**Gold Hill Radio Watch**

**Net Guide**

Below are descriptions of the two kinds of Nets (networks) participants need to know how to operate in.

**Applicable to All Nets**

We meet on Channel 4. In the event Channel 4 is not operational, we will meet on Channel 1.

Nets are facilitated by a Net Control person, and all communications should be directed to the Net Control. Always include your name.

**Regularly Scheduled Nets**

Our regularly scheduled nets are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 pm.

The typical Net agenda includes: 1) urgent announcements, 2) roll call, 3) general announcements and discussion.

The purpose of regular Nets is to practice using our radios and speaking appropriately on radio so we are skilled, efficient, and effective (i.e., operationally ready) in an actual emergency.

The person assuming Net Control is planned in advance for regular Nets. Though we rotate the Net Control function in order to practice, our primary Net Control is Lorraine Walter, secondary is Debbie Lindh, and tertiary is Bryon Stevenson.

**Situational/Emergency Nets**

When you become aware of a situation that may pose a safety concern for the neighborhood, turn on your radio to Channel 4 as soon as possible. Listen to hear if anyone else is transmitting.

Note: it doesn’t matter if cell phones are working or not. Our radio network provides an efficient communication and information-monitoring tool that we can and should use if such communication/monitoring could assist in a neighborhood safety situation.

However, our Radio Watch is NOT a replacement for calling 911; if phones are still available, 911 should be used first to request emergency support.

**If you don’t hear people transmitting**, state your name and street and ask if there are any Gold Hill Radio Watch operators monitoring. If no one else is on yet, keep your radio on and monitor for traffic. Try sending a group text to alert the group about the safety concern and that you are on radio. Periodically restate your name and ask if others are on radio.

**If you do hear people transmitting**, wait for a break in the traffic to announce yourself. Then say “Net Control this is [name and street (call sign is optional)]” and join the Net.

If it's decided there is an emergency and we should have a Net, a Net Control should be assigned. If none of the regular Net Controls are on, one of the people on (usually the first person on) should assume the function of Net Control for this event. If one of the regular Net Controls comes on soon, the function can revert to them if desired or as appropriate. Any change in Net Control should be announced to the group.

Remember, any of us can take on the roll of Net Control. If you do so, be very clear that you are taking control and then, as calmly and clearly as you can, maintain control of the conversation. If serving as Net Control becomes too much for you, don’t hesitate to ask for someone else to take over. We need to view ourselves as a team. Take the ball if you’re in the best position at the moment, pass the ball if you’re fatigued and a good shooter is open. Or something like that. ;-)

Once an emergency Net has been started, radios should be kept on until the Net is closed, you are out of range of Net Control, or the emergency is over.

Based on the circumstances, the Net Control can decide whether to have the group check in for updates at certain time intervals, like at the top of the hour. At designated check-in times, the group’s information monitors (Ed Tulley and Zack Witte) and everyone else monitoring channels should be prepared to provide any updates to the group. Net Control can also make announcements at any time as appropriate. She/he may also periodically announce a roll call to maintain a current list of active participants.

**Examples**

**1.** If we had had our Radio Watch in the **2021 Bennett Fire** that was so close to our neighborhood, we would have all gotten on our radios pretty quickly because the fire was so close and obvious.

I (Lorraine) was home and would have got on radio and established myself as Net Control. I would have taken roll to ascertain who was on radio and asked for monitoring updates from Ed and Zack and anyone else monitoring channels. I would have asked to have Jeanne Pincha-Tulley, Ed’s wife and retired Tahoe National Forest fire chief, provide updates via radio to the group based on what she was observing, including her recommendations on evacuation. (We have other retired fire-fighting experts in the neighborhood as well that could be solicited also.)

After our preliminary briefing on the situation, I would have asked the Net to keep radios on and nearby, and for people to provide updates to the group (going through Net Control) as new information became available.

Then we would have initiated our (yet-to-be-developed) plan for disseminating information to the non-radio households in the neighborhood and let them know Radio Watch was on duty and where/how to get updates. Even though people still had access to the internet, radio, and phones, we would have been curating the most recent and local information and recommendations available.

The Net would have stayed open until we had compelling information that the threat to the neighborhood was over.

**2.** If we had had our Radio Watch in the **2021 major Christmas snow storm** and extended power outage (Snowpocalypse), we would have realized we had a radio-worthy event the morning after the major tree fall, when the power was out and many of us were surrounded by downed trees.

As Net Control, I would have asked that radios remain on at least until power was restored and suggested that we check in as a group on some schedule, maybe three times a day, for updates and reports.

We had many different safety situations in that event, which we’d have wanted to track as a group and assist with as we could—help shoveling snow or removing dangerous trees (if clearly safe to do so), coordinating trips out for groceries/supplies, etc.