

The KeyNote



Newsletter of the Americas Chapter, FISTS CW Club—The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue #1, 2017

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"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 email 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 email addresses have changed from the last reference issue of *The Key-Note*. Please make note of the following listings.

When emailing a volunteer please put the word FISTS in the title of your email. This will help the volunteer recognize that your email is important and not spam.

Awards and Certificates

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

Club Call, KNØWCW

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

Membership Questions; Renewals; Call Changes; Name, Mailing, and Email 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

Dale Holloway, K4EQ, keynote@fistsna.org
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The KeyNote

The Newsletter of the Americas Chapter of FISTS

Issue #1, 2017

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From the Editor

Congratulations to Tim O’Conner, AC5SH (FISTS #5654), on being named the new president of the Americas Chapter of the FISTS CW Club. Tim is a long-time FISTS member and is also the club’s social media director. We look forward to continued growth under Tim’s leadership.

Amateur Radio call signs are extremely personal. Although there are many people in the United States with my name, there is only one person in the whole world with the call sign K4EQ. Me! So my apologies go to Dennis Franklin, our out-going Americas Chapter FISTS president, for identifying him as K4DF in the last *The KeyNote*. Dennis assures me that he has not moved from his beautiful northern California abode and that his call sign is *still* K6DF.

In my last column, I promised to recognize the first person to identify correctly the following International Morse code character: *dah di dah di di dah di dit*. Congratulations go to Darrel, AA7FV (FISTS #17210), who quickly identified this as a prosign which signifies, “This station is closing down.”

Prosigns are formed by combining two characters with no space between them. When writing the character, the two letters have a line over the top of them, which I am unable to do with this word processor. The prosign we’re talking about is written as CL (overlined). For years, I would mess up this character when I sent it while thinking of it as CL. However, when I started thinking of it as KID, I had no more problems. Go figure! I find CL

to be a helpful prosign to use when I plan to shut down my station after a QSO. I combine it with SK, another helpful prosign. Hence, I would send SK K6DF de K4EQ CL. Other stations listening then know I am no longer available for a contact.

In the February 2017 issue of *QST*, Steve Ford, WB8IMY, had a great article about Solar Cycle 24, our current cycle, which is one of the weakest on record. I encourage you to read it, particularly the sidebar on page 50 titled “Choose Your Mode Wisely.” Steve makes a strong case for using a narrow bandwidth transmission mode such as CW during the solar minimum we’ll soon experience (bottoming out around 2020). It’s no secret to most FISTS members that you get a lot more *bang for the watt* using CW than you do with SSB. Steve gives a simple explanation of why that’s true.

I regret to announce that Mary Cronin is stepping down from her position as *The KeyNote* designer so she can spend more time enjoying retirement. Mary is an outstanding graphic designer who has turned *The KeyNote* into a top-notch newsletter. Thank you, Mary, for all you’ve done for the FISTS CW Club.

My thanks to everyone who submitted items for this issue of *The KeyNote*. Your continued input is necessary for the success of our great newsletter. This will be my second and last issue as editor. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the FISTS CW Club.

CW Forever!

Dale Holloway, K4EQ (FISTS #3597)

Introducing Tim O’Conner, AC5SH New FISTS Americas Chapter President

Tim O’Conner, AC5SH (FISTS #5654), has been named the new president of the FISTS CW Club Americas Chapter. He follows Dennis Franklin, K6DF, who stepped down as president at the end of 2016.

Tim was first licensed in 1995 as KC5QBU with a post-code Technician Class license. He held that call sign as he progressed and received his Advanced Class license. He always wanted to learn the code and finally did. In 1999, he passed the Amateur Extra Class exam, shortly before the 20 wpm code test was eliminated, and was assigned his current call sign of AC5SH.

Around 1998, Tim joined the FISTS CW Club after he worked AI, N6RNP. AI sent him a letter explaining a mistake he had made. He also included an application to join FISTS. Tim says he regrets that he cannot recall AI’s FISTS number.

Tim enjoys ragchewing and working on improving his fist and ear. Lately, however, he’s been trying to operate in all FISTS events, at least, he says, “when the whacky non-schedule of my occupation as an over-the-road truck driver permits it.” He says he doesn’t have any awards but is certain he has enough FISTS contacts for a CC number. Before applying, however, he must go through his “monstrous log.” He says it’s monstrous because he logs and copies on the same sheet, then inputs the contacts into the G3ZOD Log Converter.

The AC5SH station includes a Yaesu FT857D, which he operates mostly mobile, and wires and whips for antennas. He usually operates CW with a bug and simply uses the dash side as a straight key for slow CW. He also has a Kent leg key,

which lately is used mostly in the annual G3ZQS straight key event. When he has time, he enjoys using RUFZ to sharpen his ear. RUFZ is a free program available for Windows at rufzxp.net.

Congratulations, Tim, on becoming the new president of our Americas Chapter.

Americas Chapter, President’s Message

By Tim, AC5SH

Hi Folks,

First, I wish to thank Karl, KB1DSB, then Dennis, K6DF, for their Herculean efforts in bringing the club this far after the passing of Nancy, WZ8C (SK). It has been a difficult time and without their invaluable work, our chapter would have ceased to exist. We also have many volunteers, which I shall refrain from naming for lack of space. All those folks, along with my fellow board members, have not only saved our chapter, but put us in a great position to move forward. I and the rest of the club are deeply grateful.

I have been placed in the position of president to succeed Dennis, K6DF, who will continue his fine work as our Awards and Membership manager and as webmaster. I will do my best to preserve and promote the club and address any concerns the membership has. Email sent to Info@fistsna.org will find me.

Please stay tuned to <http://fistsna.org> and also subscribe to our Updates email list by sending me an email indicating your desire to do so. These two things, along with your favorite FISTS social media outlet found at <http://fistsna.org/fistsmedia.html>, will keep you

President's Message (continued)

abreast of changes as well as new and exciting events we are planning. The development of these might fall between *The KeyNote* publication dates. One of those is an event in the next few months to honor Nancy, WZ8C (SK), which I'm sure everyone will want to participate in. I don't have enough detail on the event yet to put here.

One thing I need to mention now is that we plan to be at the new Hamvention location in Xenia, Ohio, not too far from the old place in Dayton. We need volunteers, so if you can be there, please email me ASAP.

I am looking forward to working with all of you as the club continues to further the use of CW on the amateur bands, to encourage newcomers to the CW mode, and to engender friendship within the membership.

Looking towards a bright future for CW, our chapter, and Amateur Radio.

73, Tim, AC5SH (FISTS #5654)
President of the Americas Chapter

Using KNØWCW

Happy 2017 everybody! During 2016, FISTS members using the club call sign KNØWCW logged just over 200 contacts. This year, I hope to at least double the number of our contacts from 2016. Remember, any FISTS member in good standing can operate using KNØWCW with permission.

As I have said in the past, running KNØWCW is a blast. I operated the FISTS Slow Speed Sprint and worked several current, past and non-fists members. It really is fun!

If you have never used our call sign, give it a try. You'll be glad you did. The club call can be used for all FISTS contests and events or for a

long weekend. If you're interested in operating KNØWCW, send me an email at:

kc2lsd@fistsna.org

and I'll put you on the calendar.

73 for now.

Cody, KC2LSD
FISTS KNØWCW Manager

*** ATTENTION CLUB MEMBERS! ***

Months are being added to your "Dues Expire Date" according to the amount of postage and credits you may have had remaining in the FISTS QSL Bureau when it was closed last October 2016. Months will be added at the following rate:

One month will be added for each \$1.00 or portion thereof. If your total is \$10.00 or over (\$10.00 is our annual dues rate), you will get 12 months added to your membership for each \$10.00 and one month for each remaining \$1.00.

Example: You have \$12.31 total for stamps and credit. You will receive 15 months added to your membership—12 months for the \$10 and 3 months for the remaining \$2.31.

Some members will receive automated *Thank You for Renewing* emails from the database server if the months added are over a certain amount. Many of you will not receive any notice if a few months were added to your membership. You may check your membership dues expire date on the following page:

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

This page will also show the number of months added to your membership.

This is a long process and I am not done with updating the database, so please be patient. Send questions to: membership@fistsna.org.

Dennis, K6DF
FISTS Membership

WELCOME NEW FISTS AMERICAS CHAPTER MEMBERS

Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C	Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C
AE0TT	17956	Vern	MO	N3IUI	17995	Michael	PA
K5TKO	17957	Richard	TX	W5NWT	17996	Paul	TX
WD5ETD	17958	Rick	OK	KG4GCX	17997	Bryan	NC
W2LAF	17959	Luke	NJ	KD2KUD	17998	William	NJ
WA1LBG	17960	Alan	FL	W0MLD	17999	Matt	IA
KE5RS	17961	John	TX	KM0RSE	18000	Morse Ops	CA
K7WXW	17962	Bill	OR			ARC	
K6CIM	17963	David	CA	W8CFO	18001	Charles	OH
W9AKX	17964	Bruce	FL	VA7CDB	18002	Paul	BC
KZ5Q	17965	Stephen	TX	K8SHB	18003	Joel	OH
KF7KU	17966	Cliff	OR	N3LBJ	18004	James	NC
VE7JBT	17967	John	BC	WI6QW	18005	Fremont A.R.	CA
W5ABH	17968	Micah	TX			Transmitting	
W2GPK	17969	Jerry	NJ			Society	
KI7JJC	17970	David	WA	KM4OZZ	18006	Gary	KY
NM5BB	17971	Bill	NM	KT5MMI	18007	Steven	TX
WD4ELG	17972	Mark	NC	KT0G	18008	Jeffrey	WV
KF7TUA	17973	Richard	WA	N0TGR	18009	Dick	KS
KC1FLN	17974	Carl	MA	W5FKW	18010	Richard	TX
KA9LYH	17975	Joshua	WI	NZ1B	18011	Lyle	FL
W4JKL	17976	John	KY	KK6URQ	18012	Ronald	CA
AB0LY	17977	Jim	MO	AI6VM	18013	John	CA
KD0JPE	17978	John	CO	NZ5NZ	18014	Justin	TX
K2LSB	17979	Lori	NY	WF6Q	18015	Craig	CA
W5NED	17980	Neall	NM	KM6HQI	18016	Michael	CA
KC0IMF	17981	Tobey	MO	KK4TKJ	18017	Charles	GA
K1RIK	17982	Richard	CT	W5UTW	18018	Charles	TX
K0FKG	17983	Tim	WY	W1AMX	18019	David	ME
N2KOF	17984	Jeffrey	CT	K2DCD	18020	Dennis	NJ
NT6AA	17985	David	CA	KF5DBN	18021	Charles	TX
KG5ORU	17986	Matthew	CA	N7DQ	18022	Michael	WA
AD0FB	17987	Douglas	MN	K3YEO	18023	Ronald	VA
WE3L	17988	Michael	PA				
N3JQ	17989	Sean	PA				
N3HAC	17990	Harrisburg					
		Academy ARC	PA				
WD5ENO	17991	Erik	TX				
AC8SI	17992	David	MI				
N5NN	17993	Michael	OK				
KM6HQU	17994	Richard	CA				

FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis, K6DF

Congratulations to all below who earned operating awards since mid-November of 2016. It appears that our European Chapter members have been very busy on the bands! Several of our Americas members have collected multiple awards as well.

FISTS award certificates are sent out to current dues paying members free of charge, so get on the air and start making contacts. If you are having a hard time tracking your QSOs for FISTS awards, consider using the free FISTS awards tracking and logging program, Log Converter.

Graham, G3ZOD, the author of Log Converter, is constantly providing updates and improvements to the program. This program will track your FISTS awards automatically and allow you to send in your award logs to the FISTS awards manager at the click of a button! You can also use this program for general logging. The best thing about it is...it's free! The Log Converter is available for download on the FISTS website. Look for the download link on the Americas Chapter main web page just above the Welcome New Members list.

Be sure to check the Americas Chapter web pages for up-to-date awards information and how to apply for them at:

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

If you have any awards questions please feel free to email me at awards@fistsna.org.

I wish everyone clean signals and good DX in 2017.

73, Dennis, K6DF ..._. _____ (30)

FISTS AWARDS ISSUED: Nov 12, 2016–Feb 13, 2017

Century Award:

DL5XL, SV2BBK, DK3DUA, IZ2FME

Silver Award:

N7RD, G3XVL, F5IYJ, I5EFO, EA6BB, DK3DUA

RCC 80 Mtr Endorsement: G3XVL

Spectrum Award: SP9NLI, F5IYJ

Spectrum Award 80 Mtr: M5ABN

Prefix Award: N7RD, KE5HL, K5YQF

Prefix 50 Award: N7RD, KE5HL, K5YQF

Prefix 100 & 150 Award: N7RD

Millionaire Award:

N7RD, K5YQF, MX5IPX, G0DDX, F5IYJ, AA8TA, DK3DUA

2 Million Award:

M0DRK, G6GLP, F5IYJ, DK3DUA

3 Million Award: G3XVL

4 Million Award: M5ABM, HB9FBG

8 Million Award: G4MLW

The Speed-X Model 450 Code Practice Oscillator

By Tom Stough, WØUFC (FISTS #12882)

In late 2016, I purchased a vintage straight key on eBay. As it happened, the seller in Michigan included a bonus item: a Speed-X Model 450 practice set. This is a code practice oscillator with an integrated straight key on a Bakelite base. After a bit of research, I found that 3VDC is required to actuate the buzzer, or two units can be wired together for tabletop instruction with a 6VDC source. (Were the intended students marine ops? Hams? Military? I couldn't find any information. Perhaps my fellow FISTS members can answer that question.)

So, I mounted the Speed-X 450 on a piece of plywood and connected two D cells. It made noise right away. The supplied key spring was a kludge item, so there was no up and down action. Morse Express in Aurora, Colorado, sent a proper Speed-X replacement.

After adjusting the buzzer's settings, I was able to make it sound a bit more pleasant to modern ears. The buzzer cover is missing and I haven't found a replacement. That cover might also reduce the volume and soften the tone.



The Speed-X Model 450 Practice Oscillator.

As you can see from the photo, the 450 cleaned up nicely. I wondered, how old could it be? It is embossed "Speed-X San Francisco." Here's some background from the Western Historic Radio Museum:

"The Speed-X name is first associated with Electro Manufacturing Company located in Fresno, California. In 1934, Stewart Johnson bought the Speed-X name and relocated the company to San Francisco. Johnson changed the name of the company to Speed-X Radio Manufacturing Company and the address was 30 Ninth St. in San Francisco. Johnson built Speed-X keys from 1934 until he sold the company to Les Logan in 1937."

Les Logan sold the Speed-X line to E.F. Johnson Company of Waseca, Minnesota, in 1947. The Speed-X mark was acquired in 1972 by Nye Viking Company, now of Priest River, Idaho. They make telegraph keys to this day, and Morse Express is one of their dealers.

I've seen photos of Model 450s identical to mine, except that they read "E.F. Johnson, Waseca, Minnesota." So, my 450 was likely made ca. 1937-1947. It's in remarkably good shape for being at least 70 years old. I look forward to demonstrating Morse with it in the years to come.

[This article first appeared in the newsletter of the Samuel F. Morse Amateur Radio Club in Sacramento, California. This slightly revised version is used by permission.]

Bayou Jumper 40–Meter Transceiver Spy Radio

By Larry Hastings, AB0AH

During World War II, many behind-the-lines agents and resistance groups used small portable radios for their secret communications (see *The Suitcase Set* at <http://www.qsl.net/kb7tbt/manuals/Ham%20Help%20Manuals/The%20Suitcase%20Set.pdf>). They were CW operated and had tubes, batteries and sometimes even hand cranked generators (see <http://www.paraset.nl>). They had to be portable and not so obvious.

Two designers, David Cripe, NM0S, and Jim Giammanco, N5IB, and the Four State QRP Group got together and created a modern day version, similar to the Mark 7, of those bygone years. It's called the Bayou Jumper (BJ) after the popular Knight Ocean Hopper regenerative receiver that so many Novice hams built a half-century ago and with a salute to Louisiana heritage (where Jim lives).

The 4SQRP group is kitting the transceiver for the QRP community. It is comprised of two separate circuits on one board: a crystal controlled transmitter and a regenerative receiver. The transmitter is super simple with spiral PCB trace inductors and five watts output power.

The BJ utilizes a regenerative receiver, the same as the original Paraset. This receiver provides a combination of sensitivity and selectivity with a low parts count. The receiver has been measured to have a minimum discernible signal (MDS) of better than -120 dBm, which is as good as many commercial receivers. The receiver tunes independently from the transmitter frequency. There are ways to spot the transmitter frequency on the receiver's tuning dial.



Switching between transmit and receive is performed with a rotary switch, just as was done with the old Paraset. It's simple and reliable. The entire transceiver was designed to fit inside a standard wooden box available from Hobby Lobby. It can be camouflaged as needed.



You can download the manual and schematic and/or purchase the BJ from the 4SQRP website, <http://www.4sqrp.com>. It comes with knobs,

(continued on page 10)

Bayou Jumper 40 (continued)

front panel and everything you see in the pictures except the wooden box. It even has built-in key crystals for 7.030 and 7.122 MHz.

I built mine in about two evenings. There are some very small capacitors, so be careful. They're not SMT, but if you drop one in the carpet, you'll never see it again. It runs on any filtered 12v supply or battery. It only draws 30 ma in the receive mode. I leave mine on 24 hours a day. It has a small amount of drift in the receiver during the first minute or so. I've never noticed any drift in the transmitter.

My first contact was with N6EV in El Camino Village, California, some 1,230 miles away with a 21-foot vertical made by Loops-N-More (<https://loopsnmore.com>). It brought back the Novice days of my Knight Kit Span Master regen and Ameco AC-1 two-tube transmitter kits.

There is, of course, a Yahoo group (Bayou Jumper) with lots of pictures, tips and modifications.



The CWops Award

The CW Operators' Club is soliciting nominations for the CWops Award for Advancing the Art of CW. The purpose of this yearly award is to recognize individuals, groups, or organizations that have made the greatest contribution(s) toward advancing the art or practice of radio communications by Morse code. Candidates for the award may be one or more of the following:

- Authors of publications related to CW
- CW recruiters, trainers, mentors, coaches and instructors
- Public advocates of CW
- Organizers of CW activities
- Designers and inventors who advance the art or practice of CW
- Other contributors to the art or practice of CW

The award is not limited to amateur radio operators and organizations. Nominations may be made by anybody (not limited to CWops members). This is a great opportunity to nominate a worthy fellow FISTS member. Nominations should be emailed to awards@cwops.org with a copy to secretary@cwops.org. In order to be considered, a nomination must be received by April 15, 2017 and include:

- Name(s) and call sign(s) (if applicable) of nominee(s), and complete contact information including their postal address(es), email address(es), and telephone number(s).
- A detailed explanation supporting nominee qualifications according to the above criteria.
- Name, telephone number, email address, and call sign (if applicable) of the person submitting the nomination.

A plaque will be presented at Hamvention 2017. If the recipient(s) is/are not present, it will be sent to them.

One a Day Radio Club

By Joe Falcone, N8TI, FISTS #1016

Back in the 1990s, when I was just starting out as a ham, I thought that having a club by the name of the *One a Day Radio Club* would be fun. The idea was that the members would attempt to make a least one radio contact a day. The name of the club was brazenly taken from the One A Day vitamin products, which I had taken as a kid. I do not think I actually got the club off the ground. I may have obtained a club call, but that was it.

Well, over the Christmas holidays, when I was thinking of New Year's resolutions to adopt, the old idea of the One a Day Radio Club came back to me. I thought, "What a great idea to make a New Year's resolution to attempt at least one CW contact a day for 2017." Certainly the idea was better than making a resolution to exercise every day or not to eat ice cream. At least the one-a-day resolution was possible to keep.

I did not make the one-a-day resolution because it was a unique resolution. There are plenty of hams who have amazing streaks of on the air activity. I had not thought of anything really new by stating a goal of one contact a day. The reason I made the resolution was because there seemed to be very little activity around the FISTS frequencies during the holidays when I got on the air. I thought that any addition to this very low level of activity would increase the odds of someone tuning to our FISTS frequencies and actually running into another FISTS member calling CQ.

In my opinion, the lack of FISTS activity is the largest problem we have as a club. Thanks to FISTS and the work of Nancy Kott, WZ8C (SK), CW seems to be alive and well. The problem is that it is alive and well on frequencies other than the FISTS frequencies.

Therefore, I suggest that all FISTS members start their own personal One a Day or Once a Week radio club. Try to get on the air, preferably around the FISTS frequencies, and call "CQ FISTS." Get some activity back around our frequencies!

So, how did my club work out? As you can imagine, work, family, and other activities did interfere. This is because I work full time and by 9:30 p.m. I am falling asleep, since I have to get up at 5:30 a.m. every morning. As a result, I modified my One a Day club to a Seven a Week club. In other words, I want to log at least seven contacts per week.

Making the resolution has worked. I am making at least seven contacts a week and have even made some contacts with other FISTS members. They're out there! That's quite exciting. What I realized is that turning on the radio and dusting off the key leads to fun. I usually get on at night and work 80 meters calling CQ FISTS on 3558 kHz for a few times before I move off frequency. Part of what I am trying to do is complete Worked All States during 2017. It's just another goal, but one that lends a little excitement to every new state I pick up as I make contacts. In addition, I am having a lot of fun ragchewing with fellow hams on CW.

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An Encounter Never To Be Forgotten

By Dale Holloway, K4EQ

As a result of our ham radio hobby, we get to meet and know some wonderful people on and off the air—sometimes in unexpected ways. I vividly remember one of those unexpected encounters.

It was sometime in the early summer of 1961 when two strangers knocked on the front door of our Grand Rapids (Michigan) home. They introduced themselves to my mother as being from the FCC monitoring station in Allegan, which was about 40 miles south of us. At that time it was one of seven major FCC monitoring stations in the country.

When they asked to speak with me, my heart skipped a few beats. They said they had received complaints from two neighbors that I was interfering with their televisions. Consequently, they wanted to do some testing from my station. So, while one of them went upstairs with me to my shack, the other went to the home of one of my complaining neighbors. I was scared to death and thought sure I'd end up in Jackson State Prison. Instead of KN8WHB, I'd be something like 4378527.

When the man arrived at the first neighbor's house, he called on the phone and had me start transmitting on 15 meters. Sure enough! My CW signal completely wiped out the screen. He did the same test at the second neighbor's house with the same results. Jackson, here I come.

The men didn't put me on what was known then as quiet hours, but they strongly suggested I limit my 15-meter operating to hours when few people were watching TV. Huh?

Well, I did exactly as they suggested—for about a week. If I was going to work any good DX, I figured I had to get on 15 meters. So one Saturday morning (cartoon time), I determined I was going to open up a completely dead 15-meter band. I called CQ, but to no avail. I called again and again, but no one answered.

Then the phone rang. I had a bad feeling about that call as I picked up the phone. Sure enough, it was one of the men who had visited me a few weeks earlier. He was listening to me from the monitoring station in Allegan. I think at that moment I prayed one of those real eloquent prayers: "HELP!" The subsequent conversation went something like this:

FCC: "Dale, what are you doing?"

Me: "Not much."

FCC: "Well, I'm listening to you call CQ on 15 meters."

Me: "You are?"

FCC: "Yes! What are you hearing?"

Me: "Nothing!"

FCC: "I know. Do you think it would be better if you didn't operate right now?"

I thought that was an excellent suggestion and told him so. In fact, I would have told him anything he wanted to hear. I was scared to death. It would be a long time before I worked 15 meters again.

Upon reflection, it's clear that my guests from the FCC were wonderful people. They could have been nasty and officially restricted my operating time. Instead they were courteous, professional, and helpful. Regardless, that unexpected encounter was one never to be forgotten.

Cumulatives Report— January 2017

This monthly report contains the first FISTS Americas Cumulatives 2017 results covering the sessions in January 2017.

Welcome back and thank you for the January logs. This time the Cumulatives are running for a full year. Certificates will be awarded to the top three entrants as well as Vibroplex semi-automatic (bug) keys for the top three non-FISTS officer entrants. So, there is every reason to join in and build up your score for the end of the year.

Call Sign	Position	Total
AK4NY	1	46
K5YQF	2	40
I5EFO	3	26
WI5H	4	9
K4EQ	5	6
AC5SH	6*	3
G3ZOD	6*	3
K6DF	8	1

* FISTS Officer

Soapbox:

Tim, AC5SH, FISTS #5654—Although work mostly prevented my participation in Cumulatives last month, I did get set up by the very end of the last session and managed to grab Tom, AK4NY, just in time. Of course I did stay on for a bit afterwards as long as I was set up and worked a few more. I really think that is the point of these events anyway, to get us all on air with CW having fun.

Tom, AK4NY, FISTS #17578—A fun month SKCC WES brought me many contacts on the 8th. Band conditions seemed to be OK. On the 22nd worked 20, 30 and 40 and found the most activity on 40. I was a little surprised at the number of FISTS members who were lurking but not out there CQing. I hope to CU on the air.

Emil, I5EFO, FISTS #17028—Good QSO with EU and also VK, but the absence of propagation towards the USA.

Cecil, K5YQF, FISTS #8077—Off and running. GL to everyone. Hope to see many in the Winter Sprints.

Dennis, K4DF, FISTS #3076—20 meters was dead today. Called CQ a long time with no answers. Heard JJ1CKN calling CQ and gave him a call; had a nice chat; his WX sunny 2C. Much better than our cold rain here in CA.

Mike, WI5H, FISTS #16705—Happy New Year! While I probably will not be able to work all of the FC Sundays, I hope to work some of them and I hope to operate as KN0WCW/5 for some of the FC time slots. Oh yes, the Presentation Original Vibroplex “bug” is really nice. I am looking forward to seeing someone else receive one next year.

(continued, page 14)

Cumulatives Report (continued)

Next 2017 Sessions

March 12	2000–2200 UTC
March 26	2000–2200 UTC
April 09	1900–2100 UTC
April 23	1900–2100 UTC
May 14	1900–2100 UTC
May 28	1900–2100 UTC
June 11	1900–2100 UTC
June 25	1900–2100 UTC
July 09	1900–2100 UTC
July 23	1900–2100 UTC
August 13	1900–2100 UTC
August 27	1900–2100 UTC
September 10	1900–2100 UTC
September 24	1900–2100 UTC
October 08	1900–2100 UTC
October 22	1900–2100 UTC
November 12	2000–2200 UTC
November 26	2000–2200 UTC
December 10	2000–2200 UTC
December 24	2000–2200 UTC

Here's an overview of the rules:

- Exchange a minimum of: RST, name, QTH or US state, FISTS number (if available).
- QSOs must be at least 5 minutes long (fill in with whatever you like: WX, equipment, antenna etc.).
- Bands 80m, 40m, and 20m. Recommended frequencies are around 3.558 MHz, 7.058 MHz, & 14.058 MHz, keeping clear of QRP frequencies.

- Call “CQ FISTS”.
- One QSO with a station per session.
- Logs to be received monthly by the end of the 5th of the following month.

For the full rules and logging information, see <http://fistsna.org/fc>. Please do come on the air and encourage your buddies to as well!

Americas Chapter Cumulatives Event Bug Key Winners!

FISTS CW Club Americas Chapter congratulates the winners of Vibroplex semi-automatic (bug) keys in the 2016 Cumulatives CW activity.

The first place award of a Vibroplex Original Presentation semi-automatic key was awarded to Mike Maner, WI5H; the second place award of a Vibroplex Original Deluxe semi-automatic key was awarded to Tom Spencer, AK4NY; the third place award of a Vibroplex Original Standard semi-automatic key was awarded to Cecil Turquette, K5YQF.

Three more Vibroplex bug key prizes will be awarded at the end of 2017 to the top three entrants in the new 2017 Cumulatives. Entries are welcomed from members and non-members. Winners will also receive a free one year subscription to FISTS CW Club (not applicable to life members). The Cumulatives event runs for two hours on the 2nd and 4th Sundays each month. CW QSOs, which must last for at least five minutes, can be on 80m, 40m, or 20m. For full details, please visit <http://fistsna.org/fc>.

Complete 2016 Year-End Cumulatives Report

Certificate winners for having the three highest actual scores were (1) Dennis, K6DF, (2) Mike,

(continued on page 15)

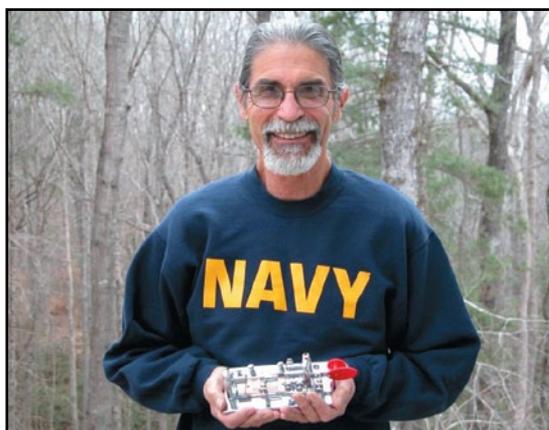
Bug Key Winners (continued)

WI5H, and (3) Tom, AK4NY. K6DF is a FISTS officer and ineligible for a prize, which is why the Vibroplex prizes went to WI5H, AK4NY, and K5YQF.

Thank you to everyone who joined in as an entrant or just came along for some enjoyable QSOs. The 2017 Cumulatives have started fresh and are running January through December of this year. At right are the final standings for the 2016 Cumulatives.



WI5H with his 1st place award.



AK4NY with his 2nd place award.

2016 Cumulatives Standings

Call	Points
K6DF*	89
WI5H	87
AK4NY	76
K5YQF	75
I5EFO	70
AC5SH*	22
G0ILN	20
G3ZOD*	18
M0SHM	6
W2XYZ	3
KN0WCW**	34
MX5IPX**	12
GX0IPX**	3

*FISTS Officer

**Check Log



K5YQF with his 3rd place award.

The Keynote Writer's Guide

By Dale Holloway, K4EQ

No doubt you have noticed that most of the articles you read in *The KeyNote* are written by FISTS members. This is by design. We are extremely grateful for those of you who have shared your knowledge and experiences with the rest of us by writing articles for us to print. We couldn't have a newsletter without your help.

I happen to believe, though, that out of the hundreds of FISTS members, we have many more potential, albeit shy authors. You may be one of those members. With you in mind, I recently put together a guide to help you get started as you prepare your article. Most of what follows is taken from that guide. The complete guide can be found on the FISTS website at:
www.fistsna.org/pdfdocs/Keynote%20Writer's%20Guide.pdf.

What to Write About

As you consider writing an article for *The KeyNote*, keep in mind that FISTS is a CW club. Therefore, your article should pertain, at least remotely, to Morse code. You could write about an experience, a review of equipment, a how-to, a... well, use your imagination. If you're not sure if your idea would work for *The KeyNote*, contact the editor who will be happy to discuss it with you. You're probably onto something good.

Preparing Your Manuscript

1. We prefer manuscripts in either Microsoft Word or plain text format.
2. Do not try to format your document like a magazine page. That type of formatting will take place on this end. Simply format your text as you might format a high school report. It may be single- or double-spaced.

3. Please do not embed pictures within your manuscript. Attach them to your email as separate image files.
4. Be sure to include captions for all your pictures. Put the captions at the end of the article and identify which picture goes with which caption.
5. Proper reference must be given to any material used from other sources. Even if you are the author, if your article was previously published, including on the Internet, you must receive written permission (email is sufficient) from the webmaster or publisher for it to be used in *The KeyNote*. A copy of the permission must be forwarded to the editor.
6. Include your name, call sign, and FISTS membership number in your manuscript.
7. Before you hit the Send button, it's a good idea to read your story out loud to yourself or another person, or have it read to you. You may be surprised at how awkward something sounds.

Writing Tips

Through the years, I have had many of my professional and non-professional articles published. Without exception, editors have made changes to every article. Also, without exception, the published article was better than what I had submitted.

One of the goals of the editor of *The KeyNote* is to make your published article better than the one you submitted with as few changes as possible. But keep in mind that editorial changes are inevitable, including changes to punctuation, grammar, and spelling. What follows are a few

(continued on page 17)

Writer's Guide (continued)

tips that will make your submission less likely to be heavily edited. Some of the tips may be debatable, but the goal is for consistency.

1. *Alot* is not a word. It should be *a lot*.
2. Put just **one space** after punctuation at the end of a sentence. The two-space rule is a holdover from the typewriter age. The advent of digital typesetting has changed the rules.
3. Run a spell check with your word processor, but don't rely 100% on it, particularly with some of our ham radio jargon.
4. The abbreviation for gigahertz is GHz; megahertz is MHz; kilohertz is kHz (notice the lowercase letter k); and hertz is Hz.
5. The FCC assigned you a *call sign* (two words) **not** a callsign.
6. Because of common usage, we have chosen to use the word *website* as opposed to *web site*. Also, we have chosen to go with *email* without the hyphen.
7. There are two voices in English grammar: active voice and passive voice. You may search the Internet and other sources for the difference. Sentences in the active voice are less wordy and more energetic.
8. *Capitalization*
Amateur Radio—Used together, the words *Amateur Radio* generally are capitalized and the words *ham radio* are not. The FCC capitalizes *Amateur Radio* in their documents since it is the name of a radio service.

Morse code—Publications are inconsistent regarding the capitalization of *Morse code*.

Some capitalize the word *code* while others do not. For consistency in *The KeyNote* use the lowercase for the word *code*; hence, it is *Morse code*.

Internet – The word *Internet* is capitalized.

9. *Job Titles*—Generally, job titles are capitalized only when they precede and are combined with the name of the person holding the title. See the website for examples.

Images

1. One or two pictures make your article more interesting. However, they must be good quality images. Therefore, all image files need to be high (≥ 300 dpi resolution JPGs or 300 dpi TIF files at least 5" wide so they can be downsized at the right resolution for the page layout.
2. Images captured from websites or other media (newspapers, magazines, club news letters, etc.) cannot be used unless you have received written permission from the webmaster or publisher. A copy of the permission must be included with your article. If you own your images and they have not been published, please include a statement to that effect.

Submitting Your Manuscript

1. *The KeyNote* is published in March, June, September, and December. The deadline for articles to be submitted is the 15th of the month prior to the publication month. There is no guarantee, however, that your article will be in the next issue. It depends on the space available for that issue.
2. Please email your manuscript to : keynote@fistsna.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Dale,

This happened on 29 December. 20m was very quiet but I thought I would try and raise a "FISTS" so put out a CQ on 14058. WB2LQF came back, about S1 on the meter (reasonably accurate) saying he was QRP using a KX1, but I didn't get his antenna information. He subsequently sent this email:

Thanks for the QSO, Dave. I just finished building my new KX1 a few minutes earlier and I really didn't expect to make the contact! It was laying on the bench, all opened up while I peaked everything. You were my FIRST 20 meter contact with it. I think I was putting out about 1.5 watts or so on 6 AA batteries and a piece of wire stretched across the room. Wish the QSB wasn't there. 73, Stan, WB2LQF

I'm sure this made Stan's day. It certainly made mine! Events like this make radio so worthwhile. The FISTS frequency is a great meeting place.

73 and Happy New Year,
Dave Plumridge, G3KMG, FISTS #124

Hi Dale,

Here is a picture you might want to print in the Keynote. It is of me, WA9PWP, pointing to a road sign for Morse, Wisconsin. We were just driving past it on a vacation daytrip and I had to stop for that picture. If you look closely at my car, you can see I am running HF mobile and I did operate almost exclusively CW. That was a blast! In fact, I hold FISTS Mobile Century Award #4! This picture was taken in 2001.

Paul Goemans, WA9PWP, FISTS #2153



[This picture was first published in the December 2001 issue of QST. It is used with permission of the ARRL.—Editor]

PHOTOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

From the K6DF collection



WWII Flameproof Leg Key CAQZ 26026 made by Brelco.



Navy Flame Proof Key Type CJG 26003A made by J. H. Bunnell & Co., March 1955 with the original box.

New in FISTS Store

The FISTS store is now offering Khaki color baseball caps for sale. The cap has our five-sided club logo embroidered on the front and is one size fits all with a Velcro sizing strap in the back. Order yours today online at:

www.fistsna.org/store.html.



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—ARRL, 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
300 Town Center, Suite 2370
Southfield, MI 48075
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.

