

The

Call Letter

September, 2003
Vol. 29 — No. 9

COMMAND
the ENTIRE WORLD
with Pilot's Double Duty
SUPER-WASP



CUSTOM SET-BUILDER'S PRICE
A combination short wave and broadcast receiver covering all wave lengths from 14 to 500 meters. Price of kit includes two sets of five interchangeable plug-in coils, full-sized blueprint, and complete assembly data.

\$29⁵⁰
Slightly higher west of the Rockies

Why miss half the joy of radio? The Pilot Double-Duty Super-Wasp, designed by Robert S. Kruse internationally famous short-wave authority, will give you radio's greatest thrill for a few dollars and a single evening's "work" with screwdriver and pliers. Uses only four tubes—including the super-sensitive screen grid! Enthusiastic radio fans report nightly reception of Chelmsford, (England), PCJ Eindhoven (Holland), Costa Rica, Central and South America, Canada, Cuba, South Africa and Australia! Exceptional results because exceptionally engineered, and priced right because produced in the world's largest radio parts plant! Hear the Super-Wasp at any authorized Pilot Agency.

PILOT Now Makes RADIO TUBES!

Pilotron tubes—Built for Professionals—are especially designed and constructed for the professional radio engineer, custom set-builder and amateur—an audience which is super-critical—and has a right to be! More-over Pilotron tubes are available many months before you can obtain them from the usual sources. This gives custom set-builders an opportunity to use new tubes long before they are available in manufactured receivers. You would think that because of this Pilot tubes would cost more—but they don't! Pilot's self-contained manufacturing provides definitely superior tubes at the usual price! Stocked by all Pilot authorized agencies.

BUILT for PROFESSIONALS

TRADE MARK  REGISTERED

DEALER'S OPPORTUNITY! The Pilot policy of encouraging individual experimentation and custom set-building is the greatest single factor in stabilizing and maintaining the parts and kit business. Technically qualified and financially responsible dealers are invited to write for details of our agency plan.

HOW TO KEEP STEP WITH NEW DEVELOPMENTS. Send 50c for four quarterly issues "Radio Design" and membership in the Radio International Guild, a worldwide organization of radio engineers, experimenters, and custom set-builders. Radio Design, Dept. B-103 Broadway, Brooklyn, N. Y.

PILOT RADIO & TUBE CORP.
WORLD'S LARGEST RADIO PARTS PLANT
323 BERRY STREET
BROOKLYN NEW YORK
U. S. A.

Over 25 years in print!

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society

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 \$20.00 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 (except July and August) 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).

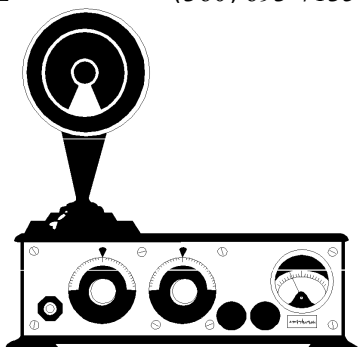
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

Society Officers for 2003:

President	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005
Vice-President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288
Board member at large	Wendy Johnson-Kent	(503) 281-9335
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 284-5648
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135

The Society's address is:

The Northwest Vintage Radio Society
Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379



September 2003

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On the cover: In keeping with September's monthly feature, our cover is sporting an ad for a Pilot radio kit from the October, 1929 issue of *Radio News*.

The next meeting is on September 13, 2003.

**Monthly feature for September:
Kit radios. Any kit - tube, transistor, whatever.
Tailgate swap meet starts at 8:30!**

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

**October Call Letter Deadline: September 30,
2003.**

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

Although it doesn't feel like the end of Summer, September is upon us and brings with it the resumption of regular club meetings. I hope that I'll see many of you there.

This month's *Call Letter* is another skimpy one, due in part to a lack of news and in part to your editor being out of town on vacation for the better part of August. Included in my vacation were numerous stops and antique, collectible, and junk stores from here to Minnesota. My treasure haul appears in Voilá.

To help fill out this issue we have an article about The American Radio Museum in Bellingham, sent to us by Carroll Ballard. From the archives I've selected one of Mike Parker's "In The Shack" articles, this one from July of 1998.

Roster Corrections

This correction for Bob Lee's phone number is particularly embarrassing since it was changed four years ago, and is correct in Bob's ad each month in the Swap Shop. My apologies to Bob and to any club members who were confused by the error.

Lee, Robert
9770 SE Stanley Ave.
Milwaukie, OR 97222
(503) 515-0410
r58d38@aol.com

R

NWVRS 2003 Calendar of Events

- September 13** Regular monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- October 11** NVRS Fall Swap/Sale at Salvation Army Rose Center.
- November 8** Regular monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
Nomination of officers for 2004.
- December 13** Regular monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
Election of officers for 2004. Annual Holiday Party!

The American Museum Of Radio

Now Offering a New Membership Program

The American Museum of Radio in downtown Bellingham houses one of the finest, most complete collections of radios and early electrical scientific apparatus in the world. On display are scientific instruments related to the development of electricity and hundreds of antique radios, phonographs, microphones, tubes, books and other paraphernalia collected by Jonathan Winter and John Jenkins. There are Zamboni perpetual-motion machines made from copper and fine wood; the only surviving Collins wireless telephone with red, white and blue USA batteries the size of soda cans; and radios from the 1920s built into pieces of furniture.

Many changes are happening at the AMR and you can be a part of the excitement by becoming a member. One of the benefits of membership is receiving the quarterly newsletter that will keep members up-to-date on programs, events, workshops and future plans for the Museum as well as articles on collection highlights, frequently asked questions, and a “kitchen science” project. Other membership benefits include free admission, a 10% discount in the future Museum Store, and invitations to special Members-only events. Membership is 100% tax deductible.

Jenkins and Winter plan to expand the museum from its present 10,000 square feet of space to 25,000 square feet. These plans are to be funded by a \$5 million capital campaign. A \$150,000 grant from the Washington State Heritage Capital Projects fund requires the Museum to raise \$300,000 in matching funds, of which \$110,000 is in hand – the rest to be raised by the end of the year. Everyone who enters now, even in this set-up phase, can easily anticipate the breadth of the Museum’s possibilities and discern its potential to become a world-class facility.

For membership information, please call 360 738-3886, fax 360 738-3472 or check our website: www.AmericanRadioMuseum.org. The Museum is located at 1312 Bay Street, Bellingham, Washington 98225 and is open from 11:00 to 4:00 Wednesday through Saturday and by appointment.



It's A Miraco

At the June NWVRS meeting, we had quite an interesting display of “black faced” or Bakelite panel battery radios. At this point, I would like to say that the Board is doing a fine job this year of keeping the meetings interesting and people can't seem to wait for the “Show & Tell” to begin! All this without a contest of any sort. I feel good enough about just displaying a collectible for others to see for it's educational value without having to win something. But, I don't really expect others to feel this way. I have enjoyed our contests in the past and our club auctions were always a big hit...sometimes to the old pocketbook!



From the shack, I dug out a totally unrestored 1924 -25 Miraco R-3 that I have been “staring at” ever since I acquired it in 1990, and I brought it to the display*. This particular model battery set was made by the Midwest Radio Co., of Cincinnati, Ohio. The Midwest company was somewhat of a pioneer in radio receiver sales, especially in mail order, offering their first set in 1920. Midwest was founded by A.G. Hoffman, the one key person in the Midwest company throughout it's existence.

Midwest went on to fair success with it's Ultra 5 3dial TRF, offered with an illustrated Gold on Bakelite front panel in ~26 and ~27. The 1-dial Unitune was a runaway seller until AC sets became standard.

Midwest languished and somehow survived the Depression and by 1937 was making elaborate high-end radio sets with many tubes, multiple bands, a tuning eye, excellent audio quality and other fine features not

* See a picture of the Miraco that Mike describes in this article on page 6.

unlike the competition such as Scott or Zenith, but for far less cost. This practice continued until the late 40's' when the Midwest company became occupied with television production and named their product after Hoffman. I still remember the Hoffman "Easy-Vision" TV. The company ceased production around 1955.

But. I am straying from the point of this article. The Miraco R-3 is a 3-tube Reflex radio. It was never the main attraction in any of their many ads and was portrayed as a low cost alternative, along with the 1 tube model R. Since it has the wire connecting posts and a clip in coil mounted on the front panel, the design was decidedly old fashioned by the 1924-25 season. It was pictured as perhaps a second radio for the family, something extra for the kid whose father had enough money to buy a Miraco Ultra 5 at the same time. At just over \$25 it was a pretty fair bargain, as were all of the Miraco prices. The R-3's resemblance to the Crosley 51 or 52 series low cost sets was more than a coincidence and one wonders what Midwest was up to, making radios in the same town and in the shadow of the giant Crosley Corp. facilities. I can't see the Miraco R-3 as a family living room radio, but perhaps set up in a service station or an old country general store. It was that kind of radio.

I guess I am still straying from the point. Those of you that saw the Miraco at the meeting could see the 74 years of grime and tobacco on the set. (I have contributed some of this, myself). For those of you who didn't see it, I can only describe it as grungy and unrestored but very complete. The plain wooden case with the lift top has definitely lost it's luster, the wood is rough and dry like an old berry crate! When I had it in operation, it mixed the strong broadcast stations. I am told that this is typical of a Reflex circuit radio, where the audio signal is routed back through the detector tube, making that tube do double duty. There is nothing like hearing KEX and KBNP at the same time!

OK, I'll get to the point. My dilemma is simply this: What should I do with it? Should I leave it alone and keep it as-is, or should I clean it up and refinish the cabinet? Should I "monkey around" with it and maybe destroy it's originality and value. Or, should I just leave well enough alone. I tend to think that I should just leave it alone but it's ugly!

You, dear reader can help me with this decision. If you feel like it, just drop me a line or call, I am in the new roster. Or, I will welcome any suggestions when we are together at the next meeting. I really would like to see the set all fixed up but I may not be capable of doing it the right way and end up less satisfied with it than I am now.

As for Midwest's reputation for reliability, it is fun to read the many testimonials given in their ads during the 20's, one is from Oregon and I wonder how many of those grand claims of getting stations "Coast to Coast" were just made up. Midwest did offer a 30 day free trial.....or you don't buy it! Were they

really good radios? I think so just because everything was generally of good quality in those days but at this point, I must quote a friend, Bill Hayes of Portland, an old time radio repairman for years. He says; "It's a Miraco if it works"!

Have a great Summer and I will QSO you in September..... IN THE SHACK.

Reference;

Book; RADIO MANUFACTURERS OF THE 1920's, Vol. 2, Alan Douglas



Voilà

...new and recent finds by NVRS members

Compiled by Sonny Clutter

Rick Walton Here are the treasures collected from numerous stops in antique, collectible, and junk stores between Portland and Southwest Minnesota. A Belmont Model A6D110, Series A, painted bakelite table model from around 1946 with a sticker on the back that says "Truetime Stratosphere". An Airline Model 74BR-1502B, ivory painted bakelite, 1946 (pictured in Bunis 3 on page 70). Books, including *Essentials of Radio-Electronics, Second Edition* by Slurzberg and Osterheld, *The Radio Boys at the Sending Station* by Allen Chapman, and the Wolf, Bear, and Lion-Webelos Cub Scout handbooks that have plans for a crystal set, one-tube set, and two-tube set, respectively.

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

WANTED: The INGRAHAM man wants radios with wood Ingraham cabinets. If you're not sure if it's an Ingraham, call Ed Cook in Vancouver, (360) 573-1439, or e-mail "hopopcol@attbi.com".

FOR SALE: A wide variety of radios at <http://radiogallerykent.com>. Charlie Kent

FOR SALE: 1934 Midwest G-10 rare 12 tube table model. Some cosmetic restoration done. \$200 less tubes or \$350 with complete set of tested tubes including 4-"45's". If interested phone me, Jerry Talbott, at 503-649-6717 or email (vinradio@easystreet.com) for more details on what has been done. I can bring it to the September meeting if needed.

FOR SALE: *Two remote controlled pre war Philco consoles that play very well. The stepper units work somewhat but need tuning that seems to escape my abilities. Will sell both for 200.00 with the remotes, batteries installed. Unique, party stoppers. Speed. felrad@open.org

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

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

Dave Wise – (503) 293-7835, 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 Last Page

Here's another ad from the October, 1929 *Radio News*.

196 Page FREE CATALOG

The new **SCREEN GRID**

RADIO
the new *SCREEN GRID* models

A-C RECEIVERS

RECEIVERS!

WHOLESALE PRICES!

THIS NEW big catalog—just off the press—heralds values never before approached in radio merchandising. Prices have never been lower—or quality so high. Send for your copy today. See for yourself the astounding values we offer—the actual wholesale prices at which you can now buy. Our recent purchases totaling over one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in standard radio receiving sets coupled with our tremendous stock of standard accessories, parts and kits has enabled us to make startling price reductions. Write today for the complete story as given in this large 196 page catalog of radio bargains.

EVERYTHING IN RADIO AT UNHEARD OF PRICES

New Screen Grid A. C. Humless All-Electric sets—standard A-C sets as well as battery operated receivers in an attractive array of consoles ranging from small table model types to gorgeous pieces of radio furniture. They represent the finest offerings of the season. The price range is especially attractive presenting unusual values as low as \$15.95.

Get this Allied catalog. Buy low so you can make more profit. Deal with an organization of experts who are trained to render real service in radio.

\$15.95

ALLIED RADIO CORPORATION

711 W. Lake Street Dept. B-1 Chicago

Backed by Resources totaling over \$3,000,000

A Reliable, High-grade Radio House

Meeting Location!

Our monthly meetings are held in the Abernathy Grange Hall, located at 15745 S. Harley Ave. in Oregon City. Here are instructions for getting there and a map.

1. Take the OR-213 exit, exit number 10, towards PARK PLACE/MOLALLA.
2. From the South, turn RIGHT onto SR-213, or from the North, keep RIGHT at the fork in the ramp and merge onto SR-213.
3. Turn LEFT at the first traffic light onto CLACKAMAS RIVER DR.
4. Turn RIGHT onto S FORSYTHE RD.
5. Turn LEFT onto S HARLEY AVE. The Abernathy Grange Hall is a little past S. Taylor Lane.

The written instructions came from “Map Quest” on the Internet; the map is scanned from a AAA map with much detail removed for the sake of clarity.

