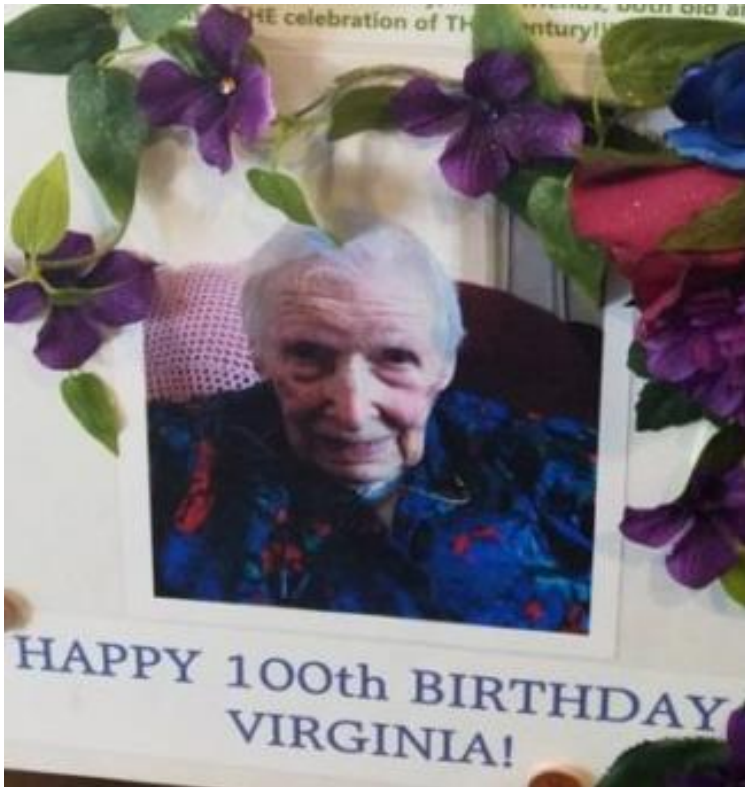


*The*

# *Call Letter*

June 2019

Vol 45, #6



**Virginia Rankin's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

# 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.

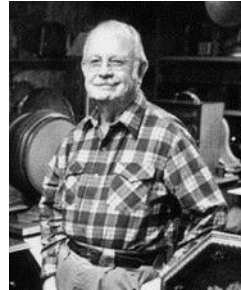
Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

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 9:30 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 shows, 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

President	Pat Kagi 360 909-7009	<a href="mailto:patkagi@yahoo.com">patkagi@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Franklin Ouchida	<a href="mailto:crazykeychains@gmail.com">crazykeychains@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Ed Tompkins (360) 573-3895	<a href="mailto:edtomp@Q.com">edtomp@Q.com</a>
Recording Sec'y	Liles Garcia (503) 649-9288	<a href="mailto:landn2@frontier.com">landn2@frontier.com</a>
Corresponding Sec'y	Mark Moore (503) 286-5224	<a href="mailto:mark@pdxhistory.com">mark@pdxhistory.com</a>
Board member at large	Mike McCrow (503)730-4639	<a href="mailto:soundmikey14@gmail.com">soundmikey14@gmail.com</a>
Librarian	Damon Vandehey (503) 459-1777	
Call Letter Editor	Don Hanson	<a href="mailto:vanguard4@lycos.com">vanguard4@lycos.com</a>

# On the Cover

## Virginia Rankin 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party

Photography by Pat Kagi

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### Announcements

**June Meeting** will start at 9:30 AM on Saturday, June 8.

**June Monthly Feature** is Coin Operated Radios and the Tech Talk is also Coin Operated Radios by Dan Howard

**Leads and Needs** - The Swap Shop has returned to the Call Letter. Member ads are free and can either be permanent or temporary.

Brian Wegener: You can download free smartphone ringtones from old radio shows <https://www.radiolongago.com/otr-ringtones>

**Editor’s Note** - Please have July Call Letter Contributions in by Sunday June 26. Articles & Ads welcome (Tube labels too).

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Visit our web site at: [www.nwvrs.com](http://www.nwvrs.com)

Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nwvrs](http://www.facebook.com/nwvrs)

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## **Note from President Pat Kagi**

I most likely will not be able to attend the meeting in June because of some ongoing issues. Dick Karman, Mark Moore and I did attend Virginia Rankin's 100th birthday party. Also, we will have five radios up for auction. We are looking for a club photographer, so let us know if you would like to fill that much needed role.

Pat

## **Note from Vice President Franklin Terry Ouchida**

Feature of the Month and Tech Talks

June Coin Operated Radios - Dan Howard

August- Regenerative Radios - George Kirkwood

September- Stand Alone Speakers - (Open)

November- Clock Radios (Open)

Members needed for committees

Positions for members or just willing to help.

We need you! We need your Help. Sign up for a committee.

Radio Sales Coordinators (Swap meets, Auctions, Sales)

Christmas Party Coordinators (Plan, help, setup Christmas party)

Picnic Coordinators Mike McCrow (Plan July Picnic, DJ and sales tables)

Makers Fair Coordinators Franklin Ouchida (Free admission and T-shirt)

Prize Coordinators Franklin Ouchida (Door prizes, drawings, features)

Tube Coordinators Franklin Ouchida (Tube Testers & Tube of the Month)

Save the BS project Blake Dietze, Franklin Ouchida (Battery Sets, Battery Eliminator, and T-shirt)

Live Stream Coordinators Franklin Ouchida (Web site, YouTube Live streaming)

The purpose of the committees is to provide a growing fan club.

It is your club help make it the best it can be.

Please let me know if you are willing to help out our committees

Franklin Ouchida

FO1963@gmail.com

(971)407-8108

## **NWVRS Meeting Minutes - May 11, 2019**

### **Recorded by Secretary Liles Garcia**

President Pat Kagi called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. All present pledged allegiance to our nation's flag. Pat welcomed new members and guests to our meeting. Robert Heffler and Jake Austin are new members that attended today. Welcome Robert and Jake!! There are 54 people at our meeting today.

Damon needs two 7189A tubes for a stereo. Dick Karman told the group about a display and outreach opportunity at the Salem Senior Center in Salem. Some members volunteered to go and take their radios for display. Virginia Rankin is having her 100th birthday party on May 19. Members are invited to attend. Our Society needs a club photographer if anyone would like to do this task for us. Vice-President Franklin showed the group a new flyer for our Society.

Dick Karman presented a recommendation to the group for increasing our level of communication within our Society and other vintage radio societies. Dick will discuss this recommendation with the Board at a future Board meeting. Librarian Jeff LaDoe said that our library is doing well.

Robbie Robinson said that all tables at our Swap Meet were sold. Our next Swap Meet will be on the second Saturday in October. One comment is that the access ramp at the American Legion Hall needs some repair. We also discussed the idea of having our Swap Meet open later in the afternoon for shoppers in Aurora. The Board will discuss this idea further.

The Program Topic for today is "Farm Radios." Members showed and discussed the radios that they brought. Warren Wright won the "Best Radio" award for his RCA R-71-B farm radio. Congratulations Warren!! The Program Topic next month will be "Coin-Operated Radios." Sid Saul gave a very interesting Tech-Talk on "Battery Eliminators." Members gave Sid a round of applause for his Tech-Talk. The meeting was adjourned.

## Calendar of Events

**June 8. Port Ludlow ARC Old Fashion Tail Gate'r.** 8am – 12pm. Grace Christian Center, 200 Olympic Pl, Port Ludlow, WA. <https://www.n7pl.org/>

**June 7-9. 51st Annual Apple City ARC Hamfest.** Apple City ARC. Dryden, WA. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* (Five miles east of Leavenworth on Hiway 2 <https://leavenworth.org/organizer/leavenworth-chamber-of-commerce/>). This is a RV oriented old fashioned Hamfest and there is a wide range of motel accommodations available - see the back of the flyer. <https://www.applecityarc.com/> [Flyer in PDF.](#) (314K)

**June 15. Second Annual Tailgate Swap. Spokane Valley, WA.** [Flyer in PDF.](#) (38K)

**July 5. Clark County ARC Tailgate Swapmeet.** 4 PM to 6:30 PM prior to the monthly club meeting at 7 PM. Salmon Creek American Legion Hall, 14011 NE 20th Ave., Vancouver WA 98686. <https://www.w7aia.org/>

**July 19-21. Glacier Waterton International Peace Park 85th annual Hamfest.** *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* (Always the third weekend in July) Glacier Meadows Campground, 13 miles west of East Glacier on MT Hwy 2. <http://www.gwhamfest.org/>

**July 20. Chehalis Valley ARC 21st Annual Ham Radio Tailgate Swapmeet.** Southwest Washington Fairgrounds, Chehalis, WA. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* Contact John Ellingson, K7OSK. [k7osk@boatanchor.com](mailto:k7osk@boatanchor.com) . <http://www.cvars.org/> [Flyer in PDF.](#) (158K)

**July 12-14. QRP Salmoncon.** Valley Camp, North Bend, WA. <https://sites.google.com/site/pnwqrpgroup/salmoncon>

**July 20. Coos County Radio Club annual Hamfest and Swapmeet.** North Bend, OR. <http://www.coosradioclub.net/> **CANCELED.**

**July 20. Moosehorn ARC (Kenai Peninsula) Hamfest.** Kenai American Legion Post, 902 Cook Ave. Kenai, Alaska. 1000 to 1500. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* Contact :Ed Cole, KL7UW [kl7uw@acsalaska.net](mailto:kl7uw@acsalaska.net) . <http://moosehornarc.org/wp/> Flyer at <http://www.kl7uw.com/Hamfest2019.htm>

# Virginia Rankin's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party

By Dick Karman

Photography by Pat Kagi

Someone asked the question at the May Membership meeting  
“Who is this lady that is turning 100 years old?”

Virginia has been a loyal follower of the Society since 1976.  
Here is some of what I put in the Call Letter in March 2018:

. . . . I don't know the back-story on how Hugh and Virginia Ranken came to membership. I believe their membership started in 1976. I know that they were always there to help and most definitely there to help Tom [James] and the other leaders of the group. As early as 1978 Hugh had taken on the authorship of a piece in the Call Letter known as OUR PEOPLE. Unlike other historical pieces, or the meeting minutes, Our People told about members in the club and what they did and what they said between meetings. Hugh wove into the piece his interest in radio history and prefaced it with the phrase “remember when. . . .” Hugh wrote this for more than 5 years.

. . . . For two years he accumulated and prepared the “SWAP-SHOP” page, taking information from members and making sure it got into the newsletter. His wonderful wife Virginia took an active role (more than many other wives) in the organization and in the publication. The NW Vintage Radio Society, knowing radios don't run by themselves, named our women's auxiliary the “POWER SUPPLY.” Virginia wrote the Power Supply pages (once a month) in the Call Letter from 1978 to 1981, as well as helped organize social gatherings, refreshments, picnics, contests, and Christmas gift exchanges.

. . . . Hugh for a few years held the office of NWVRS Recording Secretary (which required pages in the Call Letter every month). Between the two of them they sometimes filled 5 pages of the Call Letter. And Virginia and Hugh were often called upon to be host and hostess at club house events and public gatherings. They were on-sight greeters for many of the NWVRS special displays. Together with Tom and Dorothy James and Chuck and Bobbi Kibler, they were often the local maintenance and hospitality team for the Buena Vista Club House.

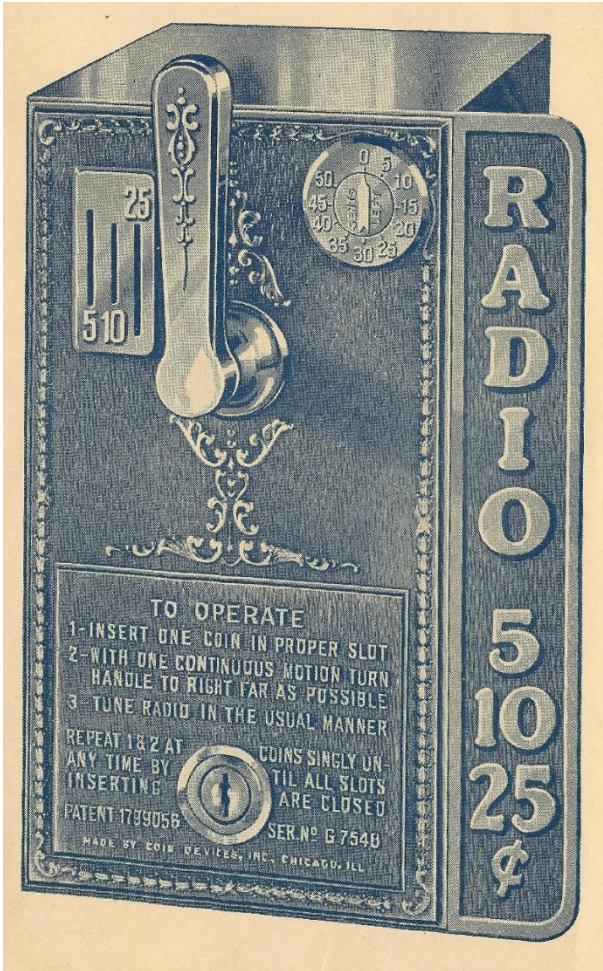
. . . . On September 11, 1988, Hugh was struck down with a heart attack. Our sadness and loss were expressed in the Call Letter, the publication they so richly supported.





# 1930 – A Time for Timers

By Dan Howard



The idea of charging to listen to the radio dates to the earliest days of public broadcasting. In Great Britain, broadcasting was supported by a tax on new receivers and an annual receiver license fee. In the U.S., broadcasting was supported by paid advertisements and anyone who could make or purchase a receiver could listen for free.

However, for public spaces and accommodations, there was a real need to recover the cost of placing and maintaining the receivers themselves.

In the 1920's several entrepreneurs demonstrated sets that used integral coin-operated timers to charge folks a nickel or two for a few-minutes listening. And, yes, you paid for the time it took for the tubes to warm up and to find your station. And, whether you got to enjoy the broadcast you wanted, or a landed on a commercial break, was up to fate.

Pay-to-listen took off commercially around 1930. By then AC-operated radios had replaced battery sets (except for on the farm); external antennas were no longer a “must”; and tuning had been simplified down to a single knob in most cases. Seeing an opportunity, several companies began marketing coin-operated “Radio Timers” for use with the receiver of your choice.

Figure 1: Set-top coin-operated radio timer



### Set-Top Boxes

Figure 1, from 1929, shows one of the earlier models by Timing Devices Incorporated. The large radio timer box would sit atop a lowboy-style console as shown or mount to a wall or nearby object.

Figure 2 shows another early model by Prepay Radio Inc. The coin box and timing mechanism are housed in a cathedral-style cabinet about the size of a Philco Jr. This model was designed to sit atop a flat-topped radio not unlike some of the popular enclosed speakers from the late 1920s. The large flat front could be custom-painted to accommodate additional advertising.



Figure 2 – Pre-Pay Radio timer      Figure 3 – Pre-Pay Radio timer with Philco Advertising

Figure 3 shows a version advertising Philco radios and including local station listings. Like many cathedral-style radios, these timers have thinly-made cabinets and are seldom-seen intact.

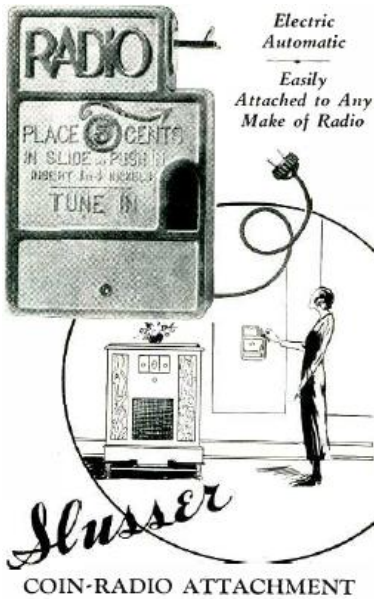


Figure 4 shows another set-top box, this one by Hansen. Up to six “five cent pieces” (nickels) at-a-time were deposited, filling the window on the front. As time passed, the nickels dropped one-at-a-time into the vault below allowing you to keep track of your remaining listening time

Figure 4 - Hansen “Best Way Radio Control”



## Place 5 Cents, Push the Slide, and Tune In!



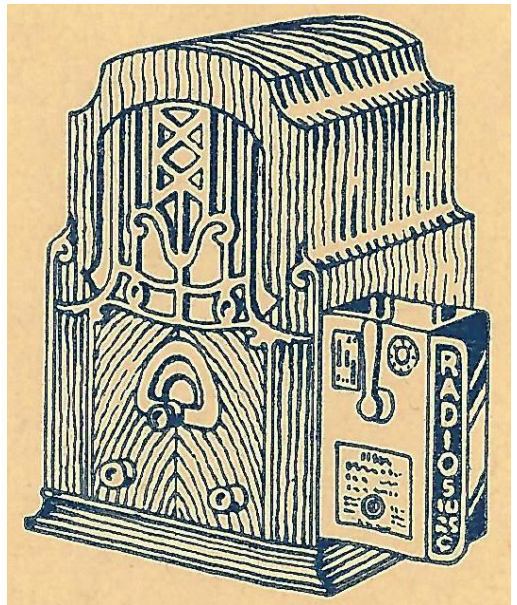
Judging by the number surviving today, the more popular timers were housed in simple metal boxes, small enough to mount directly on the radio. As with all types of timers, the radio was plugged into an enclosed jack. Once the timer was closed and locked, the radio cord was held captive by its plug preventing customers from simply plugging it into the wall and bypassing the timer. The Slusser radio timer, shown attached to a wall in Figure 5, was sold with steel and bakelite cabinets – steel being more commonly seen today. In the early 1930's, radio timers were often marketed for use in restaurants, bars, and other public spaces as this depiction of a hotel lobby suggests. When coin-operated radios saw their boom in the late 1940's they were more-often placed in individual rooms.

Figure 5 - Slusser Coin-Radio Attachment

The lead image shows a “Miller” Multi-Coin Timer which is typical of the simpler coin boxes. Here, it's shown installed on the side of a tombstone radio.

Readers familiar with cabinet construction common in the 1930's know that very thin plywood-type material was typically used. Was it wise to cantilever a cast-metal coin box off the side?

Figure 6 – Miller Multi-Coin Timer



## Time to Go

Why were radios with stand-alone timers replaced by purpose-built “hotel radios?” The timers of the 1930’s had flexibility - they could be used with the most any radio and they could be mounted to the radio, a desk, or the wall. However, placing a common household radio in a commercial environment left it vulnerable to:

- theft (in whole or in part – those knobs would make a great souvenir)
- tampering (maybe it’ll play better if I swap these tubes around)
- And vandalism (wow, this pencil is sharp enough to go right through the speaker).

And excessive down time and frequent service calls did nothing to help the bottom line.

The purpose-built coin-operated receivers of the 1940’s addressed all those short-comings. Cabinets were stoutly built with internal timers and locking backs to prevent tampering. Though wooden and plastic cabinet models may show the ravages of cigarette burns and spilled drinks, those clad in steel shrugged off the elements, for the most part, and survive in great numbers.

Regardless, by the late 1950’s, neither radio-timers nor purpose-built hotel radios could resist the travelling public’s demand for rooms equipped with television.

### Partial List of Radio Timer Manufactures ca. 1930

Coin Devices Inc. “Miller” Multi-Coin Timer, Chicago IL

Giles & Simpkins Inc. “Jenkins” Coin-operated Radio Timer, Inglewood CA

Hansen Mfg. Co “Best Way Radio Control,” Princeton IN

Monarch Tool & Manufacturing, Cincinnati OH

Prepay Radio Inc., Fostoria OH

Radio Coin, Newark NJ

Radiomatic Coin Devices “Radionica,” Newark NJ

Slusser Coin-Radio Attachment, Ottawa OH

Timing Devices Inc., Chicago IL

Walser Automatic Timer Company, New York

### Photo Credits

Lead Image: Miller Multi-Coin Timer brochure (author’s collection)

Figure 1: Timing Devices Incorporated, *Automatic Age* 1929\_11 pg. 98.

Figure 2: Prepay Radio Inc. (Ebay)

Figure 3: Prepay Radio Inc. (Ebay)

Figure 4: Hansen Mfg. Co “Best Way Radio Control” *Radio Craft* 1930\_12 pg. 343.

Figure 5: Slusser Coin-Radio Attachment *Radio Retailing* 1930-06 pg. 194.

Figure 6: Miller Multi-Coin Timer brochure (author’s collection)

**May Monthly Feature – Farm Radios**  
**Photography by Franklin Ouchida / Notes by Blake Dietze**



Liles Garcia - Silvertone 4539 and Silvertone 4419  
Both are gold dials which celebrates Sears Golden anniversary



[name missing] - Canadian model 7B71 - Looked at the cabinet and the schematics and did not see any manufacturer.

Warren Wright had a cathedral RCA R71B. The B stands for battery set and he won the ribbon

# Radiolaguy's Monthly-Showcase

By Sonny Clutter

Zenith G660 "Twin-Seven" radio/phono ca: 1949

Sonny's <https://radiolaguy.com/Showcase/Zenith%20Twin-Seven.htm>

NWVRS <http://www.nwvrs.org/Events/News/RadiolaGuy-s-Monthly-Feature/radiolaguy-s-monthly-feature.html>



## Swap Shop

Ads are free and can be permanent, or 3-month, with an asterisk added each month for tracking. Contact editor to extend.

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**Please contact the following members to be trained in Radio Repair**

Bruce Baur	503 708-4537	Milwaukee
Blake Dietze	360 944-7172	Vancouver
Mike McCrow	503 730-4639	Aloha
Sid Saul	503 869-5280	Hebo
Ed Tompkins	360 573-3895	Vancouver

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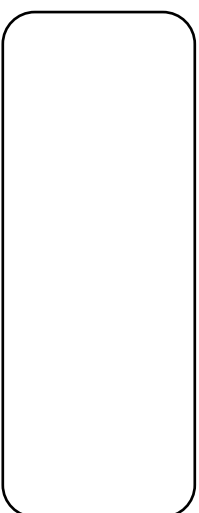
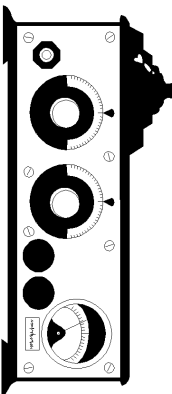
\*\*\* Large collection of high-end quality radios that range from mid-1920s to late 1950s and into the 1960s, for sale. Only NWVRS and PSARA club members and personal guests are invited! Please call Steve Berglund 206-244-6428 for appointment.

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\*\*\* I have dozens of radios that I purchased to restore that I will never get to. I need to part with them as I am moving. Basically name your price! Lots of nice table and console projects. I can email pictures. Joe Millward 503-209-8414



NW Vintage Radio Society  
P.O. Box 82379  
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**FIRST CLASS MAIL**