

# THE KLARION

## Newsletter of the Keuka Lake Amateur Radio Association

### 2021 2-Meter Simplex Challenge

by KLARA member Joel Fiske, KC2VAW

This event was held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We had eighteen participants, with four stations operating from fixed locations, ten stations operating as rover stations, and four stations heard during the contest but submitting no logs. See the associated spreadsheets for actual scores.

Scores for the fixed stations were very tightly clustered, ranging from 11 to 46 points. The top scorer was Bill Glosick with 46 points.

Scores for the rover stations were not as tightly clustered, ranging from 132 to 372 points. The top scorer was Reiner Dieg with 372 points.

I think all participants had a good day. I, personally, was very gratified to note the number of stations who were willing to try the 2-meter USB category, which was new for this year. The willingness to learn new skills and to experiment with new techniques is a key part of our hobby. I think the 2-meter USB section challenged a lot of participants in that direction.

We also were able to gather some very good info for disaster assistance planning. For many folks who were new participants, it was very eye opening to note the distances possible on 2-Meters.

Next year? Who knows what the pandemic is likely to do to us? I'd like to think it's winding down and that next year is going to be back to "normal". Assuming this is correct ...

I think the general consensus was that this Challenge was well worth repeating next year.

Changes for next year? Some people wanted to go further into the evening, some folks wanted a shorter contest period. I think the four hour interval was just about right, and I'd suggest we stay with that.

People seemed to be excited about the 2-Meter USB division. I think we will keep that active for next year, although we may pull this out to its' own division, scoring FM and USB separately.

Other additions? Well, both 6 meter and 10 meter FM or USB (or both) would be possible, as would the addition of a digital division.

We do need to be a **little** cautious about how much we add in any one year. We could add enough that we only got one station in each class. No fun in that!

That's pretty much it for this year. Look for us next year in mid-May!

## Second Quarter 2021

### Major KLARA Events

#### Winter Field Day

January 29-30, 2022

#### KLARA 2 Meter FM Simplex Challenge

Spring 2022 TBD

#### Annual Spring Picnic

Spring 2022 TBD

#### Annual Red House Picnic

Summer 2022 TBA

#### KLARA Booth at Steuben County Fair

August 2022 TBA

#### KLARA Hamfest

August 20, 2022

#### KLARA All Day Tech Question Review and VE Testing

TBD

#### KLARA Annual Meeting and Elections

September 8, 2021 at VFW in Bath

#### Wineglass Marathon

October 3, 2021

#### Annual End of the Season Picnic

October 9, 2021 at Kanakadea Park

#### Annual Christmas Dinner

December 2021 TBD

#### KLARA Club Station

N2AAR

Gary Stratton KC2YTD Trustee

#### Talk with us on-the-air using our linked repeater system:

Bath, NY 145.190- 110.9  
Arkport, NY 147.045+ 110.9  
Jasper, NY 147.330+ 110.9

#### Visit us on the web:

<https://klara.us>



## 2021 Simplex Challenge Scoring

### Fixed Stations

Call	Name	City	Score
N2CT	William Glosick	Bath	46
N2NRL	Neil Lewis	Erin	45
KA2GEH	Michael Hanna	Wayland	36
NB2L	Gary Acker	Almond	11

### Rover Stations

Call	Name	City	Score
N2PEZ	Reiner Dieg	Elmira	372
KD2EH	David Hartman	Dansville	352
KC2VAW	Joel Fiske	Savona	320
KD2CZY	Donna Fiske	Savona	310
W2JTC	James Caneen	Arkport	296
KC2YTD	Gary Stratton	Dansville	258
W2RMT	Rick Torrey	Almond	240
K2RTH	Ruth Walters	Bath	232
N2FMS	Harold Scharmberg	Dansville	204
A12U	Thomas Shugars	Hammondsport	132



Harold N2FMS using a hitch mounted home-brew ground-plane antenna.



KLARA member Bill Glosick N2CT operating a fixed station during the Simplex Challenge.



Mike KA2GEH using a tripod mounted Ringo Ranger antenna at 2057'.



Gary KC2YTD used a 4 element quad antenna as part of his rover station.



Rick W2RMT put his IC-705 QRP radio to the test. Looks good mounted in the backpack. Sounded great on-the air.



Jim W2JTC and XYL Donna teamed up for the Simplex Challenge. Jim had good results with a 3 element vertically polarized beam. Donna was flawless with a No. 2 pencil!



## A Word About Frequency

by KLARA member Joel Fiske KC2VAW

Wow, we had a lot of stations active during the 2 Meter Simplex Challenge, didn't we? In some cases we had numerous stations all trying to occupy the same frequency! Very confusing!

You should remember that the FM simplex portion of the band runs from 146.400 to 146.595. Any frequency within the portion of the spectrum is available for your use. 146.520 is the nationwide calling frequency ... a great place to make contacts, but you should QSY away from this frequency to complete them.

Another issue some folks were having was channel spacing. A big issue for the 2-meter band is that some areas have adopted a 15-kHz channel spacing while others use a 20-kHz channel spacing.

Here in New York (and in most of the rest of the northeastern US), we use a 15 kHz spacing, which is why 146.535 works (It's 15 kHz away from the nationwide calling frequency of 146.520). If your radio is set for 20kHz spacing, you probably won't be able to tune this.

However, all of the 2 meter FM rigs that I am familiar with, allow you (the operator), to control the channel spacing. You can set the frequency step where you need it by using the menus to make a change to your set up. Remember, you control the radio, don't let the radio control you!

"But if we aren't all on the same frequency, I might miss someone!" No, you won't. Again, all of the 2 meter rigs I am familiar with, also have a scan function. Prior to a contest, program this for your radio and scan the FM simplex frequencies. Your receiver will pause on a busy channel, allowing you to stop the scan and contact the station occupying the busy channel.

The FM simplex portion of the band is not that large. You can also just take the radio out of "memory mode" and put it into "VHO mode", which will let you simply dial through the frequencies.

Will you program my radio for me? Nope, not unless you're really in trouble, and not unless you have the "book". No one else should either, actually. You really need to learn this for yourself. It's part of being an amateur operator!

"Wait a minute, what about 2-Meter SSB simplex?" Well, as noted when we started this year's contest, not everyone has the equipment to operate in this mode.

However, we did have three or four SSB stations, and we managed to make a decent number of contacts. We also

had several stations using multiple operators, so we had at least six operators on 2-Meter SSB. From what I could hear most of us were using FM simplex to schedule contacts on SSB. Not a thing wrong with that! It's a smart use of the frequencies.

"What about the mis-match in antenna polarization?" Don't I need a horizontally polarized antenna? Doesn't 2-Meter SSB require an "opening"?

No, not necessarily (to all questions). We had a wide variety of antennas which operated in this year's contest, both vertical and horizontal. I noted no difficulty in making contacts. Go ahead and use what you have (after testing SWR to be sure you're not going to blow up your radio) and hope for the best!

You will, of course, need equipment (transceiver) capable of producing a 2-Meter USB signal, but that's another whole ball of wax, as Granddad used to say.

If you would like to experiment with a horizontally polarized antenna without spending a ton of cash, grab the cheap yagi page from the contest material on the club website. You can build a yagi with scrap lumber and (wire) coat hangers for about 5 bucks, maybe less. Will you be able to use it for EME work or serious VHF+ contesting? No, of course not! But, it will let you get your feet wet with VHF+ and see if you enjoy this type of work.

That's enough for this go-round. Hope that dispels at least some of the "fog" around frequencies and a few other contesting issues.

I'll be looking for you in next year's contest! Hope you'll be looking for me ... can't wait!

**Take Care**

**Operate In Public**

**Explain What You Are Doing**

**Be A Ham Radio Ambassador**





## 2021 Winter Field Results

The Winter Field Day Association published the results from the 2021 WFD. This year, because of the COVID virus, hams participated as individuals. When logs were submitted a club name could be attached. After the cutoff date for log entries the WFD Association compiled a total club score.

KLARA earned a total of 9200 points! In 2020 KLARA earned 5500 points and in 2019 earned 3191 points.

Joel Fiske KC2VAW and Donna KD2CZY earned almost half of those points. They made only 20 phone QSO's but setup an outdoor station with emergency power earning 4500 bonus points. A job well done!

Just wondering if KLARA should attempt an outdoor activation in January?

Call	Name	QSO's			Total
		PH	CW	DIG	
AI2U	Thomas Shugars		40		420
KC2VZW	Joel Fiske	20			4528
KC2YTD	Gary Stratton	30		93	2674
N2FMS	Harold Scharmberg	152			1440
NB2L	Gary Acker	5		10	138
<b>2021 Total Score</b>					<b>9200</b>

## Upcoming Ham Radio Activities

### ARRL VHF Contest

September 11 through 13

[www.arrl.org/september-vhf](http://www.arrl.org/september-vhf)

Many enjoyed the KLARA 2 Meter Simplex Challenge. This is very similar but includes all modes and bands from 6 meters and up. You don't need to officially enter the contest and submit logs. You can get on-the-air and make some fun contacts. A 6 meter dipole is very easy to make. It's only about 9 1/2' long. Hang it as high as you can, hook up your radio and have fun. Like the Simplex Challenge, you could drive to a hill top. Give it a try!

### Elmira (Horseheads) Hamfest

September 25, 2021

### Wineglass Marathon

October 3, 2021

### KLARA Annual End of Season Picnic

October 9, 2021 at Kanakadea Park

Does anyone have a 2 meter fox? Perhaps we could hunt for it during the picnic with our handhelds.