

The

Call Letter

November, 2004
Vol. 30 — No. 11



Almost **30** 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).

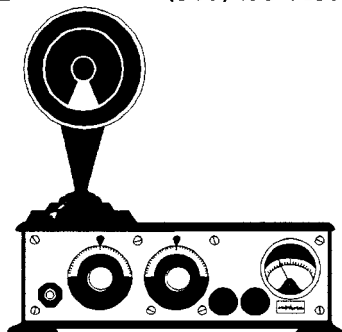
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

Society Officers for 2004:

President	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005
Vice-President	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Tony Hauser	(503) 397-0074
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



November 2004

Table of Contents

From the Editor.....2

Nomination of Officers.....2

NWVRS 2004 Calendar of Events.....2

Photo Display3

Looking Back: 30 Years in Print!5

Play It Again, Sam! 11

Swap Shop..... 11

On the cover: Who’s teaching who in this scene from cover of the November, 1925, issue of *Radio* magazine.

The next meeting is on November 13, 2004.

Next meeting is on Nov. 13: Officer Nominations!
November Feature: RCA Tube Radios.

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

December Call Letter Deadline: December 1, 2004.

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

The noise and strife of the 2004 Presidential Campaign has ended, but there is one more important election to keep in mind. At the upcoming meeting, we will nominate candidates for club offices, and in December we'll hold the election. Take note of the officer's duties printed in the back cover of this issue.

The bulk of this issue consists of an updated article of mine detailing the history of the *Call Letter* that first appeared in December of 1999 as part of the build-up to the 25th anniversary celebration. Now we're approaching 30 years and it seemed fitting to re-tell the story of this (at times amazing) little publication. It is part of the "Looking Back" series that Dick Karman has been working on. In that regard, if you have memories from the last 30 years of the NW Vintage Radio Society, send them to Dick@karmans.net.

As is usually the case this issue has photos, this time of last month's Swap Meet, and another rendition of "Play it Again, Sam!"

Nomination of Officers

by Cliff Tuttle

November is the month for nomination of officers, and I encourage each of you to consider running for an office. The duties for the various positions are posted on the back cover of this Call Letter, and if you have any questions, please give any of us board members a call and we can fill you in. Taking on an office is not hard stuff, its always interesting, always entertaining, and almost always fun. I highly recommend it.

Cliff Tuttle - Lame Duck President of NWVRS

NWVRS 2004 Calendar of Events

November 13 NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30. Nomination of officers for 2005.

December 11 NWVRS monthly meeting, Holiday lunch, and 30th anniversary celebration, 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30. Election of officers for 2005. Annual Holiday Party!

Photo Display

Photos by Rick Walton

Here are a few photos from the October Swap Meet at the Salvation Army Rose Center.





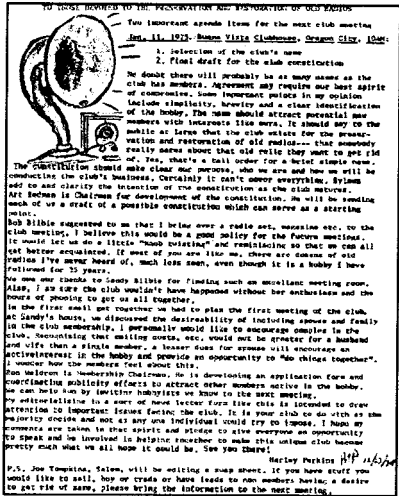
Looking Back: 30 Years in Print!

by Rick Walton

Thirty years ago next month, the members of our fledgling radio collectors club met to decide on a name for the club and to adopt a constitution. The invitation to this meeting went out to the members via the newsletter that you see here, the newsletter that is considered to be issue #1 of the monthly publication that is now the *Call Letter*.

Over the past thirty years the *Call Letter* has been edited by a number of folks, and has changed its appearance several times, but it has always remained the source of information for the membership about the club, its members and its activities.

The first newsletter editor was Bob Bilbie, one of the leaders in the founding of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. During his term as editor, the newsletter remained in essentially the hand-typed, mimeographed format of that first letter signed by President Harley Perkins.



DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF OLD TIME RADIO EQUIPMENT
 President: Harley A. Perkins Secretary: Sandy Bilbie
 Vice President: Peter Young Treasurer: Bob Bilbie
 Meetings: Second Saturday of each month at Beavercreek Club House,
 Sixteenth and Jackson, Oregon City, Oregon, 10:00 AM.
 Information, call: 665-6637 or 659-7133

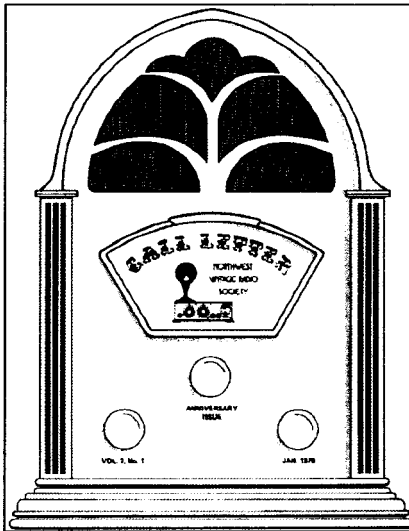
The club now has a name and a draft of the Constitution approved. About 25 radio hobbyists attended the January meeting to see the club off to an enthusiastic start. The majority have already paid their dues of ten dollars and will be listed as charter members of the club; any others who still wish to join and have confirmed their standing by payment of dues before the first of March will also be listed as charter members. The board of directors has decided that after February, new members should use the regular application forms and follow the procedure prescribed by the Constitution. A mailing list of members and known potential members will be distributed to the members in good standing at the February 5, 1975 meeting of the club.
 The first dues meet is planned for late in March. Details will need to be worked out. Already the club has been able to show some of our crates at several places. A display at Mall 201 to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of broadcasting in Portland has been approved by the club. You might be interested to know that the Call Book for Fall, 1973 lists the following broadcast stations in Portland: WPCO, KFIF, KZJN, KPMV and KVM, Vancouver Washington area: KVM, The entry has the following to say about KVM: The Morning Oregonian, Portland, Ore., 481.5 meters, old microphone, 500 watts, slogan: "Keep Growing Wiser". Come and join in the fun! The few old radios and books at the last meeting were the center of a lot of attraction, let's bring a lot more. Or there.

The second issue to appear carried the new banner of the club, the Northwest Vintage Radio Society.

Issue #3 had the first poetry. By Bob Bilbie, it was called "Ballad of the Radio Collector."

Then in issue #4, the first poetry by Tom James appeared, called "The Old Timer's Lament." In the next issue, another and different Tom James poem appeared but with the same title. With those beginning poems began the *Call Letter's* longest running feature and contributor. For almost the next decade Tom contributed new poetry to the *Call Letter*.

In the June 25, 1975 issue (#7), the familiar "Hunkerdyne" logo made its first appearance. Bob Bilbie wrote that it was the "club logo by Don Hunker and 8 anonymous people who helped move the horn to the far end of the radio."



1st Anniversary Special Edition

An important issue during Bob's editorial reign was the first anniversary issue. This issue was important because not only did it celebrate the first full year of the club's operation, but it also carried for the first time the name that still graces the masthead, the *Call Letter*.

This edition was special in a number of ways. It was printed on heavy stock, with the text typeset rather than pasted typewriter text. It also made lavish use of graphics, and at eight pages was much larger than any previous issue. Much of this was the work of Mark Moore, who Bob Bilbie had described in an earlier newsletter as "the club's youngest member." As explained in that issue, Mark was the originator of the name *Call Letter*.

In April of 1976, another printed issue appeared that is noteworthy because Tom James' poetry, which had been carried under the heading of "Tom James' Poetry Hour" or "Tom James Poetry Corner," appeared for the first time under the heading "Atmospherics." Later altered to "Atmospherica," this title remains in use today when Tom's poetry is reprinted in the *Call Letter*.

In July of 1976 while Bob Bilbie was out of town, Mark Moore produced the *Call Letter* and did so in a way that previewed the future format. Mark produced the newsletter in the half-page booklet format that is still in use today. It was a one-time shot, and it would be another year before the format changed for good.

In February of 1977 the Ladies Auxiliary selected a recipe from "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes (1927)." It was the first appearance of a recipe in the *Call Letter*, and began a long series of articles that later appeared under the heading "Power Supply."

The following month, Tom James edited the *Call Letter* in the absence of Bob Bilbie, who was hospitalized due to a heart seizure. Ever ready with a limerick, Tom wrote:

*Bob Bilbie, in the flea-market game
Went Hell-bent, to create a name.
But his "ticker" said, "NOPE,
Better slow down, you dope!"
And let someone else garner the fame.*

Also of note in that issue was the appearance of a horn speaker as part of the "Atmospherics" heading, although the familiar striped horn did not appear until the June issue.

In April 1977, Bob Bilbie, in what was apparently a surprise move, announced his resignation from the *Call Letter* and from the club. It was his last issue. On an archived copy of that issue, Tom James inscribed this intriguing comment: "Note: this is the issue Bob Bilbie delivered to the house himself. He

paused for nothing, not even to pass a genial greeting, so eager was he to be on his way. No real explanation has ever been given as to his real reason for 'bolting the party' - He has since made overtures to re-join our ranks, but as of this writing, has received no bids. TJ 9/8/79"

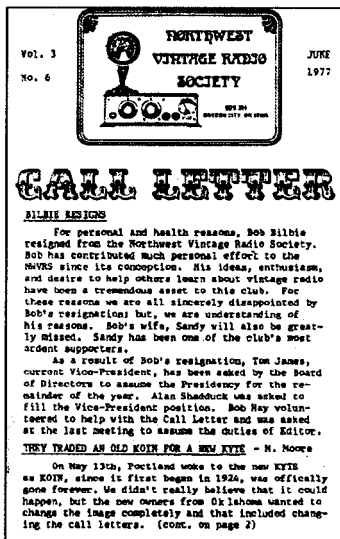
The next month in the June issue, the lead article carried the headline "Bilbie Resigns." Bob and his wife, Sandy, left the Northwest Vintage Radio Society "for personal and health reasons" according to the article, and gave up editing the *Call Letter*. The duties of editor passed on to Bob Hay, who "volunteered to help with the Call Letter and was asked ... to assume the duties of Editor."

The most obvious change in that June issue of the *Call Letter* was the size and format. Bob adopted the half-size booklet format, which is still in use. Inside, new features appeared: "Power Supply" for reports from the Ladies Auxiliary, and "Swap Shop" for the classified ads that appeared. The following month the first paid advertisement appeared for "J.K. Hills, dealers in antiques and collectibles." Thus began a practice that continued for a decade or more and included advertisers such as Ja-Mac Speakers, Cascade Surplus Electronics, and Wacky Willy's.

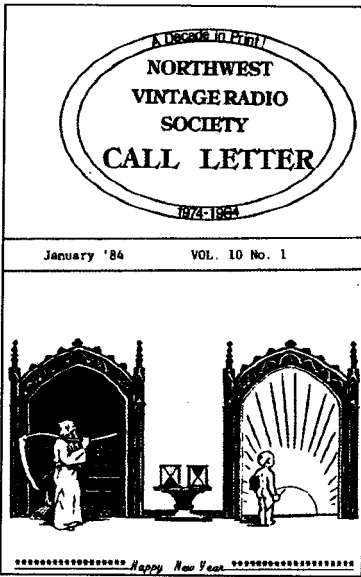
In June of 1978, just a year after taking the reins, Bob Hay announced that this was his last *Call Letter*. Tom James stepped in to the position and it was his name listed as editor of the July issue. New headings for existing features included "Cartoon Clippings" often contributed by Art Redman, and "Radio Static" by Glen Gonshorowski (it was renamed "I.Q. Trimmer" the following January). Other contributors during Tom's tenure were Virginia Rankin with "Power Supply" and Hugh Rankin with "Our People."

In December of 1979, Tom announced his resignation as editor and turned the job over to Bill DeVey, who first edited the January 1980 issue. Tom James continued as a contributor with "Atmospherica" and "Olé" and Bobbie Kibler assumed the "Power Supply." A new feature in that issue was the table of contents.

In January of 1981, Jim Mason became the editor of the *Call Letter* although there had been no previous announcement. Perhaps this was because Bill DeVey was elected Vice President of the club in the December meeting. In that issue, "Wireless Quote of the Month" appeared as a new feature. In May, "Display News" by Dick Karman began to appear, and in June "Bits and Pieces" made its debut. In February of 1982, the meeting minutes began to appear in the *Call Letter*. In January of 1982, the last "Power Supply" column appeared although editors and writers referred to the Power Supply for years afterward when speaking of the Ladies Auxiliary. In March of 1982, "Our People" appeared for the last time, and in December, "Bits and Pieces" made its final appearance. In January of 1983, Jim announced that he was resigning as editor, and turning over the position to Dick Karman.



The June, 1976 issue announcing Bob Bilbie's resignation.



The *Call Letter* took on a new look with a Dick Karman in 1983. The “Gay 90’s” lettering in the banner gave way to less flamboyant fonts, and after a couple of experiments, the cover settled into the format shown here in the January 1984 issue. This issue in particular is of note because the cover announces that it has been a full decade in print.

Features that began to appear during Dick’s tenure as editor include “Yesterday” and “Pages from the Past.”

In March of 1983, the first classified ads from the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association appeared in the *Call Letter*, often under the heading “Tradio.”

Along with changes to the cover, Dick also made changes to the appearance of the text, including new graphics in the headings and new fonts in places.

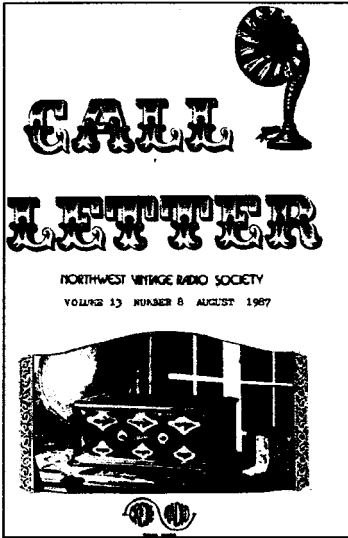
In July of 1984, the *Call Letter* had the sad duty of announcing the passing of Tom James, poet, past editor, and regular contributor. Tom was, in the words of Dick Karman, “the longest (and only) continuous contributor” in the decade of the *Call Letter*’s existence. On the cover of the July issue, Dick placed this self-portrait of Tom that had first appeared in the November 1976 issue. Dick obtained permission to continue printing Tom’s poetry and writing, so that “Atmospherica” continued to appear regularly for more than a decade following Tom’s death, and still appears occasionally in these pages.



In September of 1984, “Accession” replace “Olé” as the column that listed the most recent acquisitions reported by club members.

Dick Karman continued to edit the *Call Letter* for another three years before announcing his resignation as editor to the club in the June 1987 issue, citing the need to balance time for faith, family, and other interests with time spent editing the *Call Letter*.

In June of 1987, the job of editor passed to Ed Buhite, who made immediate changes to the appearance of the cover. The “Gay 90’s” typeface returned to the banner harkening back to an earlier format, and a striped horn speaker appeared, although by October it was permanently replaced with the club logo and name in an ornate frame. In February 1988, “Olé” returned, replacing “Accession.”



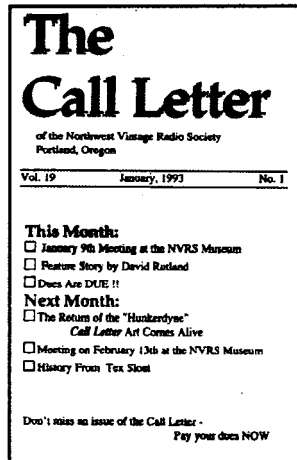
The most significant change took place in July of 1988, when the *Call Letter* merged with the *Horn of Plenty*, newsletter of the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association. Minutes of both clubs' minutes appeared in the *Call Letter*, and when rosters were published, they included the memberships of both clubs.

In May of 1992, editorial responsibility began alternating between Seattle in the even months, and Portland in the odd months. David Dintenfuss of PSARA was the interim editor in Seattle, sharing responsibility with Ed Buhite. But in October of 1992, David announced that he could no longer carry on as editor. That proved to be the last joint issue of the *Call Letter/Horn of Plenty*. In November, the *Call Letter* was the monthly newsletter of just the NWVRS, and was once again in the editorial hands of Dick Karman.

The front cover appearance changed with that issue, but just to a temporary format. With the January 1993 issue shown here, Dick arrived at the basic format that continued until February 2000.

Significant feature changes were the addition of Mike Parker's "In the Shack" in January of 1995, and Dick's own column "Wandering on the Web," a sure sign of the times that marked the merging of the antique radio hobby with the latest Internet technology. By the end of 1996, Dick once again realized he could no longer keep up the demands place on him by both his faith, his family, and the commitment to editing the *Call Letter*. In December of 1996, Dick resigned from his second tenure as editor having served a total of over eight years, longer than any other editor.

For the *Call Letter* this proved to be a crucial moment. Dick's resignation announcement in the December issue did not include his successor, because no



one had as yet stepped forward to do the job. In that same issue, the meeting minutes quote President Greg Bonn as saying, "If no one volunteers, then this publication is history."

At the December meeting the request was made again for a volunteer, and I, your current editor, stuck my hand in the air. I was nervous about taking over because I feared I had neither the equipment nor the skills required, even though I am by profession a technical writer. With a lot of help from Dick Karman, I managed to publish a January 1997 issue. By the middle of the year I was able to produce an issue without assistance. From that time, the tools I had to work with improved, including the addition of a scanner purchased for me by the club, and better word processing tools that I acquired. The decision by the membership in February of 1999 to accept higher production costs resulted in much improved pictures and art work.

In December of 1999, there began a tradition of publishing the cover of the December issue in color, a tradition that continues to this day (except for December of 2000). That first color cover featured a pair of Arvins, one red, the other green, that belong to Dan Howard. That December issue also began the practice of printing the cover on glossy white paper.



In February, 2000, the *Call Letter* received a slight face-lift to help celebrate the society's twenty-fifth anniversary. The cover format adopted then is the one still in use today.

In August of that year, we revived the latest acquisitions column, this time with the title of "Voilà." In June, 2001, a new feature, "Play It Again, Sam!" premiered and continues sporadically. "Play It Again, Sam!" allows members to tell about restoration projects on which they are working or that they've completed. Because both "Voilà" and "Play It Again, Sam!" depend on the willingness of members to submit written articles, those features tend to be a bit sporadic. In September, 2001, the last of Mike Parker's "In the Shack" articles appeared, although archived articles are occasionally re-run.

In November, 2000, the *Call Letter* first became available to members online. It was stored in PDF format at the original E-groups site in the same way that the *Call Letter* is stored at the Yahoo! Groups site (E-groups was the predecessor to the Yahoo! Groups that we use now). The PDF version has the advantage of being in color.

So after thirty years in print, the *Call Letter*, like the club it serves, continues to thrive.

Play It Again, Sam!

by Dave Wise

Philco T7

This set, made in 1957, was Philco's first transistor offering. All three electrolytic caps were bad and easily replaced - in a pinch you wouldn't even have to take the circuit board out of the cabinet. That was all it took to get it working. On the other hand, I feel that it's always worth doing an alignment, because the oldest slug-tuned stuff always seems to be off.

The T7 was no exception, benefiting greatly. Like the Magnavox AM-12 I did last time, the loopstick was intended to be adjustable, but again I left it alone, this time due to my annoyance at Philco for making such a good circuit (lots of gain and selectivity, tightly controlled by a wonderfully clever AVC design) and then ruining it with a rubbery direct-drive tuning cap that squeezes the high end so bad it's almost impossible to tune.

You'll notice that high-end squeeze on most transistor sets and some late tube portables. It all began with the drive to miniaturize. Prior to this period, most tuning caps used a large stator, with a specially-shaped rotor that changed capacitance faster and faster as the plates meshed.

While ideal for the user, the so-called "straight-line frequency" profile represents an unhealthy extreme in this respect. I have one in the junk box, and that rotor extends a LONG way out from the shaft. Almost nobody used it; instead, they went with the milder "straight-line wavelength" profile. (Later they did away with the need for a padder in the oscillator section by making that section smaller than its RF cousins. That has nothing to do with the squeeze.)

For a 3-to-1 frequency ratio, you need a 9-to-1 capacitance ratio. Practical loop antennas translate this into a lower bound on the full-mesh RF capacitance. When you have to cram a variable cap into a small space, there's only so far you can go with decreasing the plate spacing before it becomes prone to shorts. At some point you have to give up on special plate profiles and go with whatever gives maximum capacitance per cubic inch, namely, straight-line capacitance: plain old semicircular plates. (Actually, they did not go all the way to SLC, just partway.) This is what gives the top end that awful squeeze. It's not intuitive, but you can confirm it by looking at the oscillator section. In order to maintain tracking, it is severely deformed; in fact, the profile is the opposite of what you'd like; the capacitance changing slowly at full-mesh, and rapidly at near-open. Look at any small transistor set with an air-variable cap (the plastic ones are too hard to see into) and you'll see what I mean. Don't get thrown by the fact that the profile has been imposed on the stator instead of the rotor.

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: 1934 Crosley 5V2 small tombstone-\$85, 1936 Sears 4563 "slope-sided" wood set-\$85, West German "Tonfunk" BC-AM-FM-SW wood table set-\$75, Philco 53-566 maroon bakelite deco set-\$45. 1967 Knight KNI-333 tube stereo receiver-\$125. All are in excellent condition. I also have two Philco console antennas, \$5 each. These are the type you could rotate and were mounted near the speaker area. Jerry Talbott, Phone (503-538-4041) or e-mail (vinradio@easystret.com) for pictures and more details on each item.

FOR SALE: *1. American Bosch hi-boy console
2. RCA Radiola 62 hi-boy console.
3. Silver Marshall lo-boy console.

All are from my collection and have been previously restored although are not presently working. Some slight veneer lifting due to moisture. These sets are loaded with good 26, 27, 45, and 80 tubes and all should be good. Cost \$50 each or \$130 for all. The tubes are worth more than this.
Ray Nelson 503 845-2897

FOR SALE: **Two Zenith consoles: 10-tube model 10-H-5, and 11-tube model, number uncertain. \$200 each. Contact Galen Feight, 503-231-9708, gfeight@aol.com.

WANTED: Older tube oscilloscope for learning how to use one. Preferably free or trade. Working if possible. Damon Vandehey

WANTED: **A "deluxe or higher end" wood table radio with two or more shortwave bands, a tuning eye and a quality tuning mechanism (coarse and fine tuning or gear reduction tuning). It can be working or not but please, no basket case. Thanks. Vance Daberko, Corvallis, OR
(vdaberko@fastmail.fm) 541-753-3356

Radio Service

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

Roger Brown – (503) 693-6089

Blake Dietze – (360) 944-7172, wb6jhi@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>

Officer's Roles

The President

The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors. The President shall set the time and the place of Board of Directors' Meetings. The President has the power to appoint members of committees as appropriate to enhance the activities of the society.

The Vice President

The Vice President shall be responsible for planning and arranging technical and entertaining activities associated with the society's meetings. He serves as chairman of the program committee if such a committee is appointed. He acts as presiding officer at meetings if the President is unavailable.

The Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the minutes of every business meeting and for receiving and preparing all of the society's correspondence.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be accountable for all funds received and disbursed by the society and shall report all monetary transactions and treasury balance at each regular meeting of the society. The Treasurer shall prepare a list of members in good standing for distribution at the next regular meeting following the annual meeting of the society.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the current elected officers of the society plus the immediate past president of the society. The Board of Directors shall direct the care and expenditure of the funds of the society. The Board shall determine a suitable time and place for regular society business meetings.