

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

September 2022



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Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
WB2GTG	WA2YOW	KA2GJV	W2RBA	AB2WB	WA3JXW	WI2G

AUGUST ROSTER

AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	15	WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	5
K2EAG	Matt	Amherst	8	WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	2
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	10	WI2G	Anne	Elma	16
KA2AQV	Jim	Troy	1	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	27
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	5	WB2GTG	Bill	Easton PA	31
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	10	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	13
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	9	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	13
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	25	K4ZXM	Don	Hanover VA	10
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	8	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	5
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	30	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	28
W2XS	John	Northport	9	VE3MVM	Mary	Shelburne ON	8

August totals: QNI 288, per session 9.3 (Jul 9.9); QSP 61, per session 2.0 (Jul 1.6). Thanks to all for your continued support of the net over the summer; conditions should be on the upswing as we head into fall. Congratulations to K2NPN and K4ZXM, this month's net-certificate recipients (80 points in a calendar year—one for each checkin and a bonus point for net controlling), and to WB2GTG for checking in every day during August; W2RBA, VE3FAS and K1SEI were close behind. Our thoughts are with VE3MVM as Mary is busier with family issues, reminding us that radio comes second; don't hesitate to pick up the net if the scheduled net control station isn't there at 6:02. It's also a good idea--and alleviates boredom--to "copy along" as stations check in and list (and clear) traffic; it's good practice for net controlling, and you'll be able to continue the session without a hitch if the NCS is forced to leave for any reason. If *you* have to leave the net to answer the phone or the call of nature or whatever, alert the NCS by sending your suffix; when you're acknowledged with your suffix, send QNT ____ (the number of minutes you expect to be away). When you return, send your suffix again to let the NCS know that you're back. Stations have been known to disappear after they "get credit" for checking in, which is poor form on a traffic net; we're expected to stick around until we're excused (QNX) or the net is over (QNF). It's disconcerting for an NCS to call a station (perhaps to excuse them) and hear crickets; they don't know if the station can't copy them or has indeed already withdrawn from the fray. If you know when you check in that you can't stay for the duration, advise the NCS at that time by sending SHORT TIME or OUT IN 15 or something similar; unless there's already traffic for you (and whatever time constraint you have will be honored), chances are that you'll be excused then. Beyond a minimum length of time (about 15 minutes for ESS), a CW traffic net should only last long enough to "net" its checkins and clear any listed traffic; an NCS should respect the time their stations contribute to a net, and the stations who check in should value their participation in a net. **Birthdays: September**—KA2AQV 14 and W2ITT 28. **October**—None, as far as I know. The birthday list is getting shorter, courtesy of Father Time; additions and corrections (as always), preferably by radiogram, to ye editor.

Public Service Knows No Season

Hams check into traffic nets for a number of reasons. Busy folks may enjoy their clearly-defined “fix” of amateur radio, not unlike a morning cup of coffee. For others, net activity combines the desire for public service (which still justifies our licenses) with a social aspect; many decades-long bonds, friendly or collegial, have been forged on traffic nets. Some consider public service (training for a disaster role we hope we’ll never have to play) paramount.

ESS, however, has had the roughest summer I can remember in my 34 years of regular participation. The checkin count is down substantially; so is traffic, mercifully, but a traffic net with little or no traffic can begin a death spiral which is only visible in retrospect. I hope the net hasn’t reached that point and hope it never does (at least in my lifetime), but time will tell. Some of a net’s social function may have been usurped by social media, which is blissfully unaffected by thunderstorm static or lousy propagation. We still notice when one of our number is missing, though (such as WA2WMJ, who has had health issues). Public service remains a worthwhile and necessary pursuit; you certainly don’t have to have a fallout shelter in the basement or live in nonstop anticipation of the Big One to want to help people in need. Unfortunately, climate change will give us all the opportunity we need to use the skills we learn on traffic nets and should be a spur to keep those skills sharp. One important capability is to be able to deal with less-than-armchair copy, like we have on 80 meters every summer. Disaster communications may require us to pull out a weak signal from a low-power station running off a battery, and withdrawing from the fray until “the bands get better” is not much more effective than thinking that a walk around the block will prepare you for a 5K road race.

ESS has been around longer than most nets; it’s almost as old as the National Traffic System, and I hope there’s life in the old thing yet. It was the first traffic net I ever checked into, and is still the one dearest to my heart; the warm welcome I received here propelled me into many years of public service, as I’m sure it’s done for others as well. Any net, though, is only as strong as its membership!

NTS and RRI News

I can’t help comparing the organizations to Macy’s and Gimbel’s (given my age), and there’s recent news from both. VE3MVM forwarded an email she received via the Great Lakes Emergency and Traffic Net .io group from ARRL Central Division vice-director N9BA that the league’s Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee has formed a subcommittee to review and modernize NTS. Two informational Zoom meetings are planned to obtain feedback; if you’re a league member and would like to participate, register in advance for the first meeting on September 10th at 10:00 am Eastern time (<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAod--uqjsqHNfCLPyKsYc0KlyNz8TS2sl5>) and/or September 12th at 8:00 pm (<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAkf-mrrDMoHdCa9m6B0p2xX4c0Y1V57gr2>).

Radio Relay International has published the latest issue of its *QNI* newsletter, available for download at www.qni-newsletter.net . The 27-page newsletter (always good reading) includes telegraphy history, an improved version of the RRI radiogram text list (this one similar to the familiar ARL list) and a reminder of the new RRI URL.

Finer Points

K1SEI emailed two good questions: what to do when you hear a station checking in whom the NCS doesn’t, and whether to send two stations off frequency when assisting the NCS. The answer to the first is to send your suffix (to get the NCS’ attention) and send QRZ G (or whatever checkin letter) you hear. It saves time to send a traffic pair off frequency yourself; specify the frequency, though (7110, instead of QSY 40 MTRS).

Dennis, W8YS, emailed guidelines for the use of the separator X when composing a message. Use it only when needed for clarity, don’t use it before 73, and don’t make it the last group in a text; the BT before the signature is separator enough!

Condx are improving. Please come back! 73 Anne