

Greetings from the President



As I take the reins of the club I would like to share with you my vision for the club and what I would like all of us to accomplish this coming year. I am writing this column a short time after we have put to bed another very successful hamfest, thanks to the steady guidance of K8AJX and a hamfest committee that has now worked together very well for several years.

The first order of business will be for us to show that we can apply the hamfest model of dedication, organization, and good leadership, to the task of organizing a successful Field Day. For the last three years I worked Field Day in Autauga County at the Smith Center. Those were great events and they were loosely but very well organized. We had hams from all over the tri-county area come and visit.

There was a time when MARC Field Day events were equally famous and exciting, and you don't even need to go back to Charlie's Farm. Who can forget Lew's chili? We had a grand time at Ft. Toulouse and always enjoyed KV4AC's backyard. We had trailers with voice stations and CW stations in hot competition. Quite a bit of the time new

hams would be getting a shot at the radio and make calls and log contacts with the assistance of more experienced operators. It was always a good time.

But it takes some effort to organize. We need to figure out where we want to have Field Day, which antennas to erect, and how many radios to operate. We may consider new locations like the club houses of some neighborhoods or churches. We have a large club membership of hams that have never operated a contest. They would find the experience enlightening.

So, in the next couple of months we face the challenge of organizing field day. There are lots of things to do. Your part may be big or small, but if you take part, you will have fun!

Starting with the February meeting, I want to bring back the tradition of a feature presentation at every ham club meeting. I want to have a meeting that has a feature presentation first, followed by a break and then 30 minutes of club business. Whatever does not get resolved in that time is tabled for the next meeting. If you have special expertise, please volunteer to give a

club feature presentation. We have many people in the club with special expertise, from digital to CW to designing wire antennas. Just the other month Lew gave an excellent presentation on propagation. I would also like to devote some club evenings to brief presentations where members show pictures and describe their stations.

One of the core missions of the club is to foster ham communications. We need to upgrade our repeaters and make them work better. We are in the process of doing that right now. My wish is that we could place the 147.18 antennas on the north side of the WSFA tower so that the repeater gains better coverage towards Montgomery, Prattville, and Elmore County.

We also have a big task ahead of us to establish a strong and modern online presence where our Facebook page and our Facebook group feed into our website which in turn is used for marketing to increase attendance at our hamfest. We need to explore ways of marketing the hamfest. We will see what kinds of avenues are open to increase hamfest attendance.

I would like to develop a regular schedule of club station operations, and a club station open house at least quarterly.

I want to see a club register of equipment and expertise that is available for club members to use as they work on their stations. For

instance, we have a tennis ball launcher that can be used to shoot fishing line or rope over trees. We have had several antenna building parties in the last two years and want to continue that tradition. We get antennas built and installed, and everyone has fun and learns a lot.

In the meantime we will see what other ways we can think of to have some club fun in the greatest hobby of all, amateur radio!

Otto 73 de N4UZZ