

Media Release
October 4, 2012

AMATEUR RADIO ENTHUSIASTS (HAM) BRING INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO ALABAMA LIGHTHOUSES THIS WEEKEND

Across the US and in many foreign countries, amateur radio clubs (commonly known as “HAM”s) hold weekend events transmitting from lighthouses. The October 5-7, 2012, Lighthouse Weekend is a first for Alabama.

After participating in a HAM radio contest on the USS Alabama, Huntsville Amateur Radio Club member Warren Alford was inspired to organize a similar event for the lighthouses of Mobile Bay. “We want to increase awareness of the rich history and help our partners, the Alabama Lighthouse Association and the Alabama Historical Commission, raise funds for continued preservation of each lighthouse,” said Alford.

Two Huntsville clubs will operate stations at Middle Bay, Sand Island, and Mobile Point at Fort Morgan beginning at 6pm on October 5th through 6pm October 7th. HAMs from across the world can “call in” and talk to the volunteers manning each station. Bill Lees, president of the Lighthouse Association, stated, “We are thrilled about an event that supports Alabama’s historic lighthouses.” This includes helping the HAM operators navigate the waters out to Middle Bay Light. Recently restored by the Alabama Historical Commission, Middle Bay can only be reached by boat and under approval from the state.

Two stations are setup at Fort Morgan, also owned and maintained by the the Commission. Mobile Point Lighthouse is situated on the Fort. The HAMS located Sand Island hand radio station on the fort too since “we can clearly see the lighthouse from the fort,” said Alford.

Manned lighthouses across the world are fast becoming endangered properties because of technology - GPS and Satellite Navigation override the need for staff (Keepers). To learn about or donate to Alabama’s Lighthouse preservation efforts go to <http://alabamalighthouses.com/> or http://preserveala.org/middlebaylight.aspx?sm=g_l .

For those HAMs out there, note the three special event call signs: K4L, N4L, and W4L.

Media should contact Warren Alford for more information at 256-468-1323 or KJ4RAQ@comcast.net.

*The Alabama Historical Commission **protects, preserves, and interprets Alabama’s historic places** and is the State Historic Preservation Office.*

www.preserveala.org



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