# FKeys Utility (V1.11.1)
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WriteLog is a very mature and effective logging program aimed at contesters. Back in 1999 I was using WriteLog as a casual contester and found that the function keys that are used to send messages were difficult for me to remember. I wrote the original FKeys to solve that problem. It runs as a separate application that looks like a small bank of buttons with descriptive text on them.

23 years later, WriteLog has evolved and FKeys has not kept up. So, I had a little time and decided to re-write FKeys using more modern tools and exploiting the new features in WriteLog.   I also dropped a couple of features that are no longer relevant.
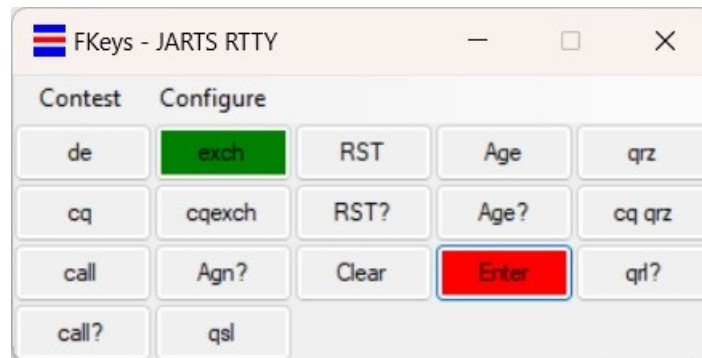

Most of the buttons above map to function keys (F1, F2, etc.). These will cause WriteLog to send the message buffers corresponding to the function keys. The Enter and Clear buttons cause certain keyboard shortcuts to be executed by WriteLog. If you click the "Configure" menu item you can change the screen and the function of each button. Right clicking on any button will send an ESCAPE to WriteLog which cancels the current transmission (we've all sent the exchange when we meant to send our call).

Installation

Installation has been simplified for this version. Just pick a directory and unzip the files to that directory. For an initial installation Windows may complain a little bit and may ask for Administrator privileges, but only the first time. This is because the program is not registered with Microsoft and has to create a key in the registry ([HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\K7KAR\FKeys]).

The zip file contains FKeys.exe, fkeys.pdf and several ".reg" files. The ".reg" files are contest templates that I've used. You can double click and they will be installed in the registry. You can then modify them to suit your needs.
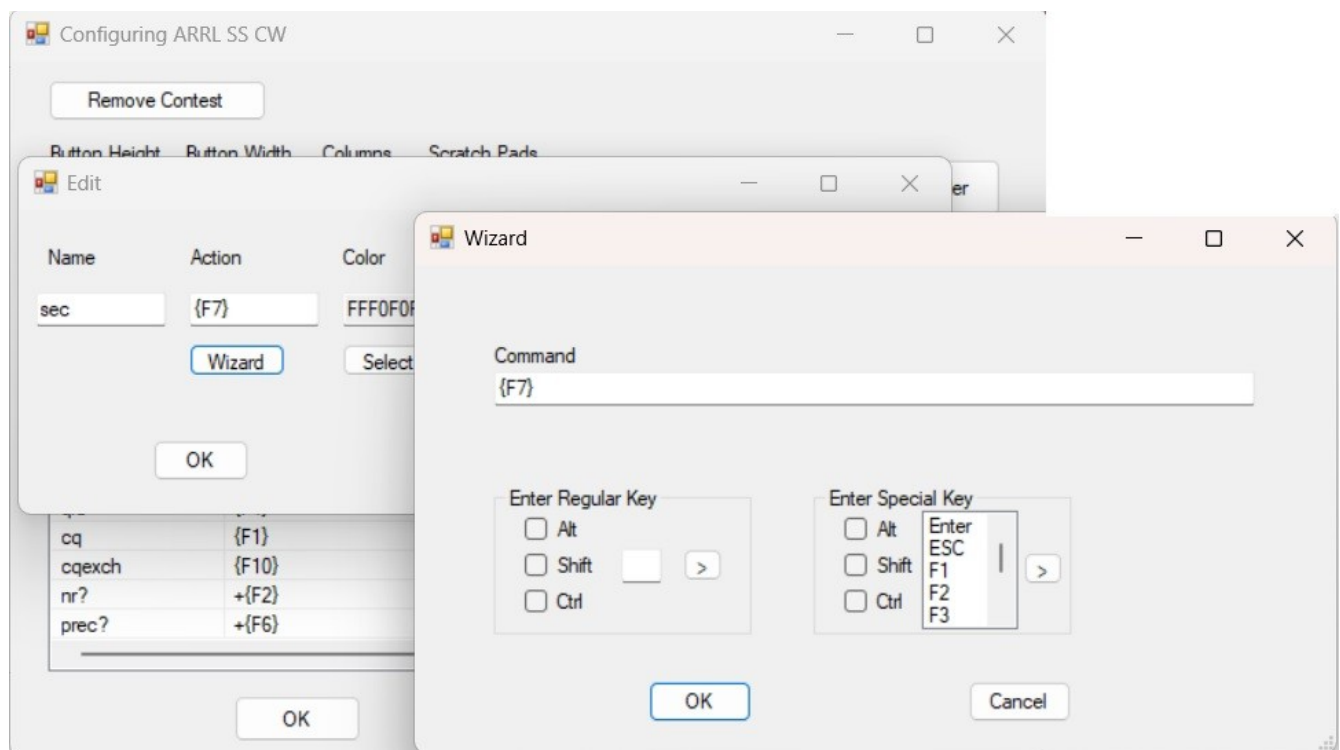
Configuration
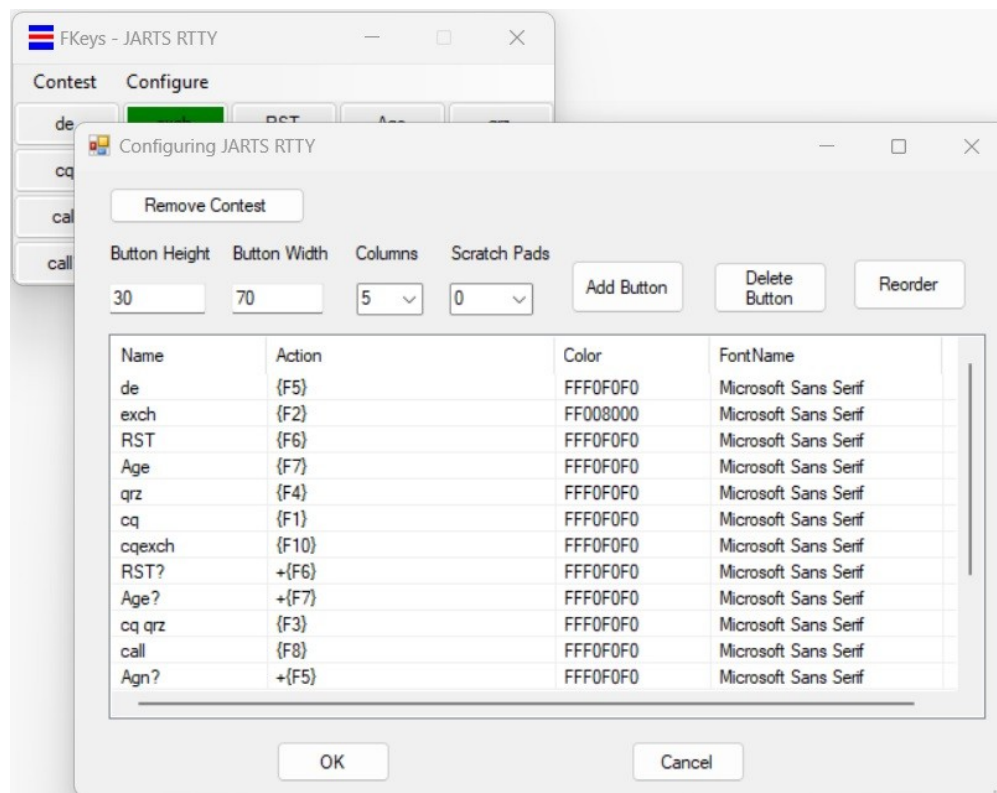
Above is the configuration screen which shows the text, color and font for each button along with the action that the button initiates. For technical reasons we use + as Shift, ^ as Ctrl, % as Alt and special characters are surrounded by {}. Other characters will be interpreted by WriteLog as text in the entry window. You could, for instance, have a button to increase CW speed by inserting {PGUP} as the action.

By double clicking on the button text in the configuration screen you will pop up the editing screen for that button.
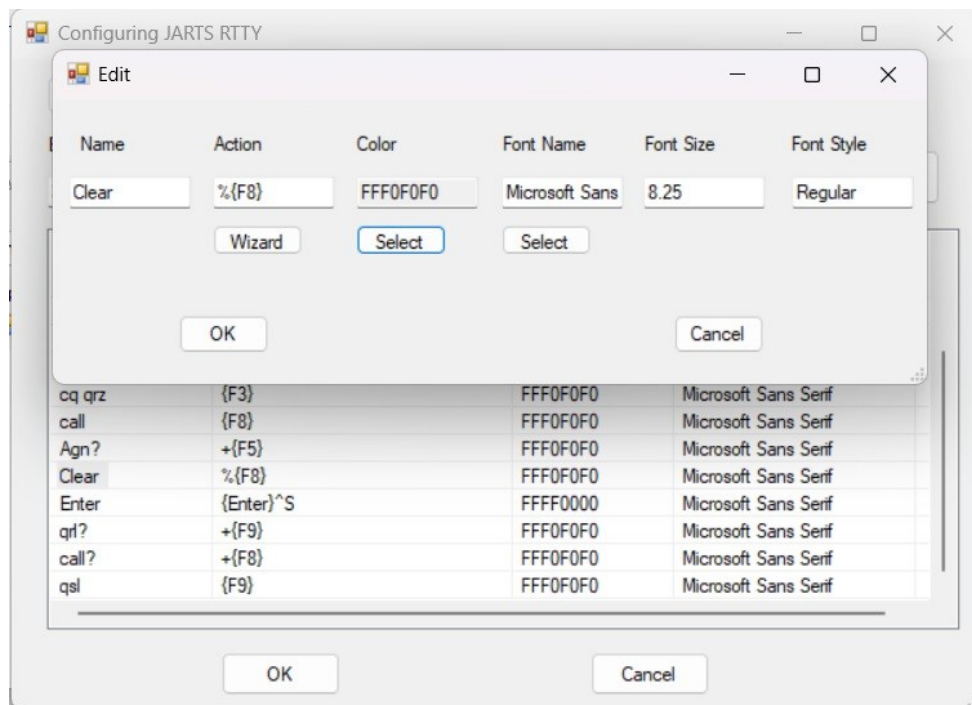
You can edit any of the three fields directly, but I suggest using the Wizard for the action, the Color dialog (Select) for the color and the font picker dialog (Select) for the font.


Select check boxes for alt, shift and ctrl then enter the key in the text box and press the > button.

Back in the Configuration dialog there are three buttons, "Add Button", "Delete Button" and "Reorder". Add Button simply adds a line in the list of buttons. Delete Button removes the currently selected line. Reorder brings up another dialog that allows you to drag buttons to the position you'd like them. It takes a little practice, but you can drag the buttons around to where you want them.
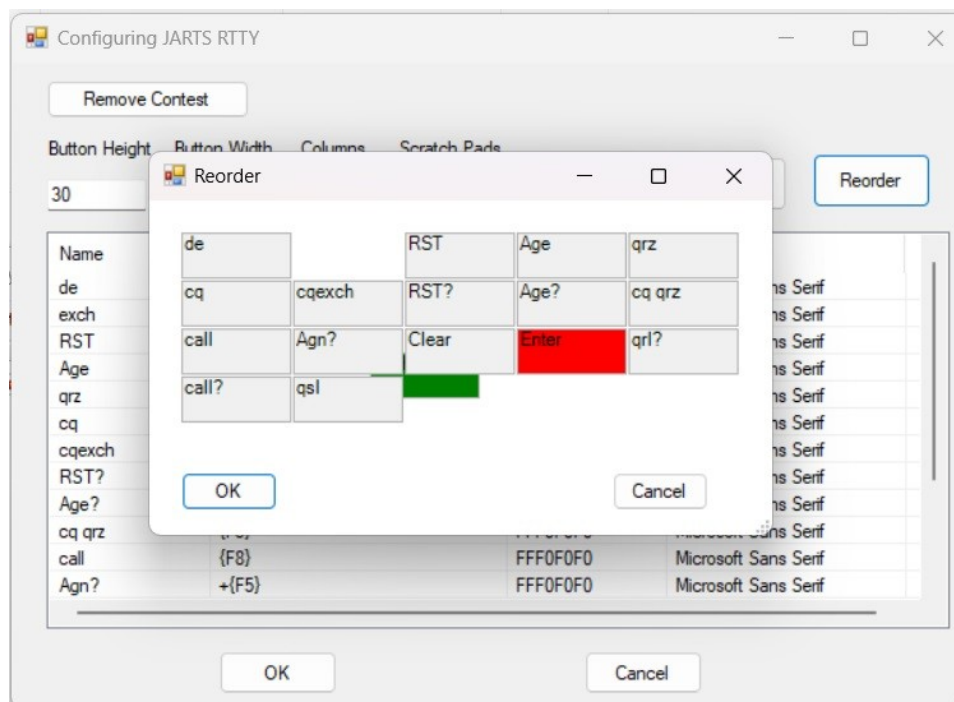
The final button is "Remove Contest". This will delete the contest from the registry completely.

Back to the main screen, the Contest menu item allows you to select a contest configuration or add a new contest configuration.
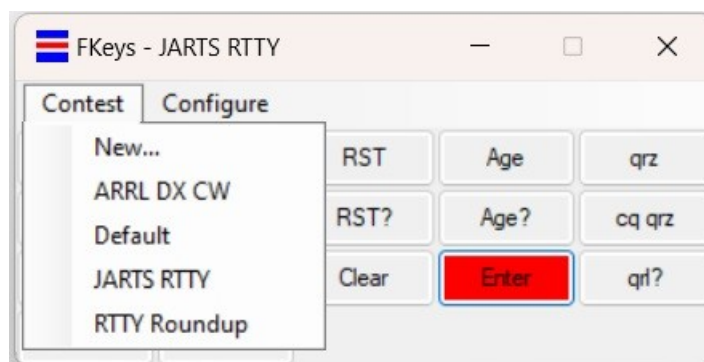
If you select a contest, that configuration will appear. If you select "New…" you'll need to add the contest name. Once you've picked a name you'll be presented with the configuration screen using the configuration from the last contest selected (you won't overwrite that contest).
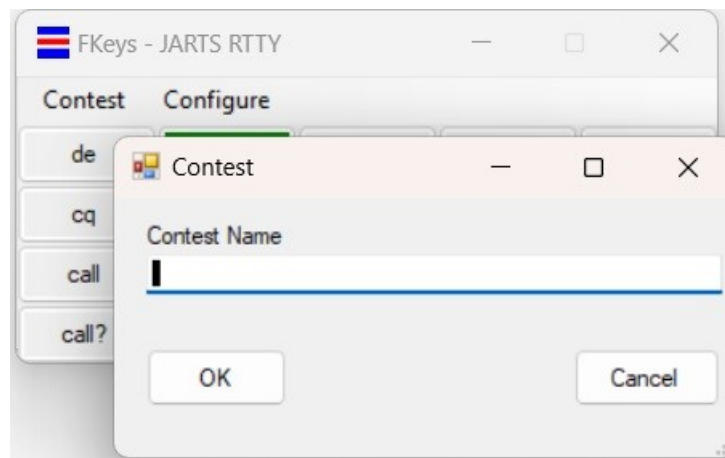
For those not familiar with the old FKeys, the notion of scratch pads may be new. They are small buffers that you can use to send messages via the CW and RTTY keyboards in WriteLog.

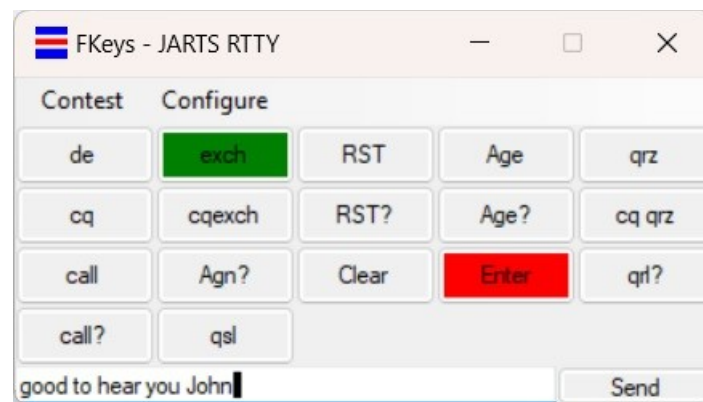If you start FKeys before WriteLog, or close WriteLog, FKeys will change the font color to Red as a reminder. After WriteLog starts it will change back.
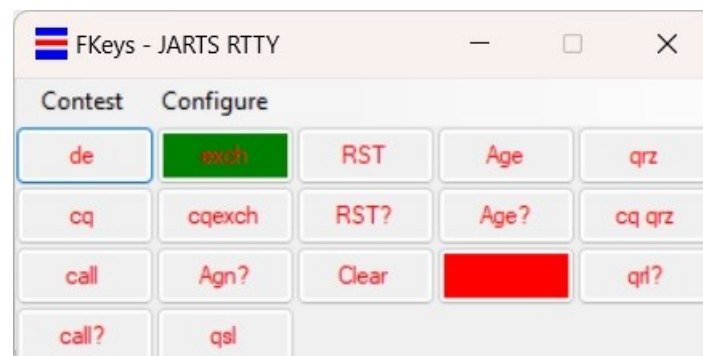
That's about it. I suggest starting simple and adding complexity after you've used the utility for a while. I think you'll find you don't really need a large number of buttons.

Repair K7KAR Utility (1.0)

This little utility can be used to fix up problems in the Registry associated with my programs. Generally these programs have Registry entries under HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\K7KAR. This is pretty typical for such programs. Under this key will be a key for each program (FKeys, FlexButtons, etc.). Under the program key there is some stuff that the program needs to operate. This stuff used to be stored in "*.ini" files, but now lives in the Registry. This makes it less accessible to users who might corrupt it, but makes it harder to fix when something goes wrong. Most of the problems with my programs are caused by me making changes to how things are stored from one version to the next (sorry). My programs have reached the point where each has some generic stuff stored at the top level (usually version # and last "layout" used). Beneath the top level is a key for each "layout". The layouts may be a collection of buttons associated with a contest or QSL configurations. Under each layout are fonts, sizes, text, actions, etc. Below is a picture of a sample Registry view showing what this looks like:
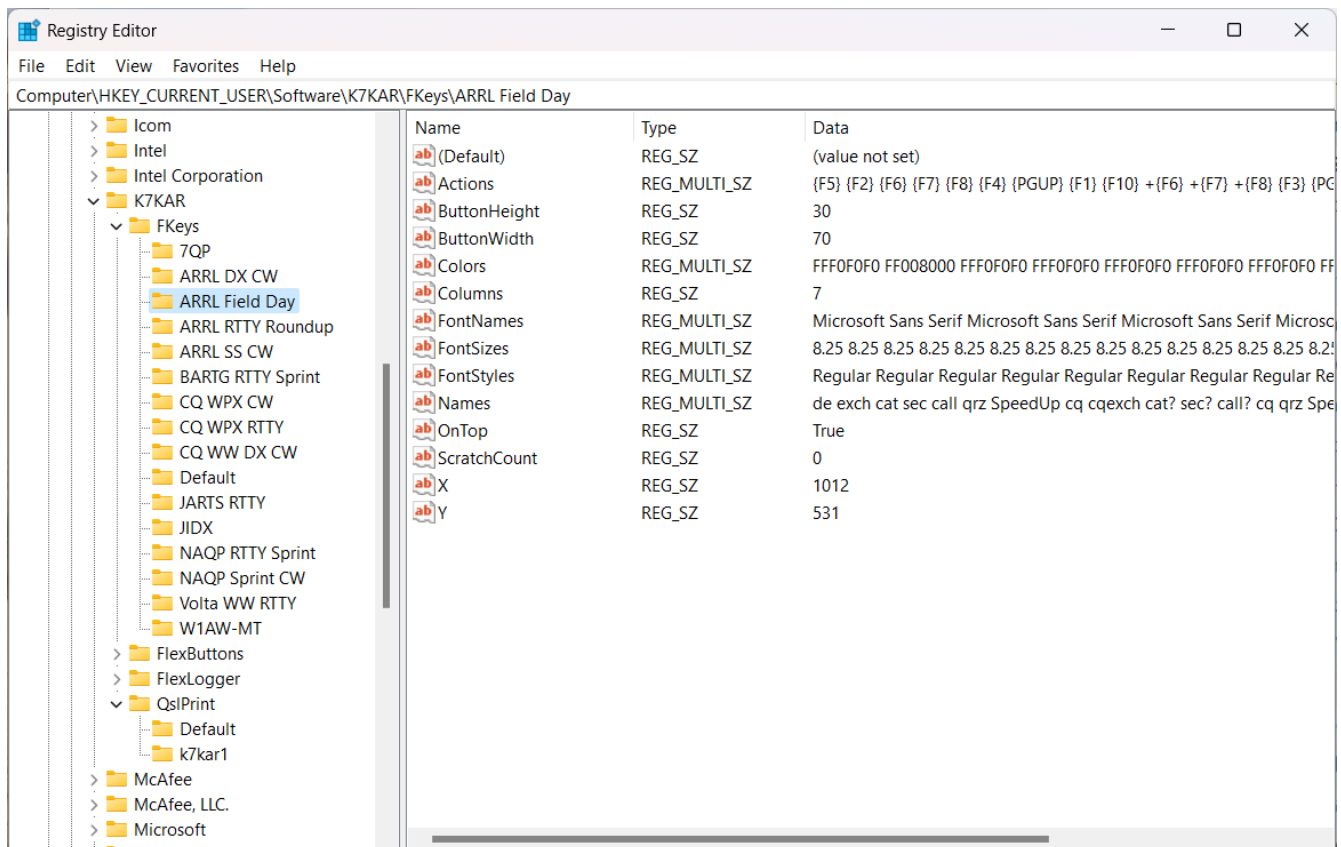
Users are discouraged from using the Registry Editor because you can mess up your Windows installation if you are not careful. I made this utility so you can see what's happening and fix most problems. This is version 1, so it doesn't do as much as I'd like; but it is a good start.

Let's take a look at the program.
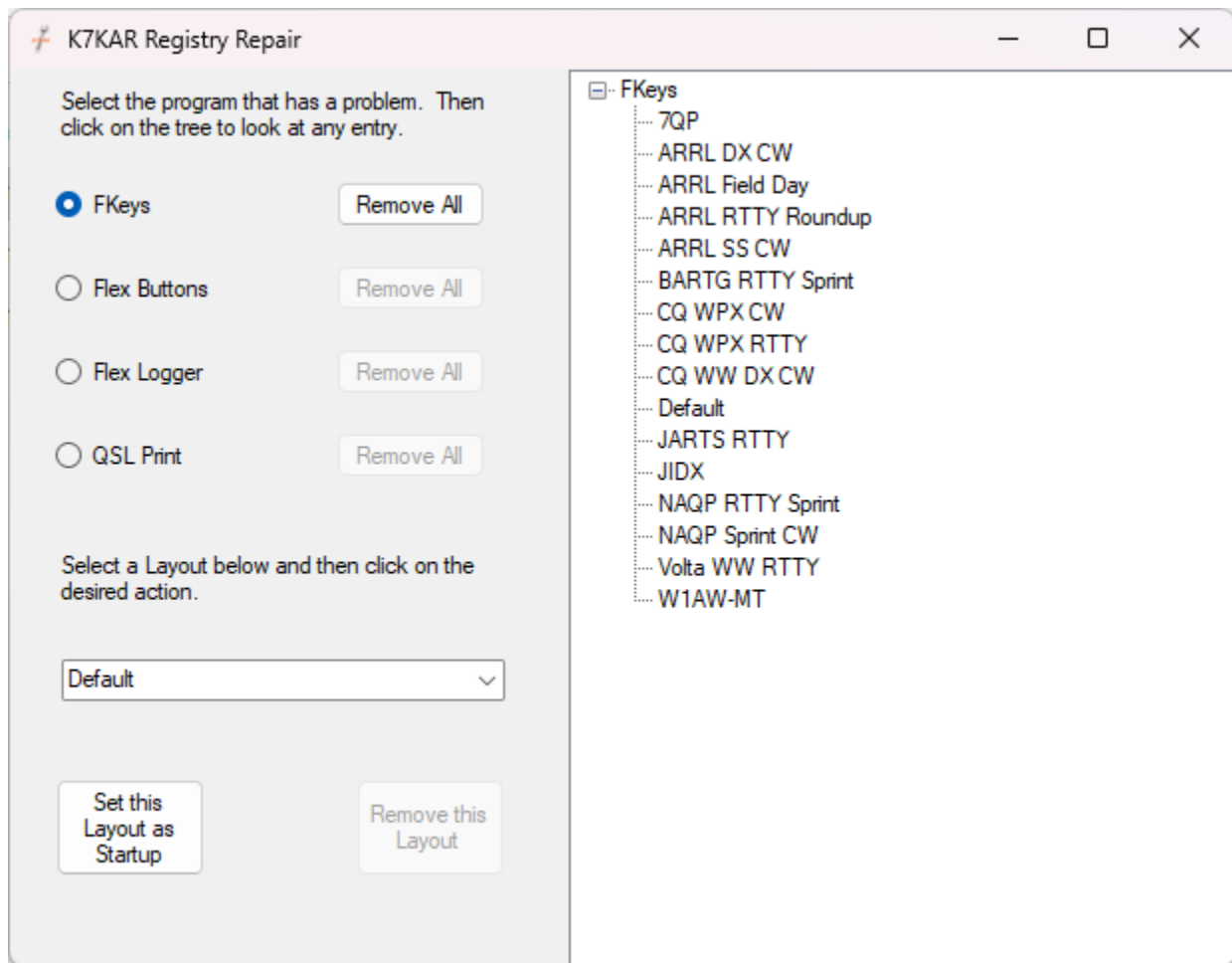
This shows the screen with the FKeys program selected. The "Remove All" buttons will remove ALL reference to FKeys from the Registry. After doing that you can run the FKeys program and it should start with a blank slate using the simple "Default" configuration. This is a drastic solution as it will wipe out any layouts (contests) you have previously set up.

If you click on the program name (FKeys here) a message will pop up showing the top level stuff.
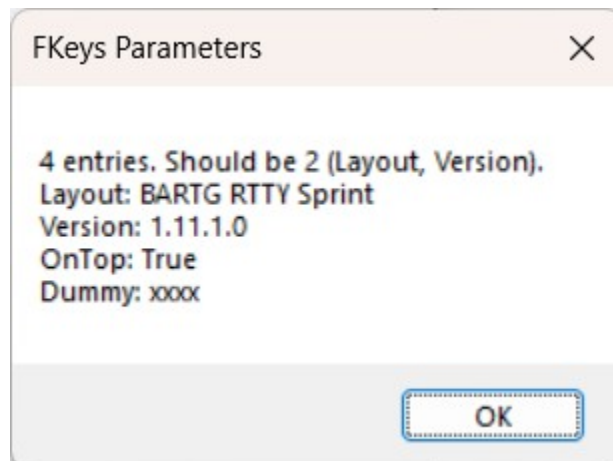
In this case I have a couple of incorrect entries (for testing) and it tells me that. It also shows the startup layout (BARTG RTTY Sprint). Usually the problem is that the startup layout has somehow gotten corrupted. Try switching the startup layout to the Default layout and see if FKeys (or other program) will startup correctly. If that works, you can go back into this utility and delete the offending layout. Both of these actions can be done on the lower left of the main screen.

If you'd like to see what is in one of the layouts you can click on it on the right side of the screen. A message box will appear showing the information from the layout and maybe give you a clue what was wrong with it.

ARRL Field Day Parameters   ✕

13 entries. Correct.
Names: de, exch, cat, sec, call, qrz, SpeedUp, cq, cqexch, cat?, sec?, call?,
cq qrz, SpeedDn, qsl, agn?, qrl?, Cancel, Clear, Enter,
Actions: {F5}, {F2}, {F6}, {F7}, {F8}, {F4}, {PGUP}, {F1}, {F10}, +{F6}, +{F7},
+{F8}, {F3}, {PGDN}, {F9}, +{F5}, +{F9}, {ESC}, %{F8}, {Enter}^S,
Colors: FFF0F0F0, FF008000, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0,
FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0,
FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0, FFF0F0F0,
FFF0F0F0, FFFF0000,
FontNames: Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans
Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
Microsoft Sans Serif, Microsoft Sans Serif,
FontSizes: 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25,
8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25, 8.25,
FontStyles: Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular,
Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular,
Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular, Regular,
ButtonWidth: 70
ButtonHeight: 30
Columns: 7
ScratchCount: 0
X: 1012
Y: 531
OnTop: True

                                                            OK