

The KeyNote



Newsletter of the Americas Chapter, FISTS CW Club—The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue #2, 2016

In This Issue



Photos from the 2016 Dayton Hamvention
Page 17



“Home-Brew Keys”
Page 13

“CW Island Hopping”
Page 14



Table of Contents

Information Page	2
Americas Chapter Message	3
FISTS at Dayton, 2016	4
Dayton Hamvention.....	6
Directors’ Reports.....	6
Welcome New FISTS Members	8
FISTS Awards.....	9
FISTS Cumulatives.....	10
FISTS Awards—The Easy Way	12
Home-Brew Keys.....	13
CW Island Hopping Trip to the Gulf of Texas.....	14
The Romance of CW	15
FISTS Photos.....	17
Letters to the Editor	18
Sprint Information	19
FISTS Spring 2016 Sprint Results.....	20
FISTS Sprint Entry Form.....	21
To Join or Renew Your FISTS Membership.....	22
FISTS CW Club Membership Application/Renewal	23

“When you’ve worked a FISTS, you’ve worked a friend.”

INFORMATION PAGE

When you have a question about FISTS, go to the source for the correct answer. Posting a question on a chat room or e-mail reflector may yield the answer, but your best bet is to ask a FISTS volunteer or look in the reference issue. Several volunteer contacts and/or e-mail addresses have changed from the last reference issue of *The Key-Note*. Please make note of the following listings.

When e-mailing a volunteer please put the word FISTS in the title of your e-mail. This will help the volunteer recognize that your e-mail is important and not spam.

Awards and Certificates

Dennis Franklin, K6DF, awards@fistsna.org
4658 Capitan Dr., Fremont, CA 94536-5448

QSL Bureau

Stan Reas, K4UK, k4uk@fistsna.org
1020 Long Island Dr., Moneta, VA 24121-1952

Club Call, KNOWCW

Cody Codianni, KC2LSD, kc2lsd@fistsna.org
413 Martin Court, Leonardo, NJ 07737-1317

Membership Questions; Renewals; Call Changes; Name, Mailing, and E-mail Address Changes

Dennis Franklin, K6DF, membership@fistsna.org
4658 Capitan Dr., Fremont, CA 94536-5448

Membership Application or Sample KeyNotes for Friends

Jim Ranieri, AA9LS, aa9ls@turbotoads.com
33778 Rebecca Rd., Kingston, IL 60145-8121

FISTS Store Manager

Will Dix, KF4IZE, fistsstore@fistsna.org
2028 Merrimac Dr., Fayetteville, NC 28304-2619

Website Changes (including getting your personal or club web page linked)

Dennis Franklin, K6DF, webmaster@fistsna.org
4658 Capitan Dr., Fremont, CA 94536-5448

Club Presentation Packets

Joe Spencer, KK5NA, kk5na@kk5na.com
3618 Montridge Ct., Arlington, TX 76016-4821

Code Buddy Volunteers and Buddies

<http://www.fistsna.org/codebuddy.html>

FISTS Sprints

Ed Wlodarski, N2ED, n2ed@fistsna.org
3 Shore Rd., Andover, NJ 07821-2240

Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day/G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest

Karl Zuk, N2KZ, feetwetlogs@fistsna.org,
g3zqslogs@fistsna.org
15 Flintlock Ridge Rd., Katonah, NY 10536-2510

The KeyNote Newsletter

keynote@fistsna.org



Autotronic Key built in 1960 by Electrophysics Corp. of Newport Beach, CA. From the collection of K6DF.

The KeyNote

The Newsletter of the Americas Chapter of FISTS
Issue #2, 2016



Send articles to:

keynote@fistsna.org

Design: Mary Cronin

www.marycronindesign.com

Americas Chapter Message

By Dennis, K6DF #3076

Here we are a little over halfway through 2016 and it seems like only yesterday we were changing our calendars to January of this year. Time goes by so quickly.

As always, I extend a warm welcome to all of the new members who have joined the club since the first of this year. Please be sure to look through the list of new members listed later in this issue. Since January, 279 new members have joined our ranks and if this pace continues we will surpass the 517 new members that joined in 2015. New members and renewals are keeping me very busy updating the database as well as the website. To our new members, I hope to hear and work many of you on the bands. To our old and renewing members, I ask you to look for these new members on the air and help them to feel welcome into the FISTS CW Club.

As you may have heard before, change is inevitable unless you are trying to get it from a change machine. A number of chapter items have changed or evolved since the first of this year. One of those is the number of renewing and new members who are electing to receive their *KeyNote* newsletters via the on-line download instead of through the U.S. Postal system. This is actually good in some ways for the membership since newsletters can be downloaded and read a few weeks earlier than receiving the printed newsletter in the mail. Downloaded newsletters can also be taken along with members on a small flash drive or their laptop computers.

Another change, which is not as apparent to the membership, is the notices sent out to remind members when their dues expire. These are sent out automatically by the database server, which also sends out thank-you e-mails when you renew your club dues. This same server generates and e-mails passwords to you so you can download your newsletters. It also allows you to reset and change your password if you desire. Once again I wish to extend a special thanks to Graham, G3ZOD, for his programming talents in setting this up for the membership. This change has also drastically reduced my workload taking care of the membership files.

We need to find an Editor for *The Keynote* newsletter. I will continue to act as Editor and produce *The KeyNote* until we can find a qualified person. If you or anyone you know might be interested in the Editor's position, please let me know via e-mail at k6df@fistsna.org

The Editor's job is basically gathering together all the needed articles with supporting photos and drawings for each issue of *The KeyNote*, reading through each article and correcting any obvious errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Once that is done, send the articles to Mary Cronin, our layout and design person, who will produce and send a printed version to the publisher as well as a PDF version to the webmaster for publication on our website.

Dayton Hamvention 2016—We had a very successful booth at the Dayton Hamvention this year due to a number of club volunteers who took the time to step forward and support our club and booth manager, Tim AC5SH. A nice Dayton

(continued on page 4)

booth write-up by Tim, along with a few photos, can be found following my message. I personally want to thank the following for their time and effort helping in the booth this year: Larry KA8HFN, Henry WD8Q, Al W8FAX, Russ W4ZDU, Ray WB4ZDU, and Tim AC5SH. By the way, each of these volunteers received one additional free year of club membership. The club will do the same for Dayton booth volunteers at future hamventions. I would also like to add one other personal thank you to Rich W4RQ and Rob AJ4SB for their work building and donating the very large QLF key for use at the FISTS Dayton booth. This key will be very helpful qualifying more QLF operators. For those of you who don't know, we have a QLF certificate available only at the Dayton FISTS booth for sending Morse code with your left foot. Again, thank you to all who made the FISTS Dayton booth a success!

The year 2017 will be the 30th Anniversary year for the FISTS CW Club. We are looking for a 30th Anniversary Logo for use on special anniversary logo items to be available in the FISTS Store for purchase throughout 2017. If you have an idea for a 30th anniversary logo please draw it on a piece of paper or on your computer and send it to this e-mail address: 30thlogo@fistsna.org. If your 30th Logo design is chosen to be used, you will receive a one-year free membership in the club as well as a grand prize that has yet to be determined. The winner will also receive one of each item that incorporates your logo design.

A couple of fun operating events are coming up later in the year:

Veterans QSOs. Are you a U.S. veteran or active duty U.S. military? Do you know a U.S. veteran or an active duty U.S. military person? Join FISTS CW Club N.A. Chapter as we celebrate our military veterans from October 11th until November 11th. This coming November 11th is Veterans Day. FISTS Americas Chapter will have a special operating award available to recognize QSOs with

amateur CW operators that are U.S. veterans or active duty U.S. military. A distinctive certificate will be issued for logs submitted with a minimum of 11 CW QSOs with U.S. Veterans. A special endorsement sticker will be issued for any QSO that takes place during the 11th hour (your local time), of the 11th day, of the 11th month (November 11, 2016). A full description of this event is available on the FISTS Americas Chapter website and on page 16 in this issue.

FISTS Cumulatives. Starting in August 2016 we will have another operating event called the "FISTS Cumulatives." This event will start in August and continue into the month of December 2016. Details of this event are available on page 10 of this issue as well as on the chapter website at <http://fistsna.org>.

Wishing you good health and good DX..._.

73, Dennis K6DF

Fists at Dayton, 2016

Tim, AC5SH

Hi Gang,

I was greatly privileged to be our booth manager this year and had a great time working with Al W8FAX, Larry KA8HFN, Henry WD8Q, Ray WB4ZDU, and Russ W4ZDU in the promotion of Fists CW Club, Ham Radio and Morse Code. I was actually the new guy, with several of these gents having worked in the booth over many years and I think all having been licensed longer than myself. Gentlemen, I am most humbled and the club is grateful for your help.

Larry deserves special mention for serving as our chief QLF examiner and bringing much attention to the club in this capacity. People really enjoyed this crazy endeavor and seeing

(continued on page 5)

FISTS at Dayton, 2016 (continued)

someone working our Bigfoot key (donated by Rich W4RQ and Rob AJ4SB), they would just have to try it and of course, would usually join or renew their membership at the same time. I even managed to qualify, barely, and received one of the very impressive certs printed by our long-time awards manager and now President, Dennis K6DF.

Larry also did us the great service of receiving the bulk of our supplies and making sure they got to Hara Arena on time.

We had quite a parade of people asking questions about FISTS and Morse Code, and the opportunity to clear up myths and point people in the right direction in their efforts to learn CW or improve their skills seemed endless. I plan on making up a flyer to give out next year with tips, tricks and answers to some common questions and excuses, most of which were heard more than once and many of the excuses sounding like just that. It is our job of course to answer those questions and eliminate those excuses, to allow more ops to discover the joy of CW on air, or to improve their skills.

We also handed out a great many copies of the K7QO Code Course, paid for of course with membership dues money but completely free to the recipients. This is a vital service our club provides, giving ops a simple and reliable way to learn Morse Code, in this era of way too many confusing and complicated methods. To those who wonder, we are aware of the groundbreaking research done by German Psychologist Ludwig Koch. The K7QO course in my opinion, utilizes the most important principles that research revealed, plus does not require complicated interactions with a computer. It is in my opinion, having either tried or heard about most of the wrong and hard ways, the right and easy

way to acquire the skills to enjoy oneself on air with Morse Code. People continually ask if it is The Koch Method. No, not exactly but it's just as good and it works. If you missed your copy at Dayton (0 to about 30 wpm on one disc, plus another disc for more practice) please order it from the FISTS store. You can get it on disc at <http://fistsna.org/store.html> for what amounts to postage and handling. It is also available as a free download at Chuck K7QO's K7QO.net website and by the way, can be loaded on a smart phone.

Here are the numbers provided by Dennis from the stack of apps produced at Dayton. We signed up thirty-four new members, ninety-seven renewals, six family members (youth and same household) and one op over eighty years of age who is of course a life member. That's a total of one hundred thirty-eight sign-ups, plus some address corrections and such.

We also handed out a large number of applications for people to fill out at home, and notably had a visit from four members of the same family, the father and three youngsters all of whom were licensed and I think took an app to send in later. I believe they all got QLF certs as well.

The show went very smoothly thanks to the great crew but we could have used a bit more help. If you would like to volunteer in the FISTS booth next year, please email me at AC5SH@aol.com or President Dennis K6DF at K6DF@fistsna.com and let us know.

Here's looking forward to next year, and I hope to run into you on air soon.

73 Tim, AC5SH

Dayton Hamvention

Henry, WD8Q

I just finished my fourth year of working the FISTS booth at Dayton Hamvention. Just being there is a hoot, but working the FISTS booth is extra special. I have met so many FISTS over the last four years, and it has been a real thrill.

The last two years we have had a QLF tryout and certificate, which has gone over quite well. FISTS is “The Morse Preservation Society,” and I think most of us join FISTS to keep Morse Code from fading into the sunset as time moves on.

Living in Ohio makes a Hamvention visit easy, but those who live in more distant locations have quite a challenge to get there. However, most hams need at least one trip to Hamvention to get the feel of what it’s really like. There are something like seven buildings to go through, plus the huge flea market to wander around in.

If you plan to attend Hamvention 2017, give some thought to working the FISTS booth for an hour or so, especially if you plan to be there more than one day. If you do, I think you’ll return home with a smile on your face, as well as knowing you gave a little assistance to the FISTS club.

Henry, WD8Q

DIRECTORS’ REPORTS

Social Media

Tim, AC5SH

FISTS continues to advance in the world of social media and such.

Our Updates mass mailer now has a little over 2,100 subscribers and the open reflector sees considerable use.

The Facebook page has 1300 plus likes and the Facebook group has 300 plus members.

We have some other resources as well, which serve as places to get questions answered, elmer the new ops, set up schedules, etc.

There is more to tell but due to space concerns, I will keep this short.

For an info sheet (not short), please send email to me at AC5SH@aol.com and I will fill you in.

As always, our main digital presence is the website at <http://fistsna.org/> run by President Dennis, K6DF and, of course, it has a Facebook button at the bottom. We look forward to using these resources to help you enjoy CW on air.

Club Call

Cody, KC2LSD

I’ve been keeping the club call on the air as much as possible. Had it on the recent Slow Sprint event and will continue to have the call on the air in future Sprints. Remember, you can use the club call by contacting me at kc2lsd@fistsna.org to get permission to use the club call and select your operating dates. For more information, please look at www.fistsna.org/howdoi.html#opcc for more information on using the Americas Chapter FISTS Club Call.

Fists Sprints

Ed Wlodarski, N2ED

The Spring Sprints are now history. Conditions were not good and participation was fairly sparse for the Spring Sprints.

As I write this, we are in Day 5 of no sun spots. While not too good for the upper bands,

(continued on page 7)

Directors' Reports (continued)

conditions do get better for the lower bands. Hopefully, the Summer Sprints will benefit from this!

Congratulations to those who participated in the Spring Sprints and several FISTS members have shirts, mugs and pins on the way.

You need a minimum of 5 QSOs to be eligible for the Sprint Prizes and a minimum of 3 logs must be received in a category to have prizes awarded for that category. Logs must be received in a category to have prizes awarded for that category.

First place in QRO or QRP gets you a shirt, mug and pin. Second place gets you a shirt and pin and Third place gets you a mug and pin!

I look forward to working you all in the Summer Sprint!

FISTS Store

Will Dix, KF41ZE, #5381

The FISTS CW Club is one that engenders camaraderie and friendship. It is in this vein that I've been a loyal member since 1998. So when the call came for someone to volunteer as the FISTS Store Manager, I immediately moved to express my interest.

I assumed responsibilities in February of this year and it has, no doubt, been quite an endeavor! After conducting an extensive inventory of all the items, I was ready to take on the orders. In my brief experience thus far, it appears the most popular item has been the 2-CD Code Course. I guess that shouldn't be a surprise as FISTS is an organization that obviously promotes the use of the CW mode. I recommend any member who has not taken a look at the FISTS CW Club Store website to check out all the many items available from T-shirts, coffee mugs, and pins. I am open

to any suggestions for possible items that we could possibly add to the store's inventory.

My wife, Michelle, has been instrumental in helping me assemble all the various orders. Of course, we have our busy lives dealing with family, home, and work, but the volunteer service for FISTS just gives us more sense of purpose.

I do want to mention a couple of administrative points. PayPal is often the most efficient and safest method of payment for an order. However, if you send a check or money order to myself (payable to FISTS CW Club), please include an e-mail address if possible. I ask this only because I like to inform the buyer that their order is on its way and also provide a tracking number. Additionally, if you're a member residing outside the continental U.S., please e-mail me at fistsstore@fistsna.org with your order request. I can then figure the shipping rate, e-mail you the information, and you can then place your order.

Well, as mentioned earlier, the volunteer service as the FISTS Store Manager has been an endeavor. It has been most rewarding and gratifying. I figured it was the least I could do to give back to an organization that possesses many of the qualities that I admire.



New FISTS Store Manager Will Dix, KF41ZE

WELCOME NEW FISTS AMERICAS CHAPTER MEMBERS

Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C	Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C
KB9ON	17774	James	IL	N3DWS	17815	Eric	PA
KN1SIX	17775	David	FL	KC6LTO	17816	Jeff	AR
KB5EBB	17776	Phil	VA	N5GP	17817	Thomas	LA
KG5DW	17777	Donald	TX	W9MNM	17818	Mark	IN
AC9KJ	17778	Robert	WI	AG5AW	17819	Mark	TX
N1TYH	17779	Steven	MA	WB2ADF	17820	BruceE	NY
NB8F	17780	Andrew	MI	KK4QDZ	17821	Bill	NC
KG5MCG	17781	Stuart	TX	ND8D	17822	Andrew	OH
KF4ILV	17782	Robert	FL	ND1Y	17823	Yoshiaki	GA
KD2IIK	17783	David	NY	AB0S	17824	Tim	KS
WA2VJL	17784	Alfred	TX	W0AJE	17825	Roger	OH
AJ4RI	17785	Brian	FL	KY4DAD	17826	Doug	OH
KB5RK	17786	Jim	TX	K3TAJ	17827	Todd	PA
NJ7V	17787	Charlie	AZ	KC3CSH	17828	James	PA
K8UDH	17788	Bruce	NE	KC3CSI	17829	Joe	PA
KL7SRC	17789	Steve	AK	KB8PYT	17830	Luis	MI
WE7A	17790	Philip	CO	VA3PDC	17831	Paul	ON
KC5FM	17791	Lloyd	OK	K4MCG	17832	David	GA
KJ6PEH	17792	Brent	CA	WB9QQZ	17833	Charles	IN
K5FIG	17793	David	TX	N3DRL	17834	David	MD
KD9DAE	17794	Paul	IN	W8FN	17835	Randy	TX
AE7XP	17795	Michael	OR	K9VER	17836	Thomas	WI
K5PHB	17796	Frank	TX	WT4BT	17837	Barclay	TN
KO5TER	17797	Glenn	TX	W5CCP	17838	Craig	OK
WA6VJY	17798	Stanley	CA	KC0QNS	17839	Dale	MO
HK5NLJ	17799	Alvaro	DX	N8NOE	17840	Jeffrey	MI
WH6DZB	17800	Concetta	HI	KI4I	17841	Jim	TN
AH6NM	17801	Richard	HI	NJ0U	17842	John	IN
W4KLA	17802	Gene	NC	AC6AC	17843	Elliot	CA
NM5MW	17803	Merle	NM	K8YYZ	17844	John	MI
WB6TA	17804	Terry	CA	KF9XK	17845	Jim	IL
WW5OBA	17805	Onzo	TX	KC0SHX	17846	Dale	NE
AF7BI	17806	Marilyn	WA	NZ4Z	17847	Stephen	KY
KC1AUM	17807	Wayne	CT	W0ALC	17848	Curt	CO
K0LAR	17808	Scott	MN	K4TIO	17849	Thomas	TN
W0ZRJ	17809	Will	MN	K8BGR	17850	Stephen	MI
KA1SOL	17810	Al	MA	KE4GVO	17851	Jim	VA
K9VEG	17811	Jeff	VA	WB0SND	17852	Michael	MO
N7TWL	17812	Todd	AZ	NI8K	17853	Kurt	KS
AA4GT	17813	George	FL	N4TAE	17854	Nicholas	AL
AK4IC	17814	David	SC				

(continued, page 9)

New Members (continued)

Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C
KO5USA	17855	Tom	TX
KD2HEK	17856	John	NY
KG5NKW	17857	Paul	TX
ND2O	17858	Robert	NC
N5ZY	17859	Marcus	OK
W4UCA	17860	James	AR
W5YB	17861	Alexander	TX
NE2E	17862	Fred	NJ
NO CALL	17863	Richard	MD
KK6PA	17864	Jerry	CA
KK4FLA	17865	Nathalie	FL
W8DUK	17866	Richard	FL
KD9JPC	17867	J-P	IL
W5AOP	17868	Howard	TX
W4TDV	17869	Thomas	VA
NS7I	17870	Charles	WY
WS4E	17871	Don	KY
N9HHT	17872	Aandres	IL
K3CUU	17873	Donal	DC

FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis K6DF

Looks like only a handful of stations are earning FISTS awards this time around. Of special note is John, K1ESE #10466. He has been a busy operator as one can see by looking down through the awards list.

I would like to direct our new members attention to the various awards available to them as FISTS members. I'm sure you will find something there that will catch your attention. Our Basic Century Certificate is the award most of our members look forward to earning first, although the Millionaire and Rag Chewers' awards are equally as much fun to obtain.

Don't forget to download and use the FREE logging and FISTS award-tracking program, Log Converter written by Graham, G3ZOD. This great program not only will track your FISTS awards but will also allow you to send in your award log to the FISTS Awards Manager at the click of a button!

Be sure to check the Americas Chapter web pages for up-to-date awards information and how to apply for them: <http://www.fistsna.org/awards.html>

If you have any awards questions please feel free to e-mail me at: awards@fistsna.org
73, Dennis K6DF _____

FISTS AWARDS ISSUED: Apr 19, 2016–Jun 18, 2016

Century Award: N0CVW, I5EFO, W4RQ

Silver Award: K1ESE

Gold Award: K1ESE

WAS Award: K1ESE

Spectrum Award 40 Mtr: K1ESE

Spectrum Award 20 Mtr: K1ESE, N0CVW

Prefix Award: K1ESE, W4RQ

Prefix 50 & 100 Award: K1ESE, W4RQ

Prefix 150 Award: K1ESE

Millionaire Award: K1ESE

2 & 3 Million Award: K1ESE

4 Million Award: G0ILN, K1ESE, DL5CL

5, 6, 7 & 8 Million Award: K1ESE

FISTS Cumulatives

How'd you like a regular activity where you can have friendly CW QSOs with ops who are just passing by as well as others taking part, still with the opportunity for a little gentle competition?

Well, it's here—the FISTS Cumulatives!

Starting in August 2016, the FISTS Cumulatives <http://fistsna.org/fc> run until the end of the year. There is a 2-hour slot on the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month at 19:00 UTC during day-light savings time and 20:00 UTC at other times.

Why “Cumulatives?” At the end of each month, the month's scores will be added to on-going totals. We'll publish a monthly electronic newsletter with the results to-date so that you can see your monthly and total scores. After the year is over, we'll post certificates to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd highest placed stations.

All you need to do is exchange and record any information that you would normally do anyway: RST, first name, QTH, and (if your QSO partner is a current or lapsed FISTS member) their member number.

For a QSO to qualify, it must be at least five minutes long. So, when you've exchanged the required information, you can chat about whatever you like—WX, equipment, antennas, CC numbers, etc.

Sending in logs is straightforward too. If you are using a logging program, you can export your log to an ADIF file and use the free FISTS Log Converter program <http://fists.co.uk/flc> for Windows to preview your QSOs and score and send in your log electronically. If you're not currently using a logbook program, you can use FISTS Log Converter as your logbook—it's ideal if you're not used to using an electronic logbook.

You can have one QSO with another station per 2-hour session and the QSO can be on 80m,

40m, or 20m. We recommend calling just “CQ FISTS.”

If you just want to come along for some friendly QSOs and perhaps build up some points towards FISTS Awards, that's fine—of course we would welcome a log from you too. Either way, the objective is to have fun!

For the full rules, see below:

OBJECTIVE: To exchange specified information with as many FISTS members and non-members using Morse Code only, and within the time frame stipulated.

PARTICIPANTS: Any properly licensed amateur radio operator, FISTS member or non-member, is invited to take part in the activity. Logs for FISTS HQ Club call signs will be treated as check logs (KN0WCW, GX0IPX, JL3YMV, VK2FDU, ZL6FF).

DATES AND TIMES: 2nd and 4th Sundays in August–December, 2016 inclusive:

August 14, 1900–2100 UTC

August 28, 1900–2100 UTC

September 11, 1900–2100 UTC

September 25, 1900–2100 UTC

October 9, 1900–2100 UTC

October 23, 1900–2100 UTC

November 13, 2000–2200 UTC

November 27, 2000–2200 UTC

December 11, 2000–2200 UTC

December 25, 2000–2200 UTC

(Note the time change for November and December.)

BANDS: Operation is limited to the following amateur bands: 3.5, 7, and 14 MHz. Look for QSOs around the FISTS frequencies 3558, 7058, and 14058 kHz.

Work stations once per 2-hour session regardless of band.

(continued, page 11)

FISTS Cumulatives (continued)

QSOS & EXCHANGE:

- QSOs must last at least 5 minutes.
- Calling 'CQ FISTS' is recommended.
- The following minimum information must be exchanged by both stations for a valid QSO: RST, first name, QTH (state, city or province), FISTS number (if available)

SCORING:

- 1 point: each QSO with a non-member.
- 3 points: each QSO with a current or lapsed FISTS member.
- 5 points: each QSO with a FISTS-affiliated club call sign.
- 8 points: each QSO with a FISTS HQ call sign (KN0WCW, GX0IPX, JL3YMV, VK2FDU, ZL6FF):

RESULTS: Monthly and end-of-year results tables will be published in an electronic newsletter (announced on the FISTS website and social media) and in *The KeyNote*.

CERTIFICATES: Certificates will be awarded to the overall first, second, and third-place finishers in January 2017.

LOG SUBMISSIONS: Logs must be received by the end of the 5th day of the following month. Log Formats:

- FISTS Log Converter 3.3.0 or later (Recommended).
Use this free program <http://fists.co.uk/flc> for Windows to submit logs quickly and easily.

If you are using it to process an ADIF file exported from another logbook program, put any FISTS member numbers in the your logbook's QSO "Comment" (or similar) field by adding the word FISTS followed by

the member number. For example, for member #3076: FISTS 3076.

- Excel, Calc, CSV (comma-separated values), or TSV (tab-separated values) files:

The first row/record in the file must include these exact column names although they don't need to be in this order: QSO_Date, Call, Name, QTH, Freq, RST_Sent, RST_Rcvd, Time_On, Time_Off, FISTS, Mode, Points

Example:

2016/08/14,K6DF,Dennis,CA,7.057,599,559,14:25,14:37,3076,CW,3

- 'QSO_Date', 'Time_On', and 'Time_Off' are UTC.
- 'QTH' can be a state (e.g., CA) or a city/town (e.g., Fremont), or province (e.g., NB)
- 'Freq' is in MHz and must be a decimal number only, e.g., 7.027
- 'FISTS' must either be blank or contain a FISTS member number only, e.g., 3076
- 'Mode' must be CW
- 'Points' can contain a number or be left blank, e.g., 3

There is a sample Excel file available at <http://fistsna.org/fcsample.xlsx>.

- ADIF files:
These can be ADI (text) files or ADX (XML) files and must include the fields named above.
- Other file formats: These may be acceptable—please ask and, ideally, e-mail us a sample to: fc@fistsna.org.
- Paper:
If you don't have access to e-mail, you can use official FISTS Cumulatives paper log

(continued, page 12)

FISTS Cumulatives (continued)

sheets only; please ask and we will post you a set along with details of where to send the filled-in sheets.

Notes on other logbook programs:

1. If your logbook program doesn't provide a 'FISTS' field, you can instead include FISTS member numbers in the 'Comment' or 'Notes' field by typing the word FISTS followed by the number, e.g., FISTS 3076
2. If your logbook program doesn't provide a field for the QSO end time, other than getting a better logbook program(!), you can instead include the end time in the 'Comment' or 'Notes' field by typing the word ENDTIME followed by the hours and minutes as a number without a colon (:). E.g., if the QSO finished at 19:15 UTC: ENDTIME 1915

If you need to send in a log by e-mail, post it to fc@fistsna.org along with your name, call sign, FISTS member number (if applicable), and any soapbox comments.

FISTS Awards—The Easy Way

John, K1ESE #1644

The FISTS Log Converter Program has changed how I feel about applying for FISTS Awards. It is flat out amazing.

The Old Way

When I applied for my FISTS Million Award many year ago (Number 1843), I seem to recall poring over logs, searching for member numbers, copying that information onto a paper form.

Then I spent time checking and double checking to be sure things were right. Next, find an envelope and a stamp. Not to mention finding the address of where to send it. Fingers crossed, I waited to hear back that my application had been accepted and that I didn't somehow mess it up.

That was enough to discourage me from any further award applications. And, since I knew I wasn't going to look for points and awards, it kept me from getting too involved in various FISTS on-air activities. It was all too much work.

The Easy Way

In the last newsletter there was a mention of a computer program that claimed to make things much easier. It was the FISTS Log Converter Program: <http://www.fistsna.org/logconverter.html>

I downloaded and installed the program. I exported my ADIF formatted log from my logging program. I started the Log Converter. I filled in the name of my log file, clicked the FISTS Awards tab, and clicked the Check Awards button. That's it—fill in the log name and click twice.

It took about 2 minutes to search the 70,000+ QSOs in my log. I qualified for 15 awards. For each one I clicked "Apply for Award." I filled in personal information for the first award. The program took care of that for each of the others. I clicked on "Submit" for each award. That's it. Done. The program e-mailed my application to FISTS without my help. In less than ten minutes I had submitted applications for 15 awards.

I didn't pore over logs—the program did it. I didn't search for member numbers—the program found member call signs and filled in the numbers. I didn't have to copy information to paper—the program did it. I didn't need to check my application—the program did it. I didn't need to find an envelope, a stamp, or an address—the program did it. I didn't even need to wait very long to hear the

(continued, page 13)

The Easy Way (continued)

result. I received an e-mail the next day saying my awards had been approved.

The program also shows how close I am to earning other awards. Now that it is this easy, you may find me active in FISTS activities, knowing that if I earn another award I will make my application —THE EASY WAY!

73 de K1ESE

Home-Brew Keys

Cody, KC2LSD #11793

About ten years ago I became intrigued with the concept of building a bug, I mean, how difficult can it be. First off, let me tell everybody I am not mechanically inclined. So I gathered up bearings, wood, metal, a #2 pencil, and paper. I will not bore you with my comedy of errors, but I can assure you one thing, that bug never made it off the bench.

One day while out with my wife I saw a plastic Praying Mantis. I told my wife that's what I'm looking for! We've been together way to long for her to ask why. When I got home I wondered how I could give this life? Then it came to me. I would mount the Praying Mantis on something, make a key of some sort and get on the air. Simple right!

Well here's what I did, I figured the easiest key to make is an iambic one, three wires and a plug. What troubled me most was what material could I use that had tension and wouldn't require the use of springs or magnets. Remember, I'm mechanically challenged. Well one day in the parking lot of my local super market I found a one-foot piece of bailing wire, you know, the kind used to bind large bails of cardboard.

My apologies, I don't have the photos of the actual build. I used one large screw in the back.

Then I drilled two holes on the bottom of the wooden base. Then with a piece of emery cloth I cleaned off the enamel from the bailing wire and attached the wires utilizing two wood screws (Figure 1). After I filed the sharp edges and a few bends for the correct tension bingo I was on the air.

How does it work you ask? Well, if you worked me under KN0WCW or KN0WCW/2 there's a good chance I was using my homebrew bug. There's nothing like running homebrew gear. I usually take it to the field during Field Day, public events that my club does and once I used it at the ARRL.

So my fellow FISTS members show us your homebrew keys!!!!!!

KC2LSD@fistsna.org

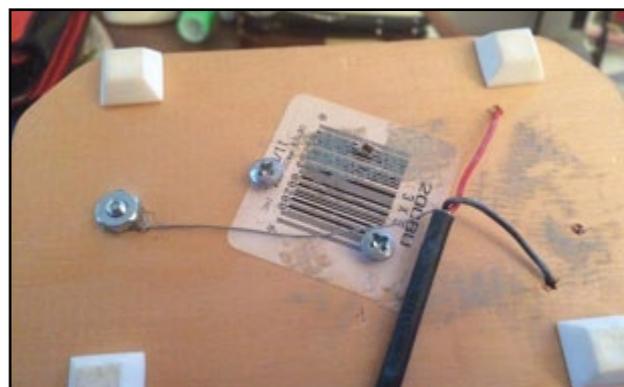


Figure 1



Figure 2: Finished bug

CW Island Hopping Trip to the Gulf of Texas

Gary Stone, N5PHT FIST 10181

My wife and I departed on January 3, 2016 for about a two-week trip. We are normally on the road RVing about half of the year. This trip to the Texas Gulf Coast was exciting because the USA Islands, IOTA, and NPOTA will all be CW contacts.

Goose Island—The first Island was Goose Island State Park near Rockport, Texas. The Park has two camping locations, only one of which is actually on Goose Island, so we of course chose the Goose Island part and we were camped a few feet from the bay. Goose Island is USA Island number TX003S. We had a lot of fun on Goose Island and in 8 days there made 255 contacts.

Mustang Island—Our next stop was Mustang Island in the Gulf of Texas. This was my first IOTA experience, which was great fun. We stayed on Mustang for about 7 days. Mustang is part of the NA092 IOTA Island group. On Mustang I made a little over 700 contacts. Mustang is also given a USAI number of TX011S.

Padre National Seashore—During our stay at Mustang Island I made a side trip to Padre National Seashore, which is only about 15 miles from Mustang Island. This year is the 100th anniversary of the National Parks and the ARRL is helping with the “National Parks on the Air” challenge. It is all year long and with Padre so close I departed for a one day ‘field day’ set up. The staff at Padre were very accommodating. In less than 2 hours I made 86 contacts and it was fun. I spent about the same time setting up and taking down the antenna, an 80-10 G5RV. Then went back to Mustang Island.

Equipment and RV—We travel in a 32-foot Class C Motorhome with a Jeep toad. Radio is

a Kenwood TS590S and I carry several antennas but generally use a 40-10 G5RV. No amplifier so max power is 100 watts. Our home is in North Texas but we enjoy travel and hamming.



The Romance of CW

Lawrence Paola, KC2EQA #8865

In the late 1950's, Sammy Cahn wrote a song that was popularized by Frank Sinatra, called *The Second Time Around*. The first line of the song, 'Love is lovelier the second time around,' most likely has absolutely nothing to do with telegraphy. Nevertheless, Cahn's song can be aptly applied to my passion for CW even after being away from the hobby for five years. Why, after being away from an activity, did I pine to use a key and send code into the heavens again? In much simpler words; why CW? To start, if one considers the Old French word "amateur" meant "lover of," and it was derived from the Latin, "Amare" meaning "to love," it's no wonder the art of telegraphy and the love of CW is so deeply embedded in the past and present of the amateur radio community.

When I was first licensed in 1999, using an HT was a hit until its limitations became apparent. I recall needing a greater challenge to make the hobby worthwhile. I remember becoming a Tech Plus, passing my 5 wpm and tentatively getting on the air. My first QSO was in October of 2000; what a great feeling it was. Improving my speed with the help of two good friends, KC2E-QB, and, WA2BQC (SK), I was off and running. Next, it was getting my General license, a FISTS number (8865), filling page after page of my log book, acquiring more equipment, all sorts of keys, and collecting QSL cards. And to my delight, after finishing every QSO, an incredible feeling of accomplishment and a serene sense of satisfaction took a magical hold of me.

Then it came to an end. Unforeseen events dictated that I begin the arduous, yet immensely gratifying task of restructuring my life. Equipment was sold, antennas taken down, books and logs boxed up; I was off to a new start. The years went by and I began to slowly detach

myself from ham radio. Eventually, in 2010, I gave up on my beloved hobby to concentrate on my family, home and other activities. Fortuitously, I carefully stored away one small QRP rig and, interestingly, all of my keys.

Upon retiring after a career in education in 2015, I began to ruminate as to how I wanted to make quality use of my new found time. I'm an avid gardener, and have recently delved into viticulture with a small backyard vineyard. But there was something else calling me back. The yearning to use CW and relive the experience of working the ether to make a contact began to seep into my conscience. That boxed up FT-817nd and all those straight keys were heavy on my mind; they needed some attention. After hanging a couple of wire antennas and using a neat CW Trainer app to bring me back up to speed, by late fall I was ready to once again participate in a small slice of the greatest hobby around.

So, back to our original question; why CW? There are all sorts of CW operators that can give you hundreds of very good answers. One can talk of the simplicity of gear, the narrow bandwidth, the wonderful way the signal gets through, and the portability of equipment. But, I'm here to tell you that there is a love affair a CW operator has with this mode of communication. I'm an old fashion op with a simple QRP set up; rig, straight key, wire antenna, pad, pencil and a pair of headphones. I like using a written journal and sending QSL cards. I enjoy listening to well sent CW, and doing my best to send clearly and efficiently. When time spent at the radio desk is done, a warm feeling of attachment to other CW operators, past and present, envelops my mindfulness. It's almost as though a mystical relationship with history is present. After all, who hasn't used a J-38, and thought about those who used such a device aboard an Eighth AF bomber! Think about Lincoln walking over to the telegraph

The Romance of CW (continued)

station to find out the results of a battle. Or, how about Taft's son running to the telegrapher to obtain the election results for the nervous candidate. And with inspirational admiration, the thought of telegraphers receiving calls of distress and responding with alacrity to provide life-saving assistance. For me, it's the history; all those signals that were sent by an uncomplicated, yet elegant brass instrument that may, or may not have had significant meaning to the receiver.

Today, to send and copy CW is the unalloyed joy of communicating with another unique individual who takes pride and enthusiasm in practicing an art of the past. It is this shared experience that has developed a bond between CW operators. The simple pleasure of tapping out a QSO, trying to visualize your contact and accurately copying the message sent has an autodidactic quality, which does not exist when communicating by voice. The logging of one's accomplishments, the promise of receiving upon sending a QSL card, and the satisfaction of improving a skill set all contribute to why I chose to return to amateur radio and operate CW again.

Occasionally, after a great QSO, or unbelievable QRP DX, I'll complete my log, pull my headphones off and stare at my set up. One may believe I'm off my rocker, but I know many of you have done this! I'll stare at it and think, wow, what great hobby! You take a quiet satisfaction in knowing you did something that most of the people you know have no idea what you're doing, or how you did it. You'll shut everything down and walk away from your desk knowing you communicated with the present and the past. That's the romance of CW. Truly, love, for CW, is lovelier the second time around.



FISTS Veterans Celebration



Oct. 11–Nov. 11, 2016

- Using CW mode, contact 11 different amateurs that are U.S. veterans or active duty military. Each QSO must be a minimum of 11 minutes in length.
- Exchange: Name, QTH, and branch of service (Army, USAF, Marines, etc.)
- Log for each QSO: Call, Name, Date, Band, QSO Start Time, QSO End Time, QTH Branch of Service.

A special Endorsement Sticker is available for any QSO that is in progress at the 11th hour (your local time, a.m.), on November 11, 2016. Please make a note of the QSO in your submitted log.

Send mailed logs to:

FISTS Awards c/o Dennis Franklin, K6DF
4658 Capitan Dr.
Fremont, CA 94536

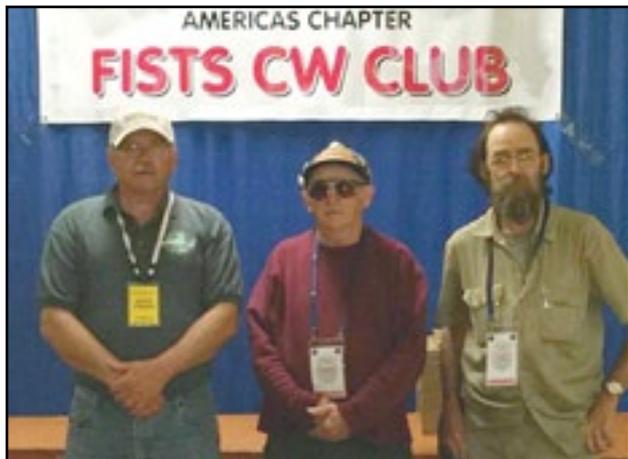
We need articles and reviews for *The KeyNote!*

**NOTE: Image files need to be high resolution
JPGs or 300 dpi TIF files at least 5" wide.**

Send your Word or text files to
keynote@fistsna.org

FISTS PHOTOS

Photos from the 2016 Dayton Hamvention



The booth set-up crew. L-R: Jamie WW3S, Larry KA8HFN, and Tim AC5SH



Rich W4RQ (left) presenting to Henry WD8Q a large key made by Rich and Rob AJ4SB to be used for QLF testing at the FISTS booth during Dayton Hamvention.



Manning the booth. L-R: Al W8FAX, Larry Ka8HFN, and Henry WD8Q



Phil AB8GB on the left renewing his club dues with Russ W4ZDU and Ray W84ZDU accepting the renewal.

See you in Dayton next year!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

Nice to see all the photos of various keys in the recent Keynote. Here's a paddle made by my father in about the mid-60s, WA8AED (SK) 1911-1999. It's two J-38 straight keys mounted back to back on a vertical support of steel and the base is also steel. This thing does NOT move around the desk! Note the Bakelite bases have been removed.

73, Gregory W2BEE #13085



Editor:

I'm sending pictures of my 40 Meter Rock Mite CW Rig I built and installed in a Walnut box I built.

73, Dick KF9GS #13858



SPRINT INFORMATION

FISTS Sprints are a great way to meet other FISTS members, collect FISTS numbers, and have a lot of fun. We hope to work you in the next FISTS SPRINT.

OBJECTIVE:

To exchange specified information with as many FISTS members as possible using Morse Code only, and within the time frame stipulated.

PARTICIPANTS:

Any properly licensed amateur radio operator, FISTS member or non-member is invited to take part in the contest. At least one of the two stations in each QSO must be a FISTS member.

DATE AND TIME:

Fall **SLOW SPEED SPRINT**—runs from 1700 to 2100 UTC on October 3, 2015

Fall **UNLIMITED SPRINT**—runs from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC on October 10, 2015

Winter **SLOW SPEED SPRINT**—runs from 1700 UTC to 21 UTC on February 6, 2016

Winter **UNLIMITED SPRINT**—runs from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC on February 13, 2016

BANDS:

Operation is limited to the following amateur bands: 3.5, 7, 14, 21, and 28 MHz amateur bands. Look for other participants around the FISTS frequencies: 3558, 7058, 14058, 21058, and 28058 kHz.

Work stations only once per band.

ENTRY CLASSES:

There are three entry classes: Club, QRO, and QRP.

QRO: Over 5 watts–100 watts output power. 100 watts is the maximum output power allowed.

QRP: 5 watts output power or less.

Club: (regardless of power).

Entry class **MUST** be shown on logs to be considered for entry in a particular class, or will be assumed QRO. An entry must be **ONE** class only, no combination of classes is allowed.

EXCHANGE:

The following information must be exchanged by both stations to count as a valid contest QSO:

FISTS members: RST, U.S. state/Canadian province/DXCC country, first name, FISTS number.

Non-FISTS members: RST, U.S. state/Canadian province/DXCC country, first name, output power.

DX COUNTRY STATUS:

U.S. states and Canadian provinces are those states and provinces that are contiguous and found within the North American continent. DX are those entities listed in the current ARRL DXCC publication, other than the above.

MULTIPLIERS:

Each U.S. state and Canadian province counts as 1 multiplier. Count each only once, no matter how many times worked. Each DXCC entity counts as 1 multiplier. Count each only once, no matter how many times worked.

SCORING:

Each QSO with a FISTS member: 5 QSO points.
Each QSO with a non-FISTS member: 2 QSO points.
Final score is total QSO points times multipliers.

CERTIFICATES:

Certificates will be awarded to the first, second, and third place finishers in each Entry Class.

LOG SUBMISSIONS:

All log entries must be received within 30 days after the Sprint to be considered valid. Logs not sent to the proper address will not be considered for entry. The logs will be spot checked for accuracy and correct scoring procedures.

All logs **MUST** contain the following information to be considered for entry: Your name and call sign. Club name if entry is for a club. Your FISTS number if a member. Entry class. Your claimed score. List of claimed multipliers. The entry form is the best way to record this information.

ELECTRONIC LOGS:

We accept electronic logs in standard Cabrillo format or ASCII text files. If you're not sure about your format, please contact me before the contest entry deadline. E-logs are sent to n2ed@fistsna.org ONLY.

PAPER LOGS:

Send log and forms to: FISTS Sprint Log, c/o Ed Wlodarski N2ED, 3 Shore Rd., Andover, NJ 07821-2240.

FISTS SPRINT ENTRY FORM

Entry Class: QRO _____ QRP _____ CLUB _____

SCORING: _____ QSO points X _____ multipliers = _____ final score

CLUB Name _____ FISTS Club # _____

Name _____ Call sign _____ FISTS # _____

Address (Street, City, State, Zip Code) _____

E-mail Address (optional) _____

MULTIPLIER CHECK-OFF LIST

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	VE	DX
CT	NY	DE	AL	AR	CA	AZ	MI	IL	CO	NB	NF/LB
MA	NJ	MD	FL	LA		ID	OH	IN	IA	NS	NT
ME		PA	GA	MS		MT	WV	WI	KS	PE	YK
NH			KY	NM		NV			MN	QC	BC
RI			NC	OK		OR			MO	ON	
VT			SC	TX		UT			NE	MB	
			TN			WA			ND	SK	
			VA			WY			SD	AB	

Please enclose paper logs ONLY, photos, comments, ideas, etc., with your entry and mail promptly to:

FISTS Sprint Logs

Ed Wlodarski N2ED
3 Shore Rd.,
Andover, NJ 07821-2240

I HAVE OBSERVED ALL FISTS SPRINT COMPETITION RULES AS WELL AS ALL REGULATIONS FOR AMATEUR RADIO IN MY COUNTRY. MY REPORT IS CORRECT AND TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE. I AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THE DECISIONS OF THE FISTS AWARDS COMMITTEE.

Date _____ Signature _____ Call sign _____

Comments:

TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR FISTS MEMBERSHIP

If you live in North, South or Central America, you may join the Americas Chapter of FISTS. Membership is open to all people interested in Morse Code, irrespective of their speed and ability. You can download a North American membership application from <http://fistsna.org/pdfdocs/nafists.pdf> or use the application form on the inside back cover of *The KeyNote*. You can also have an application e-mailed to you by sending your name and address to Jim Ranieri, AA9LS, aa9ls@turbotoads.com, or mail a SASE to Jim at 33778 Rebecca Rd., Kingston IL 60145 and Jim will send you an application via return postal mail.

The membership fee to join or renew is \$10.00 per year. This includes having *The KeyNote* mailed to you. You may join or renew for up to 5 years at one time. Family members of a current dues paying FISTS member may join and receive a membership number without paying additional dues, but only one issue of *The KeyNote* will be mailed to a household.

The membership fee to join or renew as a regular member and receive *The KeyNote* electronically (PDF file) is \$10.00 per year. Again, you may join or renew for up to 5 years.

FISTS numbers are not reassigned, so if you had a number in the past and renew your membership, you will retain the same membership number.

If you are age 80 and older, or under age 18, or have a family membership, membership is free. If you qualify for a free renewal, please drop Dennis K6DF a note by email or by postal mail around the time of your renewal each year. Let us know you are still interested in CW and FISTS so we can update your membership info and keep you on the Active Members List.

To join or renew, send a check or money order with your membership fee, along with your membership application, to Dennis Franklin K6DF, 4658 Capitan Drive, Fremont, CA 94536-5448. Please make checks payable to "FISTS CW Club." Include your call sign and FISTS number (if you are currently a member) on the memo line.

If you wish to pay your membership fee using PayPal, go to <http://fistsna.org/howdoi.html>. Use the proper PayPal box (JOIN or RENEW) to select the number of years you wish to Join or Renew. Enter your CALL and NAME to JOIN or enter your CALL, NAME, and FISTS Number if RENEWING in the space provided. For the over 80 or under 18 age groups, also include your date of birth, please. Be sure to include your home mailing address if it is different from the one you use for PayPal. Then click "Pay Now."

For non-US applicants and renewals, please make sure checks, money orders and PayPal funds are in USD (US Dollars).

Members that elect to receive their newsletters via on-line download will be send a User ID and Password from the newsletter server once their membership application has been processed. Links to change or reset your password are available on the main page of the Americas website <http://fistsna.org>.



FISTS CW CLUB Membership Application/Renewal



For North, Central, and South America including all territories and islands.

Call sign _____ NEW Member or Renewal, Enter FISTS # _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ ZIP+4 _____ Phone _____

Rig (optional) _____

Other club affiliations (optional—AARL, RSGB, etc.) _____

A User Name and Password will be sent to the e-mail address you provide below to give you access to current On-Line Newsletters as well as Member Only Areas of the FISTS CW Club web site.

E-Mail _____

Please check the appropriate box and enclose annual dues of \$10 per year in U.S. funds. Example...\$10 for one year, \$20 for two years, \$30 for three years, etc.

Regular Membership-\$10 per year Please Circle...**Mailed** and/or **On-Line*** Newsletters
(We encourage members to elect to download the newsletter to help lower printing and mailing costs.)

Family Membership-FREE—Please provide the Name, Call, and FISTS # of the dues paying family member.

Name _____ Call _____ FISTS # _____

Under Age 18-FREE Membership—Birthdate Required mm/yyyy _____

Over Age 80-FREE Membership—Birthdate Required mm/yyyy _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please make checks payable to “FISTS CW CLUB” and send to:
Dennis Franklin, K6DF, 4658 Capitan Dr., Fremont, CA 94536 USA

*E-Mail required
09/24/2015

Americas Chapter, FISTS CW Club
c/o Dennis Franklin K6DF
4658 Capitan Drive
Fremont, CA 94536-5448
www.fistsna.org
webmaster@fistsna.org

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #212
PULASKI, TN 38478

You Can Find Your Renewal Date on the Mailing Label
Or On the Following Web Page:

<http://www.fistsna.org/expdate.php>

Send in your stories and photos for *The KeyNote!*

When you've worked a FISTS, you've worked a friend.

