

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 2023



Anne Fanelli, WI2G, manager
541 Schultz Road
Elma, New York 14059
(716) 652-6719 (mobile)
Email afwi2g@gmail.com

Net Control Stations

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

JUNE ROSTER

AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	12	WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	4
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	3	WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	3
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	7	WI2G	Anne	Elma	16
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	6	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	25
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	9	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	26
N2TQT	Colin	Brooklyn	19	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	8
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	12	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	18
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	20	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	1
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	6	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	3
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	28	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	30
W2XS	John	Northport	13	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	5
WA2WMJ	J. B.	Walden	22				

June totals: QNI 296, per session 9.9 (May 10.1); QSP 45, per session 1.5 (May 1.5). Many thanks for a decent month under the circumstances, with average checkins barely under 10 and traffic (albeit anemic) holding steady. Congratulations and thanks to N2TQT, this month's net-certificate recipient. Our thoughts are with K4ZXM; K1SEI emailed a couple of weeks ago that that the Hit & Bounce Slow Net NCS asked for prayers for Don, who was in the hospital. Tage hasn't heard anything further, so please keep your ear to the ground if you frequent the Hit & Bounce nets. The slow net meets daily at 7:30 am Eastern on 7112 kHz (if memory serves), and HBN meets at 8:30; I think Will (K4IWW) manages both nets, but please correct me if I'm wrong. Sometimes the jungle telegraph sputters a bit. Speaking of the HBNs, Tage notes their NCS' longstanding practice of sending QPC when asking another station to please call the net. The ARRL has QN codes for CW-net use and the international Q signals begin with QR, so QPC is definitely apocryphal but has its uses (if you know what it stands for, after rummaging through lists in vain). The Royal Order of Arfers has always marched to its own drummer (as independent nets, like ESS) and I consider CW traffic-handling tricky enough to learn as it is, but—especially in poor conditions—I see no other reason we couldn't use it here. It's very good to see WA3JXW joining us more often, and kudos to VE3FAS for perfect attendance last month. KB2QO forwarded an email from AA2Y in which Shelly resigned as manager of the New York Public Operations Net at the end of June; NYPON (whose acronym was originally short for the New York Post Office Net) meets on 3925 kHz daily at 5 pm, and is a good outlet for traffic to parts of New York not currently served by the somewhat smaller pool of CW-net checkins. Shelly is apparently having antenna problems; I dislike antenna work more with each passing year, and have the feeling that I'm far from alone. I've heard his cheerful voice (and his fist in the past) on the air for decades, and hope to continue to do so. **Birthdays: July**—VE3FAS 1 (Canada Day) and VE3DCX 25. **August**—W2RBA 12. Additions and corrections always welcome, preferably by radiogram!

Summer Strategies

Unlike the past few summers, solar activity has been good this year; band conditions, however, have been same-old same-old. After a prolonged dry spell here (which has prevented us from laying in next winter's hay yet, a source of great stress for man and beast alike), we're having a thunderstorm which has become strangely unfamiliar. It's an important reminder, though, that safety comes first. Keep an eye on the forecast and radar; the regional lightning map at https://www.blitzortung.org/en/live_lightning_maps.php?map=33 has become a great addition to my toolbox since the NOAA radar migrated away from Flash and became somewhat less user-friendly (to me, anyway; when our older son Paul—a NOAA oceanographer—visits in August, I have to find out what I'm doing wrong). Never hesitate to throw the big switch, even when you're the net control, when a thunderstorm threatens; disconnect your antenna, ground it if possible (we live in an imperfect world), and unplug your power strip(s) from the AC mains. Send QNO STORM if you can, but your safety is paramount.

Even without bad weather, daylight operation on 80 meters is ... interesting. The skip is maddeningly short, and static from distant storms raises the noise floor. So does my noise blanker, which I need much of the time because of our electric pasture fence; occasionally I find the bad spot(s) in the fenceline (by ear more often than by eye), but that rarity makes it a cause for celebration. Switching in a preamp pumps up the volume, but does little for the signal-to-noise ratio. Mostly, we have to deal with what is.

Bad weather makes you appreciate good, though, and poor conditions can be worked around. It's tempting (especially in good weather) to "go fishing" until Labor Day, and many casual hams do just that. Traffic-handling, however, is a seven-days-a-week (usually), 365-days-a-year pursuit; we train for disaster communications, which are not generally required according to our convenience. Nobody likes to bang their head against a wall, but try to keep checking in even during summer. If you can't hear the NCS because of fading or signal absorption, be patient; they'll generally ask another station (in a different location) to call the net and you'll be able to check in—and maybe help with traffic! Don't panic if a station you're trying to hear fades out; chances are that they'll fade back in. As the days begin to shorten, band conditions should also improve over the course of a net session.

Forty-meter capability is especially useful this time of year, and the difference in propagation is astounding. If you can't QSY to 40, though, relays can work too. I'm pressed for time on Saturdays, because after I run ESS I check into 2RN/630 on 3926 kHz SSB as the rep to NYS and EAN. W2ITT checked in with traffic for me, and if I wasn't playing Beat the Clock I would have asked Rob to QSY to 7110 after the net. AB2WB kindly took Rob down 3 (it was well before 6:30, when the Michigan QMN net meets on 3563; it's better to go down 5 later in our session, so we don't bother them) and picked up his traffic to relay to me so I could make 2RN in time to pick up a bunch of Field Day traffic. It's nice—and rare--when everything falls into place!

This 'n' That

KW1U recently emailed that the ARRL's NTS 2.0 modernization project is on the horizon, and information on the project is available at nts2.arrl.org; to learn about the relevant changes, click the arrow next to "Standards and Procedures" for a drop-down menu. Chief among them is a long-overdue update to the league's net directory (in the meantime, RRI's current net directory is at <https://radiorelay.org/publications>).

YouTube is a treasure trove of arcana, and WB2U emailed links (<http://w1tp.com/imww.htm> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5P2yTfJ7nGI&t=767s>) suggesting that Walter Winchell *may* have been—of all things—a CW operator. Winchell, wryly known as "Waldo Winchester" in Damon Runyon's stories, was a gossip columnist and radio-show presenter whose trademark attention-grabber at the top of a story was sending Morse code with a Vibroplex bug. His CW was ersatz, according to his Wikipedia article, but Morse was commonly used back in the day to signify up-to-the-minute content and the short YouTube video (a 1953 ABC-TV kinescope simulcast of his radio show) is an amazing period piece. Thanks, Vic!

Happy Canada Day and Fourth of July! 73 Anne