

An interesting bit  
of history!!

## W 2 A E E

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
BOX 32, ENGINEERING BLDG.  
COLUM. UNIV., N. Y. 27, N. Y.

"Comments from Columbia"

(An Open Letter to the All-College Net)

APR 27 1953

Hi Gang --

Takin time off from the books to drop a line or two to a few of you stalwarts who are helping to mold ACN into a net which is fast gaining the respect which it deserves on the air.

Before I make wid the criticisms & stuff, we first wanna take time out to congratulate each & every member of ACN fer their willingness and co-operative support in continuing this FB idea first fostered by ~~W2DSC~~ W2DSC, the NYU club, a number of years ago. However, in our book special praise is aimed where it is most deserving; thus, on behalf of the net, we wish to thank (and pledge our vote to):

W2SZ, who in the person of Roger has proven himself extremely capable in handling various situations and the net as a whole, while acting NCS (especially last Friday), fer Director of ACN, Northeast Area;

W2KGY, that ole yardbird Cliff, who has demonstrated not only a natural ability fer the job, week after week, but has gained through his ever-friendly character the overwhelming support fer permanent Net Control Station, Northeast Area;

W3AEQ, who through the far-reaching signals of John & Stew, has in our opinion merited assignment as alternate Net Control Station; and finally (though far from least)

W2APA, Dick) who has shown perhaps more interest in the state and welfare of the net than any other member -- always in there pitching in trying to keep the record straight (even at times of almost hopeless confusion. hi.) -- we pledge our support fer Net Secretary.

When the All-College Net was organized by NYU, this station, and a few others, I am told, it just took into account the Northeastern colleges -- not fer the sake of discrimination, but fer what seventy-five meters is (or is thought to be) -- local stuff. While stayin up on this band in the late evenings after the various traffic nets are QRT, I've had occasion to talk to a few college stations scattered around the country. I've taken the liberty in asking them whether they wud be interested in joining.

Needless to say, they all expressed great anxiety in wanting in. So, in the hope of one day seein this truly an ALL-College Net, this station (through a little research & Call Book browsin) has cum up wid what I believe is the most comprehensive directory of College Amateur Radio Club Stations ever compiled, which we are sending along a copy to those stations where we hope it will do the most good. (We'd like to satisfy all hands with rosters, but roll call and careful listening should do the trick; however, there is one spare copy on file here which may be borrowed fer copy)

As is peculiar to colleges and universities, the turn-over each academic year is usually quite large. Thus, Columbia bein no exception to the rule, our turn-over in the past few years has left its mark here as to a gross lapse in administrative duties and obligations. However, now that we are up to sixteen members, of which fifteen are licensed, things are gettin underway once more here. We are applying to ARRL for affiliation of the club wid the league; the traffic nets have found a quite reliable New York City outlet; our CD obligations are more than met; new equipment has either been donated fer use here by the several members or is presently under construction -- so here we are, just a lil' station in a big city tryin ta make good. Now that we're gettin back into stride once more, we feel that this station can once again volunteer its services as to managerial duties of the net in co-ordinating with the league, the other nets, Joe's fish market, or what have you, as well as offer a shaking and guiding hand in various matters which might arise (though we hardly think you'll ever need it; in view of the proven capability of you guys -- sincerely). However, we'd like you to know that we're right here a-willin ta help and give u fellas total support.

Now criticism is a fine tool to use, but unless this instrument is used toward constructive ends it becomes a dangerous weapon in the hands of those who would find fault only fer the dubious pleasure of degradin. Therefore, in the hope that I'm not puttin my foot in things, I'd like to pass along a few constructive (I hope) measures and recommendations fer operating the net. To be truthful, though, last Friday's session merited extreme praise in my book, and most of the following may be completely ignored. However, just to keep the record straight, we'll still try to let you know where this station stands; we hope you'll give careful consideration to the following fer what they're worth. So here goes.

The Lion Roars at improper net calling procedure by NCS; it purrs to hear him call the roll on schedule, on the assigned frequency, calling (1) the station, followed by (2) the college, (3) pausing to listen fer approximately one to two seconds (but not any longer than this -- they'll get wise to break-in!), and (4) comes back with either "Negative" or an acknowledgment of the station reporting-in, as conditions warrant. This way all stations on net may copy down the roster as you go along and not be left in the dark as to which call goes wid which college. If called region-by-region, alphabetically (as arranged), things should work out quite well. The lion is tamed when he hears NCS (not the whole net!!) clear the channel through diplomatic calling; roll call should do it.

The Lion continues to roar when he hears inconsistent station reporting procedure, but purrs to them report-in, giving (1) call, (2) college, (3) handle, (4) traffic, stating how many and where to, or QRU, and (5) requests (eg. desired QSO's wid certain colleges, etc.) He growls to hear breaking stations during roll call, unless the breaking station has info regarding the absence or delay of the station called, or has most important business that will not wait. If good support is received in this area, the first three regions should not take more than about ten minutes, if worked properly.

The Lion's paw becomes quite tired when he must constantly retune his receiver to find off-freq stations on a net. Just because we are 'phone doesn't throw away the advantage (and the should-be-necessity) of zero beat WITH NCS, REGARDLESS OF HIS FREQ!

The Lion becomes bewildered when he hears call signs thrown about without college name, college affiliation, or QTH, during ALL transmissions. He reasons that since this a college net, then he wishes to know and hear which colleges are represented AT ALL TIMES. He does not extend his paw to every single amateur in the country (there are some who would abuse a net, though thankfully a very small minority), but he gladly welcomes ANY station (college, or non-college affiliated) who would come to stroke his friendly mane, providing the station agrees to abide with existing net procedure. (Note: the above advocated call-college signings by all stations might take a wee bit longer, but the use of this procedure has many obvious benefits.)

Now the Lion likes his meat raw, but he is in turn quite choosy as to its grade. ("Likes his meat rare" would hardly be the proper analogy, since traffic is his meat, and man -- is he an ever-hungry beast fer it! But he wud rather wander off happily swingin his tail than receive a bare portion wid all the necessary vittles missin. (We have complete street maps of the five boros and Nassau County on the Island, in addition to village maps of New York State, New Jersey, the Metropolitan Area, and Long Island, but please fellas -- give the complete preamble, and most important -- the COMPLETE address!)

After rollcall (or at some better suited time, when all stations who have checked in on the net are on freq) the Lion will listen wid great attentiveness while all necessary net business is disposed with, includin a report on the status of the net by its Area's Director, a report by the net's Secretary, and any possible comments by the Net Manager and NCS, or any other news which might concern the welfare of the net as a whole. In this process he will smile to see an efficient net which conducts its business properly on the air (as well as on paper) and thus helps to build its respect from net ntations and other stations who are "readin the mail" on us.

When the Lion hears NCS (that magical instantaneous traffic-routing machine) dispense wid pending traffic, assigning each bit to the nearest point of delivery or the best known means

of routing (whenever you're stuck for an outlet, you can count on us to get it through) in the efficient manner that has gained everlasting respect for us amateurs, then the Lion is in his finest hour. But when he hears a station told (or rather asked) by NCS to either send and/or receive traffic, and no initial check for QRV and/or QRX is made first between the traffic-handling stations, then, really starts fuming at the mouth. (Only his leash of better sense than to QRM prevents his paw from pressing that ole mic button.) Even TCPN takes stand-by check-breaks between the address and the text when condx aren't at their best, but certainly an initial short call-up is always in order rather than sending traffic in the blind AS HAS BEEN DONE ON NET! If the traffic is assigned on net freq, the Lion safely assumes that the traffic-handling station (either the sending or receiving one) knows of his important obligation to send the channel "back to net control" when the traffic is terminated. For if he neglects this duty, or is lax in delay, then NCS is no longer an actual control, but just a figurehead, right? This point, roars the Lion, must be made clear to all members of the net who tie-up the channel at an inopportune moment (including the Lion, if he so does -- he can stand a cuffing now and then, too, I would imagine!)

If in the NCS' opinion any traffic should be handled off net freq (or any person-to-person or station-to-station QSO's so granted by him) then he should be quite explicit in assigning the off-net working channel. He should pause briefly, continues the Lion, and receive acknowledgment from BOTH stations told to QSY thusly, preventing the always horrible confusion when somebody "didn't get the word" that always follows. After his "up five" or "down ten" assignment, the NCS is certainly correct to assume that both stations will notify him when QRI on net channel again. (It sure is nice when NCS knows where his boys are -- and man, it's hellifhedont!) on the same trend, the Lion gets quite peeved when he must sit through a twenty-minute 'phone patch on net freq which is not of important nature. He would as soon as take up his cubs and git -- as have other stations done in the past (and will continue to do -- I know.) Surely an off-freq designation would be better, no?

As for the next point, the Lion wants the NCS to know that he is not the least bit "shaken up" for havin to QRX for over an hour on net -- it could have happened to anyone (lucky it was us, although others left widout the proper QNO!) But if a round-table is started by NCS after all essentials are dealt with (and we think he should start one then), he must plan it so that all stations have their say, if only for a minute or so. Otherwise he is in for trubil. (We feel that last week was the exception, rather than the rule, in this phase, and the directory should help to keep track a little better in the future; it should prove quite useful.)

When the session is drawing to a close, the NCS should definitely declare the net is free (QNF) before shoving off and leave things completely uncertain as to whether the net is controlled. But in any event, the Lion appeals to NCS to turn over the COMPLETE

list of stations who are on net (QNS) and all pending traffic to his successor. Then the responsibility to QMF rests with the new acting or temporary NCS. It has been quite discouraging to hear the mass confusion that follows on the channel after a while, with new stations who could not make the early hours frantically trying to break -in on a supposedly controlled net. The best time to secure might be between 1700 to 1730 or so, but things will find a way.

The Lion brings up just one more point, then he will have expended all his pent-up wrath on you pore dawgs. This is the manner of break-in. For ordinary purposes a single voice break or double carrier break will usually suffice and can best be made when the channel is or is about to be turned back to NCS. However, a station should never use the "triple break," either by carrier or voice, unless the importance of using this highest means ~~is~~ of getting attention is so warranted. The triple break is recognized by ALL nets and it should not be used loosely (as we have heard it so used). The Lion pleads that its use and misuse be carefully explained to all members of the net. He also mentions that it is very uncurteous to break-in (unless urgent, or to assist) when traffic is being handled on net freq, but this goes without saying. However, there have been numerous cases, nonetheless. The best time to break-in, repeats the Lion, is when the channel is being turned "back to net control."

Well, the Lion has had his say; he is content that at least some good might come of his ramblings. He thinks that this is his idea of a well-organized net. Maybe he is wrong, but he has seen it work, and the Lion, for one, would sure like to see the All-College Net receive the proper respect that it deserves. Only time and experience will tell.

On the side the Lion has confided that he wud sure like to see some more YL's on net an he welcomes dates wid any Lionesses who shud happen to wander into the big city lookin for a gud time. You can't miss him; he has a big blue and white sign stapled to his fur reading "Free Luv, Cold Beer, & Sunspots!" Ole Leo may have swathin there. Who said animulos ('ceptin army ones) were dumb?

We'd like to get together wid Dick & try to reach all of the nation's colleges in a cupola months so that things cud start rollin come fall. I think we can run ~~them~~ <sup>em</sup> off on a duplicating machine here on campus and send them over to him fer delivery. But there's still alot to be done in establishin key contacts throughout the country's colleges, as well as the frequency andvtime plan and other factors.

We'd also very much like to know ur reaction, guys, to these comments, in part and in full. We hesitated at first in offer- ing them to you (along wid those comments overheard on the side- bands), but on later thought we felt that you should have the right to know how at least one small group of voices feel. Wud also appreciate any new dope which wud supplement or help fill the dir- ectory.

So that's about it from here, and migosh -- never that I'd last this long. Jess goes ta show ya the ham im me. hi. You might pass along any comments where you think they'll do the most good.

To be frank we just got plumb fed-up wid a few of the sly remarks on the side channels (none abt u directly, don't worry -- just abt things in general), and we thot it abt high time somebody shud come out in the open. So spare our neeks (an Leo's, too) fellas, huh?

Either Merle WISDO or Nate W8CTS will be on net Friday, but I'll try to take it if I'm all caught up wid the reports an stuff. So we'll BCNU Friday --

Fraternally, wid 73

Art

Arthur M Kay W2AIP  
President, Columbia Univ  
Amateur Radio Club W2AEE

Box 32 Engr Bldg  
Colum Univ NY 27

cc: 1 W2AFA  
1 W2KGY  
1 W2SZ  
1 W3AEQ  
1 NET FILES