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

June 2023

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Net Control Stations

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

MAY ROSTER

AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	18	WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	5
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	1	WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	5
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	10	WI2G	Anne	Elma	16
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	6	K1NN	Jan	East Calais VT	5
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	12	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	23
N2TQT	Colin	Brooklyn	17	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	30
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	14	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	9
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	24	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	1
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	3	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	13
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	30	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	4
W2XS	John	Northport	11	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	22
WA2IAX	Jim	Sidney	1	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	6
WA2WMJ	J. B.	Walden	27				

May totals: QNI 312, per session 10.1 (Apr 10.6); QSP 52, per session 1.7 (Apr 1.5). About three weeks to the solstice as I type this, after which time the days will almost-imperceptibly begin to shorten; I generally don't notice that much of a change until the beginning of August. Since we can hardly hear each other on 80 meters at 6 pm this time of year (when the skip seems to shorten to 100 miles or so), it helps to check in "by the book"—callsign, greeting, and traffic; signal reports and other extraneous what-not can confuse an NCS (or relay station) doing their very best to pull someone out of the noise. An hour can make a surprising difference in 80-meter propagation, however, even now. If you can't move traffic on ESS, wait an hour and check into NYS on 3569 kHz at 7 pm (or your corresponding section net); KT2D will be glad you did too, and it's encouraging to learn that section nets aren't that different from ESS. This, too, shall pass. Belated congratulations to W2ITT, who also earned a net certificate in April; *mea culpa* for the oversight, Rob. T.he sole requirement for an ESS net certificate on card stock by postal mail is 80 points in a calendar year; you earn one point each time you check in, and a bonus point for serving as net control. N2PEZ continues to work on the net website as time permits, and I was inspired by KT2D to form an .io group. If you haven't done so already, feel free to subscribe at https://groups.io/g/empire-slow-speed-net. I don't see anyone's inbox being overwhelmed in the foreseeable future, and it can be a good alternative way to contact each other quickly. **Birthdays: June—**KW1U 8. **July—**VE3FAS 1 (Canada Day) and VE3DCX 25. Additions and corrections always welcome, preferably by radiogram.

You may not always turn the page for the monthly sermonette, but this month we have a guest columnist! Since my literary inspirations are Red Smith (who said about writing for deadline, "I just sit down at the typewriter, open a vein and bleed") and Charles Dickens (who was paid by the word), anything you'd like to see appear in this space is always very much appreciated.

The unsinkable K2TV's adjustment to recent restrictions (antenna and otherwise) has been inspiring:

Downsizing Your Ham Station
by Bob Myers, K2TV
(from the April 2023 Great South Bay ARC Compass)

Many of us find ourselves having to downsize our ham station because of a move to a smaller living facility or HOA-restricted homes for many reasons. In my case, my XYL required a handicapped-accessible accommodation and we found ourselves moving to a two-bedroom apartment in Virginia. Luckily we found a third floor-apartment with a balcony. I asked the rental agent if they allowed ham radio and she said yes but nothing can be physically attached to the building.

So I had to move from a single-family house on Long Island with my fairly large well-equipped ham station to a two-bedroom, third-floor apartment. Gone were the tower and beams, my full-size rigs and HF amplifier. It looked like I would be relegated to possibly an HF mobile station and a couple of handheld radios. Thankfully my many friends from The Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club chipped in to get me a Precise RF magnetic loop antenna with remote tuning that would get me on the air from the confines of the new apartment. I'd heard a lot about magnetic loop antennas, but was concerned that due to its small size, it would not perform well. I mounted the loop on an MFJ adjustable tripod. On the tripod I installed a mount for a 6-meter ham stick dipole and a vertical ham stick for 10 meters. I planned on having two runs of RG-8X coaxial cables and a CAT-6 control cable for remote-tuning the loop antenna. My ham station is located in the second bedroom, which is not near the balcony. I was limited to a 50-foot cable run and fortunately that was exactly the right length to reach the balcony. I kept the cable close to the baseboard and under rugs, but where it ran across the floor or where it crosses the door saddles it presented a tripping problem. An internet search came up with some wood-grained plastic channels that stick to the floor and cover the cables.

On the tripod, I can mount the ham stick antennas both vertically or horizontally as a dipole. I have had a lot of success on 6 meters using two ham sticks as a dipole.

My magnetic loop antenna is somewhat directional, but due to the surrounding balcony railing, it skews the predicted RF pattern. It doesn't seem to limit my operation as I sometimes get answers to my CQ from areas that should be a null in the loop pattern. Perhaps if I take the loop out in the field it will perform in a predictable way. When you operate from a less-than-optimum location, you have to expect anomalies. Running this setup I have worked the world running 20 watts or less. The Precise RF magnetic loop model that I use limits me to 10 watts on 80 and 60 meters which makes it hard to work anything but local stations on SSB. On FT-8 the range is better, but I wouldn't expect to work any rare DX on those bands.

On VHF/UHF, I use my Kenwood TM-V71 dual-band rig into an indoor Arrow antenna dual band J-pole. I selected the J-pole antenna because it doesn't require radials and is easy to mount. Fortunately there are plenty of repeaters to hit and use in this part of Northern Virginia and I have no problem hitting them from my third-floor location. I also have my Shark RF hotspot to enable me to use D-STAR to connect into our W2TOB D-Star machine at Babylon Town Hall. Of course there are several local D-STAR repeaters in this area too. An ALLSTAR node in the shack rounds out my digital voice operation and enables me to get into the W2GSB VHF and WB2QGZ repeaters.

If I get bored with these modes, I can always get on the FM satellites or International Space Station repeater using a handheld rig and an Arrow antenna handheld dual-band Yagi.

If I do manage to somehow get further bored, there are many parks in the area that qualify as POTA. So having to move to a new restricted location is not as bad as it seemed at first. The great thing about ham radio is there are so many facets to it. I thought when I had to move into an apartment it was going to be pretty much the end of my ham radio hobby, but that didn't happen. You just have to use your imagination and ham radio ingenuity to overcome the obstacles.

Look for me on the one of the GSBARC repeaters because I still frequent some of them. I just have a very long microphone cord.

Instant summer, as usual. 73 de Anne