

# THE KLARION

## Quarterly Newsletter of the Keuka Lake Amateur Radio Association

### Parks on the Air

by KLARA members Joel Fiske(KC2VAW) and Donna Fiske (KD2CZY)

CQ POTA, CQ POTA, CQ POTA KC2VAW calling CQ for Parks on the Air. Standing by and waiting for calls ...

Many of you will remember the National Parks on the Air awards program from 2016. Following the closure of NPOTA, this program morphed into Parks on the Air, which includes state and national parks, forests, and wildlife areas.

The idea is that you set up a portable station in one of these areas (subject to approval by the administrator, of course) and solicit other contacts from other amateurs, those set up in either “your” park other parks or those “hunting” from home.

So far, Donna and I have “activated” 37 entities (and the list continues to grow). We have also gathered about 135 contacts with other parks, everywhere from Prince Edward Island in Canada to Merritt Island National Seashore in Florida. Yes, this is a worldwide project.

How do you do this? We know this is blasphemy to a true amateur, but the first step is to do some reading. Go to the Parks on the Air website (<https://parksontheair.com>). Read the “help / getting started” section. I’d suggest you download the PDF versions of the “Activator” and “Hunter” guides then go back and read the guides again.

Then look at the “map of entities”. You will note that New York State is blessed with a ton of places to activate. In fact, I think the 637 entities for New York makes this state the number 1 spot for entities in the world! It’s certainly a big sandbox and there’s a lot of room to play.

Then have a look at the videos that Matt Heere has made and posted to YouTube. He’s still in the process of making these videos, so be sure to subscribe. After you have had a look at Matt’s videos, go back and read the guides a third time. Now you’re getting the idea.

The other item which is worth looking at is the scheduling and spotting pages on the website. In contrast to many other events you may work, Parks on the Air not only allows you to spot yourself, but encourages it. The scheduling page can be difficult to navigate and

**Third Quarter  
2020  
Summer through Fall  
Edition**

### Major KLARA Events

#### Winter Field Day

January 30-31, 2021

#### KLARA 2 Meter FM Simplex Challenge

Spring 2021 TBD

#### ARRL Field Day

June 26-27, 2021 with setup on June 25

#### Annual Red House Picnic

TBD

#### National Warplane Museum Airshow

July 9-11, 2021

#### Wine Country Classic Boat Regatta

July 17-18, 2021

#### KLARA Booth at Steuben County Fair

August 17-22, 2021

#### KLARA Hamfest

August 2021 TBD

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

TBD

#### KLARA Annual Meeting and Elections

TBD

#### Wineglass Marathon

October 3, 2021

#### Annual End of the Season Picnic

October 2021 TBD

#### Annual Christmas Dinner

December 2021 TBD

**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>



frustrating to use, but it is critical. You need to figure it out. Syntax is critical and very (as the English would say) "fiddly". You'll get it. There is also on-line help available ... but I'd encourage you to exhaust the written and video resources before you ask questions of the on-line folks.

This little article also leaves the Facebook pages and Slack channels for you to figure out on your own. It also does not give you hints and tricks about planning your activation. But, that's part of the fun for this type of project.

A few pictures follow:



Joel working the pile-up from under the picnic shelter at Pinnacle State Park in Addison. This is park K-2121. We had 26 contacts for the day. This was on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This was a Saturday. The weather was not in our favor this day, as there were a lot of thunderstorms in the area to work around. Static crashes on 40 meters had to be heard to be believed!



Donna has a very nice logging position, in the shade, on Burt Hill State Forest, in Howard, NY. This is Park K-5146. We were first to activate this area, making this an All Time New One (or ATNO). This was on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We made 51 contacts, including 7 park-to-park contacts. Not too bad for a mid-week day, working from 10:00 AM until about 3:00 PM.

If this looks like something you would like to do, good! As noted above, this is a very big sandbox, and there's a lot of room to play!



Joel in the standard operating position off the tailgate. This is on Rock Creek State Forest, Park K-5275, in Greenwood, NY; another mid-week activation and another ATNO. We had 41 contacts on this day. Note Donna's handmade sign; we have taken to posting this on the side of the car ... it saves a lot of questions!

## Annual Meeting and Election

The KLARA Annual Meeting was held at the VFW Post in Bath on October 14. The following members were elected to the Board:

Jim Caneen W2JTC *President*  
Alan Whiteman W2ADW *Vice President*  
Belinda Connor KD2BPJ *Secretary*  
Jerrilyn Baker KE2YB *Treasurer*  
John Babbitt K2GQG  
Harold Scharmberg N2FMS  
Preston Skillman W2CAZ

During the meeting Ruth Walters was recognized for her years of service as KLARA Treasurer. She was presented a certificate of appreciation and a gift card. Ruth, a job well done!



KLARA received the following note from Ruth:

To My KLARA friends -  
My sincere appreciation for the recognition and the gift card. I will find something fun to do with the gift card although maybe I will wait awhile. It has been an honor to serve KLARA and look forward to spending time with the great friends I have made. Many thanks, with love from your Treasurer!  
Beth

## ARRL 2020 Field Day Results

The ARRL published the 2020 Field Day results in their December issue of QST. As a group entry, the Keuka Lake Amateur Radio Association earned 2266 points. Because of the COVID virus we were not able to setup a club site and operate under the N2AAR club callsign. Members participating in Field Day used their own callsigns while working from home or in a remote location. Some used emergency power and others used commercial power. ARRL tabulated the club score by adding together all the individual scores. Unfortunately, as a club, we were down about 800 points from last year but everyone reports having fun during the weekend.

The following KLARA members participated:

KC2VAW Joel	KD2SPC Gary
KD2CZY Donna	KS2YL Nancy
KC2YTD Gary	N2FMS Harold
KD2BPJ Belinda	W2JTC Jim
KD2GEB Brian	W2RMT Rick
KD2GQG John	W2RTH Ruth

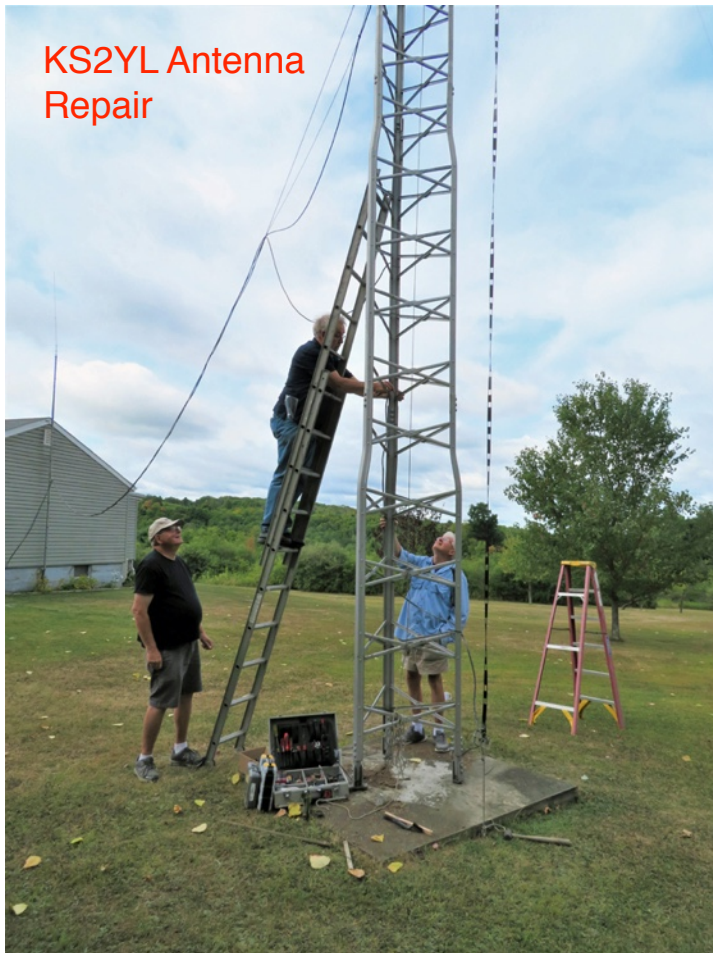


## Winter Field Day 2021 January 30 and 31

CORONA-19 will not stop KLARA from participating in WFD. Club members can work from the warmth of their home using existing antennas or perhaps use a remote location such as a heated cabin. For the brave, there is always the outside option. Individual digital or paper logs can be submitted. The WFD group will add up a club score. Read the rules at [www.winterfieldday.com](http://www.winterfieldday.com). Last year KLARA placed first in the WNY section and 44th out of 170 nation-wide.



Joel, Gary and Jim setting up antennas for WFD 2020



**KS2YL Antenna Repair**

In August, Jim W2JTC, Gary KC2YTD and Harold N2FMS traveled to the QTH of Nancy Bob KS2YL. They were on a mission to repair her antenna. The G5RV antenna was originally built and installed by long time KLARA member and friend Roy Koehler KB2WXV (SK). Roy helped many people install antennas. It's great that some are still up and working. Nancy was a very gracious host and shared coffee and homemade baked goodies.

On the way back to Livingston County the work group stopped in at Mike's KA2GEH QTH. His 75M dipole was raised to new heights and is now performing great. He referred to the group as the Talented Tech Team. We'll have to see if the name sticks.

The "Talented Tech Team" also helped Dave KD2EH, Belinda KD2BPJ, and Rick W2RMT with antenna projects. Rick also has a Roy Koehler antenna – a 40M dipole.

If anyone needs help with antenna projects, don't be afraid to ask. Perhaps the "Talented Tech Team" needs a new slogan, "Have Spud Gun Will Tavel"!

## New Antenna Installation by Glenn W3LSW

Glenn recently added to his "antenna farm" by installing a Gap Voyager DX antenna. You can view this antenna at [www.gapantenna.com](http://www.gapantenna.com). The antenna is impressive at 45' tall but has an



electrical height of 66' due to the "top hat" at the very top of the antenna. Two sets of guy wires (actually non-conductive rope) hold it up. This antenna does not require radials on the ground as it is a true dipole set vertically. This antenna was designed for low angle high performance on 160,80, and 40 meters.



## From the Editor. . .

I assume most people read this newsletter online by using a web browser. It might be easier to view some of the smaller images if you zoom in on them. Please send me any suggestions and critiques (both good and bad) to my email address [n2fms@frontier.com](mailto:n2fms@frontier.com). Thank you and 73, Harold

## A Little More on Baluns. . .

by KLARION editor Harold Scharmberg N2FMS

In the last issue of *The Klarion*, Glenn W3LSW and I published Part 1 of an article on Baluns and Ununs. In doing research for Part 2, I came across two ads from LDG Electronics. The ads are very instructional and I wanted to share them with our readers. I was granted permission from LDG to use them. KLARA and *The Klarion* are not endorsing the purchase or use of these products. They are presented for educational purposes only. Part 2 is still a work in progress. [Enlarge for better viewing.](#)

### WHERE TO USE LDG BALUNS & UNUNS

Not sure which balun or unun is right for your antenna? See our handy chart below to help you determine which is the best fit for your set-up. All LDG baluns and ununs handle up to 200 Watts PEP and cover frequencies from 1.8 to 30MHz. Visit us at [www.ldgelectronics.com](http://www.ldgelectronics.com) or see your favorite dealer today to learn more and to see our full line of products.

# LDG

**\$30 ea.** | 200 Watts PEP  
1.8-30MHz

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DIPOLE</b> Length = <math>468/freq</math></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1:1 Balun</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LADDER LINE/TWIN LEAD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4:1 Balun</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>18' THRU 43' VERTICAL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4:1 Unun</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>END FED WIRE</b> 30' - 135'</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>9:1 Unun</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">&gt;30' Coax Cable</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>40M DIPOLE</b> LDG-40MD-K</p> <p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"><b>\$60</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RBA-1:1</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">INCLUDES 70' #14/7 Wire 1 Center Insulator 2 End Insulators LDG RBA-1:1 Balun</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>G5RV DIPOLE</b> LDG-G5RV-K</p> <p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"><b>\$100</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RBA-4:1</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">INCLUDES 120' #14/7 Wire 32' Ladder Line 1 Center Insulator 2 End Insulators LDG RBA-4:1 Balun</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OFF CENTER FED WINDHAM</b> LDG-OCFW-K</p> <p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"><b>\$130</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RU-4:1</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">INCLUDES 140' #14/7 Wire 25' Coax 1 Center Insulator 1 End Insulators LDG RU-4:1 Unun LDG RU-1:1 Choke</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>END FED LONG WIRE</b> LDG-EFLW-K</p> <p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"><b>\$130</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RU-9:1</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">INCLUDES 70' #14/7 Wire 50' #20 Drop Ground 25' Coax 1 Center Insulator 1 End Insulators LDG RU-9:1 Unun LDG RU-1:1 Choke</p>

LDG Two-Year Warranty!

## An Updated Version of the AS-2259GR

by KLARA member Joel Fiske KC2VAW

Several people have inquired as to what type of antenna we are using for Parks on the Air. Several other folks have asked about an antenna for field day to do "gap filling" i.e. contacts with stations close to our locations and within the "skip zones" for the larger, higher antennas.

My answer to this, assuming a portable operating situation, is the same in both cases. A NVIS antenna. NVIS stands for **N**ear **V**ertical **I**ncidence **S**kywave. If you are interested, we can discuss the operating physics involved in NVIS at a later date.

One of the more famous designs for this was done by our friends at Harris Communications in Rochester, NY. Basically, it consists of two crossed, Inverted Vee antennas, mounted fairly low to the ground (see the "top view" sketch next page). Note that this is **not** a resonant antenna and will **require a tuner** to match to an amateur transceiver!

This design was deployed by the US military for tactical communications in the range of 1 – 450 miles; from the later portion of the Vietnam conflict to the recent "unpleasantness" in Afghanistan. I figure if it is reliable enough for tactical military communications, it's robust enough for me!

### A word or two of warning:

**First** the sketches, and so forth, which are contained in this article assume you will be using soft drawn, bare copper wire. If you use insulated copper, it will have a slightly different velocity factor, which will affect the length. However, given the above warning about needing an antenna tuner, the variation in length is unlikely to be significant.

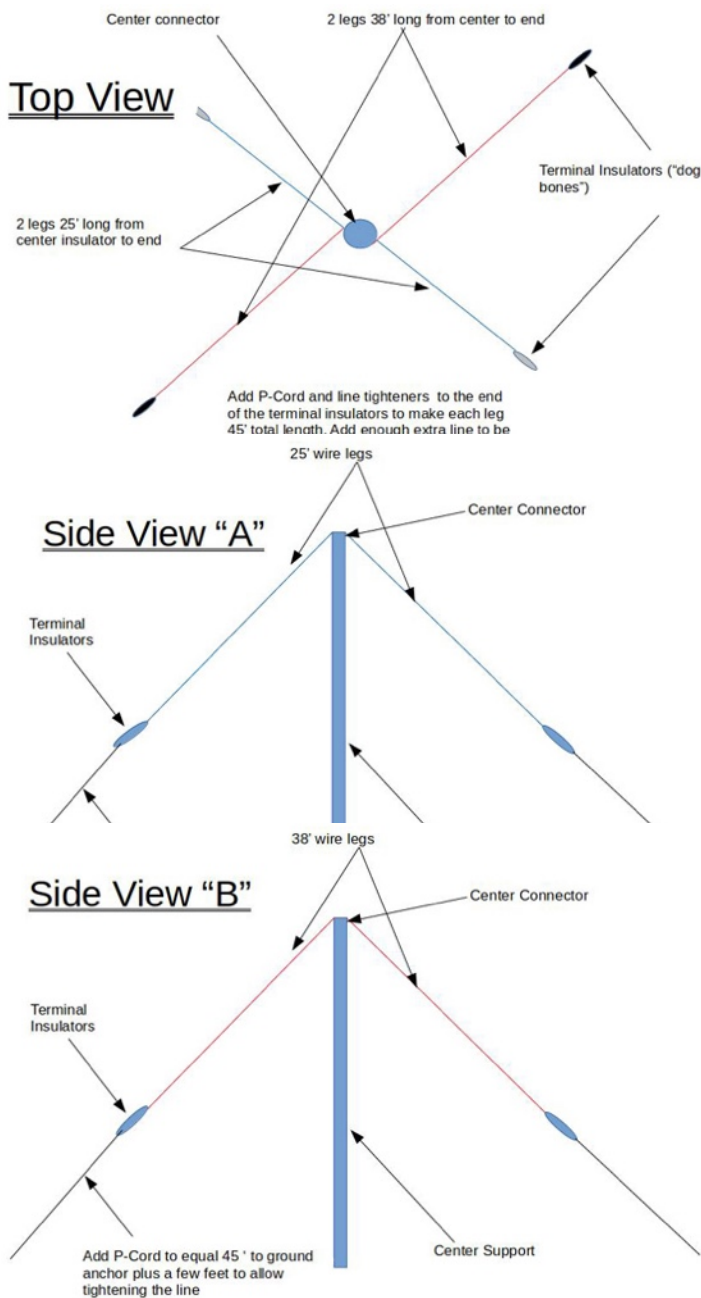
**Second**, you probably should be using insulated wire. The ends of the "legs" for this will be, or at least could be, close enough to the ground so that people could come into contact with the wires. This could cause an RF burn if contact was made while transmission was occurring.

**Third**, be careful where you set the transceiver, and be cautious about your power levels. The original design had the transceiver situated right at the bottom of the center support. This puts the operator right in the center of the radiation pattern. From an

RF safety point of view, I'd rather see you use 50 to 100 feet of low loss coaxial cable and get the operating position away from the antenna by a bit. While I recognize that this is unlikely to carry more than 100 watts of power (it's a portable antenna, remember); it's still a bad idea to expose yourself to RF for 6 – 8 hours, unnecessarily.

O.K., so where are the sketches? Here you go:

Enlarge for better viewing.



Bill of materials:

2 pcs	12 ga wire	38 feet long
2 pcs	12 ga wire	25 feet long

2 pcs	Dog bone insulator	Black
2 pcs	Dog bone insulator	Gray or White
1 pc	Center Insulator	
50 ft or 100 ft	Coaxial cable	
15 ft	Center Support	

You do not need a pole for center support. Strategically placed tree branches of the proper height (12 – 15 feet) will work fine.

It's good practice to put "streamers" of surveyor's tape on the antenna lines, so someone does not walk into them inadvertently.

The center insulator may be purchased or "home brewed", your choice. If you make your own, the shield of the coax goes to one set of 25 and 38 foot wires, with the conductor going to the other set.

I use tent pegs for ground anchors. Once the weather gets colder and the ground freezes, we'll probably use 4" concrete blocks. There are many other options

I have been using an LDG Z-100+ for a tuner with this antenna. It works very well. There's a bunch of other tuners out there that will also work. I particularly like the Z-100+ for portable work because of it's low power requirements. Current draw is about 100 mA when tuning. Once the relays are locked into a tuning solution, it requires, essentially, zero power. It runs very happily on a 9 volt transistor battery or on 6 AA batteries. It is possible to make your power source internal to the case ... but please don't put it away with the batteries installed.

One of the few things which is critical with this antenna is to be sure you do not allow any of the antenna lines to cross each other. This may make it impossible for you to tune the antenna. If you are able to tune it, it will cause arcing when you put the key down, which causes great excitement for the few seconds before you blow a fuse!

There you go, a gentle introduction to NVIS. Is there more to this subject? Yes, there certainly is! However, you do not need to know the theory to put this antenna into play!

Have fun with it, and if you build one, let me know how you make out.