

Zero Beat



Montgomery Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

Established 1938

March 2012

CALENDER OF EVENTS

CLUB MEETING

Every month - 3rd Monday at 7 PM
American Red Cross Building
5015 Woods Crossing Dr. Montgomery

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Saturday morning before the club meeting at 8:30AM
Flips's, Altanta Hwy. at Perry Hill Rd.

FCC EXAMS

Montgomery ARRL VE Team: Last Saturday in March, April and May at 9:00 AM at the E. L. Lowder Public Library, 2590 Bell Rd. just north of Vaughn Rd.

For information, Howard Marshall, W2SKP, by e-mail, hmarshal@w2skp.com

CAVEC every 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM at American Red Cross, 5015 Woods Crossing Dr.
For Info contact Jim Eiland, KR4JY (jeiland@knology.net)

Additional Exam Info:

<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml?State=AL>

Club Nets

Central Ala 2 meter Net

Sunday at 8:00PM on 146.84 MHz Net manager: Chris, K4LIA

2M SSB Net,

Sunday, immediately following the Central Ala 2 meter Net on 144.210MHz USB Net Managers: EI K4DJL & Jim N4CIO

SkyWarn/Alabama Emergency Net Golf

Thursday at 8:00PM on 146.84. Net manager: Otto, N4UZZ

2011 Officers

President: Scott Poole, W4SPA
Past President: Ken Kohnke, KJ4CJP
Vice-President: Ken Kohnke, KJ4CJP
Secretary: Rick Cochran, AJ4ZZ
Treasurer: Jim Cooke, K4FP
Publicity: Bruce Jenkins, KI4OZW
Trustee: Jim Eiland, KR4JY
Trustee: Rik Doll, KU4PY
Trustee: Phil Salley, K4PO
W4AP Trustee: Tim Moore, K4TK

Local Repeaters

146.840(-) W4AP Wetumpka
146.920(-) W4AP Eastdale (DSTAR)
147.180(+) W4AP Tall tower - Grady, AL 123 Hz
444.5(+)
53.350(-) W4AP Titus, AL 100 Hz
444.450(+)
446.450 (Splx) IRLP (4845) Baptist Tower 110.9 Hz
147.200(+) KE4LTT Friendship 107.2 Hz
444.575(+)
147.380(+) W4KEN Santuck
145.690 W4AP BBS
144.390 W4AP-1/3 APRS Digipeaters



From the President's Shack

By Scott Poole, W4SPA

It's hard for me to believe, as I write this, that Spring has sprung around here so early this year. Yes, it's March and the sunspot numbers are way up too! That means plenty of good propagation conditions, especially on the upper HF bands (like 10 and 15 meters.).

I am honored to once again have the opportunity to lead the MARC in 2012. I would like to thank the 2011 MARC officers for a job well done! I know I speak for all the 2012 officers when I say we're indeed excited about what lies ahead this year for the club. In January we adopted a new budget that allocates sufficient funds for lots of important activities including completing work on the MARC Emergency Communications Trailer, a Spring picnic, Field Day and the Montgomery Hamfest. I have decided the essential mission for our club this year is to establish and/or improve our working relationships with the area EMA offices as well as other served agencies.

Speaking of the trailer, I am encouraged to have so many of you willing to volunteer your time to help complete the trailer work. Now that the weather is getting warmer and drier, I expect to start scheduling trailer work sessions very soon. We need to have it ready for Field Day; maybe not completely finished, but at least habitable.

Ken Kohnke, KJ4CJP has agreed to be Field Day chairman again this year and we're going back to Fort Toulouse again. If you didn't make it last year, Fort Toulouse is a superb venue for our Field Day operation. It has a large covered pavilion with picnic tables and plenty of shade trees around. Another big plus is the availability of the campground. Last year, several of us stayed in the campground for the weekend. I recommend it as it's a great way to spend field day weekend.

In case you haven't heard already, the Hamfest committee has decided to try a new location for our Hamfest this year. In January, we signed a contract with the Alcazar Shiner's Temple to have the 2012 MARC Hamfest at their facility. If you've been to one of the gun shows there, it will be in the same hall. The main hall is about 14,000 sq ft in size and has areas for forums and a concession stand too. We are going to operate the concession ourselves which will provide an additional source of revenue. As Hamfest gets closer,

I'll be needing lots of help to make this a successful event so please consider volunteering to help out!

At the February meeting, we listened to several disaster preparedness themed presentations; Mike Watkins, the interim SEC for AL gave a presentation about ARES and Otto Arnoscht talked about the Central AL Skywarn program and activities. I'm planning to continue the preparedness theme this month too with a more technical twist... curious? Come join us on Monday, March 19th to hear details.

Our club is only as good as we make it so let me hear from you if you have an idea about how we can make it better for everyone. Feel free to call me or email me any time. My home phone is (334) 262-0412 and my email address is President@w4ap.org. I do work days so please respect my sleeping hours by not calling after 9:00PM. Well, that about all from here for now. Hope to see everyone at a meeting on chat with you on the air soon!

73,
Scott

New Hams and Upgrades

By Howard Marshall, W2SKP

We have had several new hams and several upgrades during the past three months. There were nine new Technicians, seven new Generals, and seven new Extras. The figure below shows the details by license, class and month. The figures include both the ARRL and CAVEC test sessions.

	Technician	General	Extra	Total
December	4	1	5	10
January	4	5	0	9
February	1	1	2	4
Totals	9	7	7	23

Need a ride to MARC Meetings?

If you or someone you know of would like to attend the monthly MARC meetings but cannot get there, we can help.

Please contact me by email at secretary@w4ap.org

If you get my voice mail, please leave your name and phone number and we will make arrangements to get you to the meetings.

Please give us as much notice as you can. We have members that travel from areas other than Montgomery and would like to see you at the meetings

Tips to Help Pass the Amateur Radio License Exam

By Howard Marshall, W2SKP

The follow are some tips that may help you pass the Radio Amateur License Exam. The tips include selecting a good study text, study method, and using the online tests to help you gauge your progress.

The series of texts that I recommend are those written by Gordon West. Gordon has texts for all three license classes: Technician, General, and Extra. The test pool is divided into 10 groups numbered 0-9. The groups are divided into several subgroups beginning with A through F. Each subgroup can have up to 19 questions. Gordon puts similar questions together regardless of their grouping.

When studying the questions, there are a couple of guidelines to remember. One is that there is only one question from every subgroup on the test. So if there are 19 questions in, let's say group 9b, there will be only one on the test. Most of the math problems are in one to three groups. So there may be only three questions on the test.

Another guideline to remember: read only the correct answer to each question. Learning the question, the correct answer along with the incorrect answer is too much work.

If you can work on the questions in a study group, you will find this more fun than studying the questions by yourself. In my classes, I have the students take turns at reading the questions and correct answers. We also discuss the supporting background for the questions. So it is helpful to have other HAMs join the study group to help explain the questions.

I like to have at least five people in a study group including other hams. Each study session should be also be about four hours long. The Technician and General study time should take about 12 hours and the Extra sessions should take 20 hours total.

Along with the study sessions, it is a good idea to take the online practice tests. When you can consistently get an 85+ on the online tests you are ready to take your exam.

The Extra Class Question of the Day

by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

As many of you already know, I have written study guides for the Tech and General Class license exams (www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual). Until now, however, I've shied away from writing an Extra Class study guide. The two main reasons for this is that the material is much more complicated and there's a lot more of it.

This year, however, the NCVET is updating the Extra Class question pool, and I've decided to bite the bullet and do it. So, I'm now in the process of writing a No-Nonsense Extra Class Study Guide.

After I got started on this, I had a D'oh! moment. It occurred to me that instead of just publishing this material in the study guide, I could also post some of it to my blog (www.kb6nu.com). So, now I have the "Extra Class question of the Day" feature on KB6NU.Com.

In reality, it's usually more than just a single question because many of the questions are on the same topic. That's OK, though, because in reality, I don't post these every day. So, it all works out. Having said all that, here's an example. The correct answer to the question is in bold.

Extra Class question of the day: meteor scatter

Amateur radio operators use many different ways to get signals from one spot to another. Perhaps one of the most interesting is meteor scatter propagation.

Meteor scatter propagation is possible because when a meteor strikes the Earth's atmosphere, a cylindrical region of free electrons is formed at **the E layer** of the ionosphere. (E3A08) **28 - 148 MHz** is the frequency range that is well suited for meteor-scatter communications. (E3A09)

Unfortunately, these ionization trails are relatively short-lived, so to communicate via meteor scatter, you need to either be able to detect when these paths are available or be transmitting when the paths are available. **All of these choices are correct** when talking about good techniques for making meteor-scatter contacts (E3A10):

- 15 second timed transmission sequences with stations alternating based on location
- Use of high speed CW or digital modes
- Short transmission with rapidly repeated call signs and signal reports

For more information on meteor scatter, go to:

- G3WZT's Meteor Scatter page (www.qsl.net/g3wzt/g3wzt_ms.html)
- RSGB's Meteor Scatter page (www.rsgb.org/psc/meteor-scatter.php)

For more Extra Class questions of the day, go to www.kb6nu.com.

ARRL VE Test Location Changed

Please note the new ARRL VE test location for March, April and May in the FCC Exams announcement on the first page.

From the Editor

This is my first shot editing Zerobeat. I will appreciate future inputs and suggestions from MARC members. Please send to Zerobeat@W4AP.org. Thanks for your input and support.

Ken Brittin, AK4KN

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club participates in Family Emergency Preparedness Day event

By Scott Poole, W4SPA

On Saturday, February 25th 2012, the Montgomery City/County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) sponsored a Family Emergency Preparedness Day event in Centre Court at Eastdale Mall. EMA Director Mike Stoudenmier personally invited the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club to attend the event in order to make the general public aware of what amateur radio is and why it can be important during and after a disaster. Several members of MARC set up a display that included a video about amateur radio, displays, hand-outs about amateur radio, the ARRL, and MARC and a demonstration of radio equipment. Also present at the event were representatives from Alabama Power, the National Weather Service, the City/County EMA office, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), the Red Cross, and several other disaster related organizations. Throughout the event, MARC members talked with the public and explained the purpose of and advantages of being a licensed amateur radio operator. This is but one example of how MARC will be reaching out to the general public and other agencies to increase awareness of who we are and what we can do to help.

Photos by El Erby, K4DJL



Last Man Standing QSL Cards on UTube

Videos of QSL cards received at ABC studios for "Last Man Standing" have been posted to UTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EljwNzZ-1kk&feature=g-all-esi&context=G2905be0FAAAAAAABAA>

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Year _____

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club – PO Box 3141 – Montgomery, AL. 36109

Renewals enter, **name** and **callsign** and any **changes** in status.

***Note: Senior Members** over 70 please send in application to keep roster updated.

New Members enter **all** available information.

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL Member(Y/N) _____

E-mail: _____

Family Members

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL Member(Y/N) _____

E-mail: _____

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL Member(Y/N) _____

E-mail: _____

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Call: _____ Class: _____ ARRL Member(Y/N) _____

E-mail: _____

Class of License: N= Novice, T= No Code Technician, T+= Code Technician, G= General, A= Advanced, E= Extra

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Indicate Membership type below. Membership fees are **due every January 1st**. There is a 60-day grace period. Family membership is for immediate family with 2 or more amateur radio license holders residing at the same address.

Associate Membership is for individuals who **do not have** an amateur radio license, but are interested in the activities of the club and are preparing for exams.

Senior Membership is for an amateur age 65 or older.

Check type of membership:

_____ Single Membership (\$25 per year)

_____ Family Membership (\$40 per year)

_____ Senior Membership - age 65-69 (\$15 per year)

_____ Senior Membership - age 70+ (no charge)

_____ Associate Membership (\$10 per year)

The Montgomery Amateur Radio Club

Public Service Since 1938

Amateur Radio

www.arrrl.org

www.w4ap.org



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