

From the Editor

I am writing this as we have moved into the heart of the fall 2022 contest season. Our remote station at NA7TB was active as a Multi-Single entry in both CQ World Wide DX Phone (as NA2U) and ARRL November Sweepstakes CW (as KY7M). In both contests, 10 meters played an important role. We made more than 800 of our 2,400 Qs in the CQ WW phone on 10 meters with 103 DXCC entities, more mults than on any other band. We elected to open ARRL November Sweepstakes CW on 15 meters, but several of our high scoring MS competitors chose 10 meters and had impressive rates there in the opening hours. This bodes well for the contests this fall and winter, although it already has had the expected negative impact on the LF bands — both in terms of propagation and reduced activity as contesters migrate to the HF bands the growing sunspot numbers favor. If you have been sitting on the sidelines, get back in the game and join the fun on HF.

I just returned from my first trip to PJ2T since 2019 for the CQ World Wide CW. Our Multi-Multi team of 10 operators made 14,446 QSOs and, not unexpectedly, finished third (claimed) behind Zone 33 stations CN2A and CR3W (congratulations to both!). It was fun to listen again to contest pile-ups while running stations from around the world for hours on end. I have missed it.

I had an experience with Murphy recently unrelated to radio. Debby and I were scheduled to take our first hot-air balloon ride at sunrise on November 11 in Sedona, Arizona. We knew it would be cold before sunrise because of Sedona's altitude of over 4,000 feet. As we finished putting on our multiple layers of clothes plus gloves, scarves, etc., we got a phone call telling us that the balloon ride had to be canceled because it was



For those who always think of Arizona as “that hot place in the desert,” here is what your Editor looked like bundled up in mid-November, with the red rocks of Sedona in the background.

too windy. We still got to enjoy some hiking in the beautiful red rocks for which Sedona is famous. I am hoping I picked up some of the Vortex energy that Sedona is famous for providing to visitors — hoping it will be good for more mults and higher contest rates. The balloon ride will be rescheduled for next spring. Go away, Murphy!

In This Issue

Shortly after Sweepstakes CW, I received an email from Bud, VE7ST, asking if I might be interested in an article about his trip to VY1CO for that contest. He included his write-up and photos. This is just the type of story I like to feature in *NCJ*. Bud provided the NT multiplier to many of us in SS CW this year, so read his story of how this strong effort came to fruition.

Carl, K9LA, definitely had more fun writing his annual propagation

forecast now that the sunspots are tickling the ionosphere regularly. See what he is predicting for 2023.

Jack, W1WEF, could not find a commercially available switching system for his Connecticut Icom contest station, so he went to the drawing board and designed his own. He tells us how he had fun using his soldering iron and drilling holes to create a solution for his requirements.

Pat, N9RV, wrote about designing his new station in Montana several issues ago. In this issue, Pat describes in more general terms what it takes to build a contest station and makes the case for the advantages of building a station to meet your personal needs and preferences.

After seeing a lively discussion on the CQ-Contest email reflector about taking vitamins and other supplements to aid contesting acuity, I asked Bob, KQ2M, to expand on his well-reasoned response based on his personal experience and academic credential. This is a topic that concerns many of us, and Bob has done a masterful job of putting “neutraceuticals” into perspective.

This issue's Profile of Mitch, K7RL, shows how you are never too old to begin mastering CW. After years as a phone only contester, Mitch realized that the only way to fully enjoy what contesting has to offer was to dedicate himself to becoming a competitive CW operator. That dedication has led him to being a participant in the World Radio Team Championship (WRTC). It is an inspiring and informative story for what is possible if you put in the time and effort for self-improvement.

Finally, we have an interesting view of a contester's “learning curve” from Paul, NØGN, who documented some of the key points he has learned the further he has gotten into his contest efforts.