

telstar



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF STARS (SOUTH TOWNS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY)

ISSUE 220 JANUARY 2000

FCC restructures: Three license classes, one code speed

The FCC has issued its long-awaited Report and Order on amateur licensing restructuring. The bottom line is that starting April 15, 2000, there will be three license classes-- Technician, General, and Amateur Extra--and a single Morse code requirement--5 WPM.

"We believe that an individual's ability to demonstrate increased Morse code proficiency is not necessarily indicative of that individual's ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art," the FCC said.

Besides drastically streamlining the Amateur Radio licensing process, the FCC said its actions would "eliminate unnecessary requirements that may discourage or limit individuals from becoming trained operators, technicians, and electronic experts."

Although no new Novice and Advanced licenses will be issued after the effective date of the Report and Order, the FCC does not plan to automatically upgrade any existing license privileges. The ARRL had proposed a one-time, across-the-board upgrading of current Novice and Tech Plus licensees to General class, but the FCC declined to adopt the idea. This means that current licensees will retain their current operating privileges, including access to various modes and subbands, and will be able to renew their licenses indefinitely.

(Continued on page 6)

January Meeting

This month's club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, January 6 at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave. All interested in amateur radio are invited; neither club membership nor an amateur radio license is required.



The featured speaker for this meeting will be Kash "DX never sleeps" WB2RAJ. Kash will talk about DXing and just how to QSL to a DX station and get a card back.

Did You Renew Yet?

Your dues to renew your 2000 STARS club membership were due and January 1. Did you remember? If we receive them in time, your 2000 membership card and repeater codes will be included with your February newsletter.

Why not take time right now to fill out the renewal form included with your Nov. newsletter and send it along with your dues to Membership Chairman Judy Levan N2TEZ, 120 University Blvd., Depew, NY 14043 or bring them to the January club meeting.



STARS continues to be the largest amateur radio club in the Buffalo/Niagara Falls area, but we need each of you to help keep us great. Won't you do your part by renewing your membership today?

HAPPY YEAR 2000!

STARS & ARRL Memberships

Membership in STARS is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio. A license is not required. Membership applications may be obtained by sending a SASE to Judy Levan N2TEZ, 120 University Blvd., Depew, NY 14043, from the newsletter editor or from board members.

Annual Dues are payable on January 1 and are \$21 for a single membership, \$27 for family memberships and \$8 for a student membership (through grade 12). The dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for new members plus there is an initiation fee of \$5 when first applying to the club. For example, a new member joining in July would pay \$10.50 (6 months X \$1.75 per month) plus the \$5 initiation fee for a total of \$15.50.

Applications should be returned to Judy N2TEZ along with the appropriate dues. The applications will be reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors at the business meeting. The applications are then voted on by the general membership at the next regular club meeting.

Members should send their ARRL renewal memberships to Jack Cullum, Jr. KB2ESM, 6871 Webster Rd., Orchard Park, NY 14127 along with a check made out to STARS. No extra cost to you and STARS benefits!



Club Nets

STARS club nets are open to all to exchange information on local amateur radio activities.

STARS WB2EZU Memorial HF net meets at 10 AM local time on Saturdays on 3.925 MHz +/- QRM.

STARS Sunday 10 Meter HF net meets at 10 AM on Sundays on 28.340 MHz. +/- QRM.

STARS VHF net meets at 7:30 PM on Thursdays on STARS club repeater WB2ELW 147.09/ .69 output/input— PL of 107.2 Hz) except on the first Thursday of the month (club meeting night).

From your President

The **BIG** question is whether you are reading this by electric light or candle light ??? Y2K is now behind us and we are now starting a new year, decade, century and if you wish a Millennium. To me, these are very exciting times and I wish to move STARS ahead even farther as a premier Amateur radio Club in the western New York Area.

We are already starting to plan for a Mini Flea Market at an upcoming meeting, Field Day and The Erie County Fair Exhibit and other events. Thanks to Dave WA2TVT we are looking into getting a shelter to set up at Hamfests, that will serve as a meeting place for STARS members and as a place also to promote the Club.

Under Greg's KE2VW leadership the Erie County Fair Exhibit will encompass even more of Ham radios interests. We are planning to do a special event station at the fair with a certificate available to all those who send a SASE. Kash WB2RAJ has agreed to serve as our manager for that event.

Field Day - Yes planning has already started. Tom KC2FCB has volunteered his 10-20 foot tent and to help feed the events attendees. We are also looking for a more friendly site to use. Maybe Chestnut Ridge or the Fair grounds in Hamburg, Norm KD2KK and Mark N2LAB are both looking into getting us a new site. We will also have a bunk tent to use for the tired operator to rest on. So make plans now to operate WB2ELW on Field Day or at the Fair, I promise it will be a time you won't forget.

If you missed the Holiday Party in December, a great time was had by all. We also made public a new STARS Club banner that will be displayed at the meeting and will also be used at any indoor events we attend. This banner was provided at **NO COST** to the Club.

I am also looking for suggestions for meeting speakers. If you have any thoughts please feel free to let me know.

Hope you see you all at the January 6th meeting.
73's

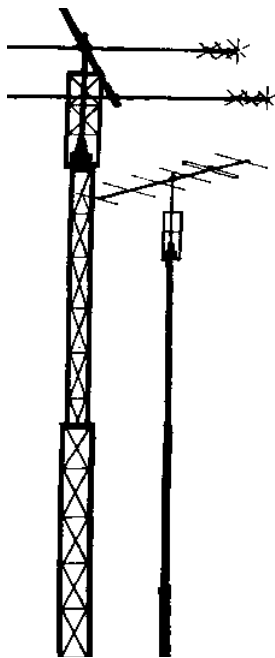
Gary KB2YJ
President



Repeater Report

Welcome to the New Year. As I reported to all of you a couple of months ago, we are now working on building and installing the new remote receiver for 147.090.

The remote receiver will be located at the Nike Base with the antenna reconfigured to enhance coverage towards the south and west. With new members joining from North Collins, Eden, Angola and the Dunkirk-Fredonia area we needed to offer them better access to the repeater at minimal cost the Club. To effectively give the repeater a better signal to send to the transmitter, we "the Repeater Technical Committee" decided to use a different PL on the remote receiver than on the main receiver. The main receiver PL is still 107.2 - the remote receiver will be 141.3. This gives you the user a better choice in which input is better for your use. Regardless of which input you select, you will still hear the repeater on 147.090. The linking will be accomplished on the UHF band and will be all automatic. No having to turn it on or off as it was done in the past. Some of you may have heard me doing the tests in late December and so far it has been working very well. It is my hope the we can put everything into place after the Holidays and have it all up and running by meeting night January 6th.



I also will report, that with all the cold weather that we have been having so far this season, the repeater has not gone into the howling mode that it did last year. Once again this reaffirms, "in my opinion" the rebuild on the repeater was needed.

New repeater codes will go into effect February 12th 2000. The new phone patch and user codes will be in the February Telstar for those members that are current on their dues.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to drop me a note or call me.
73's

Gary KB2YJ
President/Repeater Chairman

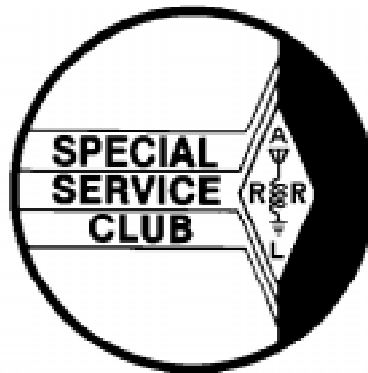
New 10 Meter Net

New 10 meter net to start on Jan.23, 2000. This net will be run on 28.380mhz (+ or- QRM) 14:30 UTC or 9:30 AM local time. Net Control will be Tony KB2OUT from Eden, NY. Assistant net controls will be Jack N2NJU from Depew, NY and Kevin W2KJM from Amherst, NY. We will try to always have an assistant net control on freq. to assist net control if the need arises. If anyone is interested in helping out as an alternate net control please drop me an e-mail (KB2OUT1@AOL.COM) or phone me at (716) 992-2011.

The name we will use is the "380 RAG CHEW NET" If anyone has different ideas for a name please send your suggestions to KB2OUT. Net participants will receive a certificate from the net after 5 times checking in, and there will be further awards offered after 25-50 and 100 times checking in. We are going over other possibilities / activities for this net. If anyone has other ideas for this net please send them to me. You will find the updates for this net on the WB2JPQ web page (WWW.WB2JPQ.COM). If anyone is interested in being added to the new net reflector list please drop me a line at AOL and simply say ADD ME TO NEW REFLECTOR LIST.

Tell your friends and we hope to hear all of you on Sunday Jan.23,2000 at 9:30AM local time. This net is NOT affiliated with any club and is open to ALL amateurs through out the world.

Thank You
Tony J. Balas Jr.
KB2OUT1@AOL.COM
KB2OUT@JUNO.COM
(716) 992-2011



**STARS is an ARRL
Special Service Club**

"PACKET RACKET"

an introduction to packet radio, part 11

This month we will depart from our usual forum, which has been to discuss only those commands which are generic to all FBB BBS(s).

The rest of our chapters will cover those servers which have been added to BBSVW. To use these servers you need to be in the normal BBS section, indicated by the normal BBS prompt: KE2VW BBS (? , CB, HELPVW, ICB, SH) > .

One of the most useful, especially to new users is the HELPVW server. This program is the ONLY source, outside of the users' manual, which provides instruction on using the various features of the BBS. This section includes all recent additions to the BBS, as well as reviewing important topics and changes on-going at the BBS. ALL users should make it a habit to check in on this, at least monthly!

To enter this server simply type: HELPVW. You will be sent a chart containing two columns. The first column gives you the commands to actually type to get the desired information, which is described in the second column. Here is a section of it:

```
=====
HELP & INFORMATION ON USING BBS FEATURES
Type:  Desired Information/help:
7p    Information on our server for transferring binary
files...
BBS   How to look up the home BBS of a station.
CALL  How to use the callbook servers (N. American...
      etc. etc. etc.
*****
BYE   LEAVES THIS SERVER & RETURNS YOU TO
BBS
*****
```

Let's suppose we want to know how to look up the home BBS of a ham you wish to correspond with. Typing: BBS gives you:

HOW TO FIND HOME BBS OF ANOTHER STATION

To find the home BBS of any packeteer, while connected to this BBS type: I callsign, where callsign is replaced by the actual callsign. For example.. etc. etc. etc. Press ENTER to continue...

This gives us the information we were interested in. When we are done reading it, we MUST press the ENTER key. If we try typing BYE, or anything else, we will stay "locked" into the server. I have watched many new users, who don't read the prompts, and can't get out of the server, so they disconnect from the BBS in frustration. If only they followed

the prompt's instructions!

When you press enter, you will be returned to the initial two-column chart. If you decide you don't want to read any more sections, then type: BYE. You can do this ONLY when you see this prompt:

```
*****
BYE LEAVES THIS SERVER & RETURNS TO BBS
*****
```

If you don't see this at the bottom of the chart, you may see instead:

ENTER=continue, A=abort, N=next, C=cancel paging -->

Remember the paging command, that limits you to one screen of information at a time? If not, reread the section on the commands. In this case, since you have paging turned on, you need to press ENTER to continue to the end of the chart, where you will then see the BYE exit prompt. Then you can type: BYE.

Typing: BYE, when leaving this server will NOT disconnect you from the BBS, it merely returns you to the normal BBS prompt. I built that little safeguard into the software, to prevent accidental disconnects, and then reconnects.

Again, I will be adding new sections to HELPVW, which serve as additions to my users' manual, as new features are added to the BBS, so be sure to check into it!

Another popular server the BBS has in operation is the callbook servers. Notice I said server(s). We have three different callbooks on-line at BBSVW!

One is the USA/Canadian callbook, known at the SAMS database, which is updated quarterly.

(Continued on page 5)

STARS Board of Directors

President	Gary Zanghi	KB2YJ
Vice President	Rick Doherty	KD2QV
Treasurer	John Cullum, Jr.	KB2ESM
Finc. Secretary	Judy Levan	N2TEZ
Secretary	Dave Baco	WA2TVT
Director	Paul Julyan	WB2KFL
Director	John Crawford Sr.	KB2VWC

President Gary Zanghi KB2YJ may be reached at Kb2yj@aol.com or by calling 549-8476

AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will hold test sessions on 1/15, 3/11, 5/13 and 7/8 in 2000 at Grace Lutheran Church (McKinley Pkwy. and Newton Road) in Hamburg. All candidates should report to the church by 9 AM; walk-ins are allowed. For information on STARS tests, contact Tony Balas, Jr. KB2OUT at 992-2011 or Norm Jones KD2KK at 824-1148.

Lancaster ARC will be holding test sessions at the Aurora Middle School, Lancaster, NY on 1/12, 2/16, 3/15, 4/12 (or 4/19?), 5/17, 6/14, 7/12 in 2000.. For information on Lancaster exams, call Chuck Koester WD2AIK at 937-3592.

ARATS will be holding test sessions at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. on 1/8, 2/5, 3/4, 5/6 and 6/10 in 2000.. For information on ARATS exams, call Vern Siegel AA2AC at 693-5977 (days) and 634-5276 (nights).

Most sessions except for STARS non-hamfest exams, do not allow walk-ins, so call ahead and make a reservation.

(Continued from page 4)

The second is the Canadian callbook, a COMPLETE callbook program updated bimonthly. This is MUCH more accurate and timely than the SAMS database.

The third is the International callbook, known as the Buckmaster CD-ROM hamcall database. This is updated annually. This server also provides some very interesting data on the US hams, data you will NOT find in any other database!

All databases allow looking up hams by their callsign, but the SAMS additionally allows looking up hams by their name/zip code!

Let's start off with the USA/Canadian (SAM) database. To enter this type: CB (which stands for CallBook). Do NOT add the callsign at this point. You will enter the server, and see this prompt: Welcome to the KE2VW N. American callbook server! B, C, F, H, M, N, Z, ?)

Typing: ? explains these "cryptic" symbols as:

- B Disconnects from the BBS
- C Go to the CALL lookup menu
- F Return to the previous menu
- M Return to the main BBS menu
- N Go to NAME lookup menu
- Z Go to ZIP code search

? This help section

Typing: C prompts you to type in callsigns you are interested in finding information on, ONE AT A TIME. Try one to test it out. When you are done, type: F to get back to the main CB menu.

>From the menu, type: N to lookup hams by their name. You will be asked for their last name, then their first name. You must be exact in the first name. Do not use nicknames, or Dick for Richard, etc. If you do you will NOT get a match. Finally you will be prompted for their middle initial. If you don't know it, press ENTER. You will receive a listing that may/may not contain the ham you are interested in. The middle initial really is necessary, in many cases!

Once you have tried this, type F to get back to the main CB menu. Now let's type: Z to lookup hams based on the zip code area they live in. Once you have typed: Z you will be prompted to type in the desired zip code. After the calculations are completed, you will be given a list of hams living in that zip code area. I have limited the list to 100 hams, as it does take some time for BBS calculations. Oh well, maybe when I get the pentium...

Typing: M sends you back to the BBS prompt, closing this server. If you are ready to disconnect from the BBS entirely, type: B instead.

For the Canadian callbook, type: CI callsign, substituting the desired ham's call for "callsign". For example: CI VE3MX. This server automatically returns you to the normal BBS after each entry! No menu here to worry about.

Finally, let's try the International callbook. Type: ICB (which, you guessed it, stands for International CallBook). This prompts you: "Welcome to the KE2VW callbook server. Type the call to look up, or QUIT to return to the BBS." Try an American call, to see the additional information you are given in this database. Lookup your Dx here!

There you have it, our start into the many servers BBSVW has available for you to enjoy. Have you ever wondered just how many are available? Here's a hint, at the normal BBS prompt, type: PS to see the Program Servers which contain many, but NOT all, of them. To get information on the others, refer to our users' manual, which is being written section by section (this being one), or HELPVW.

Until next time, 73, and keep those packets flying!
Greg, KE2VW, SysOp of the
STARS KE2VW BBS
c 1995

FCC Restructures License Classes

(Continued from page 1)

Starting April 15, 2000, individuals who qualified for the Technician class license prior to March 21, 1987, will be able to upgrade to General class by providing documentary proof to a Volunteer Examiner Coordinator, paying an application fee, and completing FCC Form 605.

The FCC's decision not to automatically upgrade Novice and Tech Plus licensees means the current Novice/Tech Plus HF subbands will remain and not be "refarmed" to higher class licensees as the ARRL had proposed. The FCC said it did not refarm these subbands because there was "no consensus" within the amateur community as to what to do with them.

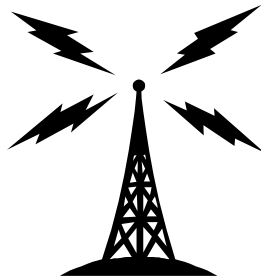
The FCC decided to lump Technician and Tech Plus licensees into a single licensee database, all designated as "Technician" licensees. Those who can document having passed the 5 WPM Morse code examination will continue to have the current Tech Plus HF privileges. The FCC said it may request documentation from a licensee or VEC to verify whether a licensee has passed a telegraphy examination.

The FCC action also authorizes Advanced Class hams to prepare and administer General class examinations, and eliminates Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) station licenses. RACES will remain, however.

Under the new licensing scheme, there will be four examination elements. Element 1 will be the 5 WPM Morse code exam. Element 2 will be a 35-question Technician exam; Element 3 will be a 35-question General exam; and Element 4 will be a 50-question Amateur Extra exam. The FCC has left it in the hands of the National Conference of VECs Question Pool Committee to determine the specific mix and makeup of written examination questions.

Elimination of the 13 and 20 WPM Morse requirements means an end to physician certification waivers for applicants claiming an inability to pass the Morse code examination due to physical handicap.

The FCC disagreed with the League's suggestion that it undertake a restructuring of operating privileges along with licensing restructuring. The Commission said it wanted to give the amateur community a chance to "reach a consensus" regarding new technologies before it tried to restructure amateur operating privileges and frequencies.



A copy of the entire Report and Order (FCC 99-412) is available at

<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt98-143ro.pdf>

or at

http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/1999/db991230/fcc99412.txt

ARLB096 ARRL Bulletin

Amazon Queen 2000 Amateur Radio Expedition Ready To Sail

Phil Gonzales, HK3SA, reports his Amazon Queen 2000 ham radio expedition is nearly ready to get under way. Gonzales says the four to five-month long journey aboard the 47-foot wooden Amazon Queen will cover almost 3000 miles--from Iquitos, Peru, to the Atlantic Ocean near Belem, Brazil.

Gonzales told the ARRL he expects the expedition to begin the second week of January, but crew members might be on the air as early as the first of the year. The expedition hopes to use the call sign 5K9AQ, although Gonzalez said that was not certain, and the actual call sign could be different.

Gonzales says the purpose of the voyage is to bring the world together through the use of Amateur Radio and the Internet. "We will be transmitting daily photographs from the voyage," he said.

The crew will be active primarily on HF SSB and plans to check into the Intercontinental and Maritime Mobile Net on 14.300 MHz "every few hours." The expedition will maintain schedules with several other nets as well. The primary operating frequency will be 14.347 MHz. Other frequencies include 7.0935 (Amazon Net frequency and outside the US phone band--Ed), 21.287, and 28.400 MHz.

The Amazon Queen 2000 Expedition is interested in setting up schedules with schools on SSB or other modes. Gonzalez said he hopes to have CW, AMTOR, and SSTV capabilities on board, and may even have 6-meter capability. Cliff Clark, KZ9E, is coordinating phone patches from US schools to the Amazon Queen. He is active on 14.300 MHz. He also may be contacted at kb9ksl@midwest.net or call 618-648-2499. Teachers seeking additional information about Amateur Radio in the classroom should visit <http://www.arrl.org/ead/teacher/>.

The ARRL Letter 12/23/99

Elser-Mathes Cup Awaits Extraterrestrial QSO

Recent news of the now-lost Mars Polar Lander has renewed interest in the Elser-Mathes Cup. Visitors to ARRL HQ may recall having seen the unusual trophy on display. It's intended to mark the occasion of the first two-way Amateur Radio contact between Earth and Mars. (The actual bowl of the cup is borne by images of beings that only coincidentally resemble the large-eyed hominids of alien abduction lore; that was not the intention, however.--Ed)

The story of the Elser-Mathes cup appeared in the November 1969 issue of QST. In his article, "That Planet Mars QSO Cup," Col Fred Johnson Elser W6FB, recalled meeting League founder Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW, in the 1920s. He learned that Maxim had an interest in Mars and even owned a globe of "The Red Planet." Later, back in The Philippines--in 1928 under US jurisdiction--Elser was inspired by a visit with Philippines SCM Lt Cmdr Stanley Mathes, K1CY, to offer "a unique trophy" for the first two-way communication with Maxim's "pet planet," Mars.

The actual trophy selected by Elser and Mathes during a trip to Baguio is an example of Igorot native woodcarving. "The base symbolizes Earth and the seated figures are its inhabitants," Elser explained in QST. "The bowl is Mars, and the standing men are the amateurs who bridge the gap of space." The plate fastened to the cup includes space for the names and call signs of those who will one day fulfill the cup's eventual destiny. (In the meantime, if you'd like to send your name to Mars, visit <http://spacekids.hq.nasa.gov/2001/> .)

The ARRL Letter 12/17/99

Cash Only For W1, W2 Bureaus

The W1 and W2 QSL bureaus no longer accept stamps and/or envelopes. Funds sufficient to cover the mailing of anticipated cards should be sent by check or money order (or cash, at your own risk). Addresses of all ARRL QSL bureaus are at <http://www.arrl.org/qsl/qslin.html> .



The ARRL Letter 12/23/99



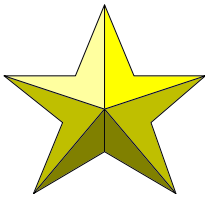
Christine Pyne KC2FUY and Pat NW2I.

New Ham!

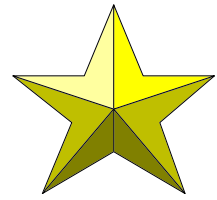
After some prompting from Bruce KG2IC, his YL Christine, took her amateur exams last month. First passing the Novice theory in November, Christine passed the Technician exam on December 15 at the Lancaster session. Such hard work did not go unnoticed, and Chris was presented with a new Yaesu VX5R at the exam session so her new privileges would not go unused. Christine received her new call sign of KC2FUY on Dec. 24, just in time for Christmas.

Christine plans to join the STARS group being originally from the Lakeview area. She is currently self-employed with her own dry cleaning business, and resides in East Amherst.

The idea of amateur radio for personal safety and convenience of keeping in touch with friends appeals to her, although Bruce KG2IC already has plans of getting her licensed for the HF bands.



STARS



CLUB REPEATERS

The club repeater (WB2ELW/R) is located near Colden, NY (147.09/.69 output/input, with a PL of 107.2 Hz). Autopatch privileges are available to club members.

STARS honorary southern repeater (KE2VW/R) is in Arkwright, NY (146.67/.07 out/in, with a PL of 107.2 Hz).

The club UHF repeater is located near Colden, NY (442.325 MHz with a PL access of 107.2 Hz.)

CLUB PACKET

The STARS KE2VW BBS, located in Colden, NY is accessible on 145.61 MHz or 145.65 MHz (indirect) by typing: C BBSVW, using 1200 baud. Or connect using 19.2K baud on 441.050 MHz (direct)

Using a telephone modem, you can reach the STARS KE2VW BBS by calling 537-9334.

CLUB MEETINGS

Club meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of the month at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.) at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.

Board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Nike Base Club Station at 7:00 PM and are open to all club members.

CLUB HF STATIONS

The club Nike Base HF Station (WB2ELW) is located on Lakeview Road 1.75 miles east of Route 20 next to the Hamburg Town Arena. The station is operated on most Saturdays between 1 and 3 PM local time. A second club HF station is located at the Hamburg Youth Center.

CLUB WEB PAGES

The club has a home site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cmp-express.com/stars/>

STARS

Terry W. Rockhold K200
4805 Transit Road #1903
Depew, NY 14043
(716) 656-0865
k2oo@bigfoot.com