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SELLING ON EBAY

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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 and letters to the editor are welcome!



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My POTA Station

N4UZZ

I love POTA – Parks On The Air. You go out to a (registered) park, set up a portable or mobile station, announce (spot) yourself on the POTA website, and make contacts. You wind up with lots of people calling you. Some of them simply want to give and receive a signal report, but many of them are park hunters. Park hunters are hams who want to get your park into their log because they are working on one of the POTA awards. With POTA you have a chance of being on the receiving end of pile-ups!

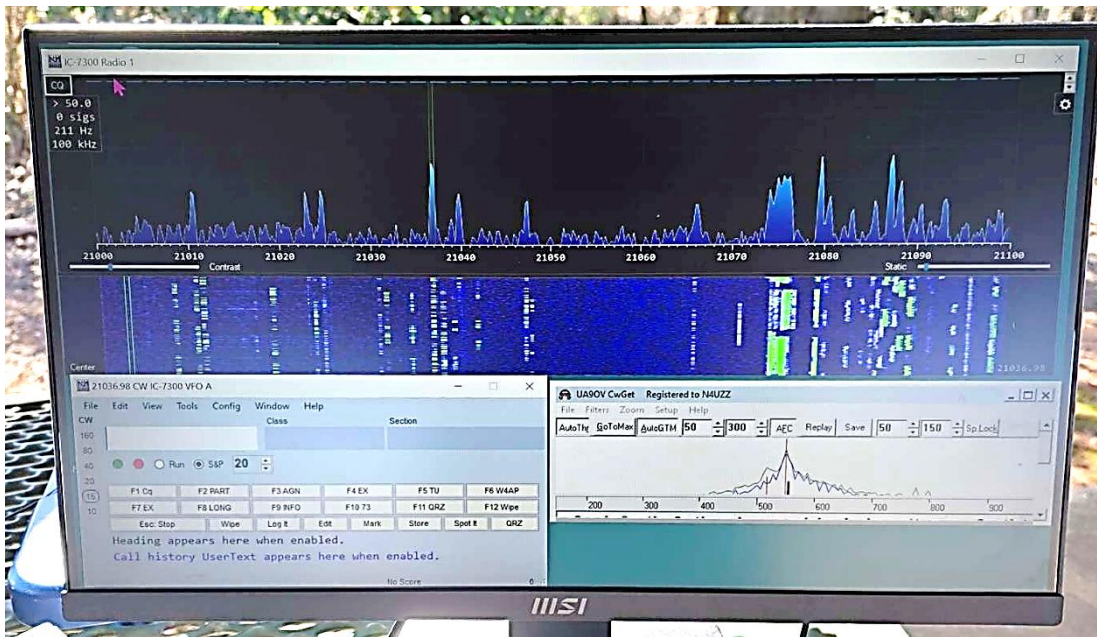
My POTA station is strictly designed for drive-up. I do not do any hiking with radio gear. So, my gear is not the tiny backpack kind of station. I pretty much drive up to the location, open the hatch of the Tahoe, and unload a table, a chair, a tripod, the mast, and set up the antenna and the equipment for operation.

My POTA antenna is a random wire 80m – 10m vertical. The wire is 35 ½ feet long and is held up with a Spiderbeam fiberglass mast which in turn is supported by a drive-on base. This is a bit of a compromise antenna. Verticals have less efficiency than dipoles, but the ease of putting it up makes it the antenna of choice for me. What makes it all work is an SBG remote tuner at the foot of the mast that allows quick tuning anywhere in the spectrum. The tuner is powered with a 12v battery.



For my portable radio I have gone back to the good old tried-and-true Icom IC-7300, most importantly because it gives a beautiful spectrum display and waterfall on the laptop computer, using the free N1MM logging program. I work CW and N1MM has provisions for twelve customizable macros that allow me to handle all cw tasks quickly and easily. If I hear a partial call, I can repeat that partial call, add a question

mark, and do it all by just hitting one function key. Other keys handle the exchange and some detailed park information if it is requested.



The spectrum display from the IC-7300 using the freeware logger N1MM. This display is on the laptop. Mouse clicks on the spectrum will tune the radio. It was also on a 22-inch display at Winter Field Day.



K4SWL throwing an arborist line over a tree branch for an endfed antenna.

We have several parks not far from Montgomery. The closest is the Autauga Wildlife Management Area which is northwest of Prattville off County Road 59.

Even during hunting season there are plenty of places to set up in the no-gun safety zone near the entrance to the area. This park has been activated several times by our club member K8JOK, Gary "Padre" Priest. Of course, there is the Tuskegee National Forest. The POTA website has a map of registered parks. Unfortunately, any old city park does not qualify.



K8JOK in the field operating.



A map of POTA parks near Montgomery as seen on the POTA website.

Some activators make YouTube videos of their activations and have gathered quite a following. There are some stars in the POTA community. Thomas Witherspoon, K4SWL, is an avid POTA activator. He has written about amateur radio and short wave listening his entire adult life (see his articles on QRPer.com and SWLing.com). His YouTube videos have a huge following.



W4ARB in the Tuskegee National Forest working CW.

Closer to home, we have W4ARB, Aaron Bowman, who regularly activates parks in the Auburn – Tuskegee area and makes videos of his activations.

Aaron is working on his Tuskegee “kilo” – an award for making 1000 QSOs from a park.



Another well-known activator (on phone) is Michael, KB9VBR who tends to activate parks in the Upper Midwest and give many excellent practical hints. KB9VBR is the operator who popularized the mesh screen ground plane. POTA is a ham radio activity that seems to attract some younger people to the hobby.

A close park is Ft. Toulouse. It has a \$ 2.00 admission fee. The caretaker of the park is a ham radio operator who is not only extremely accommodating but very friendly. Ft. Toulouse offers a wide variety of ways you can set up antennas. There are grassy fields and tall trees. There are also large parking lots. At times Ft. Toulouse has big events that attract a crowd, so it is always a good idea to check ahead of time what is going on.



A few years back John KJ6MTJ, Scott KS4TAC, and I, were the first activators of some parks like the Lowndes Wildlife Management Area, but by now all parks in the area have been activated many times. However, there are always park hunters looking for these parks.

So, go ahead! Let's see you manage pile-ups!

A POTA activator on TikTok. And no, POTA is not really a great way to meet women. Sorry, Jeri.

Some eBay Selling Hints

I did quite a bit of research before selling a bunch of equipment on eBay last month. All the work paid off and the sales went very well. I wanted to pass along all the ideas about effective selling that I learned and that seemed to work.



A classic eternal beauty of a radio – the Kenwood TS-940S.

The most important factor in selling an item is the quality of the pictures. Make sure that you have really cleaned the radio to make it look presentable. Place it on a surface that provides no distractions. Take pictures of all sides, front, back, and bottom. Take a few pictures of the front and the display while the radio is operating.



Showing off the nice spectrum display and waterfall of a Yaesu FTDX10.

If the radio has a cosmetic defect such as scratches, it is a good idea to point these out honestly, and to provide close-up pictures of the defects. You want to make sure that you do not look like you are hiding any defects.

The second important factor is price. I have had excellent success following a simple strategy when it comes to price. First, I set the starting bid quite low so that it will attract some attention. For example, a radio that I would expect to sell for around \$ 800.00 dollars might get a starting price of \$ 485.00. Then I would add a Buy-It-Now option. The Buy-It-Now option is available to buyers until the price of the auction exceeds the Buy-It-Now price. I set the BIN price very close to the price I would hope the radio will fetch. So, \$ 725.00 would be a good level. Then I would set the auction to run for seven days. I do not use reserve pricing.

Using that strategy, the items have consistently been sold well above the BIN price. If you see the bidding, do not be discouraged because the real auction action happens in the last few hours before auction end. Items are often bid much higher in the last few minutes.

The other key element in selling success is the item description. You should be quite specific about where and how you acquired the item, how it has been used and stored, and what you see when you examine it. You should also describe how it operates and what you have done to test it. With transceivers, describe the output on all bands and how the radio receives. Do not

waste the readers' time with a regurgitation of the radio's specifications – they already know that. Your description should also be quite clear in what is included such as power cord, microphone, or any other items. If there is anything in the pictures that is not included, make sure you make that clear.

Some sellers are tempted to sell entire bundles of equipment, like power supplies, desk microphones, tuners, and watt meters, along with their transceiver. They think that this will entice some buyers. Time and time again, I have seen that strategy fail. Frequently, the entire combination sells for far less than the individual items would bring. In fact, there are scavengers on eBay who buy up these combination offers and then turn around and sell them piece by piece for a nice profit.

More and more items on eBay now have descriptions that are obviously generated by ChatGPT. They are empty, vacuous, vague, and extremely wordy. When you read sentences like “this equipment is sure to please the most demanding radio operator and will greatly contribute to your communication pleasure ...” then you know that the seller is lazy, is unwilling to provide details, and just asked ChatGPT to come up with verbiage to pad the listing. It is an insult to the intelligence of the readers and potential buyers.

Here are some listings examples that illustrate the principles I enumerated above.



YAESU FT-991A All-Mode Radio
Transceiver
★★★★★ (5)
\$770.00 8 bids
\$76.72 shipping 1h 8m

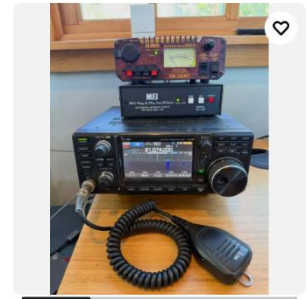
A nice Yaesu FT-991A transceiver that seems to be attracting a lower price than other similar listings. With only one hour left, it ought to be at a higher price. The price might be depressed because the listing has no photo of the radio in operation. There is a photo showing the radio in operation, but it is a stock photo – not a good idea.

A Yaesu FT-950 – a beautiful radio in great condition. It has attracted no interest, probably because the starting bid is simply too high. A starting bid needs to be low enough to attract interest.



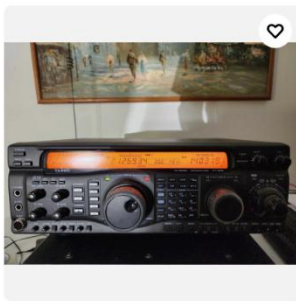
Yaesu FT-950 HF Transceiver
\$500.00 0 bids
\$60.00 shipping 1d 19h

An excellent example why it is not a good idea to offer combination deals. The radio itself should fetch \$ 800.00 easily and might even bid up to \$ 900.00. The power supply should fetch another \$ 150.00 and the MFJ-939 tuner should fetch another \$ 150.00 if sold separately. Having such a combination listing is shooting yourself in the foot.



Icom IC-7300 HF Transceiver with MFJ 939i tuner, Alinco DM-330MV power supply

\$830.00 36 bids
\$82.24 shipping 1d 22h

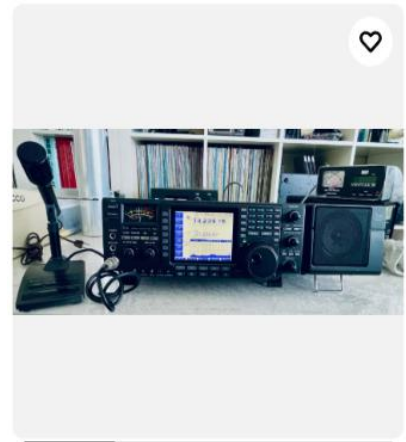


YAESU FT-920 HF/50MHz 100W All Mode Ham Radio Transceiver

★★★★★ (8) 16 bids
\$416.99 \$55.55 shipping 2d 4h

This is a good listing with an attractive starting price that has gathered a lot of interest. Since there is still another two days to go, the auction will probably end quite a bit higher, possibly near \$ 600.00, a fair price for this radio.

Another example to show that combination offers do not pay off. The radio itself should fetch at least \$ 500.00, and the desk microphone should get another \$ 150.00. The speaker should get another \$ 100.00 to 150.00. By combining these items, the seller is losing quite a bit of money.



Icom IC-756 HF 6m ham radio transceiver with Mic and Speaker

\$405.00 15 bids
\$79.50 shipping 2d 6h

Where is the D'Arsonval movement? Post your answer on groups.io



Which picture shows a D'Arsonval movement?

- 1 2
- 3 4
- 5 6
- 7 8



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) meets for a rag chew following the Cradle of the Confederacy Net on 28.350 MHz upper side band. Any amateur radio operator who has been licensed 25 years or longer is invited to join the QCWA by going to QCWA.org. We are Chapter 40.
- Monday nights at 8:00 PM CT the UHF Net meets for ragchew and to answer questions about antennas, coax cables, and various other equipment. New hams and experienced hams are invited. The net meets on the 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 7:30 pm the Hams for Lambs 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.
- 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 April 2025

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

Apr 2, 2025	Pizza Perfect, 428 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109
Apr 9, 2025	San Marcos, 61 N Burbank Dr, Montgomery AL 36117
Apr 16, 2025	Sommer's Place, 7972 Vaughn Road near Vaughn & Taylor
Apr 23, 2025	Full Moon BBQ, 7660 Eastchase Pkwy, Montgomery, AL 36117
Apr 30, 2025	Vicky's lunch Van, 106 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109

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, Apr 19, 2025 starting at 7:00 AM
Chappy's, Carmichael at Perry Hill Road,

Club Meeting **Mon, Apr 21, 2025, 7:00 PM**
Red Cross, 5015 Woods Crossing, Montgomery AL 36106

CAVEC Testing Mon, Apr 14, 2025, 6:30 pm
Community Room, Renfroe's Foodland,
9168 East Chase Parkway Montgomery, AL 36117

ARRL-VE Testing Sat, Apr 26, 2025, 9:00 AM, Renfroe 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)