

# Zero Beat



Montgomery Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

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## ***BREAKING NEWS:***

# ***WE THINK WE FOUND A NEW HOME!***

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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](mailto: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](http://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!**

## The MARC Search for a New Home

N4UZZ

This article describes the details of searching for a new home for MARC. Because the Red Cross is moving into much smaller facilities where they will have no space for an amateur radio station. **BREAKING NEWS: WE THINK WE FOUND A NEW HOME!**

In January 2026 we learned that The Red Cross was moving and that they were not taking ham radio with them. We learned that they were moving into a small building in the parking lot in front of Lowe's building supply store on the East Blvd. The new facilities will not allow them to have any offices, instead they will have cubicles. We learned this from informal discussions with various Red Cross staff. We found out that The Red Cross was clearing out the current building by September 2026. They also indicated that any furniture in our radio station room can be removed and taken with us.

We announced these developments and asked club members to come up with ideas for a new home, and to contact anyone that might have a lead for a good location. Members jumped into action and brought up a lot of good ideas. However, these ideas served to clarify the needs of the club.

We need

- Place for a club station and HF antennas
- 24-hour access to the club station
- Place for monthly club meetings accommodating about 35 persons
- Reasonable security

With these needs in mind, several possible future locations were found to be unsuitable. For instance, one member had discussions with the Salvation Army who had just acquired a new building from the Church of Latter-Day Saints on Carter Hill Road close to the school that was Jefferson Davis. That was a place where 24-hour access was essentially impossible, and the Salvation Army would always have to have staff present for ham radio operators to be on the premises.

The EMA (Emergency Management Agency) of the city and county offered us space. The club station would be very small, really cramped, and there was a question about access to the building for monthly meetings. Additionally, several members found the location of the EMA as a draw-back, expressing the feeling that many members would choose not to attend meetings at that location.

We received reports that the City was closing Fire Station No. 9 (near Huntingdon College). We investigated its availability, but it turns out that the city will use the building for other purposes.

Many club members reached out to friends and acquaintances for possible club locations. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

**Breaking News:  
We think we found  
a new home!**

One effort that seems to have paid off is Frazer United Methodist Church. The pastor, Dr. Stephen Streett, is welcoming and interested in the idea of having the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club establish emergency communications capabilities at the church. The church is located at 6000 Atlanta Highway. The church has ample space for meetings and for a club station.



A screenshot of a Frazer Church YouTube video.



The church has a well-equipped broadcast facility with a tower. The location of the tower is marked in red.

With the advent of internet technology, these facilities are no longer in use and can easily make room for an amateur radio club station. The tower appears to be at least 50 ft tall.



An interesting possibility will be to hang our HF fan dipole antenna from this tower. There are flat roofs extending from this tower in several directions. The possibilities are quite exciting. In addition, we hope to be able to place a VHF/UHF antenna at the top of this tower, giving the club station tremendous range, along with another VHF/UHF antenna somewhat lower on the tower for the FSQ digital emcomm network.

We are hoping to soon need strong arms and lots of muscle to help us move! The Red Cross has indicated that we can take all tables and furniture from our existing station. Please be alert to messages from members of the Relocation Committee of the club – they will call for volunteers to help us move into the new facilities!

## Plans for the New Year – Many Exciting Events (Updated February 1, 2026)

### **The Great Spring Fox Hunt March 14, 2026**

CANCELLED DUE TO CONFLICT WITH CLUB BREAKFAST. THE EVENT WILL BE RESCHEDULED.

### **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. Watch the excitement of pileups. 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**

We 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**

See the article in this ZeroBeat for details.

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



## Skywarn is now on UHF!

Skywarn has moved to UHF. The Skywarn Net is now meeting on the Bald Knob W4AP UHF repeater at the usual time, Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM CT. The net has storm spotter training, coordination, as well as check-ins.

We are keeping the new Skywarn frequencies confidential. We are not mentioning the new frequencies on the air! When on the air, simply refer to the “Skywarn repeater frequency” or the “Skywarn simplex frequency.” Anyone who would like to join the Skywarn group email list or get further details about Central Ala. Skywarn, contact me at [caskywarn@gmail.com](mailto:caskywarn@gmail.com)

### Membership in the Skywarn Group

Members in the Skywarn email group on groups.io get regular *Skywarn WX Bulletins*. These are either marked as *Routine* or as *Special*. Routine bulletins are those that contain no warnings of any severe weather events and cover a time period during which storm spotter activation is not expected. These *Routine* bulletins are designed to keep members aware of the bigger weather picture for the next seven days. *Routine* bulletins are issued on Thursdays.

*Special* bulletins are issued whenever needed to alert members about possible severe weather in the future – usually one to three days out. *Special* bulletins attempt to provide specific forecast details about the timing of front passage, severity and nature of weather threat.



Skywarn WX Bulletin – Special  
01/24/2026 17:05 PM CST

A front will pass through Central Ala on Sunday 01/25/2026 at 2PM CT with possible *svr* t-storms and tornadoes (probability less than 5%)

An example of a recent Special Skywarn WX Bulletin.

All bulletins are extremely condensed, very brief executive summaries that give essential information in one or two sentences and a map. They are designed to give the reader the information they need at a glance.

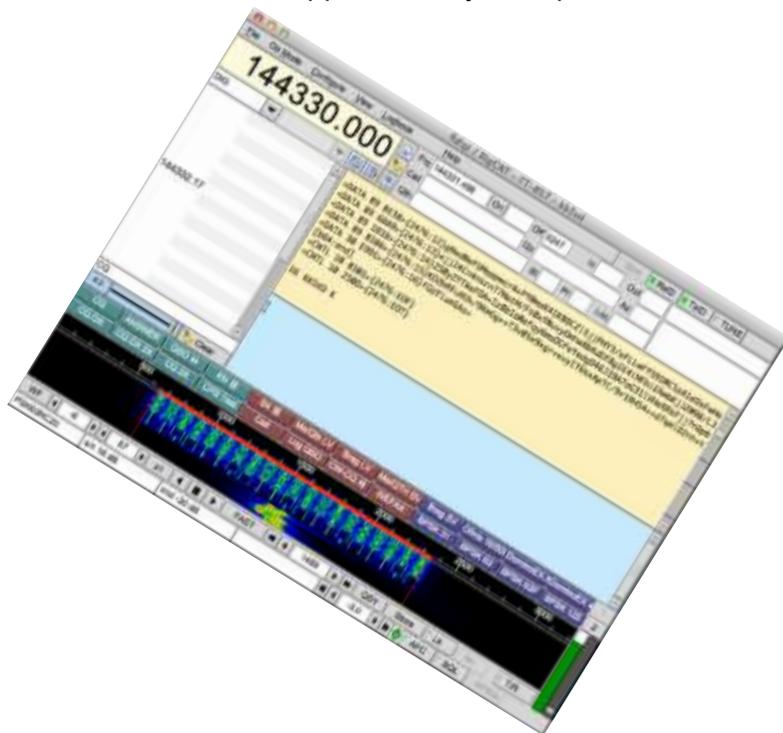
With this extremely condensed executive summary format we hope to fight “alarm fatigue” while keeping members informed of the weather picture.



## 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 and beaoning 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](mailto: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, 7:00 PM Skywarn Net on UHF. Weather topics. Storm spotter training. Contact the net manager at [caskywarn@gmail.com](mailto:caskywarn@gmail.com) to join.
- Thursday evenings at 7:30 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](mailto: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 February 2026

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

Mar 4, 2026                 Pizza Perfect, 428 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109  
Mar 11, 2026                San Marcos, 61 N Burbank Dr, Montgomery AL 36117  
Mar 18, 2026                Fried Tomato Buffet, 6561 Atlanta Hwy, Montgomery, AL 36117  
Mar 25, 2026                Full Moon BBQ, 7660 Eastchase Pkwy, Montgomery, AL 36117

To join the club or Lunchbunch email list, send request to [CASKYWARN@GMAIL.COM](mailto: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  
**Skywarn Net**                    every Thurs 7:00 PM except fourth Thur of the month, caskywarn@gmail.com  
**MGM-ARES Digital Net**         every Thursday 8:00 PM – 9:15 PM CT [memarc840@gmail.com](mailto:memarc840@gmail.com)  
**Central Ala UHF Net**            Mondays (except club meeting nights) 8:00 PM 444.500 W4AP

**Club Breakfast**                 Sat, Mar 14, 2026, starting at 7:00 AM  
Chappy's, Carmichael at Perry Hill Road,

**Club Meeting**                   **Mon, Mar 16, 2026, 7:00 PM**  
**American Red Cross, 5015 Woods Crossing, Montgomery, AL 36106**

**CAVEC Testing**                 Mon, Mar 9, 2026, 6:30 pm  
Community Room, Renfroe's Foodland,  
9168 East Chase Parkway Montgomery, AL 36117

For details on all events:        go to [w4ap.org](http://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)**