ZerO Beat

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club Newsletter — Established 1938

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PLANS FOR THE NEW YEAR

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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!

Your club needs you!

Help keep our repeaters on the air!

Support our mission!

Now with easy on-line renewal!

Go to w4ap.org click on JOIN/RENEW

Mobiles click top left menu button ☰

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

Plans for the New Year – Many Exciting Events

Winter Field Day January 24, 2026
This will be a rehearsal for the big Field Day. Winter Field Day will be on the grounds of Randy's farm in Snowdoun using the club radio, club trailer, and club linked dipole. Set up starts at 9:00 AM and then operate until 2:00 PM local time.

Club Station Operation Day, Saturday, Feb 7, 2026
From 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM to help members become familiar with the club radio.

The Great Spring Fox Hunt March 14, 2026
Ft. Toulouse Historic Park on Saturday, March 14, 2026. Hunt 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, then pizza and announcement of the winners. Big hamfest gift certificates for winners. Park entry fee is $ 2.00.

The MARC Club POTA Activation May 2, 2026
Ft. Toulouse State Historic Park POTA activation starting at 9:00 AM. Learn about POTA spotting, operation, and log submission. Park entry fee is $ 2.00.

Field Day June 27 – 28, 2026
Randy's KV4AC farm in Snowdoun, setup Sat 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, operation 1:00 PM to Sunday 1:00 PM, operating club radio in the club trailer, using club linked dipole. Members can sign up for setup, operating shifts, clean-up.

SET – Simulated Emergency Test Sat Oct 10, 2026
All day operators will report simulated emergency traffic and check into nets. Logs and reports will be furnished to the ARRL.

Glassner Autumn Challenge Sat Oct 24, 2026
Members provide communications for the Glassner ride through South Montgomery County.

Hamfest Sat Nov 14, 2026
Our hamfest continues to be a great success every year!

Special Event Station for the Iron Bowl Sat Nov 28, 2026
Members can use their home station or use the club station to operate the special event station all day until the game starts. Special QSLs will be emailed to all contacts.

Additional events: Monthly club meetings, Christmas Party in December, monthly ARES meetings.

A Special Event Station

N4UZZ

If we get enough volunteers, we want to operate a special event station for the 2026 Iron Bowl. We need to be on the air all day on the day of the game (until the game starts) on November 28, 2026. Persons taking shifts can operate from home or the club station, using the W4B call. **The main requirement is accurate computer logging!** If possible, we should operate SSB and some CW stations.

I am volunteering to compile all the logs and send out the Special Event Station QSL cards. They will be emailed to all the contacts at their QRZ email address. Pictured above is a draft of the QSL card design.

I will be asking for volunteers and putting a volunteer shift spreadsheet online. Email me with any questions or ideas N4UZZ caskywarn@gmail.com

For club members only: A football raffle!

N4UZZ

Do you feel that you can pick the winner and predict the spread of the Iron Bowl 2026? Then join this raffle and win a prize!

As part of the operation of a special event station for the Iron Bowl 2026 we will operate a football raffle for club members.

I will put a spreadsheet online where you can enter your prediction for the score of the Auburn-Alabama game. You will enter your call and your prediction.

Go to **http://tiny.cc/ironbowl**

For the winning team, enter ALA or AUB.
For the point spread enter
 a whole integer of the
predicted winning margin.
Enter points, not
touchdowns or field goals.

The member who is closest
to the actual game outcome
will be the winner.
In case of a tie, the winner will be
the first member who entered the
winning prediction. The winner
will be announced at the Christmas Party.
The prize is a VHF/UHF dual band
j-pole roll-up antenna.

The Ultimate EMCOMM Tool:
Tesla Pi Pad to be available in 2026

N4UZZ

A pad with Starlink satellite web connection anywhere, even when cell towers are down, will be available from Tesla starting in the third quarter of 2026, for $ 119.00. There is no subscription plan for the internet – it is built in. This is an exciting development for emergency communicators, first responders, and anyone looking for ways to stay connected under adverse conditions.

Tesla will sell the Pi Pad exclusively through its official website and app with no third-party distribution (e.g. Amazon), The first batch is limited to 100,000 units which is expected to sell out within 72 hours. Ultimately, production may increase to 500,000 units by mid-2026. The Pi Pad runs the Tesla AI Super Chip which is 50x faster than Apple's M4 processor.

Starlink provides internet service through a network of low-orbit satellites with speeds ranging from 40 to 200 Mbps. Tesla is expecting to make money by subscriptions to AI premium services, home integration, and cloud storage.

Montgomery County ARES
Digital Emcomm Net Thursdays

Montgomery County ARES runs a digital emcomm net on VHF Thursday evenings from 8:00 pm local time to 9:00 pm local time. ARES members participating in the net will set up their stations sometime after 7:00 PM LT but no later than 8:00 pm local time and leave the station running in the designated digital mode. After that, they can leave their station unattended because all net procedures involve automatic exchanges that require no further operator input.

The net will conclude at approximately 9:00 pm local time after net control sends a request to the station at the Red Cross to list all stations heard.

The digital station has excellent range due to its antenna placement about 20 feet above the roof of the Red Cross building. We have had check-ins from North Prattville, Millbrook, Pike Road, and Ramer.

Stations can send a signal report request to the Red Cross station at any time.

The MGM-ARES groups.io files area has a one-page cheat sheet on how to set up your radio for this digital net. It also gives a list of basic commands such as requesting a signal report.

The file is password protected. If you do not have the password, you can email me at memarc840@gmail.com and request it.

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.
- 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
- Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM local time the Montgomery County ARES Net meets on the 146.84 W4AP repeater to discuss topics of preparedness.
- MGM-ARES runs a digital net Thursday nights 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM CT. Details are available by request to memarc840@gmail.com
- 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 January 2026

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

Jan 7, 2026	Pizza Perfect, 428 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109
Jan 14, 2026	San Marcos, 61 N Burbank Dr, Montgomery AL 36117
Jan 21, 2026	Fried Tomato Buffet, 6561 Atlanta Hwy, Montgomery, AL 36117
Jan 28, 2026	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 7:00 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
MGM-ARES Meeting	every fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 PM, Red Cross Bldg
MGM-ARES Digital Net	every Thursday 8:00 PM – 9:15 PM CT memarc840@gmail.com
Central Ala UHF Net	Mondays (except club meeting nights) 8:00 PM 444.500 W4AP
Club Breakfast	Sat, Jan 17, 2026, starting at 7:00 AM Chappy's, Carmichael at Perry Hill Road,
Club Meeting	**Mon, Jan 19, 2026, 7:00 PM** **American Red Cross, 5015 Woods Crossing, Montgomery, AL 36106**
CAVEC Testing	Mon, Jan 12, 2026, 6:30 pm Community Room, Renfroe's Foodland, 9168 East Chase Parkway Montgomery, AL 36117
ARRL-VE Testing	Sat, Jan 31, 2026, 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:	**James Garner K4JKG**
Director 1:	**Philip Salley K4PO (2022 - 2026)**
Director 2:	**Fred Springall KR4YK (2023 - 2027)**
Director 3:	**Mac McWhorter KO4UWY (2026 – 2029)**
Director 4:	**Jerome Goddard II W4IJG (2026 – 2026)**