

The KeyNote



Newsletter of the FISTS CW Club—The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue #2, 2014

QLF?

by Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, FISTS #6938

QLF is not in any official “Q Code” list, but it’s definitely become part of CW operating lore. When sent as “QLF?” it means, “Are you sending with your left foot?” Depending on who you’re in contact with at the time, it might be humorous or derogatory.

I seriously doubt that any FISTS member would send “QLF?” during a QSO, as one of our mottoes is “Courtesy at all times.” I have on more than one occasion, though, considered sending, “MAYBE I WL QLF” and actually switching to my left foot, as there are times when I think that I might actually do better sending with my left foot.

I bring this up because Terry, W1QF, FISTS #7221 recently sent me a copy of an actual QLF certificate he received at a hamfest when he had the call KI8JA (see right).

Now, I don’t know how many of you actually have experience sending with your left foot, but with all the CW operating experience among our members, I’m sure that some of you do. With that in mind, I am embarking on a little construction project to build a foot-operated key hooked to an oscillator. This will be in our booth at the Dayton Hamvention 2015. Members who can demonstrate their proficiency or even marginally acceptable dexterity at QLF keying will be presented with a QLF Excellence certificate courtesy of FISTS.



“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

QSL Bureau

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

Club call, KNOWCW

Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, karl@fistsna.org
478 CR 53, Rogersville, AL 35652-3503

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

Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, karl@fistsna.org
478 CR 53, Rogersville, AL 35652-3503

Membership Application or Sample KeyNotes for Friends

Jim Ramoero, AA9LS, aa9ls@turbotoads.com
33778 Rebecca Rd., Jingston, IL 60145

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

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

Club Presentation Packets

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

Code Buddy Volunteers and Buddies

Nick Yokanovich, K3NY, k3ny@aarl.net
108 Brent Rd., Arnold, MD 21012

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

Curtis Gidding, KC9UNL, feetwetlogs@fistsna.org
109-B West Tomaras Ave., Savoy, IL 61874

KeyNote Newsletter

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, keynote@fistsna.org
1325 Orkney Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48103

FISTS Store, Supplies, Shirts, Mugs, Etc.

Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, karl@fistsna.org
478 CR 53, Rogersville, AL 35652-3503

Please check your *KeyNote* label for your renewal date. Dues are:

- Regular membership—\$15 a year
- Ages 65–79—\$10 a year
- Under 18 and over 80—free

Starting in 2015, Regular membership with PDF download of *KeyNote*, \$10.00 per year.

Checks should be payable to FISTS CW Club by mail to: FISTS CW Club, c/o Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, 478 CR 53, Rogersville, AL 35652-3503, or via PayPal on our club website at www.fistsna.org/howdoi.html.

The KeyNote

The Newsletter of the North American Chapter of FISTS

Issue #2, 2014

Editor: Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

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Editor's Notepad: Get on the Air!

I have been a ham for a long time, 43 years in fact. Like a lot of you, though, I was QRT for many years. I got back on the air about a dozen years ago, and since then I've been very active. I have been averaging more than three contacts per day since then.

Shortly after getting back on the air, I joined FISTS. My membership certificate is dated August 2002. Six months later, I earned Century Award #1389.

The point of all this is not to impress you with my operating prowess, but rather to encourage you all to get on the air more. Since taking over as editor of *The KeyNote*, I've made more of an effort to get on the FISTS frequencies, and to be honest, I'm disappointed that there aren't more of you on as well.

Last night, for example, I got on 7058 kHz and called CQ for more than ten minutes before someone finally came back to me. After I gave him my FISTS number, he replied, "SRI OM NOT A FISTS MEMBER." After ending that contact, I called CQ again. This time, it didn't take quite as long to get a call, but I pretty much the same reply after sending my FIST number, "SRI BUT DONT HV A FISTS NR."

Other evenings, I've heard lots of SKCC and NAQCC activity, but little or no FISTS activity. How can we preserve Morse if no one is getting on the air? FISTS is supposed to be the "International Morse Preservation Society," isn't it? We have to do more than just talk and read about operating CW, we have to actually do it. 7058 kHz and 3558 kHz should be hopping every night of the week.

I want to start working you guys. After all, we also say, "When you've worked a FISTS, you've worked a friend," and I need all the friends that I can get.

So, WATSA OMs? You don't have to go crazy and make three contacts every day like I do, but can I ask you to get on one of the FISTS frequencies once or twice a week and make a couple of contacts? I hope so because I'll be listening for you.

73, Dan KB6NU

Welcome New FISTS NA Chapter Members

Call	FISTS#	First Name	State	Call	FISTS#	First Name	State
WA2HOM	16780	Hands On Museum ARC	MI	N5FUR	16824	Michael	TX
				VE3NMW	16825	Terry	ON
KK4PNS	16781	Dave	FL	N9DLI	16826	Mike	IN
W6RSO	16782	Dan	CA	AG5M	16827	Richard	WA
KK4EAF	16783	Nathan	AL	W9MIC	16828	Mike	IL
KT6L	16784	Grant	CA	W7SAG	16829	John	ID
WX2H	16785	Richard	NJ	KB8J	16830	Tom	MI
KK4CCL	16786	Roy	KY	W0NWH	16831	Virginia	MO
WS0G	16787	John	IA	N4HAL	16832	Bill	NC
W4DDM	16788	Dean	GA	W5ASP	16833	Joe	TX
WR1X	16789	Paul	MA	K2ONN	16834	Bill	NC
KC0SM	16790	Mile	CO	KB9SKP	16835	Theodore	WI
K4YZG	16791	James "Gus"	TN	N1IME	16837	Kevin	NH
No Call	16792	Daniel	GU	N7ENL	16838	John	WA
AD5QA	16793	Tom	VA	N7JEH	16839	Joe	NV
KB3LLA	16794	Ken	MD	KC7DM	16836	John	OR
KD0DK	16795	David	IA	KA0HKF	16840	Glenn	MO
KC8Y	16796	Ken	OH	KW4DON	16841	Don	NC
AE6ZM	16797	Wes	WA	KK4QYN	16842	Robert	FL
KL3OK	16798	Nick	AK	VE7CGE	16844	Lou	BC
KD0OIA	16799	Timothy-Allen	IA	KF5RYI	16843	Steve	TX
K5WLW	16800	Wayne	TX	KA9NOO	16845	Tom	IN
KI6ZSK	16801	James	CA	WA7PEA	16846	Earl	WA
KM5VZ	16802	Bill	TX	KC1APK	16847	Dave	VT
WA6JSR	16803	Dave	VA	WA5LSV	16848	Larry	TX
KJ9P	16804	Tom	IL	W4RP	16849	Rick	FL
NL7AA	16805	James	AK	W4YAT	16850	Barry	SC
NV5S	16806	Jim	TX	K2AM	16851	Rex	PA
KF5DNI	16809	Evans	NM	AC2KJ	16852	Dima	NY
KA6LJT	16810	Lowell	CA	K1RWR	16853	Bob	MA
AG6EF	16807	Jim	CA	AA2ID	16854	Hal	NY
KC2THO	16808	Tom	NJ	N5LNX	16855	Craig	TX
K0JZS	16811	Justin	VA	K0ALN	16856	Bob	CO
VE1OU	16812	John	NS	VE7GWN	16857	Floyd	BC
KC1CHM	16813	Tony	NH	KK4SNC	16858	Orlando	FL
WD0HVS	16814	Steven	IL	KH6NX	16859	Robert	HI
WM3X	16815	Bill	NC	KK4DZX	16860	Joe	WI
N0MH	16816	Michael	KY	K7ZQ	16861	Walt	WA
W0VX	16817	Dave	TX	N9XJN	16862	Joe	IL
WB4IT	16818	Brian	AL	AB6YA	16863	Warren	CA
AA2O	16819	William "JC"	CO	WE5O	16864	Ron	SC
W9YU	16820	Roger	IL	KF7YRS	16865	Lee	AZ
KD0NAF	16821	Larry	MN	W6DGD	16866	Dale	CA
K1AME	16822	Stephen	NH	KG4ZQY	16867	Wayne	GA
W0AKQ	16823	Denny	IA	VE4AEA	16868	Lloyd	MB

The Beginning of FISTS

By Joe Falcone, N8TI, FISTS #1016

I joined FISTS around 1996 when I saw some sort of advertisement for it. My number is 1016, and, at that time, the English FISTS Club had given Nancy a block of numbers to give out, and you could not tell how many members there were in the club just by looking at the numbers.

I came to Nancy's attention because I was interested in packet radio at the time and I had posted the FISTS advertisement to all of the bulletin boards on the packet network. Well, pretty soon a lot of people started joining FISTS and gave me credit for sponsoring them. Nancy called me on the phone and asked just who I was and how I could sponsor all those new members from all over the country!

We talked a bit, and I happened to mention that I was a tax lawyer. A few months after that, she asked if I could assist with getting the club nonprofit status, mostly for the purpose of obtaining discount mailing rates from the Post Office. I was more than happy to help with that, and shortly, the club received nonprofit status.

As we talked, we both agreed that CW was really important, and should not be dropped as an exam requirement. More importantly, at the time, CW was under attack. They were closing the Maritime CW stations, and there was some concern that the FCC would eliminate the CW-only portions of the bands. In addition, the ARRL was perceived by some as anti-CW. In the late 1990s, hams began using personal computers and the non-CW digital modes were being touted as the future. This, of course, is still going on today. Some hams even predicted that CW would be phased out and that everyone was going to use computers to communicate in the future. Vibroplex was in trouble and Single Side Band was supposedly "king."

Nancy stood practically alone against the naysayers that said that CW had seen its day and should be put in the trash bin of history. She plugged along, first as the CW columnist for World Radio and then as Chief Editor. She was at every Dayton Hamvention, tirelessly promoting Fists and CW. She did all of the FISTS administrative work, free of charge. She never took a penny. (I never did either, by the way.)

She understood that CW was not only important, but was just plain fun and could not be measured against the amount of information that could be transferred by a "baud" or "bit" from a computer. She understood that Single Side Band would be eventually replaced by Cell Phones. She understood that CW operators are a fraternity, not just a bunch of old guys pounding brass.

Yes, the ARRL did support the elimination of the CW requirement for licenses, but subsequently has realized that a lot of its members do enjoy CW and it is an important and fun mode of radio communication. As such, CW is an important part of the ARRL's publications today. Nancy's continual support of CW brought the ARRL around.

Would CW have died out if Nancy Kott had not stepped up to the plate? I really don't know. I do know that back in the 1990s, it was a lonely road that she traveled promoting CW. I think she made a wonderful difference for our favorite mode. We will all miss her.



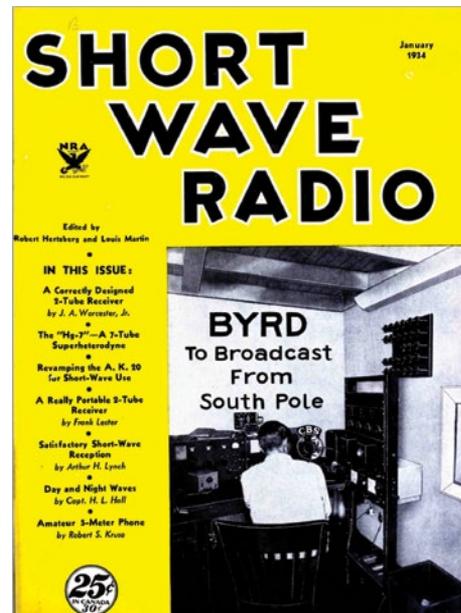
A Codeless Amateur License in 1934?

*Ted, K2QMF found this in the January 1934 issue of **Short Wave Radio**. As you can see, hams debated the utility of the code test even as far back as the 1930s. This issue, as well as many other magazines from the early days of radio can be found at <http://www.americanradiohistory.com/index.htm>.*

ALTHOUGH we doubt if anyone in Government circles is giving the matter any serious thought, there seems to be a lot of noise at the present time about creating a special class of amateur license that will not involve a code test. Considering the numerous and unmatched privileges already enjoyed by the American amateur, it seems to us that any demands for a license class of this kind are ridiculous. Many honest amateurs admit that even the present test is too easy, and is bringing many irresponsible persons on the air. Of course, everyone has to begin some time, so we must forgive the beginner his rotten fist or his hoarse modulation, as long as he stays within band, uses d.c. for plate supply and otherwise conforms to the spirit, as well as the letter, of the Federal Radio Commission regulations.

When you stop to consider that the American amateur is not even required to pay a cent in the way of license fees, that he is permitted to operate absolutely unhampered, and that the Army and the Navy defend him at international conferences while the highly military governments of other nations try to wipe him off the map, we think it is time to stop biting the hand that feeds us, so to speak.

The recent federal economy wave was responsible for a serious reduction in the technical administrative staff of the F.R.C. You can just about imagine the mess that would be created by a lot of unchecked so-called "amateurs" who are willing to jeopardize their own freedom by their



unwillingness to learn the code, which, after all, is the real language of radio.

Why do some people consider the code a stumbling block? It is really very easy to learn, as 10-year-old children and 75-year-old patriachs have discovered. Besides, a knowledge of the code greatly increases the enjoyment that you can obtain from a short-wave receiver, even if you have no intention of applying for an amateur license.

To many people not familiar with the code, the host of mysterious dots and dashes that sometimes interrupts music are things which should be eliminated by law; but to those with even a slight knowledge of the code, these mysterious interruptions are highly interesting.

Airplane, coastal and naval stations, all transmitting information that really makes sense, may easily provide hours and hours of entertainment, especially when you want to get away from the beaten path. —R. H.

[R.H. is the magazine's editor, Robert Hertzberg]



Take Advantage of the FISTS QSL

Bureau

By Stan Reas, K4UK, FISTS #2934,
QSL Bureau Manager

The FISTS QSL Bureau is one of the services that FISTS provides to its members. Via the Bureau, you can exchange QSL cards with FISTS members worldwide.

Since November 1997 members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club of Virginia have provided the World Wide QSL service for the International Morse Preservation Society, better known as the FISTS CW Club. Presently the six members include:

- Riley, K4ORD handles district 1 calls
- Dick, K1HEL handles district 2 calls
- Stan, K4UK handles district 3, 4, 9, VE, and DX calls
- Frank, K4HOA handles district 5 and 8 calls
- JJ, W4EIE handles district 6 calls
- Buddy, W4YE handles district 7 and 0 calls

Over the years, the Bureau has handled 403,725 cards.

To use the FISTS QSL Bureau, you no longer have to send SASEs to us. Simply send cash, checks, or stamps, and we will prepare #10 business size envelopes with a “Forever” stamp on each of them. Each envelope we send out will normally contain seven QSL cards. We will print out labels per the address that we have in our members list.

Based on present postage rates, the amount deducted for each envelope will be 55 cents. This covers the cost of the envelope, the label and the “Forever” stamp.

For those members who have previously donated money or stamps to the QSL Bureau, we will use these donations to make envelopes when we use your last one to mail cards. We will continue doing that until the value of the donation is used up.

The Bureau web site www.fistsburo.org provides information about who uses the Bureau and the Status of cards and envelopes we have on hand for them.

The “Bureau Use Search” provides a fast method to determine whether a member uses the Bureau or whether the member only sends QSLs directly or does not QSL at all.

The “Bureau Status Search” provides a method for members to find out the number of cards and envelopes we have on hand for them here at the Bureau.

The web site is updated monthly.

We love providing this service, but if you wish to exchange QSL cards with a FISTS member through the Bureau, please confirm during your QSO that the other station uses the bureau. By doing so, you can be sure that they have SASEs on file with us, and that they will get their cards.



FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis Franklin, K6DF, FISTS #3076

2014 was a tough year for the North America FISTS Chapter. We went through a long transition period over the past months but have emerged with some new ideas and a fine staff of volunteers to keep things moving forward.

You will find some interesting changes coming up for current members of the FISTS North American Chapter, several of which I believe will add a new spark to our operating events. Be sure to check out the rather exciting awards for operating the Sprints and Get Your Feet Wet activities on other pages of this newsletter.

It appears that the DX operators have been doing a lot of brass pounding as one can see by looking at the “issued awards list” below. FISTS members in the European Chapter have been burning the midnight oil and making lots of CW contacts. A hearty congratulations to all of the award recipients.

Applying for awards

To apply for FISTS awards, e-mail your award logs to awards@fistsna.org. Excel, Word, Open Office, and plain text files are the only file types accepted. Please read the e-mail log rules on the FISTS web site (shown below) for details.

You must send in complete logs to qualify for awards. The log must contain the following information: call, date of QSO, band, FISTS number, and point(s) claimed for each QSO. Incomplete logs will delay the award.

Check the FISTS Web Page for additional information regarding current FISTS awards and how to apply for them: <http://www.fistsna.org/awards.html>

If you have any questions about the awards that are not answered on the FISTS awards web page, feel free to e-mail your questions to me at awards@fistsna.org.

I hope to work some of you over the winter months and with that I will close this column by wishing you and your family good health, good DX, and Happy Holidays!

73, Dennis K6DF

FISTS AWARDS ISSUED: Apr 21, 2014 – Oct 27, 2014

Century Award

S58MU, 5B4AHO, GM0EPO, N1DN, MI0AHH, G6GLP, I5ECW, G0PNM, F5IYJ, CU3AA

Silver Award

AE7CG, K4GM, 2E0JCY, G4DXX, G4KLE, G3YJQ, I5ECW, CU3AA

Gold Award

GW0WEE

Platinum Award

KB9MLE - 1 X QRP, G4KLE

Spectrum Award

G4MLW, G0ILN, G4LRG, WA6OEF, G0PNM,

Millionaire Award

M0DRK, K4GM, I5ECW, G0PNM, CU3AA

Perpetual Prefix Award

K4GM, W3QT, G4LRG

Perpetual Prefix Endorsements—50, 100, and 150 PREFIX

K4GM, W3QT, G4LRG

2 Million Award

G0ILN, GW0WEE, G4KLE

(continued next page)

(FISTS Awards continued)

3 Million Award

G4KLE

4 Million Award

PA7RA

6 Million Award

AB0BM, WA6OEF

8, 9, and 10 Million Award

OK1KW

The KeyNote to Be Available Online in 2015

by Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, FISTS #6938

Beginning with Issue #1, 2015, we will be offering all our active members the option to receive *The KeyNote* in PDF format. To get your issue, you'll download it from our website. Currently, we are running a beta test with our non-US chapter members starting with this issue. The hope is that this beta test will help us work out all the bugs before we offer it to the rest of our members.

There are a couple of advantages to getting *The KeyNote* in an electronic format. First of all, the newsletter will be available about the time that the print edition is sent to the printer, meaning that you won't have to wait for the postman to deliver it. It will also arrive in one piece. The U.S. Postal Service can't damage an electronic version.

Another advantage is that you'll have access not only to the current issue, but to digital

versions of Issues #1 and #2, 2014. And, who knows? If we get ambitious, we may even digitize some previous issues, as the ARRL has done with QST.

Finally, if you subscribe to the electronic version, FISTS dues drop to \$10/year. We will even extend your membership if you switch over to the electronic subscription.

If you do plan to subscribe to switch to a digital subscription, you should have high-speed Internet service. **No dial-up!** The files are going to be quite big, and trying to download them via a dial-up connection, would be very time consuming and prone to errors.

If you do want to switch to a digital subscription. All you need to do is send me your e-mail address. My e-mail address is karl@fistsna.org. I will then send you an ID and a unique password. It is simple as that. Your access will remain in place as long as you remain an active.

The chapter does ask that you not give out your password to others. Should you, you are cheating yourself, your fellow members and the chapter.

73, Karl, KB1DSB



CU at Dayton in 2015?

The dates for the Dayton Hamvention are
May 15–17, 2015.

We will have a booth there again next year.
C U THR?

The Final Courtesy

by Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, FISTS #6938

When I first got into amateur radio, sending and receiving QSL cards was considered the final courtesy of a QSO. It was a chance to thank a contact for a QSO, even something special like a new country, new state and such. It was a common sight at hamfests for folks to carry their shoe boxes or file card boxes with QSL cards to present to awards checkers to verify they qualified for this or that award. Like everything else, however, the process of QSLing has changed.

Perhaps the biggest reason for this is that the cost of QSLing has gone up. Postal rates have gone up, and the cost of printing QSL cards has gone up. It now costs 34¢ to send a first-class postcard.

The price of DX QSLing has also gone through the roof. Some DX station QSL managers now demand more than a single IRC (International Reply Coupon) or actual green stamps (US dollars) to send out a DX QSL card. And, a dollar no longer covers the return postage if you are QSLing direct with a DX station. Many are asking for at least two dollars.

Another reason that traditional QSLing is on the decline is that we now have electronic QSLing. The two major players in this game are the ARRL's Logbook of the World (LOTW—www.arrl.org/lotw/) and eQSL (eqsl.cc). It's hard to beat the convenience of electronic QSLing. Via LOTW, for example, you can receive confirmation of a DXpedition contact before the DXpedition is even over!

Using LOTW also makes it very easy to qualify for ARRL awards. No longer do you have to cart around a box of QSLs or send them into the League. If contacts appear in LOTW as confirmed, you can use them for awards such as Worked All States or DX Century Club. A

few mouse clicks and the certificate is on its way to you.

QSL "Fatigue"

Finally, there is the very real phenomenon of "QSL fatigue." Many active hams and senior hams have thousands of QSL cards and really desire no more. Nor do they want to be bothered to send out paper QSLs. I am sure we can fully understand and appreciate that.

Even so, QSLing need not be a completely lost art in this high tech and expensive world we live in. The price of simple QSL cards are still quite reasonable, and there are many companies that are still printing them.

You can also print your own on an "as needed" basis. Stan, K4UK, our FISTS QSL Bureau Manager likes to produce his own custom QSLs, highlighting special occasions/events he is operating.

To help save on postage, you can use the ARRL QSL Bureaus, if you're an ARRL member, and the FISTS QSL Bureau, if you're a FISTS member. The FISTS QSL Bureau handles incoming and outgoing cards made with FISTS members worldwide. I must caution you, though, that there are FISTS who do not use the FISTS Bureau. For more information on this option, go to <http://www.fistsburo.org>.

All of these are great options. Personally, I use eQSL for some DX non-FISTS contacts. I use the ARRL incoming Bureaus for my own and the KN0WCW club call, and I use the FISTS QSL Bureau when I can. I QSL all my contacts. I really enjoy QSLing, and for me, it is still the "final courtesy."



QRZ FISTS DE KB1DSB

Thanks to all of you who have renewed, helped update the database with dues payment dates, call changes, mailing and e-mail address changes. Since Issue #1 came out there have been literally hundreds to take care of. Thanks for your patience and understanding as we bring things up to date. This all helps to give us an accurate database on our members.

Please, if you are sending along your date of birth (DOB) to show you qualify for reduced dues or life membership, do not write your DOB on your check. Put it on a separate piece of paper and enclose with your check. I blackened out a few I noticed on checks to help reduce that info being out there. Also, please know that all paperwork is shredded and no DOB info is in our database. We want to protect you. We do not share any info about our members with anyone.

I send out an e-mail or post card when you renew or join. I want to verify to you that I received it and processed it. This is where having your current e-mail address, if you have one, would be a great help. Saves time and a few cents not sending a post card.

Please send me an e-mail or drop a note in the mail if you move. We use a great software program for creating our mailing list for *The KeyNote*, but it is only as accurate as the information we input. Please notify the USPS in writing on one of their change of address forms should you move, even for the "Snowbird" seasonal moves. Chasing through QRZ or the FCC ULS database to find an accurate address takes a lot of time and these may not be current.

New T-shirts, Electronic *KeyNote*, More Activities

We have two new tee shirts available in our store. Their info is in this issue.

We are working on some new things to better serve our membership in 2015. One is to offer the option of subscribing to *The KeyNote* in an electronic (PDF) format. By subscribing to the electronic version, you'll get the newsletter faster and save money on your dues.

We have a great variety of experience in operating in our members. We have long time brass pounders, those coming back to CW and many aspiring CW ops. We have FISTS Tuesdays, every Tuesday, and Get Your Feet Wet Activity Days on the 3rd Sunday of every month. These are both 24 hour opportunities to get on the air. No pressure, no special logs and definitely not a contest. Get on the air and have fun. Maybe help along our new ops, rekindle contacts with those you have not chatted with in a while, make new contacts. Fill the airwaves with the great sound of Morse code. And, yes, we do have our Sprints and other on-air activities. Check out the list in this issue and on our web site.

Sadly, this will be the last *KeyNote* for members that have not renewed or provided information showing that they are paid up. If in place of your dues expiration date, the label on your *KeyNote* reads "Last Issue," you are in this category. I do hope you will choose to renew your FISTS CW Club membership.

On behalf of all the volunteers in FISTS in your chapter and worldwide, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season and a great new year.

73 Karl, KB1DSB



Sprint Information

FISTS Sprints are a great way to meet other FISTS members, collect FISTS numbers, and have a lot of fun. I 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:

The Winter SPRINT will run from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC on Second Saturday in February.

The Spring SPRINT will run from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC on Second Saturday in May.

The Summer SPRINT will run from 2000 EDT to 2400 EDT on Second Friday in July.

The Fall SPRINT will run from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC on Second Saturday in October.

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:

For FISTS members:

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

For non-FISTS members:

RST, U.S. state/Canadian province/ DXCC country, first name, Power output.

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 no matter how many times worked.

SCORING:

Each QSO with a non-FISTS member: 2 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 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@fists.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 _____ Club FISTS Number _____

Name _____ Call _____ FISTS # _____

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

E-mail Address (optional) _____

MULTIPLIER CHECK-OFF LIST

1	2	3	3	4	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 _____

Comments:

FISTS Fall 2014 Sprint Results

Participation in the Fall Sprint was up a little, but we really need more people to participate. In 2015, you'll be given a chance to win \$150 at the end of the year for each Sprint log that you submit. See the article "New Rewards for Sprints and Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day Participants in 2015" for more information on that.

Upcoming Sprints

- Winter 2015 Sprint – Saturday, February 14, 2015 from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC.
- Spring 2015 Sprint – Saturday, May 9, 2015 from 1700 UTC to 2100 UTC .

73, Ed N2ED

FISTS Sprint Manager

QRO Category								
Call	Name	State	FISTS #	Member QSOs	Non-Mem. QSOs	QSO Points	Mults.	Score
W5ASP	Joe	TX	16833	24	4	128	18	2304
W9LHG	John	MN	9565	21	4	113	20	2260
KG2LO	Roland	NJ	2980	18	1	92	15	1380
K8BAT	John	OH	16091	10	0	50	8	400
VE3FMW	Ron	ON	8132	8	1	42	6	252
QRP Category								
K5YQF	Cecil	TX	8077	12	4	68	11	748
KB3CVO	Tom	PA	8110	11	6	67	8	536
AI4VE	Will	SC	13555	9	1	47	7	329
KB0ETU	Phillip	AL	9555	6	0	30	5	150
K5ICW	Hank	TX	8180	4	0	20	3	60
Club Category								
W4FFF	Randy	NC	9700	33	6	177	26	4602

Soapbox

KB3CVO: Lots of QRM from PA QSO Party, but that was expected.

AI4VE: I enjoyed the Sprint. Total of 10 contacts, all but one on 20m and the other on 15m. Rig was my K3 at 5W and antenna was attic dipole.

K5YQF: Well I missed an hour but was still fun. Hoping we have more for the Winter Sprint. Thanks to all who were on.

K8BAT: I tried hard. Made a few contacts and even heard a member in Italy. My call sign has changed and just mailed in my membership renewal.

New Rewards for Sprints and Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day Participants in 2015

by Karl Zuege, KB1DSB, FISTS #6938

Beginning the first of the year, FISTS NA will offer some new rewards for active members who participate in our Sprints and Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day events throughout the year.

FIST Sprints

Certificates will be awarded to stations with the highest cumulative point totals in the QRO, QRP and Club categories for all Sprints in calendar year 2015. The award will be a special framed certificate acknowledging the achievement. To win a certificate, operators must be current or life members.

But, wait! There's more!

If you participate in a Sprint, and submit a log, you will have a chance to win a \$150 gift certificate at the end of the year. You get one chance for each Sprint log that you submit. There will be one gift certificate awarded to QRP

entries and one for QRO entries. A random drawing will be held after the last Sprint of 2015. Only active and life members are eligible to win the gift certificate, and winners can choose the amateur radio company from whom they want the gift certificate.

Get Your Feet Wet Activity Days

If you submit a log showing that you made at least five contacts in a Get Your Feet Wet (GYFW) activity, you will be entered into a drawing to be held after the December, 2015 GYFW event. You'll get one chance for each GYFW activity for which you submit a log. Contacts logged need not be with other FISTS members, but only active and life members are eligible to win. Event coordinators and Chapter officers will not be eligible for any awards, but their participation is encouraged.

There will be two winners. The first will receive a \$250 gift certificate and the second a \$150 gift certificate from an amateur radio supply company of their choice.

Logs can be e-mailed or mailed to the event coordinator, Curt, KC9UNL, CurtStamp@aol.com or by mail to his QRZ.COM address.

FISTS On-Air Activities

FISTS Tuesday. Every Tuesday from 0000 until 2359 UTC, get on the air and make some contacts! One, two, several or a hundred QSOs it doesn't matter, just get on the air and make some QSOs. We have invited the International FISTS Community to participate also so you may be able to work some new FISTS and new FISTS countries. So dust off the key and get on the air and have some fun!

Get Your Feet Wet Activity Day. The purpose of this FISTS activity is to provide new or less experienced amateurs the opportunity to make CW contacts and learn to enjoy the mode. This activity is designed to encourage new and inexperienced

amateurs to get on the air and practice operating. Hopefully many experienced CW operators will be willing to get on the air, slow down their CW, and help "Elmer" the newbies. **IT IS NOT A CONTEST.**

The activity will be held on the Third Sunday of every month beginning in September, 2014. Operating times will be 0000Z-23:59Z. Suggested Frequencies: 3.558, 7.110, 10.110, 14.110, and 21.110. Upcoming dates include Dec. 21, 2014; January 18, 2015; and February 15, 2015.

FISTS Winter Sprint—1700-2100 UTC, Saturday, February 14, 2015

Have Any Advice On Running a Code Class?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, FISTS #9342

Recently, a reader asked me if I had any advice on starting a code class. I haven't really taught that many code classes, but here are a few of my observations about learning Morse Code:

1. Learning CW is a personal thing, but classes do seem to motivate students. See #2.
2. It's all about motivation. When someone says that they can't learn code, they usually mean they're not motivated enough to learn it.
3. CW has a pretty steep learning curve. Having Elmers and code buddies can help provide the motivation to keep students plugging away at it.
4. As noted on "Tips for Learning Morse Code (CW)" (<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/>

[Morse/LearningMorseCode.pdf](#)), "Repetition is the key to learning anything. Practice, practice. No matter if you learn quickly, or slowly, the key to learning is practice. With enough practice, just about anyone can learn Morse code."

5. I encourage people to get on the air as soon as they memorize the characters and the numbers. Once they start making contacts, they'll get faster quickly. There's a spot on the 40m band—7110 to 7125 kHz—where slow speed operators hang out. No matter how slow they are, they can find contacts there.
6. Did I mention how important it is to practice? Operating CW is like any skill. The only way to really learn it is to do it.

What do you think? E-mail me at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

KNOWCW: The FISTS USA Club Call

Nancy, WZ8C, felt that our chapter should have a club call, just as FISTS friends across the big pond do. She first obtained the call KC8VIO. Then, she applied for KNOWCW, which reflects our desire for all US amateurs to know and use CW. Since that time, KNOWCW has appeared in thousands of logs throughout the world thanks to hundreds of US FISTS members who put the club call on the air.

Any active US licensed FISTS member can request to operate the KNOWCW call. We make it simple as possible. If you are interested, please contact Karl, KB1DSB, the KNOWCW Trustee and QSL Manager, at (802) 558-2148 or karl@fistsna.org.

See you on the air!

Remember to use the FISTS frequencies:

1.808 MHz 3.558 MHz 7.028/7.058 MHz
10.118 MHz 14.058 MHz 18.085 MHz
21.058 MHz 24.908 MHz 28.058 MHz
50.058 MHz 144.058 MHz

Product Review

A Quick Review of the AA0ZZ EZKeyer II Kit

by Mike Malone, KD5KXF

I bought this kit at Ozarkcon 2014 after hearing Craig AA0ZZ's presentation on the development work. This is another fine kit from the Four States QRP Club, and you can find details of this \$30 kit at <http://www.4sqr.com/ek2.php>.

This kit doesn't come with an enclosure, per se, but rather you build one from PCB material included with the kit. The last kit I build with this type of enclosure was the Norcal BLT. Mine won an award for ugliest functioning station accessory at a HamCom years ago, so I was a bit hesitant to build another kit like this. I decided to go for it, though, after seeing several of these keyers. They looked quite nice, so I decided that I could do it, too.

I built the kit in about an hour one night, and it came out perfect! It looks great and works very well.

I won't bore you by listing all of its features, but one that I think is very useful for QRP work is a receiver mute line! The receiver mute line is very cool for those of us that dink around with separate transmitter and receivers.

The three memory buttons are easy to access and the command list is silk-screened on the back. As a take-it-to-the-park-and-play radio guy, that feature alone is great. A lot of thought, time and engineering was put into this kit, and if you built the first AA0ZZ keyer in the Altoids tin, you will really appreciate how quick this kit goes together, how nice it looks, and how well it works.



The AA0ZZ EZKeyer II Kit

If you want to build a nice looking keyer, and your building time is short these days, jump on this one. This kit would be perfect for a new ham as a prelude to building more complex QRP transceiver kits.

**We need articles and reviews for
The KeyNote!**

Send your Word or text files to
Dan Romanckik at cwgee@kb6nu.com

FISTS Store

Please, if ordering by mail, call Karl, KB1DSB (802) 558-2148 before ordering to ensure items you wish to order are in stock, unless you are paying by PayPal. If you pay with PayPal, the system will know if the items are in stock.

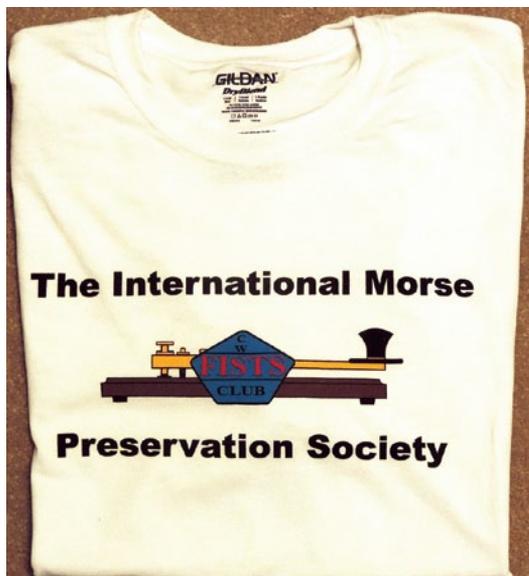
For mailed orders, make check payable to "FISTS CW Club." Mail your check along with your order to:

FISTS CW Club, c/o Karl Zuege KB1DSB, 478 CR 53, Roberstown, AL 35652-3503.

All prices listed include shipping in US only. For Canada, Mexico, and DX contact Karl for additional shipping costs.

NEW in the Store!

White T-Shirt with Color FISTS Key Logo



These are Gildan® brand, 50/50 preshrunk, white color, without a pocket. Color FISTS logo design on front only.

SKU# NA015T

Cost is \$11 per shirt including postage
Sizes: Medium through 3XL

The Original Digital Mode Sand-Color T-Shirt

Natural (light sand color) made by Gildan® 100% Heavy-weight cotton, preshrunk, without pocket.



Front



Back

SKU# NA014T

Cost is \$9 per shirt including postage
Sizes: Medium through 3XL

FISTS Store

Shirts

KNOW CODE T-Shirt

We have a limited quantity of these T-shirts. They are Fruit of the Loom® brand, 50% cotton/50% polyester blend. In blue and black

Blue T-shirt is printed in silver on front and light blue on back.

SKU# NA002T
Cost: \$6.00 each
Size: Large only



Front



Back

Black T-shirt is printed in silver front and back. Same design as the blue T-shirt above.

SKU# NA003T
Cost: \$6.00 each
Size: M, L, XL 2XL

Gray KNOW CODE Sweatshirts (no photo available)

Sweatshirts are gray in color with blue letter in same and front and back designs as KNOW CODE T-shirt.

SKU# NA004S

Cost: \$12.00

Size: L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

Light Blue Polo Shirt with the FISTS CW Club Key Logo

These are Jerzees® brand, 50% cotton/50% polyester. FISTS logo embroidered over left breast, no pocket.



SKU# NA001P

Cost: \$15.50 each

Sizes: M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

FISTS CW Club Key Logo Patch

Embroidered cloth patch. Can be ironed or sewn on.



SKU# NA011

\$1.00 each

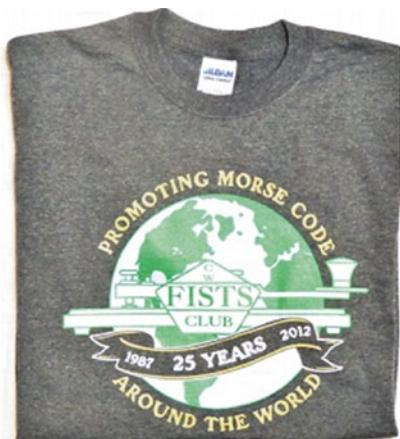
FISTS Store

25th Anniversary Items (while supplies last)

25th Anniversary Mug

T-Shirts

The shirts are heather gray, a bit darker gray than the typical “athletic gray” color, sort of a light charcoal. T-shirt and polo shirts are Gildan® brand ultra cotton, 50% cotton/50% polyester, preshrunk.



Short-sleeve T-shirts with the anniversary logo screened in color on the front.

SKU# NA025T

Cost: \$10.00 each

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, 2XL



Short sleeve polo shirts with the anniversary logo in color on top-left side (no pocket)

SKU# NA025P

Cost: \$18.00 each

Sizes: S, M, and 2XL only



Coffee mugs are 11 oz., microwave and dishwasher safe, white with the full-color anniversary logo on one side and “FISTS CW Club When You’ve Worked a FISTS, You’ve Worked a Friend <http://www.fists.org>” on the other side.

SKU# NA025M

Cost: \$10.00 each

Pins



FISTS CW CLUB Logo Pin

Pentagon, blue enamel, cloisonne/gold metal, with tie-tack-type pin back.

SKU#NA005

Cost: \$1.50



“I Heart CW, FISTS CW Club”

White enamel cloisonne pin. ¾” diameter circle tie-tack-type pin on back.

SKU#NA006

Cost: \$1.50

FISTS Store

Stickers



Metallic gold logo FISTS C Club sticker (left above)

SKU# NA007

200/package

Cost: \$3.50

I Heart CW Stickers/ 3/4" round sticker (right)

SKU# NA008

200/package

Cost: \$3.50

Reverse Vinyl Window Clings



FISTS CW Club Key Logo reverse vinyl window cling. 7 1/2" x 3 3/4"

SKU# NA009

Cost: \$1.00 each



I Love CW, FISTS CW Club reverse vinyl window cling. 3" diameter

SKU# NA010

Cost: \$1.00 each

Miscellaneous Items



FISTS 12oz Travel Mug

This 12oz Travel Mug says "I Heart CW FISTS CW Club." Perfect for portable CW operating.

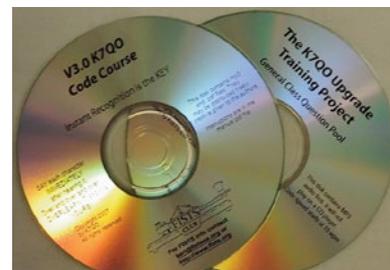
SKU# NA013

Cost: \$5.50 each

The K7QO Code Course and K7QO Upgrade Project

Thanks to K7QO's generosity, FISTS has the distribution rights to the famous K7QO Code Course (Farnsworth method) on CD in MP3 format. When you complete the program by practicing two or three times a day for 10 minutes each session, you will soon be on the air at a comfortable conversational speed.

The Code Course CD starts out assuming the person is a total beginner and sends repetitive letters, numbers and words.



The Upgrade Training CD is the General Exam questions and answers send in Morse code. Since the K7QO Upgrade Training Project CD starts at a speed of about 10 wpm and is plain text, it is not for beginners. However, it is excellent practice for those who know the code and want to upgrade their skills. It is also a good refresher course in electronics for those who have been licensed a while. You may be surprised at how much of the General class information you have forgotten!

Please make sure your CD player can play MP3 files!

SKU# NA012.

One 2-CD set \$3.50, 2 sets \$4.50, 3 sets \$5.50

To Join or Renew Your FISTS, NA Membership

If you live in North, South or Central America, you may join the North American 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 \$15.00 per year for regular membership or \$10.00 per year for college student. 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 65 to 79 years old, regular membership is \$10 per year, and you may renew for more than one year at \$10 per year. Please note your date of birth on your application/renewal that you include with your check or money order if renewing by mail, or in the comments section if paying by PayPal. We have set up a special PayPal button (on the web site) just for this group.

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 Karl KB1DSB 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 Karl Zuege KB1DSB, 478 CR 53, Rogersville, AL 35652-3503. 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 as a Regular, 65 to 80 year old member or Student member. Enter your CALL and NAME to JOIN or enter your CALL, NAME, and FISTS Number if RENEWING in the space provided. For the 65-79 age group 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”.



FISTS CW CLUB Membership Application/Renewal



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

Callsign _____ FISTS # _____ Name on the Air _____

Mailing Name and Address:

The following info provides a synopsis of members' working conditions:

Rig(s) _____

Antennas _____

Other club affiliations (ARLL, RSGB, etc.) _____

*Birthdate _____ Phone _____

**E-mail address (if available) _____

Please check the appropriate box and enclose annual subscription in U.S. funds (pays for *KeyNote* newsletters and awards).

Under age 18 or 80 & over—FREE*

College student or age 65 to 79—\$10.00*

Regular Membership with mailed *Keynote*—\$15

Regular membership with .pdf download of *KeyNote***

Signature _____ Date _____

Please make checks payable to "FISTS CW CLUB" and send to:
Karl Zuege KB1DSB, 478 CR 53, Rogersville AL 35652-3503 USA

*Birthdate required
**E-mail address required

FISTS CW Club
c/o Karl Zuege, KB1DSB
478 CR 53
Rogersville, AL 35652-3503
www.fistsna.org
karl@fistsna.org

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PLEASE LOOK AT YOUR RENEWAL DATE ON THE MAILING LABEL

Estimated Delivery of 2015 Issues

Issue #1: March 16, 2015
Issue #2: June 1, 2015
Issue #3: September 14, 2015
Issue #4: December 14, 2015

Send in your stories and photos for the KeyNote!



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