectation that we will contribute, however modestly, to the improvement of what was once quaintly known as the radio art.

Becoming a trained communicator is a process, rather than a destination. We check into our first net, sweaty and nervous and not really knowing what to expect. It doesn’t bite. We become comfortable on the net, and one fine day we hear traffic listed that we can do something with. Sweaty and nervous and not really knowing what to expect, we offer to take the traffic. It doesn’t bite, even when we have to ask for fills. Sending and receiving traffic become No Big Deal, and one fine day there’s no NCS around at net time. Sweaty and nervous and not really knowing what to expect, we call the net like we’ve heard it called so many times and write down what we hear. Our fellow net members, people with whom we’ve become radio friends, don’t bite.

One fine day the net manager asks us to be a liaison to a higher-level net, one we may have heard in passing where they seem to send much, much faster than we can possibly copy. We don’t really want to do it, but since the net manager is now one of our radio friends we say that we’ll try. Sweaty and nervous and not really knowing what to expect, we check into the Fast Net. It is fast, but it’s also oddly exhilarating and we can copy more than we thought. We keep our sending speed the same as our copying speed and the Speed Demons, amazingly, slow down to keep pace with us. It’s all about throughput, we’ve learned; it takes less time to send a message once, at a speed appropriate for band conditions and receiving-station experience, than it does to have to repeat almost everything. Not everyone can copy as fast as they send, and we learn which emperors are really dressed.

It’s pretty obvious where this is going; it’s always good to expand one’s comfort zone. In writing this when I can’t do much else (the final frontier, as they say on *Star Trek*, is the barn; I laboriously negotiate the 150 feet from the house three times a day with a ski pole for support to feed Socks and Daisy some hay, while my long-suffering spouse does everything else), I’m reminded of Allan Sherman’s song “Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh”. Things can change from bad to less-bad; I finally touched base with my orthopedist (on Friday afternoon of the New Year’s weekend!) and scheduled the CT scan and a followup what-next appointment; pain and disability are easier to take—missing the ability to do housework will give you some idea of how topsy-turvy it is here—when they may be finite.

I don’t usually say “good riddance” to the old year, but I do hope that 2023 is better. If we all do a bit more on the nets, our warhorses will be able to age more gracefully!

A happy, healthy New Year with 73 de Anne WI2G