

From the Editor

The fall contest season has arrived! I trust you were able to get some antenna and station projects done. My work schedule has hampered some of my plans, but I take the long-term view on the hobby, so I remain optimistic.

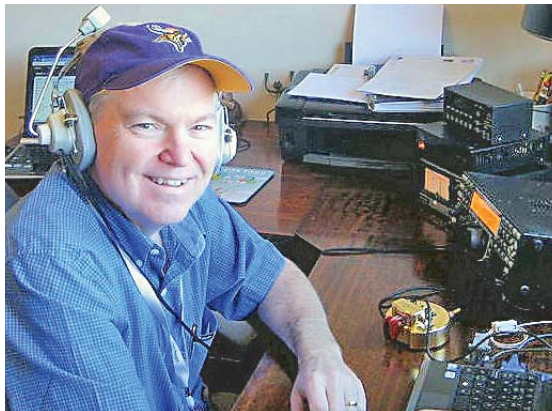
The International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) HF World Championship contest was an interesting one in the middle of summer. Participation seemed higher, and there were a large number of HQ stations on the air to work, especially in Europe. I enjoyed seeing 20 meters stay open until midnight local time in the contest. Might this be a harbinger of a better Sunspot Cycle 25? We can surely hope so!

The Future of Contesting

In this issue, Frank Howell, K4FMH, continues with Part 2 of his analysis of contester demographics. While our segment of the hobby is getting older, it is not entirely all bad. Age brings experience and perspective, critical for mentoring new contesters. Deputy Editor Fred Regennitter, K4IU, has put together a great panel interview of several contest mentors who share their tips and tricks for success with mentoring. If each of us mentors a new contester each year, contester ranks will replenish itself quickly. How about it? Will you commit to mentoring someone new in your community or contest club in 2021?

We are Not So Different Despite our Age Differences

The cover of this issue features two young contesters — Kees Van Oosbree, WØAAE, and a younger Jack Reed, WA7LNW. Kees is shown operating his Icom IC-7300, a popular radio for some contesters. He has a modest antenna set up at his home, so Kees also operates remotely and was part of a multioperator effort for the IARU. He has developed great



skills despite his youth and relatively newness to the hobby. The second photo features a younger Jack Reed, WA7LNW, operating a then-equally-popular Heathkit HW-8 along the John Muir Trail. I am sure many of you remember the venerable HW-8 and its older sibling the HW-7. These were very popular QRP radios in the late 1960s and early 1970s for new hams. These images remind us that we all start out similarly, using popular and affordable rigs and bringing lots of enthusiasm to ham radio contesting.

Think about your own excitement as a youngster or new ham the next time you meet a newbie. Perhaps some of the excitement and passion that new hams bring to our hobby will rub off on all of us again.

Transitions

ARRL Production and Editorial Manager Steve Ford, WB8IMY, is retiring in August after 29 years at Headquarters. Steve has been a strong supporter of *NCJ*, and we hope to find him in several CW and digital contests in the fall and beyond as retirement allows him to spend more time on the air. His second-in-command, Managing Editor Becky Schoenfeld, W1BXY, took over the production and editorial responsibilities in July. She offers a wealth of publications experience. Becky has innovative ideas to improve content, focus, and support for *NCJ*. We look forward to her leadership with the flagship journal of

ham radio contesting.

This year marks my third year as *NCJ* Editor. A lot of editors have served for 3 years, and I considered extending my tenure for another year or so, but the events of 2020 and my work related to the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the need to transition from editor to former editor. ARRL has selected Lee Finkel, KY7M, as the next editor of *NCJ*. Lee is an established and well-known contester from Phoenix, Arizona.

He may be the first editor from Arizona and certainly is the first from the Arizona Outlaws Contest Club. Lee has contested on multiple continents with the Voodoo Contest Group, at PJ2T and pre-COVID in February at TI7W, for the ARRL DX CW Contest, and in March at KH7M for the ARRL DX Phone Contest.

Licensed as WN9EBT in 1962 at age 15 while attending high school in Chicago, he became WA9EBT after upgrading. Lee held the vanity call sign N9BT from 1977 until 1982, when he switched to his current KY7M call sign after moving to Arizona. He is on the DXCC Honor Roll for Mixed (340), CW (339), and Phone (340), and needs only one more for Digital Honor Roll (330). He holds 5BDXCC, 5BWAZ, and stands at 2,865 confirmed in the DXCC Challenge.

Lee is an avid contester with a strong preference for CW, including memberships in FOC (#1741) and CWops (#84). He joined the Voodoo Contest Group at 5V7A in 1998 and has since operated with them in the CQ WW CW at XT2DX, 5U5Z, TZ5A, EL2A, P3F, and PZ5V. He has many Top 10 finishes in the ARRL November Sweepstakes (CW), his favorite contest. He is a member of the PJ2T Caribbean Contest Consortium, where he has operated in CQ WW CW three times.

Lee takes over with the January 2021 issue of *NCJ*. I hope you will welcome and support him as you have me.