

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club – After Action Report

MARC HAMFEST 2017

Saturday

November 11, 2017

December 07, 2017

MARC Hamfest 2017 took place on November 11 from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. While sponsored by the ARRL, this year's event did not host a section or state convention. However, the Alabama Section Manager, JVann Martin, W4JVM, and Southeastern Division Director Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, did attend and chaired an ARRL forum. The gate of 258 paying attendees was slightly above that of 2016 and table, ticket, and raffle sales exceeded MARC expenditures for the event.

The 2017 Hamfest Committee was chaired by Fred Beatty, K8AJX, and included the following MARC members: Tommy Martin, KK4TDP, Chair, Ex Officio; Ken Brittin, AK4KN, boneyard; Fidel Cintron, KK4KGO, finances; Fred Springall, KR4YK, admissions; Bill Goodwyn, KF4FSS, concession; Lew Nyman, K1AZE, tables; Karen Nyman, KA1BYP, publicity; Phil Salley, K4PO, license examinations; Paul St. John, NA4MM, prizes; Scott Poole, W4SPA, club trailer; Rik Doll, KU4PY, forums; Ken Kohnke, KJ4CJP, club table; and Otto Arnoscht, N4UZZ, talk-in. Hats off to all for their hard work in making the hamfest a success.

The committee met three times preceding the hamfest: March 11, August 12, and October 07. At each meeting, the overall plan was discussed and finalized and each committee member reviewed his/her responsibilities and addressed potential problems. Fred, K8AJX, coordinated the Alcazar Temple scheduling and obtained insurance coverage for the event. Publicity, coordinated by Karen, KA1BYP, included QST, handouts, mail-outs, media advertising, and signage.

Table setup was supervised by Lew, K1AZE, on Thursday, November 9. Because of heavy demand, he ordered additional tables from a local supplier. Nearly all were used.

The event executed without problems beginning on Friday, November 10, with vendor arrival, which continued into Saturday morning until 8:30 AM. Vendors included MFJ, Tower Electronics, The Sign Man, VIS, Satellite Sam, Ham World, Tower Electronics, and Be Ready Solar. Friday afternoon W4SPA also set up the MARC trailer for display and AK4KN roped off the boneyard area, which this year was free for tailgaters on a first-come first-served basis. Otto, N4UZZ provided continuous talk-in coverage for vendors and attendees on both Friday and Saturday. Bill, KF4FSS, and his crew provided great chow beginning with the vendor breakfast Saturday morning and continuing into the afternoon hours.

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Doors opened at 9:00 AM Saturday and the hamfest proceeded smoothly through the day, due largely to some 25 MARC-member volunteers who aided the Hamfest Committee in all execution activities. A special thanks to those individuals.

Events during the hamfest included the ARRL, Repeater Council, and digital fora and a QCWA meeting. Additionally, the young people of the GEARS Group Robot Team provided a running demonstration of their award-winning robot development project. Phil, K4PO, conducted a license exam session that resulted in one new Technician, two General Class, and one Extra class licensees. During the hamfesta number of prizes were awarded, including a dual-band Yaesu mobile transceiver, a Kenwood two-meter mobile, an MFJ antenna analyzer, five handheld VHF/UHF transceivers, ARRL redemption certificates, and several vendor-donated items. Special thanks to Paul, NA4MM, for a great job managing all aspects of the prize raffles.

In addition to the above activities, MARC sold equipment from the estates of three former clubmembers. Auction sales for the remaining gear were extremely successful and made considerable sums for their families. Particular thanks to Fred, KR4YK, for organizing, coordinating, and executing both table sales and the auctions.

By 2:00 PM, the crowd had thinned to the point that participants began packing up and departing. All vendors indicated they were pleased with sales. Cleanup was completed by 6:00 PM and the doors were closed on MARC Hamfest 2017.

Problems/issues that need to be addressed:

1. Tickets for paying vendor assistants for raffle redemption.
2. Optimum time for the license testing and examiner availability.
3. Question of raffle activities interfering with vendor sales.
4. Free boneyard causing reduced table sales.
5. Club trailer exhibit interest making it worth the effort of towing/setup.
6. Need for MARC \$25 redemption certificates.
7. Handout/mailout modification.
8. Improved directional signage.
9. City tax issue.