

Editorial

What an interesting community we have.

Dayton 2013

Another Dayton Hamvention® is in the books. Once again, Dayton was the place to be for the contesting community in May. It was great to meet many *NCJ* readers for the first time and to receive some direct feedback about the magazine. I was also grateful to be able to spend some time with many of our contributing authors and regular columnists. *NCJ* exists only because of the enthusiasm and efforts of our contributors, columnists and readers. I was pleased to learn that many still look forward to every issue and that a few still read it from cover to cover.

I've said it before, but I find the contesting community to be a fascinating group of people. It's truly a privilege to be a part of this community, and even the few bad apples serve a purpose in their own peculiar way. I'm only sorry that I didn't get to spend more time in every suite, forum and hallway discussion at Dayton. There's an awful lot going on there for the contesters, thanks to the many people who put together presentations and opportunities for us to learn from each other.

With Contest University, antenna and contesting forums, Super Suites with free pizza every night, musical/comedy entertainment and CW pileup contests, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of people working hard to make Dayton a popular gathering place for contesters. For those unable to attend, there were live video streams available on the Internet of some of the CTU programs, forums, and other activities. We'll run some photos from K8CX in the next issue of *NCJ*. I'd especially like to thank Tim, K3LR, and the team at the Crowne Plaza for providing an excellent

environment for us to meet.

Respect

When it comes right down to it, most of us want to be respected. We might look for respect in different places, but the basic desire to be recognized and valued is common to all. We might look for respect from our family, our peers, our work colleagues or our communities. Sometimes we look for it in the wrong places or in an unhealthy fashion. I believe that respect is so important to humans that we have created many different avenues to seek it. Competition certainly provides a platform in which to seek — and sometimes earn — respect.

I've recently had several opportunities to explain contesting to new acquaintances, and it's been enlightening to see how they respond. As I explain all of the different skill sets and concepts involved, people's reaction is generally one of respect — and, yes, sometimes bewilderment. They are impressed with the breadth and depth of knowledge required to compete in this game. They are fascinated by concepts of propagation, how antennas work, the radio and computer equipment integration, Morse code, tower rigging and exotic geography. Typically by the end of the conversation, they are thankful to have learned something about ham radio and contesting, and always express some degree of respect. What seems most impressive to the outsider is the multi-faceted nature of our sport. They understand that it can be a very satisfying lifelong pursuit.

I always come away from these conversations feeling more enthusiastic about what we do. I think of contesters whom

I respect, and I'm filled with gratitude (and, yes, some pride) to be a part of this interesting community. It's worth taking a moment to reflect on the value of our game and the type of people who are drawn to it. I am continually amazed at the ingenuity, tenacity and sheer brilliance that I see contesters exhibit frequently. This is a peer group of which I am grateful to be a part. I try to behave on the air in a fashion that reflects my respect for the many great operators whom I've known and heard over the years. As K4OJ once said, "There is something about the camaraderie, discipline and knowledge contesting demands that fits me; it doesn't fit everyone, but it sure fits me." I hear ya, Jim. Contesting definitely fits me.

In This Issue

N5OT describes the incredibly close M2 competition with T15W in the ARRL International DX CW. G3SXW and KR2Q present data that indicate to show that the number of contest log entries has literally doubled in the past decade or more. SMØJHF offers us a look at contesting in Madeira. On the technical side, W9RE describes his sophisticated antenna switching arrangement, and JH5GHM introduces us to his idea of the perfect foot switch. Our regular columnists serve up another smorgasbord of tips and techniques that you won't want to miss.

We are also pleased to report the results of the winter SSB and RTTY NAQPs (CW results appeared in the May/June issue) as well as of the winter CW, SSB and RTTY Sprints. We hope you'll enjoy this issue!