

The **Call**
Letter

January, 2008
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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).

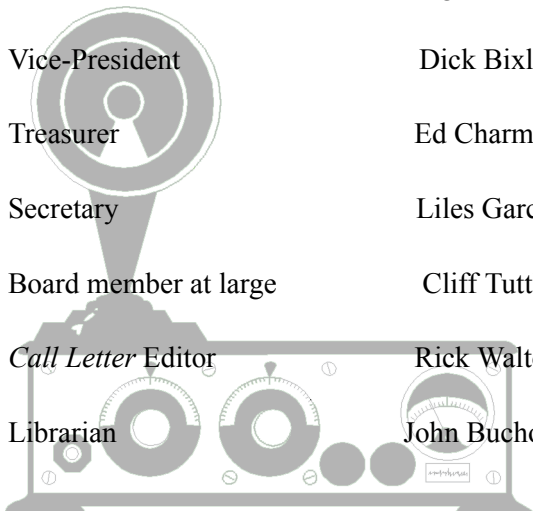
Other Society functions include guest speakers, auctions, radio show, and radio sales which are advertised in the *Call Letter* and are held in and around Portland.

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 2008:

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 BonJonBuck@webtv.net



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On the cover: “Tune out the old, tune in the new!” says the smiling young lady on the cover of the December 26, 1925, issue of *Radio World*.

The next meeting is on January 12, 2008.

January Feature: Northwest and West Region Radio Manufacturers

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

Next Call Letter Deadline: January 30, 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

Happy New Year!

With that said, let's launch into this new year with... well, not much. This is a small issue, presumably because everyone, like your editor, was busy over the holidays and didn't really give much thought to vintage radio.

So this issue is pretty much bare bones. Of course there are pictures from the Christmas Party and meeting that was a lot of fun for all who attended. And there is another installment of Mike Parker's *In the Shack*.

Be sure to check out the "Restoration Invitation." It came as a last minute phone call just as I was preparing to call this issue complete. It sounds like something that could be interesting for those of you with interest in military and communication gear, or for those of you whose restoration interests extend beyond vintage radio.

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 Meeting Minutes

Liles Garcia, NWVRS Secretary

President George Kirkwood called the December 8, 2007 meeting of the NorthWest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:25 AM. Members voted to elect the existing group of officers which were nominated at our November meeting. George discussed having a Corresponding Secretary as a new Society officer position. There was a little discussion about this idea, and Tony Hauser accepted this new position. Tony’s agreement to accept this new position was unanimously approved by those present. There were approximately 41 people at our meeting today.

The program topic for our January meeting is “Northwest and West Region Radio Manufacturers”.

The meeting was adjourned and we had our Christmas Party lunch.

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

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.
- August 1-3** Pacific Northwest DX Convention. Monarch Hotel, Portland, OR. Hosted by the Willamette Valley DX Club. www.wvdx.org.
- August 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- August 16** Antique Radio Swap Meet. Puget Sound Antique Radio Association. 9 AM to 1 PM. Shoreline museum parking lot. N. 175th & Linden, Avenue, North Seattle. One block west of Aurora Avenue - one mile west of I-5, exit 176. Free admission. <http://www.eskimo.com/~hhagen/psara/swap.html> (Always the 3rd Sunday in August)

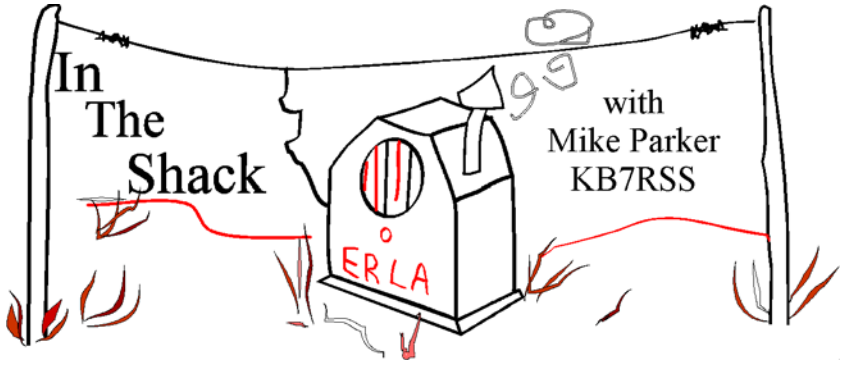
Photo Display

Photos by Rick Walton

Here are a few photos from the annual Christmas Party.







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

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 3-dial 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 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

A Restoration Invitation

by Rick Walton

A gentleman named Walt James contacted me to find out if there would be any interest among club members in the restoration of LCI 713, a WWII Landing Craft, Infantry. He saw the report on Ken Lomax' work with the USS O'Brien in the December *Call Letter* in Todd Olmert's shop. LCI 713 is docked on the Columbia at Hayden Island by the old Red Lion Inn just west of the freeway. Work parties are on Saturdays. Of interest to radio folks is the radio room, which is set up with a working ham station. There is more information about the LCI 713 at their web site, <http://www.amphibiousforces.org/>.

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.

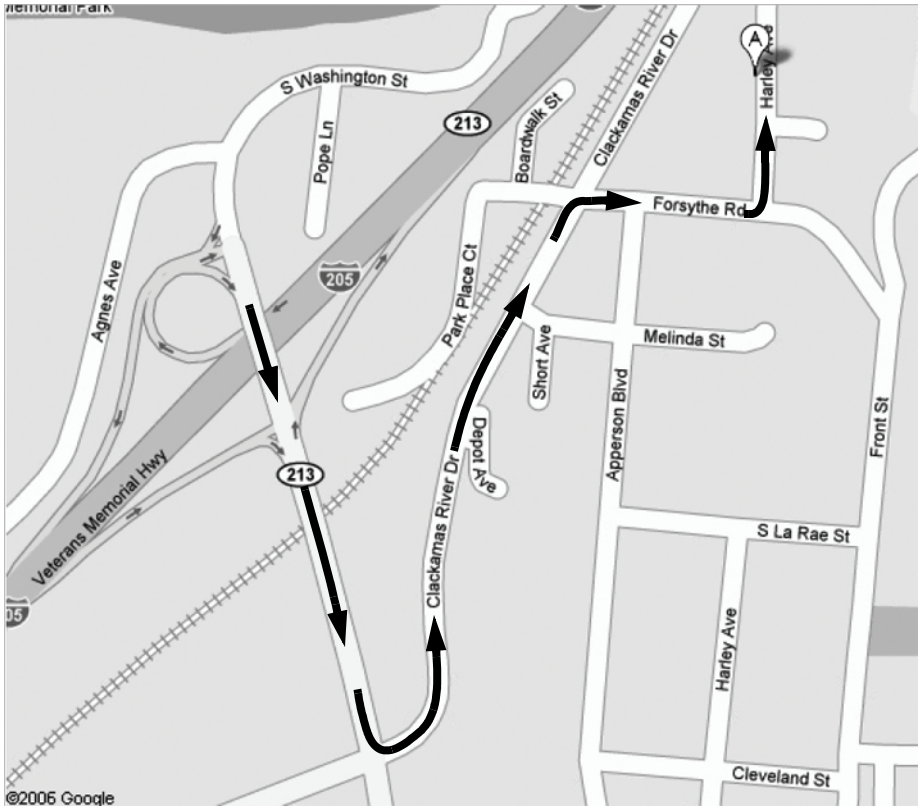
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Leads and Needs

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>

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.