

## From the Editor

As usual, it has been a *hot* summer in Phoenix. Debby and I had a wedding to attend in Spokane at the end of June, and that gave us a good excuse to escape the heat for a while. Looking at the map of eastern Washington, I realized that we would be less than an hour away from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, where Geoff, WØCG, and Dorothy reside when not at PJ2T hosting contesters or handling routine maintenance.

We made arrangements to visit them. Geoff was kind enough to pick us up at the Spokane airport after we survived several delays and rebooking of flights.

In Idaho, we spent 3 days enjoying high temperature in the low 80s, about 30° cooler than what we left behind in the desert. When we took a boat tour of Lake Coeur d'Alene, we had to wear jackets to keep warm. We also watched the athletes gather for the annual Ironman competition, set to be held in and around Coeur d'Alene a few days after our departure.

After several years of not traveling for the CQ World Wide DX CW due to COVID, I told Geoff that I would return to PJ2T in November to operate for the fourth time as part of a multi-multi team there. I have been a member of the Caribbean Contest Consortium for several years and missed being there or anywhere else outside the US for contests after my last contest trip in early 2020. You will find me before and after the contest operating as PJ2/KY7M.

I am writing this as we head into the August North American QSO Party (NAQP) CW event, where I'm hoping to put in a full effort and even try some remote SO2R operating for the first time. The August NAQP CW can be challenging, because it takes place during Arizona's monsoon season, which means dust and thunderstorms



**NCJ Editor Lee, KY7M, with Dorothy and Geoff, WØCG, at a picturesque overlook in the cool pines outside Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. [Debby Finkel photo]**

on many evenings. The lightning threat alone can prompt premature shutdowns. I imagine Arizona contesters are not the only ones dealing with this kind of weather threat in August. We also fight the QRN from storms to the east of us on the low-frequency bands.

As solar flux and sunspot numbers continue to climb, this coming contest season should be exciting. Some participants in the IARU HF Championship in July had fun on 10 meters, experiencing both sporadic E and F2 propagation for long stretches. One of my hopes for Solar Cycle 25 is that I get to experience F2 propagation on 6 meters for the first time since getting active on the Magic Band in 2007.

Good luck in the upcoming contests and please share your stories with *NCJ*, especially if you travel outside the US and Canada to operate.

### In this Issue

After a last-minute offer from Mike, W9RE, to tell his story about traveling to Bologna, Italy, for a WRTC practice session during the IARU, I conducted Zoom interviews with two of the WRTC teams on that trip W9RE/N9NB and NE9U/K9CT. Let us know how you like this format; it is something we can repeat to tell about future contest-related trips.

This issue also offers a firsthand account of what it's like to operate mobile while bouncing around Florida as a Florida QSO Party rover station. W1MD and K1XX share their 2022 adventure, the latest in many years of their participation as a mobile station in this popular state QSO party.

Chuck, KØXM, provides some history and guidance on DX clusters that contesters rely on when operating assisted. Check out what he has to say about filtering spots and how you can get "blacklisted" by automatically posting too many spots.

Gerry, W1VE, offers the next installment in his series on tools and techniques to be successful in remote radio operating. And, in case you think you can't be competitive operating remotely, we have the story of NA2U's journey remotely operating KH7M @KH6ZM for several years, culminating this year in an ARRL DX CW Single-Operator, Unlimited High-Power, victory.

A very young and relatively new contester, Maria, VE3OMV, tells the story of how she progressed rapidly from S&P in the slow-speed SST contests to running stations at the end of last year's CQ WW CW contest.

Finally, in keeping with our *NCJ* 50th anniversary commemoration, you can read what our founder, Tod Olson, KØTO (SK), had to say about the beginnings and evolution of this magazine on the 20th anniversary of *NCJ*, 30 years ago.