

A Word from the Editor

NCJ for January/February 2018 marks a transition to a new editor. I would be remiss not to recognize the contributions of Pat Barkey, N9RV, who had a very successful run as editor over the past 3 years while never missing a contest. He is a maestro of time management, as he helmed *NCJ*, directed an economics institute, and qualified for World Radiosport Team Championship 2018 (WRTC 2018) during his tenure. Pat joins a long list of distinguished past editors and deserves our appreciation. He now moves on to other priorities, namely preparing for WRTC 2018 and his chance to win.

A few other *NCJ* readers also will participate in WRTC 2018, and we will have more to say about this global event in future issues. I am also delighted to report that Pat will continue contributing to *NCJ* with occasional updates and interviews.

During his time at *NCJ*, Pat concentrated on articles dealing with station building, and that will continue. I hope to expand the focus of *NCJ* to two additional areas: Next-generation contesters (today's youth and young adults) and stories about DX contesters. My goals are to encourage readers to think about and recruit the next generation of radiosport enthusiasts and to enhance insight and awareness about successful contest stations around the world.

The contest community recognizes the need to grow its ranks with new and younger radiosport participants. Educator Neil Rapp, WB9VPG, who has led a successful school program at K9SOU in Bloomington, Indiana, will edit a new column, "Next-Generation Contesters." He has mentored many young people in ham radio and radiosport. His column will focus on highlighting next-gen activities and enhance our appreciation of how radiosport may evolve to engage the next generation.

Radiosport is a global pursuit, and I believe the readership of *NCJ*, like me, would enjoy knowing the stories behind some of the leading contest stations we work. I have had the privilege of contesting from B1Z, CE2, and VP5H/VP5S. Those experiences have shaped my own strategies for contesting and contest station building. This edition of *NCJ* highlights the PJ2T contest station in the Caribbean. I hope you find it as fascinating and insightful as I did.

Much with *NCJ* will remain unchanged. The contributing editors you know and love will continue writing their excellent columns; we are grateful for their efforts to keep *NCJ* readers updated. We'll also add another contributing editor, John Thompson, K3MD, a well-known contester

and writer. John will offer regular reviews of books and knowledge resources that contesters will find helpful.

Another new feature: John will also conduct "NCJ Survey," which will "take the pulse" (pardon the medical metaphor) of the radiosport community on controversial topics or emerging issues within our hobby. Our initial survey will be about digital contesting. We look forward to your opinions and the opportunity to share them with the *NCJ* community. John will offer commentary on the results as well. Check out the survey on the ARRL website, www.arrl.org/survey-1. The surveys are carried out in conjunction with ARRL; results will be available online and later appear in the magazine.

Subsequent surveys may address some oft-debated hot-button topics, such as retention of unassisted categories for events sponsored by US organizations. Surveys will be single-answer-per-question polls, due to the format of online polling system.

Another past *NCJ* editor, Kirk Pickering, K4RO, is the *NCJ* webmaster. Kirk is committed to building the website, www.ncjweb.com, into an even more useful tool, and he's asked me to push more content to the website, which we will be doing. You may find extensions of articles published there, and we hope to have at least one article from each issue published on the webpage soon after we go to print.

I also want to welcome Fred Regennitter, K4IU, to the *NCJ* leadership team. Fred will be the Deputy Editor, working closely with me to survey the radiosport landscape. Fred is a seasoned contester with a rich life experience. He and I have operated at VP5S multiple times and live in the same community. He worked at Mayo Clinic until he retired in January. I enjoyed our professional interactions there and am delighted that he has agreed to join me with the *NCJ* activities.

In this Issue

We've got several interesting articles in this issue. Peter Chadwick, G3RZP, has contributed an excellent technical article (Part 1 of 3), "How Much Receiver Performance Does a Contester Need?" It's been adapted from the original article, which appeared in the Chiltern DX Club newsletter in the UK. I hope you find it as helpful as I did; it was part of the due diligence I did when upgrading my station transceiver.

Pat Cain, KØPC, a fellow VP5S contester, will walk us through his decade-long experience with mobile radiosport in the frozen tundra of the upper Midwest. Noted

propagation guru Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, has contributed a 2018 primer on what to expect in terms of propagation this year; it incorporates his own perspective as well as that of Frank Donovan, W3LPL. Geoff Howard, WØCG, offers readers a behind-the-scenes look at the nuts and bolts of PJ2T, one of the best known multipliers in DX contests. Well-known M2 contest station operator Craig Thompson, K9CT, shares how his contest experience shaped the planning of the January 3YØZ Bouvet Island DXpedition. Craig highlights how his extensive contest station planning and operations influenced the technical details of the Bouvet station setup. You may already have worked this DXpedition by the time you read this.

Remembering *NCJ* Founder Tod Olson, KØTO (SK)

One reason Pat suggested to ARRL that I succeed him was to take *NCJ* back to its Minnesota roots. Many readers may not recall that *NCJ* started in the 1970s in the family room of Tod Olson, KØTO. Tod and his family put each journal together in the early years, and his family "volunteered" for *NCJ* production and mailing duties during the busy time of putting the journal together.

He and I spent significant time together in his last few years during his bi-monthly trips to Rochester for care at Mayo Clinic. On most of his trips, Tod and I would have lunch to review the world of ham radio and contesting. Tod took a keen interest in my contesting trips to VP5, and he would offer advice on my contest station construction, upgrades, incorporation of technology, and my own operating practices. He was never shy of offering ideas for improvements (criticisms) as well as encouragement. It was a special moment for Minnesota Wireless Association members to see Tod inducted into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame a couple of years ago. It was also a proud moment for Tod and his son who accompanied him.

Tod eventually persuaded then-ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, to have the League take over production of *NCJ*, to ensure its long-term viability. It is in Tod's memory that we dedicate Volume 46 of *NCJ*. We hope to honor Tod's pioneering efforts with this year's production.

You are the most important component to the production of *NCJ*, and we hope you will offer your thoughts on *NCJ* and on the future of contesting. Contact me anytime to share your views at scottwrightmd@me.com.