

From the Editor

In recent years I have found BIC (butt-in-chair) time more challenging, due to my age (75) and my concern about deep vein thrombosis (DVT) from a blood clot in a leg from sitting in one position for too long. The solution for me — and probably for others — has been to do fewer single-operator entries and more multioperator. When doing multiop, our small remote station group develops an operating schedule that accommodates everyone's needs and requests and attempts to limit operating shifts to an average of 3 hours. We try to allow for longer sleep periods through this scheduling process. We also try to rotate operator shift times for longer contests so that each of us gets some "prime time" for running and for experiencing different bands. (This is not to say that there aren't things we *should* be doing once an hour for however long we are operating, in order to stretch and move our legs and get the blood moving.)

While operating our remote station in a multiop entry, we communicate with each other on *Slack*, and when it is time for a hand-off to the next operator, we post an "I am QRV" message. Since each operator has a preference for how the logging screen should look, we will do a "Ctrl-O" or "OPON" (in the call sign field) to change the operator profile and the way the screen looks, an easy thing to do in *N1MM Logger+*. Before the contest begins, we ask each operator to set up the computer screen the way they would like the logging program to look and then go into Tools → Save Window Positions to save their screens.

The ability to get up and walk around, use the bathroom, eat, sleep, read, or watch TV gives operators the chance to recharge and be more effective on their next shift. If one operator is running, it is rare that we



Your Editor enjoying a delicious Thanksgiving dinner at PJ2T last November before the start of the CQ WW CW. The T-shirt reads, "MAY THE MORSE BE WITH YOU."

lose the run frequency during a transition. The departing operator will pass along information to the replacement operator on *Slack* about band conditions, chasing a needed multiplier, or how well the band is holding up. These same kinds of things could be handled with paper notes or orally, if the operators are physically together at the host station.

Aside from operating in multi-multi stations for many years, my first multi-single was in 2016 when Fred, NA2U, came over to my place to operate the CQ WW 160 CW using the eight-circle antenna at the remote site. After that, Fred and I started operating multi-single in CW Sweepstakes, first from my location using the remote and then accessing the remote station from our respective sites after Fred got his own Remoterig RRC-1258 black box. These days, as many as five of us join together for these multiop efforts, and we have posted many very respectable scores doing it.

My message is this: rather than giving up on a full-bore effort in a contest where you are expected to generate points for your club's score, figure out a way to join forces for a multiop effort. Unless you are in it for personal achievement, it is more fun to make it a team effort and cheer each other on. Your club's scorekeeper will appreciate the difference it makes in the points you generate.

More Silent Keys

It seems like we are losing contesters and hams in general at an alarming rate. I struggle with how to approach this disheartening subject. Some hams are better known than others, but we mourn every loss. Fred, K3ZO (SK), was a very active contester and supporter of our hobby in many ways from both Maryland and Thailand. Bruce, AA5B, was a very active contester for many years in New Mexico and in contest DXpeditions. Ellen, W1YL (SK), was the ultimate CW aficionado and made a mark for herself both as an ARRL employee and as a role model for many female ops. There are so many more we have lost this past year. Let's keep them in our thoughts and prayers and treasure each day we have left to enjoy each other and this wonderful hobby of ours.

In this Issue...

Jim Neiger, N6TJ, completed Part 2 of his contest memoir and shares memories from his middle years in this issue's installment. Coincidentally, one of Jim's stops in those years was at São Vicente (D4), the location of the story by Kelly Jones, NØVD, about his participation in the D4Z operation during last October's CQ WW phone.

We get a look at a remarkable radio site in Iceland in "A Contest That Wasn't" by George Wagner, K5KG. I

wonder if other hams have had the opportunity to use an abandoned scientific site with a surfeit of 50-foot towers, as George and friends did in TF.

Gary Johnson, NA6O, provides some very helpful information about how to most effectively use the capabilities of *MMTTY* for RTTY contesting, with a strong suggestion that AFSK is the way to go. I have used a number of his recommendations to improve the performance of my own station's RTTY operation.

Tom Taormina, K5RC, brings us up to date on developments at the W7RN contest superstation in Carson City, Nevada, where the walls are filled with winning plaques. Innovation is a never-ending pursuit at Tom's station.

With a dose of humor, Ned Stearns, AA7A, gives us his "Confessions of a Contest Junkie." He includes the challenges of competing against East Coast stations from the Arizona desert.