

The KeyNote



Newsletter of the Americas Chapter, FISTS CW Club—The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue 2, 2022

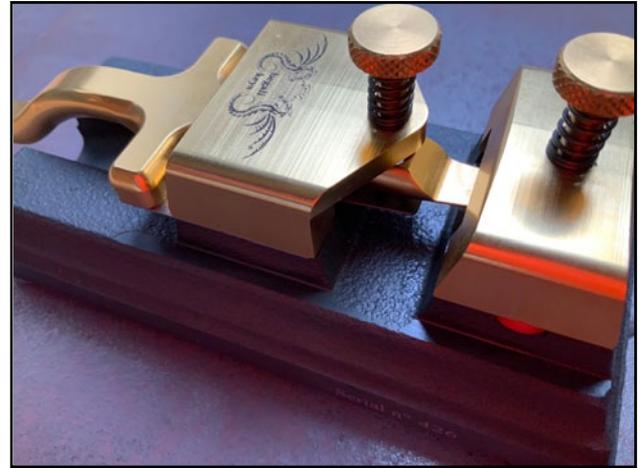
Morse Code—Means to an End or Inherently Valuable?

by Bryan Bergeron, NU1N

Based on my journey in ham radio, the question as to whether Morse Code is a means to an end or inherently valuable is akin to click bait. As a member of the International Morse Preservation Society, you undoubtedly have both an appreciation for Morse Code as a communications modality and an awareness of the inherent value of Morse Code before it was sundowned by the US military and Coast Guard. Morse Code helped settle the West. It saved lives on ships at sea. It enabled the military to communicate securely during time of war. And it provided me, as young ham with a limited budget, with a means of communicating with the world with a 75 watt CW transmitter.

Today, I rely more on the inherent value of Morse Code because my main activity as a ham is less about testing a transmitter or new antenna configuration and more about communicating. I have to admit, I miss the ‘good old days’, when the ‘S’ in RST really meant something. I’d make a contact, put the RST on a map, adjust the antenna, and repeat. In this way, I could make a simple inverted V work the world.

What’s your current relationship with Morse Code? Is it simply a platform for your contest work or do you still build and maintain your own gear?



My Favorite key. Begali straight key spring mechanism.
Courtesy NU1N

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Morse Code—Means to an End or Inherently Valuable? | 1 |
| Information Page | 2 |
| Americas Chapter, President’s Message | 3 |
| The Dots and Dashes of Morse Code Cover the Red Planet | 4 |
| FISTS Awards | 5 |
| Welcome New FISTS Members | 6 |
| Silent Keys | 8 |

“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

"Vacant"

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone N8TI fistsstore@fistsna.org

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

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

FISTS Store Manager

Joe Falcone, N8TI, fistsstore@fistsna.org
9880 Musch Road, Brighton, MI 48116

Activities Manager

"Vacant"

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone N8TI fistsstore@fistsna.org

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

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

Code Buddy Volunteers and Buddies

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

FISTS Sprints

"Vacant"

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone N8TI fistsstore@fistsna.org

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

"Vacant"

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone N8TI fistsstore@fistsna.org

The KeyNote Newsletter

Bryan Bergeron, NU1N, keynote@fistsna.org

What's Your Story?

Do you have a story to tell? Members would love to hear how you got interested in ham radio. Did someone mentor you as a child? Did you learn it in the service? What is an interesting experience you had using Morse Code? What is your favorite key/rig? Do you have an interesting QSO you'd like to tell members about? Or photos to share?

Send your stories/photos to keynote@fistsna.org.
NOTE: Image files need to be high resolution JPGs (at least 1000 pixels wide).

The KeyNote

The Newsletter of the Americas Chapter of FISTS

Issue 2, 2022

Copyright © 2022, FISTS CW Club



Send articles to:

keynote@fistsna.org

Design: Mary Cronin

Americas Chapter, President's Message

By Joe Falcone, N8TI

I am writing this column during ARRL Field Day 2022. As I look at the 20 meter waterfall on my IC 7300, I see the CW portion of the band completely packed. Back in 2007, a lot of us thought it would be different. You see, on February 23, 2007, the FCC eliminated the Morse Code requirement for all Amateur Radio licenses. It had been a long time coming, but in 2007 it finally happened – Amateur Radio operators did not have to learn Morse Code to become a fully licensed operator.

I do not believe that I envisioned that 15 years after that fateful day that the bands would be so busy with Morse Code CW signals. Perhaps FISTS had something to do with this. I would like to think so. I remember that when FISTS was starting out, there were a lot of people who wanted to eliminate the Morse Code requirement for licensing and wanted to eliminate the CW reserved portions of the bands along with it. FISTS was formed, 35 years ago, in part to let everyone know that transmitting and receiving Morse Code via radio was still a viable way to communicate and, as such, it should be promoted and preserved.

FISTS was successful in doing its part to reach the goal where the use of Morse Code on the amateur radio bands was still allowed and unrestricted. However, even the people who started FISTS would be surprised and pleased

to see the wonderful state of CW operations on the bands today. Back 35 years ago, nobody could predict that the future would bring the merger of old technology, such as straight keys and vest pocket size transceivers like the QRP Labs QCX Mini. We did not think, back then, that the “younger crowd” would take so readily to the outdoors to hike and camp on public lands and parks—and want to bring their CW radios with them.

Additionally, nobody thought that the advent of 3-D printing and the direct sales model provided by the internet, would allow so many small companies produce amateur radio products, such as end-fed antennas, mini keys and antenna fixtures. In real dollars, the price of electronics has fallen as several individual electronic components have been replaced with parts that used to be found only in computers. The new lightweight batteries have made it very easy to take a radio along with you to the outdoors or on a business trip.

In fact, most of the excitement in Amateur Radio today involves CW Morse Code operations. New radio operators are learning Morse Code and getting on the air with the small portable radios or with the computer-driven radios that allow for software-defined CW filters and noise-reduction features.

But, the new small radios and computer-influenced transceivers are not the only things that get people excited about Morse Code operations. There are many people out there

(continued on page 4)

President's Message (continued)

who pursue Vibroplex Bugs and other classic keys for the purpose of collecting as well as operating.

FISTS has as its core purpose the preservation and promotion of Morse Code. You can help in that mission simply by getting on the air using CW. If you hear someone sending slowly, you can help them practice by returning their CQ and spending a few minutes with them in a QSO. A lot of times, newcomers do not realize how fast their Morse skills will grow by engaging in actual QSO's. There is a world of difference between reading code from a computer or even from listening to a QSO on the radio and from being a participant in a Morse Code QSO. The pressure on an operator to actually understand the message being directed to him or her increases Morse Code comprehension dramatically. It is very similar to learning a foreign language. For example, if you are in a place where your native language is not spoken, it does not take you very long to figure out how to order food or ask where a rest room is. You do what you have to do, and if that means learning to read a menu in a foreign language, you accomplish that faster than you thought possible.

Learning Morse Code is similar. When a person is in a real QSO, his or her brain works overtime to comprehend what is being said. In a short period of time, comprehension becomes much better. As a result, on-the-air practice is really the best way to practice sending and receiving Morse Code and we should all engage in that activity as much as possible.

FISTS is all about the promotion and preservation of Morse Code. The best way to accomplish this is by getting on the radio and operating. With the new smaller (and cheaper) radios,

you can have new adventures every weekend by using our favorite mode of operation— Morse Code.

73, de Joe N8TI

The Dots and Dashes of Morse Code Cover the Red Planet

by Bryan Bergeron, NU1N

For the past 18 months, the Perseverance Rover has covered the red planet with the dots and dashes of Morse Code “. _ _ _ . _ _ _ . _ _ . “ or JPL imprinted by six tires. Furthermore, the license plate of the rover is engraved with the printed Morse that says “Explore as One.” Now, I don't know how many of the thousands of JPL imprints have survived the winds of Mars, but I assume a few have, and those will be covered by a different layer of dust at some point, potentially preserving the imprint for hundreds or even thousands of years. Depending on what happens here on Earth, it's possible that the only Morse Code that survives is there on Mars.

Back to earth, I've used my call sign, NU1N, in Morse Code, along the edge of photographs I've published, as a form of watermark. I'm not looking to preserve my call sign in Morse, but to have an easy way to prove a work of art is in fact mine. I've done the same with some tools and appliances. It's easy for someone to recognize and file or chip off a name or initials, but a few dashes and dots scratched into the bottom of a TV or laptop is less obvious.

How about you? Have you used Morse Code in printed form to communicate ownership or simply that you've been somewhere?

FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis, K6DF

Congratulations to all who earned operating awards from Feb. 29, 2022 to May 27, 2022.

Award certificates are available, from the Members Area of the Americas Chapter website, for members to download to their own computer for printing. A list of awards issued to your call/member-number is available in the Members Area. FISTS members may log into the Members Area from the following web page:

<https://fistsna.org/memlogon.php>

New Members can earn a free FISTS Club Key Patch for making their first 10-minute CW QSO with any FISTS member on any band, so get on the air and make your first 10-minute QSO with a FISTS member to earn your free KEY Patch!

New Member Patches Earned:

WB7UBC Gregory—QSO with K6DF
 N4TIZ Byron—QSO with KA2GSM
 NA0F Larry—QSO with KA8HFN
 W5KBM Don—QSO with K6DF
 N7CTB Casey—QSO with K6DF
 WO5W Lloyd—QSO with KA4UPI
 K9RDU Rusty—KSO with K6DF
 WB6WFO Dana—QSO with K6DF
 K5MEG Meg—QSO with ND1J
 VA7JCF John—QSO with K6DF

We have a list of new members shown elsewhere in this issue of the Keynote. Please listen for them on the bands and help them to earn their FISTS Key Patch!

Award certificates are available free to all club members, in PDF format, so dust off those keys and get on the air and start making contacts. Try using the free “Log Converter” program to track your club awards, and it’s also a good general

logging program as well. The author of Log Converter, Graham G3ZOD, is constantly providing updates and improvements to the program. This program was last updated on April 2, 2022 to version 4.2.2. This FREE software 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! The best thing about it is...it’s FREE! Log Converter is available for download on the Americas Chapter web site. Look for the download link on the main web page just below the “Welcome New Members” list.

Be sure to check the Americas Chapter web pages for updated awards information and how to apply for them: www.fistsna.org/awards.html.

If you have any award questions or suggestions, send 3-mail to me at: awards@fistsna.org.

Wishing that you and yours stay safe and healthy.

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

FISTS AWARDS ISSUED: Feb. 29–May 27, 2022

Basic Century: GW0KRL, I8QFK, M0KTZ, EA4HKF

Diamond Century: K2FW

1 x QRP: M0KTZ

Millionaire Award: GW0KRL, M0KTZ, EA4HKF

2 Million Award: DK2LO

5 & 6 Million Award: I5EFO

7 Million Award: I5EFO, IZ2FME, IU0HMB

8 Million Award: I5EFO, DL5CL

11 Million Award: IK0IXI

12, 13, & 14 Million Award: VE9VIC

15 Million Award: VE9VIC, NP3K

(continued on page 7)

WELCOME NEW FISTS AMERICAS CHAPTER MEMBERS

| Call | FISTS# | First Name | S/P/C | Call | FISTS# | First Name | S/P/C |
|--------|--------|------------|-------|--------|--------|------------|-------|
| KN6QNY | 21499 | Loring | CA | KE0SSV | 21531 | Daniel | IA |
| W4KIK | 21500 | Charles | OH | N2YIB | 21532 | Richard | NY |
| KO4TJW | 21501 | Jim | NC | K9ZU | 21533 | George | MD |
| WB7SKK | 21502 | Michael | TX | AA2IL | 21534 | Joe | CA |
| N1BRI | 21503 | Brian | CT | W2KA | 21535 | Michael | NY |
| KE8UIV | 21504 | Joseph | OH | N5FDR | 21536 | Brown | TX |
| WV1V | 21505 | Victor | CT | W8AN | 21537 | Steven | OH |
| W0FEN | 21506 | Robert | MO | KJ7BRS | 21538 | Grant | WA |
| AD0YM | 21507 | Mike | MO | N2MD | 21539 | Mark | FL |
| AI7JN | 21508 | Richard | OR | AD5XP | 21540 | Michael | OK |
| W8MHB | 21509 | Michael | OH | WE8L | 21541 | Jason | OH |
| K7SPS | 21510 | Stephen | ID | KE4KIZ | 21542 | Michael | FL |
| K4WSD | 21511 | Allen | FL | K4VMG | 21543 | John | TX |
| KF8TI | 21512 | Chuck | Mi | KC1MRV | 21544 | Steve | NH |
| KI5DYI | 21513 | Bert | TX | WQ9T | 21545 | Richard | IL |
| NT0C | 21514 | Ron | MO | KD2RUY | 21546 | Jeffrey | NY |
| WZ5MM | 21515 | Eric | TX | N5ILQ | 21547 | Randy | OK |
| K5LIF | 21516 | Clifton | LA | N1JWW | 21548 | Jeff | LA |
| KK4ETZ | 21517 | Roy | NC | VA7JCF | 21549 | John | BC |
| WA7DUY | 21518 | Jim | WA | W2AZZ | 21600 | Gary | AZ |
| AE0IT | 21519 | Michael | IA | AI3KS | 21601 | Steve | PA |
| WB6WFO | 21520 | Dana | CA | N5IFR | 21602 | Michael | TX |
| N4AAJ | 21521 | Scott | KY | VE3NRT | 21603 | Chris | ON |
| K5MEG | 21522 | Meg | GA | ND3C | 21604 | Steven | MD |
| KD2VUV | 21523 | Scott | NY | KO4WSU | 21605 | David | GA |
| KC1NLC | 21524 | David | RI | K4VRY | 21606 | Avery | GA |
| W3PDW | 21525 | Brian | PA | KI6GQX | 21607 | Bill | CA |
| VE7UEL | 21526 | Dale | BC | N4JEH | 21608 | Jenna | GA |
| N0MU | 21527 | Joe | FL | W1PSP | 21609 | Peter | VT |
| VE3EXE | 21528 | Albert | ON | KE5OA | 21610 | Larry | SD |
| K2MP | 21529 | Edward | NY | | | | |
| N3JG | 21530 | Jeriel | WV | | | | |

(continued on page 7)

New Members (continued)

| Call | FISTS# | First Name | S/P/C |
|--------|--------|------------|-------|
| AB9QU | 21611 | Bill | IN |
| KY4NQ | 21612 | Martell | GA |
| W9YNP | 21613 | Curt | IL |
| W2HMU | 21614 | Gary | NJ |
| AE5O | 21615 | Russ | AZ |
| WD4EWZ | 21616 | Robert | FL |
| VA6ARI | 21617 | Peter | AB |
| W4OU | 21618 | Bob | FL |
| NH2GE | 21619 | Clarence | GU |
| KA3UIP | 21620 | Joe | PA |
| KK6CN | 21621 | Kathleen | OR |
| AG5HJ | 21622 | Linda | MS |
| WS9V | 21623 | James | IL |
| KI6LXZ | 21624 | Stephanie | CA |
| K4BHF | 21625 | Stuart | VA |
| K1RWT | 21626 | Russ | MA |
| W6AJ | 21627 | William | CA |
| K6IXY | 21628 | Chris | CA |

February 29, 2022–May 27, 2022

NOTICE

- All Sprint Events have been cancelled until further notice. We are in need of a Sprint Manager. If you might be interested, please email: Joe Falcone fistsstore@fistsna.org
- The "Get Your Feet Wet" third Sunday events have been cancelled until further notice.

FISTS Awards (continued)

Spectrum 80M: I5EFO

Perpetual Prefix: I5EFO, I8QFK, G3WGE, DK2LO

Prefix 50: I5EFO, I8QFK, G3WGE, DK2LO

Prefix 100: I8QFK, G3WGE, DK2LO

Prefix 150: G3WGE, DK2LO

Get More Involved in FISTS-NA!

1. Submit an article, or articles, for the newsletter. We welcome all articles, photos, and experience levels. You don't have to be the great American novelist! Articles are lightly edited for typos and grammar.
2. Earn a free FISTS Club Key Patch when you make your first 10-minute CW QSO with any FISTS member on any band.
3. Volunteer! We are currently in need of Activities, Club Call, and Sprint Managers.
4. Submit suggestions about how FISTS-NA can be more relevant in 2022 and beyond.

Silent Keys

This Silent Key list is from notifications we received between October 11, 2021 and June 26, 2022. Our condolences to all families and friends.

If you know of a recent Silent Key, please send the information to the Membership Manager, Dennis K6DF, membership@fistsna.org

| | | | |
|------|--------|---------|----|
| 1402 | N7CFA | Edward | WA |
| 1409 | W2WK | William | NJ |
| 1796 | NU7D | Randy | WA |
| 2411 | N3RSD | Frank | DE |
| 2598 | NU5C | Bill | AR |
| 2793 | K7SZ | Rich | GA |
| 3232 | VE3KLM | Frank | ON |
| 3530 | W8RAE | Robert | MI |
| 3575 | N3OGT | Andy | PA |
| 4264 | WB8NMK | Ron | OH |
| 4374 | W5FRS | Dennis | TX |
| 4382 | N1YNO | Chris | CT |
| 4694 | KC7YUI | Vern | ID |
| 4733 | K5JYD | Larry | TX |
| 5256 | K2ABX | Paul | NY |
| 5257 | N2BR | Bob | TN |
| 5384 | K5JH | Jimmy | AR |
| 5831 | W6JEO | Carl | CA |
| 5882 | K9LIR | John | IN |
| 6628 | KH6B | Dean | HI |
| 6828 | K5SVS | Phil | AR |
| 7006 | W5NQZ | Steve | TX |
| 7019 | WT8R | Dave | TN |
| 7238 | K4LQ | Fred | FL |
| 7364 | WA7ND | Rick | OR |
| 7499 | W4QO | Jim | GA |
| 7527 | KE3I | Ken | MD |
| 7646 | K4GY | Bill | VA |
| 7688 | K4KHZ | Ron | VA |
| 7984 | K4JUZ | Maines | FL |
| 7986 | WB0PYF | Raymond | MO |
| 8234 | KM1G | Rick | MA |
| 8492 | AA3YR | Bill | PA |
| 8527 | KD5JHE | Jerry | MS |
| 9189 | KB8DIE | Julius | OH |
| 9203 | WA5PAE | Bill | OH |

| | | | |
|-------|--------|---------|----|
| 9412 | AA0CX | Mark | ND |
| 9531 | WS1D | Warren | ME |
| 10047 | K7LAZ | HARRY | WA |
| 10127 | WA0VKC | Scott | SD |
| 10433 | K6GC | Warren | CA |
| 10599 | WD5GXO | Steve | MI |
| 10760 | N3KB | Kent | PA |
| 10768 | KR4R | John | FL |
| 11212 | K1ER | John | HI |
| 11230 | K4EQQ | Dean | GA |
| 11382 | N9FDF | Toby | IN |
| 11830 | WG7Y | Bob | WY |
| 12181 | K9MRA | Stephen | NC |
| 12260 | W5EGS | Roger | TX |
| 12331 | WB5AAA | Jim | LA |
| 12462 | K5HLZ | Bob | TX |
| 12832 | W3JY | Joseph | PA |
| 12891 | W2RS | Ray | AZ |
| 12907 | KD8BIN | John | OH |
| 13336 | WA5JUM | Ken | TX |
| 13544 | W0IKT | John | SC |
| 13787 | WA3HTS | Thomas | PA |
| 14368 | NM5PS | Pete | NM |
| 14453 | KD8IXP | Alfred | MI |
| 14488 | WR2HM | Herman | FL |
| 14489 | WB9FHP | Larry | IN |
| 14731 | NQ3W | George | MD |
| 12462 | K5HLZ | Bob | TX |
| 12832 | W3JY | Joseph | PA |
| 12891 | W2RS | Ray | AZ |
| 12907 | KD8BIN | John | OH |
| 13336 | WA5JUM | Ken | TX |
| 13544 | W0IKT | John | SC |
| 13787 | WA3HTS | Thomas | PA |
| 14368 | NM5PS | Pete | NM |
| 14453 | KD8IXP | Alfred | MI |
| 14488 | WR2HM | Herman | FL |
| 14489 | WB9FHP | Larry | IN |
| 14731 | NQ3W | George | MD |
| 15760 | KC0SKD | Donna | ND |
| 16768 | AA1DE | Bill | NH |
| 18785 | NM5Z | David | MS |
| 19060 | KA4WYC | Jeff | SC |
| 19152 | WB9JPH | John | WI |
| 19397 | AF4K | Bry | FL |
| 19584 | K4CRD | Richard | NC |
| 20230 | KC6KWP | Robert | CA |