

# Z E R Ø BEAT

## CLUB OFFICERS

### **President:**

JIM MEACHAM KK4A

### **Vice-President:**

WAYNE GENTRY AA4BL

### **Sec./Treasurer:**

ROGER LITTLEFIELD N4LKM

### **Publicity Officer:**

KEN COPELAND WB4MMB

### **Trustees:**

FRANK GOLDEN W4DQF

RANDY SMITH N4KTX

BOBBY CHANDLER N4AU

PETE SIDES W4AUP

## REPEATERS/CUSTODIANS

146.04/64 MONTGOMERY, AL

WAYNE GENTRY AA4BL

146.24/84 WETUMPKA, AL

TOMMY GARRETT WA4FYU

147.78/18 GRADY, AL

ROLAND TOWNLEY K4BOJ

145.01/DIGI WETUMPKA, AL

TOMMY GARRETT WA4FYU

444.5/449.5 WETUMPKA, AL

BOBBY CHANDLER N4AU

**SEPT 86**

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

# MARC

**MONTGOMERY AMATEUR RADIO  
CLUB, INC. P. O. BOX 3141  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36109**

## SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

The MARC has now been officially designated by the ARRL as a Special Service Club or SSC and will be so indicated in a future issue of QST. Achieving this status speaks highly for the club and for you, it's members. The criteria which has to be met by SSC candidates is rigorous and I suspect that the number of clubs qualifying for SSC status is relatively small.

The physical rewards to the MARC for attaining SSC status are worthwhile, but even more rewarding should be the pride felt by it's members in knowing that they helped the MARC excel in public relations, emergency communications, training, technical advancement, operating activities, ARRL support, and numerous miscellaneous activities including monthly meetings, this newsletter, and liaison with Alabama Emergency Management Agency.

Finally, you can see by the addition of the SSC logo on the address page of this newsletter that we are allowed to brag a little. But let me also point out that Special Service Clubs must renew their status each year, therefore we must continue to function as a progressive organization by supporting and providing service to our members, amateur radio, and the community in general.

## CENTRAL ALABAMA HAMFEST

As of this writing, the Central Alabama Hamfest is only a little more than a month away. That's right, October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, the last full weekend in the month. So mark your calendar right now and plan to attend. The hamfest will be held at the Montgomery Civic Center and will begin at 9:00 A.M. local time both days. Talk-in will be on 146.24/84. Admission is free. Prize drawings will be held on both days with the big drawing being at 2:00 P.M. Sunday. First prize will be an Icom IC-745 with power supply and mic. Other prizes include an IC-3200A Dual Bander, an IC-02AT Handi-Talkie, an IC-2AT, a Zenith VCR, two packet TNC's, and numerous hourly prizes.

If you want a table at the flea market, contact Al Erdman, W4CNQ. On Saturday morning come to the rear entrance at Lee and Bibb Streets and drive in to unload your wares; you must be out by 9:00 A.M. If you don't drive in, then you must hand truck your stuff in from the same entrance. Oh yeah, don't forget that the MARC will have a table at the flea market, so if you want to donate something or if you want to put something there on consignment, bring it on.

For those wanting to upgrade their licenses there will be plenty of opportunity. The Montgomery unit of CAVEC will give technician through extra class FCC license exams on both days of the hamfest. Code test will begin promptly at 8:00 A.M. followed by written tests at 9:00 A.M. If you want to be tested you must bring a picture I.D., a photocopy of your current license, and \$2.00 cash.

Prize tickets should be available by the time you read this and we are counting on each of you to sell some as well as buy a few. Contact Leroy Bell, KA4WZD, to get your share of tickets. Ticket sales are extremely important to the financial success of the hamfest, so please do your part.

In closing, let me remind you that in addition to the prizes, flea market, and exams previously discussed, there will be dealers, forums, a packet ALA-NET meeting, and a packet SOUTH-NET meeting. Please spread the word about the Central Alabama Hamfest and personally invite everyone you talk to on-the-air (and off the air for that matter). But above all **YOU** make plans to attend.

### SOUTH ALABAMA STATE FAIR

This is the last issue of Zero Beat before the South Alabama State Fair comes to town Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> and of course the MARC will again sponsor a booth promoting amateur radio. If you helped man the booth last year, you know what a success it was and I hope you know how important you were to that success. We need you again this year so be ready to take a shift at the booth when we call on you. Better yet, don't wait till someone calls you; why don't you get in touch with K.C., WB4MMB, either on 24/84 or at 271-0028 and tell him what day and shift you want to work.

The actual booth will be the same as last year but the location will be in the southern most exhibit barn at the rear exit of the coliseum. The MARC booth will be the first booth on the left as you walk in the front entrance of the barn. I've included a map at the end of this newsletter for those who aren't familiar with the coliseum area.

In addition to the change in location, we'll do a few other things differently this year. Mainly, we will have a solid state HF rig instead of a tube type. This should do away with the tune-up problems of last year and should enable more people to operate the station and impress the public. We will also have CW capabilities plus a code oscillator for the general public to peck on. Also, since we are cutting down the physical size of the HF gear, I think there will be room to put the 2-meter rig and power supply in the box with the HF rig, thereby cutting down on the packing and unpacking each day.

If you have any ideas to throw at us, please do so, but make it soon cause time is running out. By the time you read this the fair will only be a month away. Keep in mind that this is the biggest self-promotional effort that the MARC is involved in thus we stand to gain alot. Also remember that working at the fair booth is alot of fun. I don't know of anyone who participated last year that didn't thoroughly enjoy themselves. We'll give everyone the final details at the September club meeting.

## ICING ON THE CAKE

In the last issue of Zero Beat I reported on our public service efforts and how successful they were. Well since then more evidence has surfaced to support that claim. The MARC has been presented with two plaques in recognition of it's service. One plaque was from the national Multiple Sclerosis Society in recognition of the communications service provided during the MS Tour for Cure on May 31, 1986. The other plaque was from the March of Dimes in recognition of the communications service provided during the March of Dimes Walk America on April 26, 1986.

In addition to these awards, the word has spread regarding our abilities and we are getting calls requesting our services in the future. Unfortunately we had to turn down an invitation to work an event in Mobile because it was in conflict with the Montgomery Hamfest. Keep up the good work!

## FIELD DAY 1986

The MARC Field Day exercise just keeps getting bigger and better and this past June was no exception; in fact it was probably the best ever. If you missed Field Day this year, then hopefully you attended the July club meeting where we showed video tapes of the activities. If you missed that meeting, maybe we'll show them again during a future club meeting.

This year we operated three primary stations; two phone stations and one CW station. All power came from three generators and all logging and duping was done by computer. All three primary stations were manned for the entire 24 hour duration of the event. The approximate results were 490 CW contacts and 600 phone contacts, plus we earned a total of 600 bonus points. And you may be wondering about the internal contest which pitted the "CW boys" against the "phone boys". Well when the multipliers were all applied and all the bonus points were given to the phone boys, the tally showed that phone edged out CW by a mere 30 points. I still haven't forgiven Bobby Chandler, N4AU, for promising all of the bonus points to the phone ops and I still think he was on something when he did it, but nevertheless thats the bottom line. I suppose you "phone types" are proud of your win, but just wait till next year. CW will win regardless of how many bonus points are given to phone!!!

Last, but not least, was the Bar-B-Q on Saturday afternoon. We had some rain off-and-on Saturday and I believe that scared some folks away, but that also just left more food for those of us who did attend. And speaking of food, it was delicious. Roy Jarrett, WB4TKU, did a terrific job with the Bar-B-Q. Lots of XYL's and harmonics came out and I believe a good time was had by all.

In closing, I'll point out that the official Field Day scores are usually published in the October or November issue of QST but if you don't get QST I'll report the statistics in the December issue of Zerø Beat.

### 146.04/64 UPDATE

There seems to be alot of misunderstanding regarding the 146.04/64 MHz repeater even though it has been openly discussed at several club meetings. Therefore, I thought this would be a good opportunity to clarify the situation. I'll try to assume that no one knows anything.

The 146.04/64 repeater is presently located atop the state administrative building in downtown Montgomery. It has been at its present location for years. It is the only MARC repeater with a telephone interface; i.e. autopatch capabilities. It is also a general use repeater. Anyone who has ever used 04/64 knows that it is often the victim of significant interference and subsequently has to be turned off by the custodian. This is due to the hostile environment of it's location; the repeater itself is not at fault. The repeater is a GE Mastr Pro (no I did not misspell Mastr) and custodian Wayne Gentry, AA4BL, says it is an excellent commercial grade machine.

In an effort to make 04/64 more dependable, it will be moved to a commercial radio tower in east Montgomery. The antenna will be the old 24/84 antenna which was recently removed from the tower atop Bald Knob. Al Erdman, W4CNQ, has refurbished it for us. The coax will be 7/8 inch hardline which was donated to the MARC. We have recently purchased the necessary connectors and with the exception of some miscellaneous details, we are waiting for the tower work to be done.

Speaking of tower work, I'd like to thank all those involved in our recent antenna party on Bald Knob. Special thanks go to Fred Springall, KB4EGH, and John McLemore, WA4MTG, for doing the actual climbing. But whether you climbed or were a member of the ground crew, the MARC sincerely appreciates your time and efforts.

So thats the scoop. I don't know when the move will be completed, but we are hopeful for some time this Fall. I'm excited about the move and those in the know are anticipating a significant improvement in the performance of the 146.04/64 MHz repeater.

### DEFINITION TIME

Panic: That feeling which suddenly overwhelms you when your XYL, whom has been holding down the end of a 200 foot spool of aluminun-clad steel antenna wire (which has a terrific memory for its coiled condition), suddenly turns loose to go answer the telephone.

## NEW UHF REPEATER

The new Icom IC-RP3010 repeater which the MARC ordered several months ago was picked up in Birmingham on June 27<sup>th</sup> by Tommy Garrett, WA4FYU, and was put on display during Field Day 1986. If you didn't see it, you missed a real treat cause its a beauty. Bobby Chandler, N4AU, had it on line within a week after receiving it and we're proud to announce that its doing a super job. The output is on 444.5 MHz and the input is on 449.5 MHz; i.e. a "+" offset. Reports indicate that the signal strength and accessibility are consistently good well beyond the Montgomery area.

Now I didn't own a UHF rig when we put the new "dot 5" machine on the air, but I did have a scanner and I got real tired of hearing others talk about what a good repeater it was. Well I could only tolerate that for so long until I just had to get a 440 rig. So if you're listening on a scanner (or even if you're not) don't keep putting off the inevitable; join us on the MARC's new UHF repeater.

## PL-259 HEADACHES

Have you ever put a PL-259 onto the end of a piece of RG-8U?...Sure you have, but were you happy with the results? There has been a many a word written about the subject but in case you haven't learned yet, here is some advice from the June/July issue of the BirminghamHAM, official newsletter of the Birmingham Amateur Radio Club.

1. Sand the connector with a fine paper. This should help the solder flow and stick.
2. Using a hacksaw, cut two slots in the barrel of the PL-259, connecting two holes with each slot. This should make it easier to solder the connector to the braid (personally, I prefer drilling out each hole to make them slightly larger).
3. Remove about three inches of jacket from the coax without cutting the braid.
4. Pull the braid back over itself until its stopped by the jacket (kinda like turning a sock in-side-out).
5. Wrap a double layer of aluminum foil around the dielectric as close to the jacket as possible. This will serve as a heat shield to protect the dielectric.
6. Cut a half inch or so off the end of the dielectric and center conductor, and then pull the braid back to its original position.
7. Now grab the braid that extends beyond the end of the dielectric and center conductor, twist the end, place the twisted end in a vice, pull the coax so the braid becomes tight, and tin the braid with solder as you keep it in tension.
8. Allow the coax to cool throughly and then trim the braid, dielectric, and center conductor, each to the proper length by using the connector barrel as a guide.
9. Slide the threaded collar over the prepared end of the coax (which now resembles hardline) and screw the barrel down on the coax.
10. Now solder one side of the braid, let it cool, then solder the other side and let it cool. Finally solder the center conductor and trim it.

## LATEST CALL SIGNS

If you have applied for a new call lately or plan to do so in the near future, then the following list may interest you. It indicates the last call sign in each license group to be assigned for the Forth Call Area as of July 1, 1986.

<u>Amateur Extra</u>	<u>Advanced</u>	<u>Tech/General</u>	<u>Novice</u>
AA4UB	KJ4VP	N4OFO	KB4TQE

## SILENT KEY

It is with deep regret that we note the passing of John Barrentine, N4OFD, who died on August 13, 1986. Some of you may not have known John, for he just recently received his Technician license, but I'm sure that most of you do know his XYL, Phyllis, KB4GGQ. We certainly hope that she will continue her roll as a friend to amateur radio and a regular and willing participant in MARC activities.

## OOPS DE WB4OZN

During the August meeting I shot off my mouth about the number of Hams in Montgomery vis-a-vis Huntsville plus some other livid remarks about character. Turns out the the Ham population of the Huntsville area is considerably larger than Montgomery's. I apologize for the jabbing remarks, but I ain't sorry they were said. Anyhow here's the straight dope on the Ham population of The "Great" State of Alabama:

### Regional Ham Population.

Birmingham	995
	817*
Mobile	495
	329*
Montgomery	313
	188*
Huntsville	697
	189*
Anniston	239
Auburn/Opelika	214
Choctaw County	7
Dothan	287
Evergreen	76
Florence	485
Gadsden	314
Hamilton	174
Selma	214
Tuscaloosa	191

### Alabama by License Class.

Novice	1456
Technician	1246
General	1711
Advance	1335
Extra	511

The totals for by city vs. by license class don't cross check. Data source is ARRL, Jan 1985.

### USA Data by License Class.

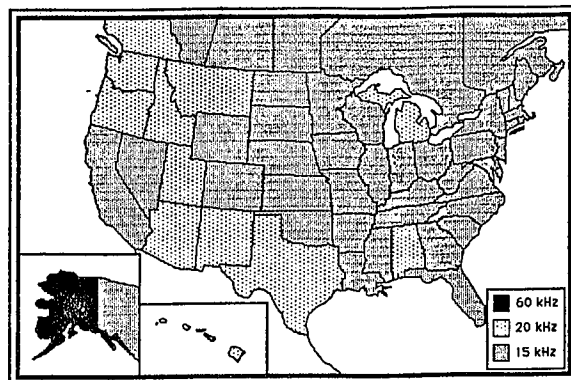
Novice	104006
Technician	85543
General	126320
Advance	100940
Extra	36311
Total	453140

ARRL Members in Montgomery = 77, Prattville = 10, Wetumpka = 9

The first four cities/areas are listed by population, the remaining are listed alphabetically. \* Denotes 3 digit ZIP area surrounding the city. Ham population is available only by three digit ZIP Code, above represents the general 3 digit ZIP areas. CUL, 73 DE WB4OZN

## STATE OF THE PLAN

I'm sure you all remember the VHF band plan squabble of last winter and spring. Well this map which came from the September 1986 issue of QST seems to paint a real clear picture of how folks feel throughout the country. If I had only known that Alaska favored 60 KHz spacing.....I thought 15 and 20 KHz spacings were my only choice.



The state of the 146-148 MHz band plan in the US and Canada in the summer of 1986.

## MOVING AWAY? OH NO!!!

I really hate to announce this but ignoring it wont make it go away. Tim Coucke, KE4KE, is moving to Kentucky and he's not even gonna give us a chance to talk him out of it. He said he has to be there later this month. This will be a severe blow to the MARC because aside from being our Novice class instructor, Tim has participated in just about every club activity that has come down the pipe. I understand this will be a step up the ol ladder for Tim and we certainly wish him well, but it sure pains us to see him go. Good luck Tim!

## DON'T FORGET

Central Alabama Two-Meter Net every Sunday night at 8:30 P.M., local time, on the 146.24/84 repeater.

Tall Tower Net every Monday and Thursday night at 8:15 P.M., local time, on the 147.78/18 repeater.

Club meetings over the next quarter will be on September 15, October 20, and November 17, 1986 at 7:00 P.M. local time. These dates are the third Monday of each month. We meet at State Trooper Headquarters on the corner of Coliseum Blvd. and Federal Drive.

Join or renew your ARRL membership through the MARC to help us maintain ARRL affiliation. The MARC gets \$2 for each renewal and \$5 for each new member. Contact Roger Littlefield for more information.

Club callbook is in possession of Wayne Gentry, AA4BL. Call him if you need an address.

Central Alabama Hamfest on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

South Alabama State Fair October 13<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>.

73 DE JIM, KK4A



MONTGOMERY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ HANDLE \_\_\_\_\_ CALL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY & STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

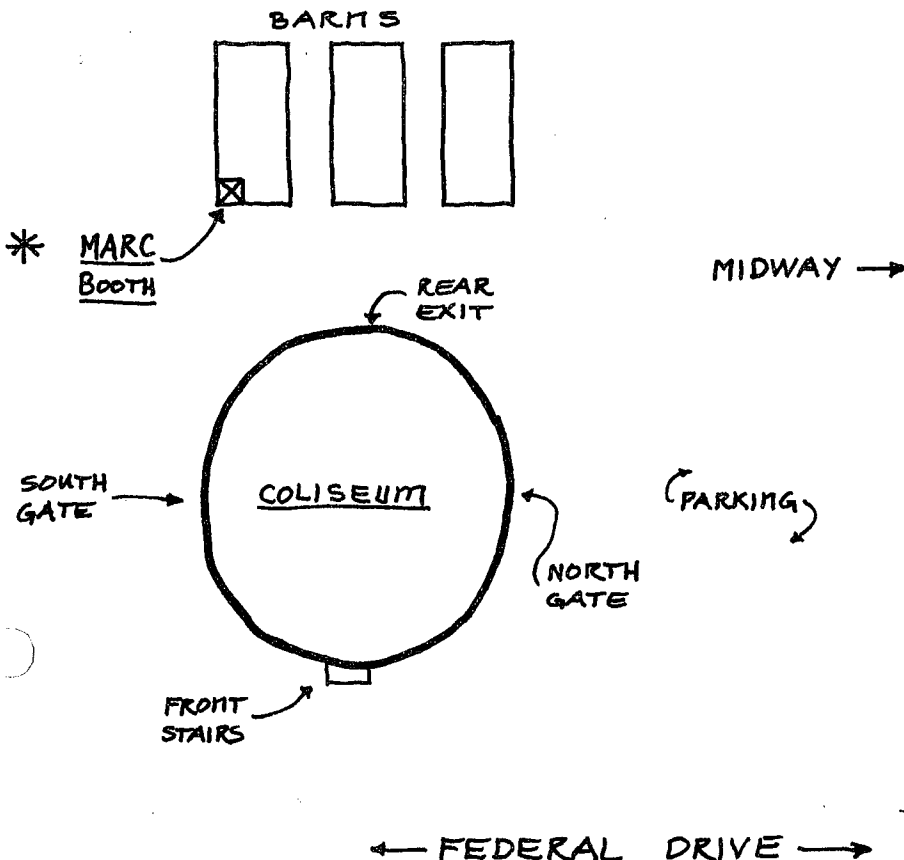
ARRL MEMBER ? \_\_\_\_\_ LICENSE EXPIRATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Those wishing to join the MARC or members wishing to renew, please fill out this application and return with \$10.00 annual dues (\$15 for families) to:

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3141  
Montgomery, Alabama 36109

Non-members receiving this newsletter are invited to join the MARC and receive each quarterly issue of Zerø Beat.

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MAP  
TO  
FAIR  
BOOTH

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

**MARC**

MONTGOMERY AMATEUR RADIO  
CLUB, INC. P. O. BOX 3141  
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