

The KeyNote



Newsletter of the Americas Chapter, FISTS CW Club—The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue 2, 2025

Time for an Official FISTS Seal of Authenticity?

Bryan Bergeron

Well, it happened again. By chance, I watched a recently released movie about a young girl in post-apocalyptic America. Thanks to years of training on her grandfather's lap, she was a Wizz at electronics and, of course, the straight key. Unfortunately, the straight key was improperly built and handled, and there was nothing resembling Morse Code coming from that little girl's fist.

For the average viewer, the acting may have smoothed over their lack of knowledge about proper construction and use of the straight key. However, if you're like me and count the number of bullets supposedly fired from a gun during a fight scene, then you would have been both

disappointed and distracted by the inaccurate depiction of ham radio and Morse Code.

I don't know how politics works in Hollywood, but I have seen end credit disclaimers from the American Humane Association (AHA) stating something like "No Animals Were Harmed". Perhaps it's time for a FISTS seal of Authenticity when it comes to depicting Morse Code accurately in a film. With it, Morse Code has a chance of surviving the next few hundred years, even if only in the films. Without it, Morse Code as depicted in the movies could devolve into something unrecognizable in just a decade or two. Your thoughts?

73, Bryan, NU1N



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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 KeyNote*. 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, KN0WCW

“Vacant”

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone, N8TI, store@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, store@fistsna.org
9880 Musch Road, Brighton, MI 48116-8215

Activities Manager

“Vacant”

If interested email to:

Joe Falcone, N8TI, store@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.php>

FISTS Sprints

Ashley Lambe, KX4ASH

E-logs to sprintlogs@fistsna.org

Mail Logs to: FISTS Sprint Logs

4305 Roundwood Ct.

Indian Trail, NC 28079-6793

The KeyNote Newsletter

Bryan Bergeron, NU1N, keynote@fistsna.org

We need articles and reviews for *The KeyNote*!

NOTE: Image files need to be high resolution JPGs (at least 1000 pixels wide).

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

The KeyNote

The Newsletter of the Americas Chapter of FISTS

Issue 2, 2025

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Send articles to:

keynote@fistsna.org

Production: Sandra Lindemann

President's message

By Joe Falcone, N8TI

You know the old saying, "Everything old is new again?" Nowadays, the saying is mostly applicable to fashion trends, (you just have to look at the changing widths of mens' ties or the lengths of ladies' hemlines). However, CW is now in that "old is new" category.

If you have been following the "trends" in ham radio in any way, you had to see that the younger members of this hobby have embraced CW with a passion. Manufacturers are coming out with new keys almost every month and CW-only QRP radios are selling like hotcakes.

CW is has a big following with the Parks on the Air crowd and the CW bands are as active as they have ever been. What is missing, however, are the old arguments about whether CW is "dead" or too old fashioned to be useful. Everyone seems to accept the permanent place that CW has in Amateur Radio.

One of the ways to gauge the feelings of people is to see what is popular on Social Media, such as YouTube and Facebook. There are always new videos about ham radio and especially CW on YouTube. A ham operator, Forrest KI7QCF, caught the CW bug a little over a year ago now has 75,000 subscribers on YouTube. His videos are all about his keys, learning and using CW and setting up and using CW stations at parks and in his house. He talks about radios, keys and antennas. He also speaks about his learning experience with

CW and gives tips and encouragement to new CW ops.

What is most interesting about Forrest is the way his CW operating skills have improved. He is now a skillful and fast CW operator. He is an example of "practice makes perfect." And, he loves CW and ham radio.

FISTS was formed back when people actually wanted to get rid of CW. Our CW bands were in danger of being given to the SSB operators. Commercial CW stations were signing off the air for the last time. Most of us CW operators thought that once the Code was removed from the licensing requirements, CW would likely eventually disappear. Boy, anyone who thought that was completely wrong.

We CW operators knew that CW was a fun and challenging way to enjoy Ham Radio. We knew that a CW signal could get through in bad conditions and CW operations were different that the other modes of operations that relied on computers or ("gasp") microphones.

Now, what was old is now new. There was a ham operator on YouTube, a young man, who said, "I'm bouncing radio signals off the ionosphere to the other side of the world. What did you do today?" In other words, using radio, as compared to a computer or cell phone is cool ... again. Vibroplex bugs and other well made keys are selling at top prices on eBay. Radios are getting better and better and smaller and smaller. Large companies are investing in research and development to produce new

(continued on page 5)

FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis K6DF

Congratulations to all who earned operating awards from Feb 18, 2025 to May 22, 2025.

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 during the first year of their membership for making their first 10-minute CW QSO with any FISTS member on any band. Be sure to 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:

KG2RG Justin—QSO with WN3T

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 get out your favorite key and get on the air. You can also use the free “Log Converter” program to track your club awards, 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 Mar 31, 2025 to version 4.8.7. If you are using a version older than this please update your program as older versions will not work properly due to recent server updates.**

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:

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

If you have any award questions or suggestions, send e-mail to me at:

awards@fistsna.org

I wish you good DX during 2025.

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

FISTS AWARDS ISSUED:

Feb 18, 2025–May 22, 2025

Basic Century: G3XIZ, G0UBE, G0TRT, ZS6WAR

Silver Century: G0DJA

Gold Century: CO6DE

Diamond Century: EA4HKF

Millionaire Award: G3XIZ, G0UBE, G0TRT

2 Million Award: G0DJA, G3XIZ

4 Million Award: GW0KRL

6, 7 Million Award: M0KTZ

11 Million Award: M5ABN, EA4HKF

13 Million Award: W8SCS

17 Million Award: AF5Z

20 Million Award: PA7RA

21 Million Award: IK0IXI

25 Million Award: NP3K

(continued on page 5)

WELCOME NEW FISTS AMERICAS CHAPTER MEMBERS

Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C	Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C
K4ERN	22898	John	FL	KI0OT	22966	Brad	CO
K0SAZ	22899	Steve	TX	KE9CLR	22967	John	IL
VE3PFF	22930	Chuck	ON	KE4QCM	22968	Thomas	GA
KC9IFU	22931	Charles	IN	AD0RS	22969	Keith	CO
K2RTR	22932	Linden	NJ	K2MAS	22970	Matthew	VA
KN6UDI	22933	Matt	CA	N1CT	22971	Mark	CT
NC4PB	22934	Paul	NC	VE6KI	22972	Al	AB
W5SMB	22935	Shawn	TN	KD3AAC	22973	Tyler	PA
HK3FJ	22936	Fran	DX	KQ4TLF	22974	John	FL
KP4MI	22937	Miguel	PR	W2VS	22975	Dave	FL
NT4T	22938	Bill	NC	KE9DCY	22976	David	IN
N9WZG	22939	John	IL	K8LK	22977	Tim	MI
VE3KDE	22940	Serguei	ON	WF7T	22978	Brad	TN
K3ES	22941	Brian	PA	KI8AN	22979	Ian	MI
KE7FTF	22942	Bob	OR	N2HC	22980	Ken	CA
W6RYM	22943	Robert	VA	KK5QZ	22981	Garen	PA
VE3ICH	22944	Jeff	ON	W2BR	22982	Bob	VA
WY8G	22945	Bruce	OH	W2KS	22983	Ken	FL
KO0H	22946	Patti	TX	KQ4MHE	22984	Mike	NC
N7GBH	22947	Tom	NJ	W3IE	22985	Mike	PA
K4OTX	22948	Bruce	GA	AI7SV	22986	Steve	WA
KH2EE	22949	Richard	NC	KC3TBR	22987	Paul	PA
W6SDM	22950	Steve	AZ	KC1WSG	22988	Gerard	MA
AK6CG	22951	Robert	CA	WA2OTC	22989	Dave	MD
KR4BHB	22952	Kamran	VA	K3AXR	22990	Dell	MD
K7SGA	22953	Sam	NY	K6SK	22991	Ed	NJ
N0ENO	22954	Rich	KS	K1PJA	22992	Peter	MA
KQ4RFT	22955	Robert	FL	N4FFF	22993	Mike	AL
WA9MTY	22956	Kevin	IN	N4BKY	22994	Becky	AL
KG5CWH	22957	Ron	TX	KT4BCS	22995	Bernard	NC
W3TLP	22958	Tim	MI	KK7HV	22996	Andy	WA
N0OMG	22959	Thomas	MN	KN4WLM	22997	Michael	KY
KA5HRF	22960	Butch	TX	KJ6ZZK	22998	Tyson	CA
KN4CBZ	22961	Michael	NC	AG4ZV	22999	Devin	AL
SWL	22962	Edgar	PA	KA3UON	23000	Neal	OH
KA3BPN	22963	Tony	PA	W0ABE	23001	Fin	CO
KC4APW	22964	Jeff	KY	KE2FMH	23002	Ron	NY
KB4LOA	22965	Hector	NC	W4YAS	23003	Yas	NC

Silent Key List

Call	FISTS#	First Name	S/P/C
N3SLR	2165	Richard	MD
WB4JJJ	2433	Alan	VA
W4HZD	2673	Willard	TN
W0LTH	3692	Chuck	KS
K6JYJ	4348	Tom	CA
K3VV	4524	Ken	VA
K3KYR	5477	Jeff	NY
W4LGJ	5637	Jerry	KY
KP3YL	6270	Mady	CA
K8JP	7625	Joe	TX
K9PLX	9315	Chuck	IL
WO7T	10064	Mark	AZ
WA9KZF	12072	Fred	WI
K7MO	12392	Nick	WA
WB5JWI	12688	Les	TX
WB0PEO	15734	Wayne	NE
K6JWM	16032	Kenneth	CA
KJ7GG	16040	Matthew	AZ
AB4O	16383	John	TN
KB8XG	17172	David	MI
WB2GTC	17721	George	NY
VE1AHX	18523	Ben	NS
N5IFR	21602	Michael	TX

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.

President's message (continued)

radios. Small companies have sprung up selling high precision keys and unique radios. CW is in the forefront of the new radio boom.

In addition, more and more women are engaged in CW operations. Women have always been great CW ops, and were very active in World War II in support of the war effort. Some of the best CW traffic handlers were women. Now they are voluntarily picking up CW without the need to save the world, but just to enjoy and challenge themselves. It is great.

Take a look at YouTube and Face book. Search for "CW" or "CW operation" and all kinds of videos and information will appear. Then, switch off the computer and fire up the rig. Hunt some Parks on the Air or just call CQ. People are around who want to have CW contacts.

The other day I heard a CQ on 30 meters. The caller was NJ2BB. That is the amateur radio station that is on the Battleship New Jersey docked in Camden, New Jersey. I had a nice QSO with the operator, Tom. I sent away for a QSL card. Who doesn't like battleships?

Joe, N8TI

FISTS AWARDS (continued)

Spectrum 40m: M0KTZ, M0NGN, AF5Z

Spectrum 30m: W8SCS

Spectrum 10m: AF5Z

Prefix 50: G0FOZ

QR0 Category

Spring Saturday Sprint Results for May 10, 2025.

Callsign	Name	QTH	FISTS #	FISTS QSOs	Non-FISTS	Points	Multi	Bonus	Score
WB0CJB	Paul	TN	12460	21	4	113	16	250	2058
WB9HFK	Mark	IL	7606	14	8	86	16	0	1376
KC2LSD	Cody	NY	11793	13	7	79	13	0	1027
KQ4MHE	Mike	NC	22984	3	2	19	5	0	95
KA5VZG	Alan	TN	15363	1	4	13	5	0	65
N5TML	Tim	TX	21761	2	2	14	3	0	42

SOAPBOX ... Call

20 meters was almost dead most of the sprint. 40 meters started to produce about 2 hours before the end. Thanks to all who stuck it out and gave me a contact. Hopefully next weekend will be better. 73 de Paul WB0CJB

QRP Category—no logs received

Club Category—no logs received

QR0 Category

Spring Sunday Sprint Results for May 18, 2025.

Callsign	Name	QTH	FISTS #	FISTS QSOs	Non-FISTS	Points	Multi	Bonus	Score
WB0CJB	Paul	TN	12460	13	4	73	16	0	1168
WB9HFK	Mark	IL	7606	6	3	36	9	0	324

QRP Category—no logs received

Club Category—no logs received

SPRINT INFORMATION

Sprints will be held eight times throughout the year on the second Saturday and third Sunday in each of the following months: Feb., May, Aug. and Nov. Sprints will now run over a 24-hour period.

OBJECTIVE:

To exchange specified information with as many FISTS members as possible using Morse Code only, and within the time frame stipulated. Sprints are a great opportunity for our newer members to get on the air, meet other club members, and have some fun! We encourage more experienced operators to please QRS to match the other operator's speed.

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.

DATES AND TIMES:

SATURDAY SPRINT: from 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC on second Saturday in Feb., May, Aug., and Nov.

SUNDAY SPRINT: from 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC on third Sunday in Feb., May, Aug., and Nov.

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. You may NOT work the same station more than once.

ENTRY CLASSES:

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

1. **QRO:** Over 5 watts to legal limit.
2. **QRP:** 5 watts output power or less.
3. **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 allowed.

EXCHANGE:

The following information must be exchanged by both stations and shown in your log for each QSO to count as a valid QSO:

FISTS members: RST, S/P/C, first name, FISTS number. *Non-FISTS members:* RST, S/P/C, first name. (Enter "0" Zero if your logging program requires a power entry for non-members.) S/P/C = U.S. State/Canadian Province/DXCC Country

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 (50) and Canadian province (13) counts as 1 multiplier. Count each only once, no matter how many times worked. Each DXCC country counts as 1 multiplier. Count each only once, no matter how many times worked. Canada and the USA do not count as DX multipliers

BONUS POINTS:

If the submitted Sprint log has a total of 25 or more listed QSO's, a bonus of 250 points will be added to the final calculated score.

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 the number of multipliers worked, then Bonus points are added.

CERTIFICATES:

Certificates will be awarded to the first, second, and third place finishers in each Sprint for each Entry Class. End-of-Year Certificates will be awarded ONLY to FISTS members with the highest cumulative point totals in the QRO, QRP and Club categories for all Sprints at the end of the year. Certificate will be sent to the winners via email in PDF format.

Sprint Information (continued)

LOG SUBMISSIONS:

All log entries must be received within 7 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 for entry:

1. Your name, call sign, mailing address, and FISTS Number if a member.
2. Club name and call sign if entry is for a club station.
3. Sprint worked—Date of the Sprint worked.
4. Entry class—QRO, QRP, or Club.
5. Number of FISTS members worked.
6. Number of non-FISTS worked.
7. FISTS number for FISTS QSOs.
8. List of multipliers.
9. Your claimed score.

An entry form is available here and on the FISTS website at:

https://fistsna.org/pdfdocs/sprint_entry_form_rev2.pdf

ELECTRONIC LOGS:

We will accept electronic logs in standard Cabrillo or ASCII Text File format. If you're not sure about your format, please contact the Sprint Manager before the contest entry deadline. E-logs are sent to:

sprintlogs@fistsna.org ONLY.

PAPER LOGS:

Send log and entry form to:

FISTS Sprint Log
4305 Roundwood Ct.
Indian Trail, NC 28079

JAN. 1, 2021 CHANGES TO AMERICAS CHAPTER MEMBERSHIPS

All Americas Chapter memberships will be dues-free.

- Expired memberships were changed to Life memberships on Jan 1, 2021.
- Current paid memberships that expired were changed to Life memberships on their expiration date.
- All New Memberships received since April 2, 2020 are entered as Life memberships.

Details about printed/mailed newsletter subscriptions appeared in Issue #4, 2020 of the *KeyNote*, which is available on the FISTS website at:

www.fistsna.org/publickeynotes.php



FISTS SPRINT ENTRY FORM

Check Sprint Entered: Saturday _____ Sunday _____ Sprint Date _____

Entry Class: QRO _____ QRP _____ FISTS Club _____

Name _____ Call _____ FISTS # _____ Non Member _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If Club, Club Name, Call _____ FISTS Nr. _____

E-mail Address (optional) _____

SCORING: Number of FISTS member QSOs: _____ $\times 5 =$ Total [A] _____
 Number of Non-FISTS QSOs: _____ $\times 2 =$ Total [B] _____
 Number of multipliers worked: _____ $=$ Total [C] _____

Add [A] to [B] and multiply by [C] to get your TOTAL CLAIMED SCORE = _____

----- CIRCLE WORKED MULTIPLIERS -----

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	
						AK					

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

FISTS Sprint Logs
 4305 Roundwood Ct.
 Indian Trail, NC 28079

Statement: "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 _____

SOAPBOX COMMENTS: