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FIELD DAY!
and lots more coming up!



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The new ZeroBeat Newsletter, the official publication of the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club published on the first day of each month. Contents: Articles about new products - antennas - techniques and ideas – items for sale – humor - announcements and upcoming events – letters to the editor – articles about old products – profiles of club members – event pictures. The ZeroBeat wants your contributions! Email articles to me at CASKYWARN@GMAIL.COM in Microsoft Word format or plain text. Comments are welcome!



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Help keep amateur radio flourishing in Central Alabama for education, discovery, public service, and great fellowship!



ALABAMA QSO PARTY!

We are planning a dxpedition to Lowndes County for the Alabama QSO Party July 26, 2025. We will set up starting at 8:00 AM CDT and start operating at 10:00 AM CDT until 1:00 PM CDT. The location is the parking area of the Midstate Stockyards at 8415 AL-97, Letohatchee, AL 36047. It is just east of the I-65 Letohatchee exit 151 on the NE side of the road which is AL-97. Across the road is a Marathon gas station with food, drinks, and restrooms.

Stations from all over the US will be trying to work Alabama counties!



We selected Lowndes County because it has very few hams and will be a sought-after county by QSO party participants. This is a chance for operators to manage pile-ups as stations from all over the United States want to put Lowndes County into their logs.

For the QSO party we will have three 40-10m antennas, band filters, and radios if you need

them. You are invited to bring your own radios, they just need to have powerpole connectors on them. We hope to operate three phone stations. If a spot remains available, N4UZZ will operate CW. We will have a canopy and tables. Please bring chairs. We will use the club call W4AP. For the event rules, see <https://alabamacontestgroup.org/aqp/rules/>

This is a fair-weather event only. Watch for an email and text message on Friday evening for confirmation or cancellation.

STEM Exhibit at AUM

We had a table at the State Annual STEM Exhibit and Fair on Friday, May 2, 2025, at AUM. We demonstrated FT8 worldwide signal exchanges and using Winlink to send emails without internet or cellular service. This is a similar event to the one last year at Maxwell AFB. School were bused to the event and walked through the exhibits to learn about science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).



We had an exhibit at the STEM show on Maxwell AFB last year and demonstrated worldwide FT8 contacts and Winlink email without the internet.

It was a great opportunity to expose young people to the hobby of amateur radio. This year we were indoors. We used Lew's hamstick dipole setup for antennas and ran a Yaesu FT-940 and a Yaesu FT-950 running with screens showing the maps and programs to the young people. We had handouts for them about learning about the world of amateur radio. (I picked those two Yaesu radios because they are the most impressive looking pieces of radio equipment I could find.) Due to the indoors location, we ran video recreations of live contacts.

In addition, I had the pleasure of giving a talk to about 35 young people about amateur radio, science and technology in general, and the value of math and science in careers.

STEM Expo (cont.)

We learn something from every event. It became very clear that the audience of young people had no interest at all in HF communications and could not care less about FT8 or Winlink. However, Jamey KQ1USA brought a hotspot and a DMR handheld, and it was the star of the show. Kids were fascinated by the worldwide talkgroup that was quite active on DMR, and Jamie and Mac KO4UWY explained hotspots and how DMR operates.



Lew brought a hamstick dipole to serve as a prop because the event was indoors. Here is Lew K1AZE, and Sparks, KK4IB, setting up the hamstick dipole.

In the exhibit hall, we had the most interesting exhibit with posters about POTA, SOTA, and off-grid email.

However, it was difficult to compete for the attention of young people who were flying drones and trying FPV goggles.



Lew suggested that we incorporate some activity that involves young people, like handing them handheld radios and running some kind of communications game. This might be a great idea. We certainly have all the handheld radios we would need.

STEM Expo (cont.)



Despite the tough competition, we had lots of young people showing great interest. Here are Jamie KQ1USA, Mac KO4UWY, and Sparks, KK4IB, explaining DMR radio to a group of young folks.

Thank you all who made this event a success. Sparks, KK4IB, Mac KO4UWY, Lew K1AZE, Jerome W4IJG, Jamie KQ1USA, and Otto N4UZZ.

Talk to the Military on the Annual Armed Forces Crossband Test

Military stations transmit outside amateur radio bands and listen on announced frequencies inside amateur radio bands. This requires split operation.

It is all happening May 10, 2025.

Here is the schedule and the frequencies:

ALL FREQUENCIES USB kHz								
	UTC	CDT						
BARROW, KY	1100Z + 24H	0600 + 24 H	4011.0	5,346.5	6,968.5	13,963.5	17,457.5	
FT MEADE, MD	1400Z - 2000Z	0900 - 1500	4,013.5	5,403.5	7,431.5	14,484.0	20,920.0	
NORTHERN CMD, CO	1300Z - 2000Z	0800 - 1500			6,970.5	14,550.5		
FT HUACHUCA, AZ	1500Z - 2359Z	1000 - 1859			7,645.0	14,438.5	18,211.0	
FOSTER, OKINAWA	1500Z - 2359Z	1000 - 1859				14,487.0	20,994.0	
AFM4NPD, TN	1200Z - 2200Z	0700 - 1700	4,575.0	7,540.0		13,993.0		
WHIDBEY ISLAND, WA	1600Z - 2300Z	1100 - 1800		5,403.5	7,431.5	13,528.5	18,272.5	
HANCOCK FIELD, NY	1200Z - 2000Z	0700 - 1500			7,473.5	15,807.0	19,955.0	20,740.0
SCOTT AFB, IL	1500Z - 2300Z	1000 - 1800		5,186.0	7,938.0	14,832.0	27,736.0	
TRAVIS AFB, CA	1700Z - 2359Z	1200 - 1859		5,004.5	7,915.0	14,760.0		

Field Day!

This year we are planning Field Day for the entire tri-county area (Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore county) at the Smith Center in Prattville. This is an indoors, air-conditioned setting with plenty of food and drink.



We will have antennas set up for 15m, 20m, 40m, and 80m, with bandpass filters so that stations do not interfere with each other. One dipole antenna will be suspended at 75 feet to put out a great signal all over the country.



The Smith Center is at 298 Jay St, Prattville, AL 36066. From Cobb Ford Road go south on Shelia Blvd, then turn left on Jay Street. The Smith Center is at the end of the street just after Overlook Park.

We will set up on Saturday morning, starting at 8:00 AM and then start operating at 1:00 PM. Help is needed for set-up and for operations. We will use the same antenna setup we did for Winter Field Day which worked very well.

Help us set up, operate, and assist others in learning how to operate HF! This is a great event to introduce new hams to the hobby. Bring your radios or use one of ours. Let's run up the score for a nice competitive showing in the State of Alabama.



Montgomery County ARES Report

Revival of the local VHF digital net

We have revived the local ARES digital net on 146.475 using FSQ. FSQ is an interesting digital mode because it allows for stations to beacon so that others know which stations are on the network. It allows for the relay of messages, so it has some “mesh network” functionality. It is highly reliable. It is an excellent RF based bulletin board.

Two activations

We had two activations during which we were at the EOC to receive messages. The EMA people are enthusiastic about our activities.

Development of the MGM-ARES documents

We are developing the MGM-ARES document package, including

- Net preamble and procedures
- The net schedule
- Training modules
- The MGM-ARES task list (of capabilities expected of members)
- A mission statement



Note from the editor: ZeroBeat has received several correct answers to the quiz regarding d’Arsonval movements. Yes, d’Arsonval movements are involved in the traditional design of meters, with the d’Arsonval principle used to move the meter needles.

Local Nets Are Inviting Your Participation!

Otto N4UZZ

NOTE: Technicians can participate in the nets on 10m.

- The Cradle of the Confederacy Net and 10-10 International Chapter meet weekly on 28.350 MHz on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM CT on upper side band.
- The QCWA (Quarter Century Wireless Association), rag chew after the Cradle of the Confederacy Net on 28.350 MHz upper side band.
- Monday nights at 8:00 PM CT the UHF Net: ragchew and to answer equipment questions. New hams and old hams invited. 444.500 W4AP Bald Knob repeater.
- Central Alabama Skywarn Net, 7:00 PM CT on the 146.84 repeater.
- Montgomery County ARES Net 7:30 PM CT on the 146.84 repeater.
- Sunday night at 7:00 pm the Hams for the Lamb Net practices Christian fellowship and mutual support on the 146.84 W4AP repeater. All amateur radio operators are invited.
- Sunday night at 8:00 PM local time the Central Alabama 2m Net meets on the 146.84 W4AP repeater to exchange news, announcements, and for ragchew.
- MGM-ARES runs a digital net on 146.475 MHz using FSQ (with Fldigi). Operation guide is here: <https://rb.gy/1bqeuk> Join us for emcomm practice.
- The Alabama Emergency Net Mike meets daily at 6:00 PM on 3.965 MHz LSB for statewide traffic handling. (This net requires General Class privileges.)

**Do you want to look up events or nets?
The club calendar on the front page of our website
<https://w4ap.org>
is always up-to-date with the latest details.
Just click on an event to get everything you need to know.**

MARC Happenings for May 2025

The Lunchbunch meeting schedule: all meetings at 11:00 AM

May 7, 2025	Pizza Perfect, 428 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109
May 14, 2025	San Marcos, 61 N Burbank Dr, Montgomery AL 36117
May 21, 2025	Sommer's Place, 7972 Vaughn Road near Vaughn & Taylor
May 28, 2025	Full Moon BBQ, 7660 Eastchase Pkwy, Montgomery, AL 36117

To join the club or Lunchbunch email list, send request to CASKYWARN@GMAIL.COM

The MARC 2m Net	meets every Sunday at 8:00 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
The Hams for Lambs Net	Christian fellowship meets every Sunday at 7:30 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
Skywarn Training Net	meets every Thursday 7:00 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
MGM-ARES Net	meets every Thursday 7:30 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP

Club Breakfast Sat, May 17, 2025 starting at 7:00 AM
Chappy's, Carmichael at Perry Hill Road,

Club Meeting **Mon, May 19, 2025, 7:00 PM**
Red Cross, 5015 Woods Crossing, Montgomery AL 36106

CAVEC Testing Mon, May 12, 2025, 6:30 pm
Community Room, Renfro's Foodland,
9168 East Chase Parkway Montgomery, AL 36117

ARRL-VE Testing Sat, May 31, 2025, 9:00 AM, Renfro Food Market Chantilly Corner
Pre-registration required Lewin.nyman@gmail.com

For details on all events: go to w4ap.org
Scroll down to the club calendar, click on any event for details

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1412939275643917/>

Club Officers:

President:	Otto Arnoscht N4UZZ
Vice-President:	Ken Brittin AK4KN
Treasurer:	Fidel Cintron KK4KGO
Secretary:	Dennis Egbert K4PDQ
Public Information Officer:	Jim Norris K4JLN
Director 1:	Philip Salley K4PO (2022 - 2026)
Director 2:	Fred Springall KR4YK (2023 - 2027)
Director 3:	Mac McWhorter KO4UWY (2025 – 2029)
Director 4:	Jerome Goddard II W4IJG (2025 – 2026)