

Z E R Ø BEAT

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REPEATERS/CUSTODIANS

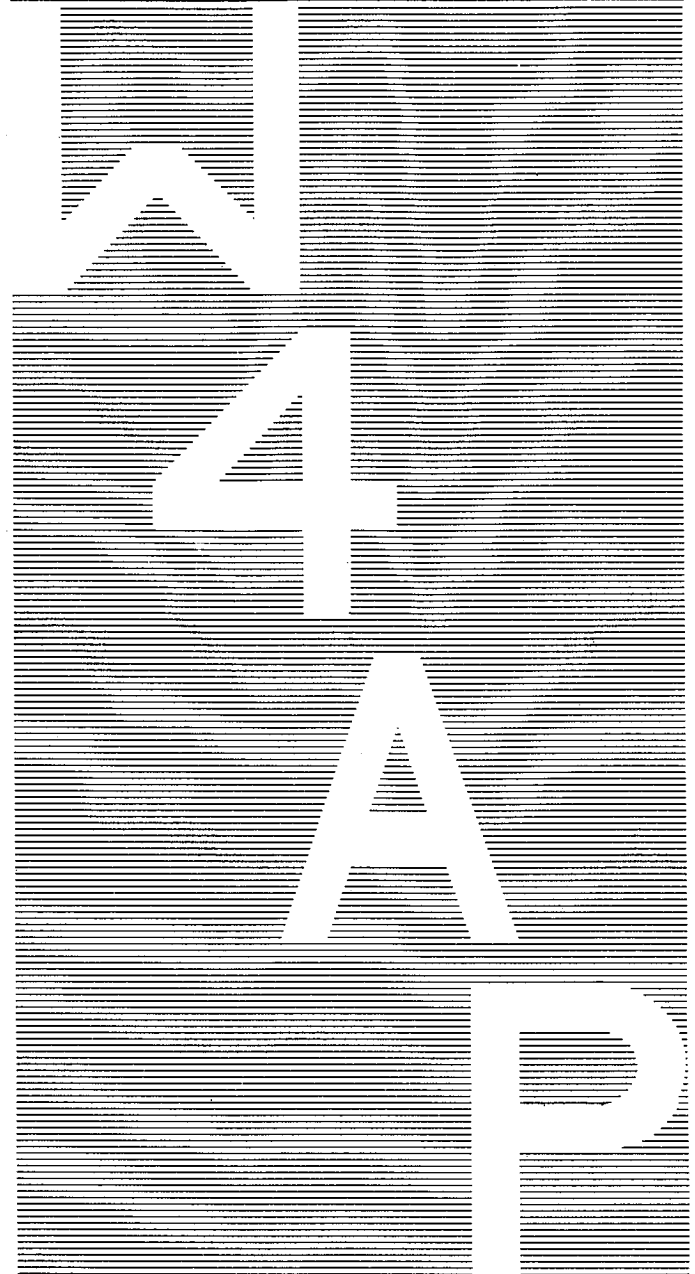
146.04/64 MONTGOMERY, AL
WAYNE GENTRY AA4BL

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



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

MARC

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

JUNE 86

GROWING ATTENDANCE

To begin this issue of Zero Beat I'd like to congratulate the MARC membership on an apparent renewed interest in the monthly club meetings. Attendance at these meetings over the last quarter has been phenominal. The March meeting was the first one after moving back to State Trooper Headquarters and it was met with a standing-room-only crowd. I initially attributed this to the "band plan" vote scheduled for that night but then the April meeting rolled around and although it wasn't a full house, it was a nice turnout. Now, by the time the May meeting was upon us I had pessimistically assumed that attendance would decline a little more, but boy was I wrong! Much to my delight, attendance in May jumped back up to near standing-room-only.

However, those of you who attend club meetings regularly, know that the size of the crowd is not the only important issue. The quality of the meetings usually influences attendance. Based on the attendance over the last quarter, the quality must be there. So, if you haven't been gracing us with your presence on the third Monday of each month at the State Trooper Headquarters building, please consider this your invitation to do so.

Additionally, I'll take this opportunity to tell everyone about the program scheduled for the June meeting. Our own Randy Smith, N4LZK, and Ronnie Mott, KA4VEY, are going to tell us about "power distribution" and why your lights blink three times before they go off. See you there on June 16, 1986 at 7:00 P.M.

CENTRAL ALABAMA HAMFEST

Planning for the 1986 Central Alabama Hamfest is now underway and alot of things have changed since last year. If you remember the infamous "hamfest agreement" between the MARC and the other two local clubs, you'd probably do just as well to forget it. The Capitol City ARA has officially notified us that they will not participate in the 1986 hamfest, and the Montgomery-Tuskegee Technicians ARS has failed to respond to our written or verbal inquiries regarding the hamfest. Therefore, the MARC is moving ahead on its own and in doing so has resolved to put the Montgomery based hamfest among the best in the Southeast.

To begin with, the 1986 hamfest will be a two day affair on October 25 & 26 and will be held in the comfort of the Montgomery Civic Center. The official hamfest committee has been expanded beyond our original three appointees and is now made up of the following individuals:

Al Erdman, W4CNQ
Phil Salley, WB4OZN
Jim Minor, K4BTP

Leroy Bell, KA4WZD
Roger Littlefield, N4LKM
Fred Springall, KB4EGH

Of course this is not to say that others cannot help; in fact your help is hereby solicited. Please call one of the above if you can be of service in any capacity. By-the-way, Al Erdman was elected to the chairmanship of the hamfest committee and has already taken the bull by the horns.

A planning meeting was held an hour before the May club meeting and a number of items were discussed. In addition to the usual activities such as license exams, flea market, dealers, prizes, and forums, there will be a packet ALA-NET meeting and a packet South-Net meeting which alone should draw some 200 individuals. It was also decided that we will have a MARC table at the flea market. You can donate items to sell at this table or you can place items there on consignment. A prime goal of the committee is to have all details resolved well in advance of the hamfest. In fact, I intend to report "in detail" on the hamfest in the September issue of Zero Beat. So be thinking about it and decide what you are going to do to help with the 1986 Central Alabama Hamfest.

THE BIG VOTE

In the March issue of Zero Beat I reported on the impending "15 vrs 20 KHz band plan" vote. At the March meeting the MARC general membership voted in favor of 15 KHz spacing therefore the MARC's three votes in the matter were cast that very night by filling in the ballots which were then mailed directly to Joe Smith, WA4RNP, by registered mail. However, the results of the state wide voting was at odds with the MARC. The state voted in favor of 20 KHz spacing. This means that the 146.24/84 repeater will stay on that pair of frequencies.

TRANSMITTER HUNT

The club sponsored transmitter hunt on April 12, 1986 was alot of fun but would have to be classified as a flop from a participation standpoint. Even in light of the \$100 prize, only eight people showed up for the event. I don't really understand such disinterest from a club with almost 200 members but maybe I shouldn't be too unhappy since the lack of competition increased the odds of finding the transmitter for those of us who did participate. In fact, yours truly and my partner Randy Smith, N4KTX, were victorious. I'll admit though that most of the other hunters were hot on the trail when Randy made the find. Frank Golden, W4DQF, probably did the best job of direction finding because he parked right next to the transmitter very early on during the hunt. He just didn't have guts enough to peek in the window of the van that he parked by. Had he done so he would have seen Jimmy Moore, WB4ZOR, and Ken Copeland, WB4MMB, huddled inside and trying their best not to laugh out loud. These two did an excellent job organizing the hunt and operating the hidden transmitter.

The hunt was alot of fun for the hunters and the hunted but obviously it is not the kind of event that the majority of you are interested in. I'm not sure what you are interested in but I am sure its not transmitter hunting; therefore I will not recommend another hunt this fall as was originally anticipated.

FIELD DAY 1986

Field Day is probably the one most significant event in the broad spectrum of amateur radio. To some, it is the very essence of the hobby and to think of June without Field Day is comparable to thinking of July without the 4th or December without Christmas. Regardless of how you feel about it, the one fact that remains irrefutable is that it's right around the corner. That's right!!! June 28 and 29 are the big days and as usual the MARC will participate. I am told that last year's Field Day was one of the more successful ones for the club, but it looks like this year's effort may out-do them all. The only thing that could stand in the way of this would be your failure to participate. Each of you is hereby invited to join the MARC in its 1986 Field Day exercise.

For those who are unfamiliar with Field Day and what it's all about, here's a brief synopsis. It is a 24 hour event beginning at 1800 UTC on Saturday and ending at 1800 UTC on Sunday. The official objective is to work as many stations as possible during the allocated time frame and, in doing so, to learn to operate in abnormal situations under less-than-optimum conditions. A premium is placed on skills and equipment developed to meet the challenge of emergency preparedness and to acquaint the public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio.

The Field Day committee this year is made up of Bobby Chandler, N4AU, Bill Haynes, NK4D, Al Erdman, W4CNQ, and John McLemore, WA4MTG. These guys need to get a feel for how many potential operators we are going to have so they can decide how many stations to run. They also need to know if you want to work phone, CW, or both and what time(s) you want to operate. We want to be sure we can handle everyone who wants to operate. If you don't know what you want to do or when, just come on out any time. Also, if you don't want to operate we can still use you because it takes alot of help other than actual radio operators. It takes considerable effort to get everything set up on Saturday morning and if the ops have to do it all themselves, then their too tired to operate when the contest begins at 1800 UTC. Good participation will insure that no one is worked to death. Keep one other thing in mind too; you don't have to be a seasoned contester to operate in this event. In fact, most folks that operate don't have any contest experience other than Field Day. Remember, part of the objective is to learn and have fun doing so. And it is fun. I have alot of memories of Field Days past and to help keep this years memories fresh we will have a video camera there to record it all. Bob Kinsaul, K4UJH, did this last year and it was a perfect finishing touch.

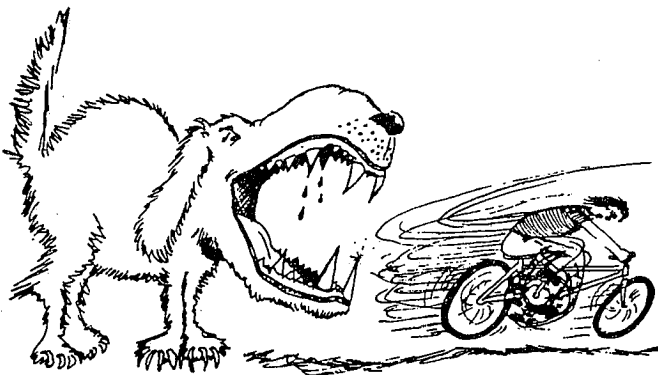
The MARC conducts its Field Day exercise at the farm of Charlie Cargile, AA4QO. I have enclosed a map hereinafter which will show you how to get there. (This time I got the highway number correct.) Even though the contest begins at 1:00 P.M., set-up usually starts about 8:00 A.M. You should bring your own personal needs such as food and drink, suntan lotion, bug repellent, lawn chair(s), change of clothing, hat, etc., and if you're a CW man, you may want to bring your own keyer, key, bug, or whatever. That brings to mind one final point. A few phone operators are suffering from some strange malady which makes them think they can score more points than the CW ops. They have even gone so far as to challenge the CW ops to a contest within the contest. Well, since phone contacts count one point each and CW contacts count two points each, the phone boys had better grease their jaw bones cause they will have to make more than twice as many contacts as the CW ops to beat them. **GOOD LUCK!!!**

PUBLIC SERVICE

The last eight weeks were very busy for the MARC and among all the things that we were a part of were three very successful public service events. They were the annual March of Dimes Walk America, the first annual Hands Across Montgomery, and the first annual Multiple Sclerosis Tour for Cure.

The March of Dimes Walk America took place on Saturday, April 26, 1986. It was a ten mile walk from Eastdale Mall to Elephant Park at Gunter AFS and took a little more than half a day to complete. The MARC provided communications all along the route for the duration of the event.

Hands Across Montgomery took place on Sunday, May 25, 1986. It was an offspring of the national Hands Across America event. The objective was to form a human chain along the historic "lightening route" in downtown Montgomery. Again, the MARC provided communications all along the route for the duration of the event.



The Multiple Sclerosis Tour for Cure took place on Saturday, May 31, 1986. It was a 70 mile bicycle ride from Montgomery to Tallassee and then back to Montgomery. Once again the MARC provided communications all along the route for the duration of the event. This would have to be considered our most grueling effort in that it lasted nearly twelve long, hot hours.

In all of the latter events the MARC was praised by the sponsors of the events and rightfully so. They all claimed (after each event) that they couldn't have done it without us and they're probably right. We have reason to be proud of our club and its members that give of themselves to help others. Note that all of these events were fund raisers aimed at aiding the sick and the hungry. What a great way to enjoy your hobby, promote amateur radio, and help the less fortunate at the same time.

I want to extend thanks to Roy Jarrett, WB4TKU, and Randy Smith, N4KTX, for the excellent work they did in the planning stages of our public service work. I also want to extend thanks to each individual ham that participated in the events. But now is a good time to look to the future and plan for it. The MARC has shown its value in the realm of public service and the word is spreading quickly among charity and civic organizations. If we are to continue along this path then we need a larger pool of hams to draw upon. We are nearly 200 strong in membership but based on past experience our public service pool numbers only around 20 and lately we have been working them to death. I think you can see the problem. If you're interested in helping with public service, let it be known.

UHF REPEATER FUND

The drive to raise money for a new UHF repeater has done so well that we decided to go ahead and place the order for the machine. The technical committee decided on an Icom which is such a popular repeater that it is in short supply and it will be a while before we receive it. As of this writing the balance of the fund stands at approximately \$1060 excluding pledges which are uncollected. That's more than enough to pay for the repeater but we don't want to call it quits yet because we can use a little more money to cover some necessary appurtenances which will be required to make it a top notch repeater. Don't forget that the MARC already has a UHF repeater on 444.5 MHz which is on loan to us until we can get our new one on line, so get yourself a 440 rig and give it a try.

FAIR BOOTH

We have now finalized the location of the MARC booth at the South Alabama State Fair next October. You may remember that last year we were in the coliseum on the ground floor concourse just inside the north gate. That location proved to be too noisy so the MARC Board of Directors decided to seek a more suitable location in the exhibit barns at the rear exit of the coliseum. Our new booth location will be in the southern most barn on the left as you walk in the front entrance of the barn. This puts us as far from the livestock as possible and adjacent to an exterior wall so we can get coax out and raise antennas.

The actual booth which we built for last years fair is presently in temporary storage and we need to find another place for it. It primarily consists of three 4 x 8 sheets of plywood plus the radio box and when disassembled, really doesn't take up much space. If you can help out with storage space for the booth, please call a club officer and let us know.

24/84 FACE LIFT

The 146.24/84 repeater has recently undergone minor renovation which created some changes in the machines performance. First of all a new timer and I.D.'er were installed and seem to be working well. The repeater can be timed out now so you long-winded folks need to be careful and drop your carrier every now and then to reset the timer. The second thing that was done involved the antenna. A new antenna donated by Al, W4CNQ, was installed by John Mclemore, WA4MTG, and Fred Springall, KB4EGH. The old antenna is to be brought down and reworked someday. When the new antenna was installed, it was moved to the Montgomery side of the tower, thus the repeater favors the Montgomery area much more now than it did. This is evidenced by the fact that HT's in Montgomery can get into the machine much better than before. Unfortunately, some areas to the north and west of Montgomery are no longer favored by the repeater, but it is my understanding that another small adjustment may be in order to remedy that problem.

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 June 16, July 21, and August 18, 1986 at 7:00 P.M. local time. These dates are the third Monday of each month. Check the March issue of Zero Beat for detailed instructions on how to get to the meeting place.

Join or renew your ARRL membership through the MARC to help us maintain ARRL affiliation. Also, the MARC gets \$2 for each renewal and \$5 for each new member.

The MARC owns a current U.S. callbook and Wayne Gentry, AA4BL, is holding it. Call him if you need an address.

Central Alabama Two-Meter Sideband Net every Wednesday night at 9:00 P.M., local time, on 144.190 MHz, USB.

Field Day on Saturday and Sunday, June 28 & 29, 1986 at the farm of Charlie Cargile, AA4QO.

WHAT GOES UP, MUST COME DOWN

Did you ever have one of those days when nothing went right? You know, the kind of day when Murphy's Law prevailed. Well, if you have, the following article, courtesy of Phil Salley, WB4OZN, should make you feel a little better.

Poor Planning

The following item originally appeared in the Benton County Enterprise, a weekly newspaper from Warsaw, Missouri. It was part of a column written by Mahlon K. (Jab) White, Publisher of the Enterprise. Jab and I attended the same small town school from grade 1 to 12. He was, I believe, one year behind me. The article is reprinted here with his permission, thanks Jab.

Insurance Claimant
Sorrowfully Found
That What Goes Up
Must Come Down

I was visiting with a friend in his Springfield, Mo. insurance office and asked if he had anything that could be used in a column. Without batting an eye, he reached into a desk drawer and handed me a claim received that day. Here it is:

"I am writing in response to your company's request for additional information. In block 3 of the accident reporting form, I put, quote-"Poor Planning"-unquote, as the cause of my accident. You said in your letter that I should explain more fully, and I trust that the following details will be sufficient.

"I am an amateur radio

operator. On the day of the accident, I was working alone on the top section of my new 80 foot antenna tower. When I had completed my work, I discovered that I had, over the course of several trips up the tower, brought up about 300 pounds of tools and spare hardware. Rather than carry the now unneeded tools and material down by hand, I decided to lower the items in a small barrel by using a pulley which, fortunately, was attached to the gin pole at the top of the tower.

"Securing the rope at ground level, I went to the top of the tower and loaded the tools and materials into the barrel. Then I went back to the ground and untied the rope, holding it tightly to insure a slow descent of the 300 pounds of tools. You will note in block number eleven of your accident reporting form that I weigh 155 pounds.

"Due to my surprise of being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rather rapid rate up the side of the tower.

"In the vicinity of the 40 foot level, I met the barrel coming down. This explains my fractured skull and broken collarbone.

"Slowed down only slightly, I continued the speedy ascent,

not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley."

"Fortunately, by this time, I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope in spite of my pain.

"At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of tools hit the ground and the bottom was smashed out of the barrel. Devoid of the weight of the tools, the barrel now weighed approximately twenty pounds.

"I refer you again to my weight in block number eleven. As you might imagine, I began a rapid descent down the side of the tower.

"In the vicinity of the 40 foot level, I met the barrel coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles and the lacerations of my legs and lower body.

"The encounter with the barrel slowed me enough to lessen my injuries when I fell onto the pile of tools and fortunately, only three vertebrae were cracked.

"I am sorry to report, however, that as I lay there on the tools - in pain, unable to stand, and watching the empty barrel 80 feet above me - I again lost my presence of mind.

"...I let go of the rope."

73, Phil de WB4OZN

MONTGOMERY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

NAME _____ HANDLE _____ CALL _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE _____

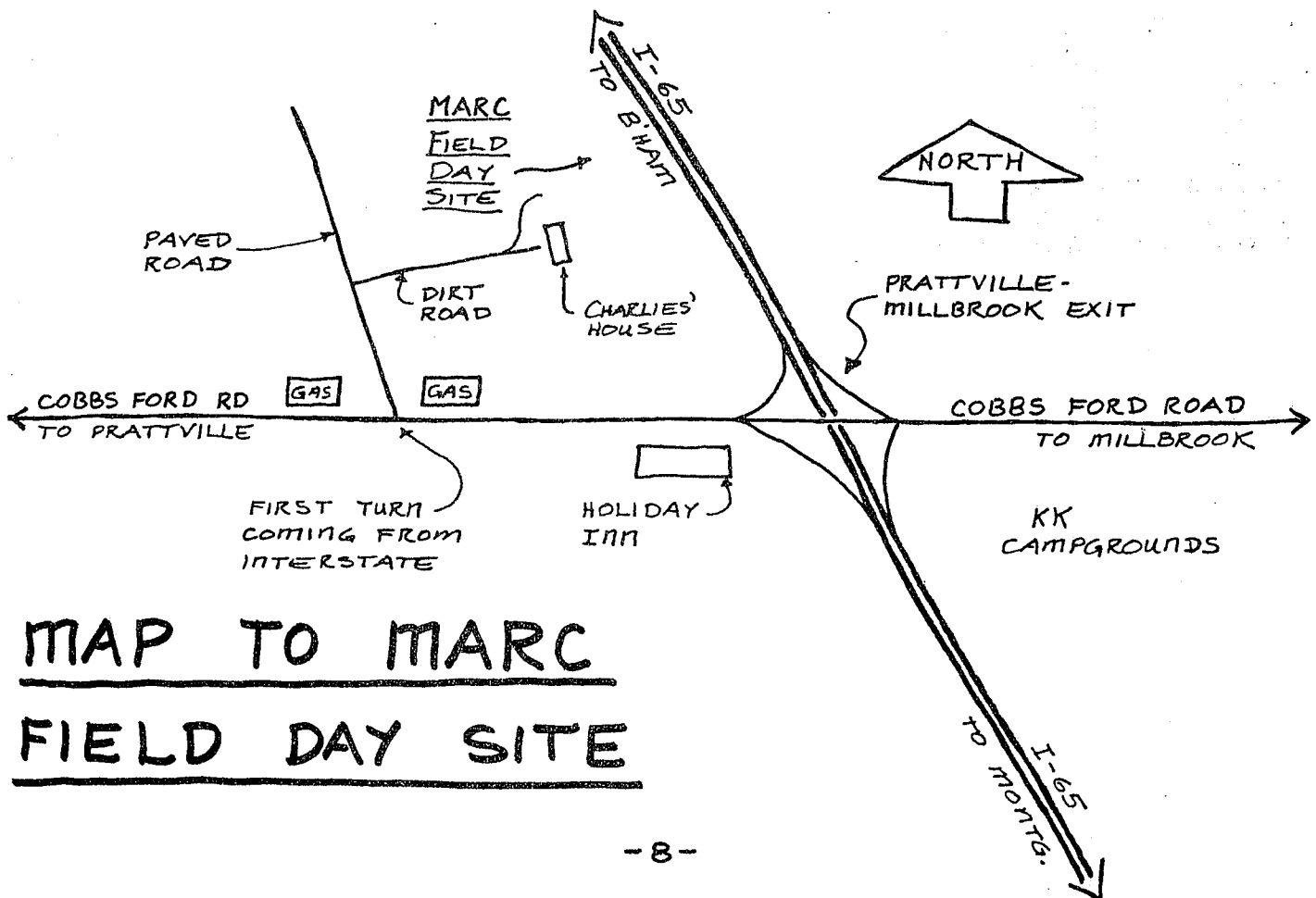
CITY & STATE _____ ZIP _____

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 Zero Beat.



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

MARC

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

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