

The

Call Letter

December, 2007
Vol. 33 — No. 12



Over **30** years in print!

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is a non-profit historical society incorporated in the State of Oregon. Since 1974 the Society has been dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of "Vintage radio" and wireless equipment.

Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

The *Call Letter* has been a monthly publication since 1974. It was originated with the founder, Bob Bilbie, and our first president, Harley Perkins. Through several editors and with the assistance of numerous society members, the *Call Letter* has continued to be a publication that informs members of the society's business and that supports the hobby of collecting, preserving, and restoring vintage radios.

Society meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at the Abernethy Grange Hall at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and exchanging information. Guests are welcome at all Society meetings and functions (except board meetings).

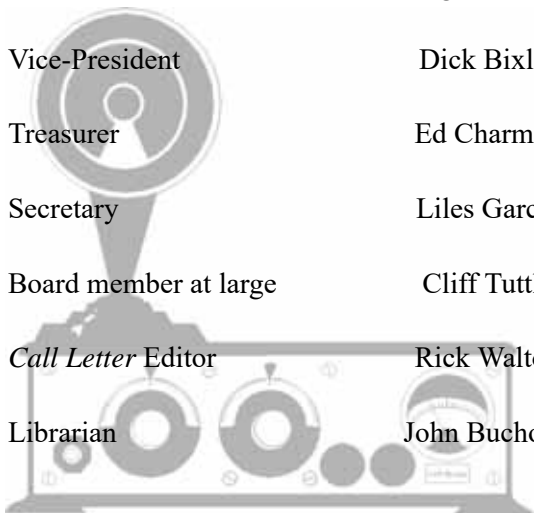
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

With each issue of the *Call Letter*, we remember Jim Mason, a charter member of the society who remained active until his death in 1999. A generous bequest from Jim's estate ensures the vitality of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society, and continued publication of the *Call Letter*.



Society Officers for 2007:

President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809 radiogeo@hevanet.com
Vice-President	Dick Bixler	(503) 690-2557 RF2AF@comcast.net
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387 enamrahc@peoplepc.com
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288 landn2@verizon.net
Board member at large	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005 kiptuttle@aol.com
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 656-4104 rwalton@easystreet.net
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135 bucholtz3049@comcast.net



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On the cover: The year was 1956 and color television was the latest thing, so who can doubt that this young lady would be delighted to find a new RCA color TV with a bow around it. This colorful Christmas scene is the cover of the December, 1956 issue of *Radio and Television News*.

The next meeting is on December 8, 2007.

For December: Annual Holiday Party!

Visit our web site at <http://nwvrs.org>.

Next Call Letter Deadline: January 3, 2008.

The *Call Letter* is the official publication of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. Circulation is limited to the membership and guests of the Society. The Society is not responsible for the material contributed for publication, nor the quality, timeliness, or accuracy of the items or services offered for sale in the SWAP SHOP. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

From the Editor

by Call Letter Editor, Rick Walton

If you missed the November meeting, you missed a most interesting presentation by Ken Lomax. He played samples of the audio from acetate discs that he found at the Oregon Historical Society. Truly fascinating stuff! I videotaped the presentation and hope to have it transferred to DVD in a couple of months.

Another event that occurred at the November meeting (but missed the meeting minutes) was the nomination and election by acclamation (railroading?) of all the current club officers. Congratulations to all.

Though much the same as previous months, this issue has a couple of things to note. Our vice-president, Dick Bixler, has some encouraging things to say about the success of our swap meets in Aurora. In another reprint of "In the Shack" Mike Parker laments the changing AM radio landscape in 1998, and reflects a bit on the coming of digital radio and its effect on our hobby.

Since I'm out of column space, I'll bring this to a close with a wish that you each will have a most blessed and merry Holiday Season."

Sinatra, Bennett, Norah.

Portland's only station for classic American standards
of yesterday and today. Sunny 1550 KKAD.

Listen online at: www.sunny1550kkad.com



NWVRS Calendar of Events

Most of the hamfest and ham swap meet information comes from:
PNW Hamfair web page at www.n7cfo.com/amradio/hf/hf.htm

- December 8** NWVRS monthly meeting and annual Holiday Party 10 am. Election of officers for 2007.
- 2008**
- January 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 16** Salem Hamfair, Salem Repeater Association, Polk County Fairgrounds, Rickreall, OR
www.w7sra.com/.
- March 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- March 8** Mike & Key Swap Meet. Puyallup fairgrounds exhibition hall, Puyallup, WA. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.*
Contact mwdink@eskimo.com.
- April 5-6** Communications Academy. Seattle, WA. S. Seattle Community College. <http://www.commacademy.org>.
- April 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- April 12** Yakima Hamfest. Selah Civic Center, 216 South 1st Street, Selah, WA. Info, contact Lindsay Kooser, N7RHW 141 Stark Road #7 Yakima, WA 98908. Phone: 509-965-6612 Email: n7rhw@arrl.net. <http://w7aq.org/>
- May 10** NWVRS Spring Swap/Sale at Aurora American Legion Hall, Aurora, Oregon.
- June 14** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- June 14** Hamfest 2008. Kootenai Amateur Radio Society. American Legion Hall, 1138 E. Poleline, Post Falls, Idaho.
Contact Jim, N7ESU at (208)755-2100 or email n7esu@arrl.net. <http://k7id.com/>
- July 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.

NWVRS Meeting Minutes

Liles Garcia, NWVRS Secretary

President George Kirkwood called the November 10, 2007 meeting of the NorthWest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:00 AM. George asked all veterans to stand; members gave the veterans a round of applause. The meeting minutes for the September meeting were approved as printed in the October Call Letter. Ed Charman gave the Treasurer's report; it was approved as provided by Ed. David Dintenfass from the PSARA and Nick Tonkin, a former Society member, attended our meeting today as guests. Welcome David and Nick!! There were approximately 40 people at our meeting today.

Old Business

Swap Meet--Members discussed joining the "Aurora Colony" group of antique dealers in Aurora. Dick Bixler described the benefits to us of joining the group. Members voted to join the Aurora group. We discussed our Swap Meet; several members said that they were very successful in their sales. George complimented the networking and advertising efforts for the Swap Meet. The group also felt that the Aurora location for our Swap Meets is working well.

New Business

Library--John Bucholtz reported that the Library is doing fine. Members voted to buy a book on Crosley radios to add to the library.

Call Letter--Members voted for Rick Walton to spend extra money for a color cover for the December Call Letter.

Leads and Needs

Jim Harper needs a volume control for a Silvertone 4586 console.

Program Topic

Ken Lomax from the Oregon Historical Society talked to the group about his work on transcribing disks of early Portland radio broadcasts from the mid-1930's to the mid-1950's. He played some early broadcasts for the group. One of the broadcasts described the first check-out voyage of the liberty ship, Star Of Oregon, as the ship steamed down the Willamette River and Columbia River. Ken's radio broadcasts were very interesting; members gave Ken a round of applause.

Our December meeting will be our Society's Christmas Party.

Swap Meet Notes

From Dick Bixler, NWVRS Vice-President

Those who were at the November meeting heard the good news that almost everyone who participated had good results at our October radio show/sale. Some members even sold out to the point that they had to pack up early and go home.

A combination of the saturation radio schedule in the prior week, coupled with the personal effort of many members delivering posters and extending invites was effective. Our new membership in the Aurora Colony Visitors Association paid off with chances to display our sale posters all over town as well as a prominent place on the Colony kiosk bulletin board.

It also gave us the chance to promote our sale in the Colony ads which ran in the Oregonian.

Consensus at the meeting was that all the promotional effort was having a synergistic effect so the more we pile on this spring the better the results for all who show and sell.

Special thanks go to Blake Dietze for production of our multi color posters as well as to our recording Secretary Liles Garcia for two trips and two days effort in visiting all stores in Aurora inviting attendance and leaving posters for store display. All stores agreed. Many other members gave of their time and gasoline and we can see it paid off.

There are additional promotional opportunities planned for next Spring's show/sale including an invitation from The Oregonian to run a story on vintage radio restoration and collection. This will run in their Home and Garden magazine in March or April '08.

If you are a member of any other antique hobbyist club with whom we could interface, please tell Dick Bixler so we can properly invite their membership to visit our May sale.

Roster Addition

A new member who joined at the October Swap Meet.

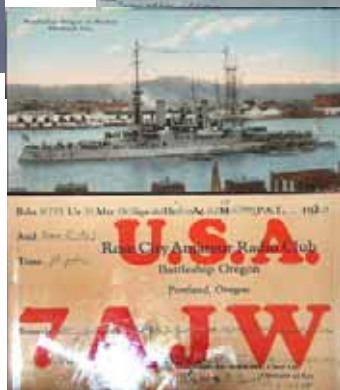
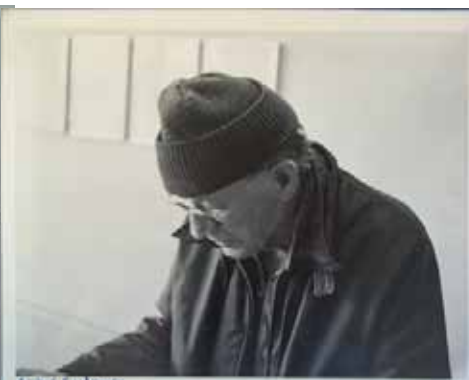
Erik Henneford
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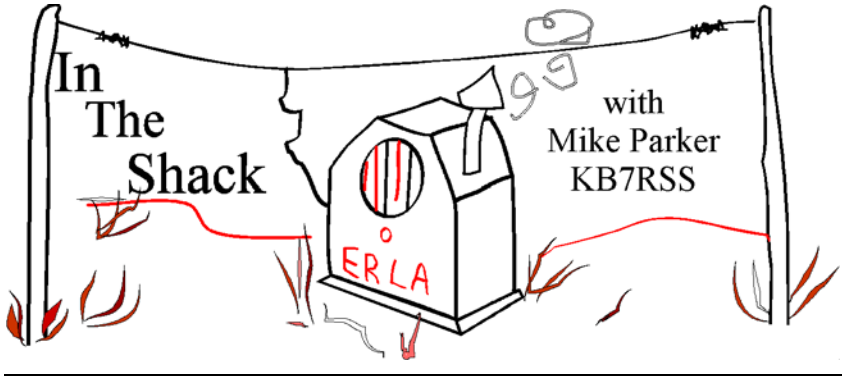
Photo Display

Photos by Rick Walton

Along with the photo of Ken Lomax are these reproductions of the photos that Ken displayed during his presentation at the last meeting. There some maritime radio equipment brought by club members.







Editor's note: This "In The Shack" article is from the May, 1998, Call Letter!

Local AM Radio Shuffle

With encouragement by NWVRS member Rudy Zvarich, I have agreed to try to define just what has happened to Portland's AM radio scene during this most recent turn of events. Perhaps "charade" would be a more appropriate term. For better or for worse, we, as the club members interested in broadcast radios should take note of what is happening with Broadcast Radio.



This recent "shuffle", as I like to call it, could perhaps rank with several other major historic events in Portland AM radio such as the arrival of the Network stations in the 1920's or the great frequency shift of 1941 or the day KALE became KPOJ or the advent of "Top 40" rock stations (KISN) in the 1950's and 60's.

Like many of us, my life was formed around those familiar radio station call letters. While I was growing up here in the Portland area, we had our familiar stations and starting from the left side of the family Philco slide rule dial, it was KGW, 620... KXL, 750... KOIN, 970... KWJJ, 1080... KEX, 1190... KALE, 1330... KPAM, 14 something... and KGON, 1520. We were lucky to have such a wide selection of stations. At that time, my grandparents lived right at the Ocean in Rockaway. Before they got the Gilfillan, I well remember an old Philco cathedral with an outside aerial and in the daytime it was all static unless you turned the dial to the high end until it stopped, then you got KTIL, 1600! At night, a few stations would drift in and out from California or Seattle. I craved receiving those strange call letters from far away. So,

basically, we associate those call letters with our lives. We can not think of how it would be if they all changed suddenly!

But then, a couple of years ago or so, that very thing started here in Portland. I like to think of it starting with the loss of KGW. Here was the oldest, successful broadcast station in the Portland market, on the air since March, 1922 and one fine day, it was GONE! New format, new call letters... KOTK... K-Oregon Talk. Forget tradition, it's not important, it's the hard sell, the big money, not what we think is historic!

Now, I can see that the reason was mostly to further the advent of "Talk Radio" and in defense of that, I will admit that I like talk radio. Whether you like it or not, it has virtually saved the AM band from extinction. I listen to a fair cross section of it every day and it is not the content of what they are talking about but the familiar sound of their voices that hook me. Paul Harvey, Don Imus, Lars Larson, Tom Leykis, Mike Segal and Art Bell all speak to me just about every day and night. Others will come and go such as Rush Limbaugh, Dr. Laura, Bill Gallagher, and the money advice guys, Bruce Williams and Don McDonald. All of these people come over the airwaves on certain stations with their own distinct call letters and I associate this to them. To not have that familiar association is practically a traumatic experience, as I found out recently.

After KGW became KOTK, the new station struggled along and I listened. They had Imus in the Morning, then Dr. Laura and shock jockey, Tom Leykis late afternoons. KXL dared to carry Rush Limbaugh and had Bill Gallagher in the afternoon. I got familiar with this pattern. Then all of a sudden, KOTK vanished and became KEWS or K-NEWS as they call it, but they cannot have 5 call letters! this station was started by KEX as a sister station and Rush Limbaugh dominated it through the day with Bill Gallagher on later in the day. KXL had Lars Larson during the day. Imus and Tom Leykis were off the air in Portland... just like that!... no previous notice!... Gone.

Well, loyal fans were not going to take this for long and then one other fine day, KOTK re-appeared in place of KWJJ, 1080, yet another long time set of Portland call letters, gone to FM only. If that wasn't enough, other shenanigans started to take place. I am not Scandinavian, but I like accordion music and had been listening to Bob Anderson and his Scandinavian Hour on KKEY, 1150 Sunday mornings. Suddenly, it was gone!, a program that perhaps was the longest continuous running program in Portland. It was reported to have been started in 1925 and Bob himself had hosted the program since 1942. KKEY, although only a 5000 watt station, was one of the only outlets for local programming in the Portland and Vancouver area, a market that should not be ignored. KKEY sold out and became KKG... Great Talk! Great Mistake would be more

appropriate. Too little, too late and a low power station with a frequency so close to 50,000 watt KEX that only a superhet will drag them in. With nobody special hosting any of their new programs, who cares. They are a disservice to the community.

Even more quirky changes took place with Sunny 910, KKSX, oldies music station trading their center of the dial spot with sports KFXX 1520... "The Fan" and country music KUPL 1330 taking over another center dial spot at 970. The religious stations such as K-Love, KEZF 1040, KPDQ 800, (a long running Portland station who has managed to keep it's same frequency and call letters for many years), K-Praise, KKPZ, now 1330 and KKSL 1290, now have some new competition at KPAM, (second version) at 860 Khz., more or less of a high energy Christian music station. What is the fascination with having a station frequency near the center of the dial? Do they think that it's a prestige thing, or that we are too stupid to tune near the end of the dial?

In spite of the above described changes in the Portland AM radio selection, we do have a good variety of AM stations. I have not mentioned business radio KBNP 1410, with up to the minute market reports, or KBPS 1450 a Benson Polytechnic School radio station since the 20's. Then there is National Public Broadcasting radio at KOAP 550, KUIK 1360 in Hillsboro, KVAN in Vancouver and the two Spanish language stations, KMUZ and KWIP 880. That leaves KXYQ 1010, which I can only get with a good superhet and KRRC, Radio Reed College, which I have never knowingly received on any radio! I may have left out a few others and any pirate stations!

Is there prestige in having a 3-letter call? The answer is very definitely yes, you just can't get 'em anymore. I don't know why not, there must be plenty of 3 letter combinations available. Portland has two very old 3 letter calls, KEX and KXL. You can bet that each is waiting for the day when they can boast of having the only one in town.

The way things are changing, that may very well happen. Or there will be no more AM radio as we know it. There are folks out there that are advocating Digital radio. Our treasured collections of AM broadcast radios will be rendered useless and will receive only... STATIC!

You are as welcome as the flowers in May to add anything to this column, anytime, that I might have mistaken or missed.

QSO you next time... IN THE SHACK

Swap Shop

FOR SALE: Thousands of tubes, hundreds of radio parts, panels, meters, surplus, etc. R5-D3 electronic surplus, Bob Lee, 9770 S.E. Stanley Ave., Milwaukie, OR 97222, (503) 513-0410

FOR SALE: *Clearing out most of my collection. Radios include brand names like Zenith, Crosley, Packard Bell Colonial, RCA, Airline and more. All are wood case radios, most are table top. If interested, E-mail me for a list of radio brands and model numbers: tobkin@pceez.com. Larry Tobkin

Radio Service

These members have indicated they are willing to perform radio repairs:

Roger Brown – (503) 693-6089

Blake Dietze – (360) 944-7172, wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com

Todd Olmert – (503) 246-4141

Tony Ranft – (360) 944-8489 or ranft@saw.net – General repairs.

Dave Wise – (503) 648-0897, david_wise@phoenix.com

If you are willing to repair radios, give your name, phone and/or e-mail, and any comments to the *Call Letter* editor.

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society is not responsible in any disputes arising from services provided by members listed here. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

Leads and Needs

Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photo's, virtual museum plus lots of other information on vintage radio and television. Oh, yes, there are items for sale as well and NVRS members get a substantial discount on most of these items. Thank You, Sonny the Radiola Guy

Visit my vintage radio web site: <http://www.radiolaguy.com>

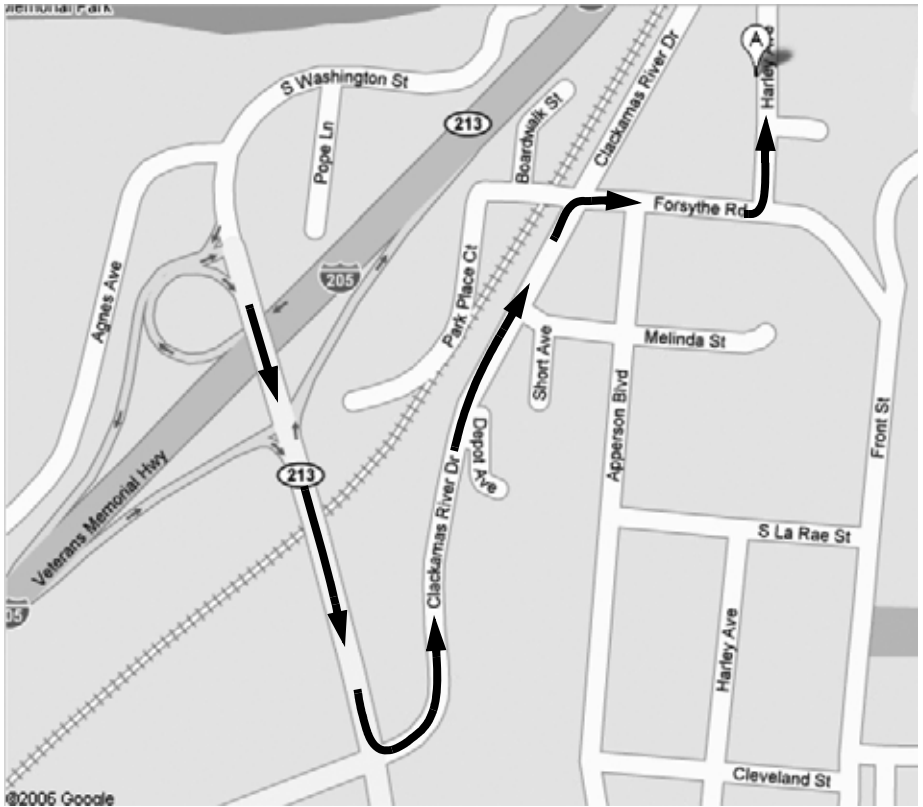
The Back Page

A Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year to you all!



Meeting Location

Here is a map (thanks to Google Maps) to the Abernethy Grange Hall (the pointer marked “A”), where the Northwest Vintage Society meets the second Saturday of each month. Just follow the arrows on the map.



To get to the Abernethy Grange Hall:

1. Exit I-205 at SR-213 (Exit 10 to Molalla) and head south on 213.
2. At the first intersection (the traffic light), turn left onto Clackamas River Dr.
3. Turn right at Forsythe Rd.
4. Turn left onto Harley Ave. The Grange Hall is on the left about a block and a half.