

The
**Call
Letter**

May, 2013
Vol. 39 – No. 5



NEXT MEETING: MAY 11TH @10AM

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.

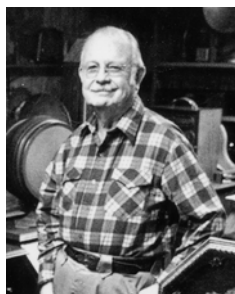
Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

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 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 for 2013:

President	Sid Saul (503)869-5280	saulsidney@gmail.com
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On the cover: Scene from our April Sale in Aurora Colony.

Monthly Feature: Catalin Radios.

Tech Talk: Charlie Kent: Catalin plastic history and repair.

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

and on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/northwest-vintage-radio-society

Next Call Letter deadline: May 29, 2013

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 Tony Hauser

Greetings fellow Society members! If recent weather is any indication of the coming months, I'd say we are going to have a great summer ahead.

I hope everyone enjoyed last month's sale in Aurora. Judging by the number of customers I saw there I would assume that plenty of radios and equipment were bought and sold. Once again, our thanks go to Brian Toon and his family for all of their hard work in coordinating our radio sales in Aurora. For our future sales, Ken Seymour has offered to run a 30 to 60-second radio ad for us on KQRZ/KQSO. If we can submit a radio spot in .mp3 format to him then he will have the ad air during the days leading up to the sale. For those who don't know, KQRZ & KQSO are the low-power FM radio stations run by the Western Oregon Radio Club and the Oregon Amateur Radio Club. See KQRZ.ORG for more information.

Activities don't slow down in May as we have our annual trash bash back in Oregon City. For questions contact our V.P. Mike McCrow. Our May Tech Talk will be presented by Charlie Kent. His subject will be Catalin plastic history and repair. And don't forget to bring along your Catalin radios for the monthly display. But wait....there's more! I have also been informed that we will be auctioning two radios at the May meeting; a 1942 Zenith console and a Stewart-Warner shortwave mini-console.

Besides our meeting, there are also two other items of note happening this month. See the brief articles in this issue about the upcoming Joe Naemura sale and the special PSARA auction for details.

One more note of business concerning The Call Letter; the Board of Directors voted last month to discontinue the directory of repair services and the Leads & Needs sections normally found near the back of each issue. Leads & Needs will now be included as reported in the meeting minutes section. The list of radio repair technicians will now only be found on our Society website. Note that the Swap Shop (buy

and sell) section will remain intact in each issue. Society members can continue to send me items for the Swap Shop section. If you have something for Leads & Needs, either bring them up at the meetings, or send them to Pat Kagi, to be included on the google groups, or to Charlie Kent to be included in the meeting minutes. This means we'll have more free space available for your articles so keep them coming!

Lastly, we have articles from Art Redman and President Sid Saul as well as another Tuned Into column. This month's column is from former President and CL Editor Dick Karman. And our staff photographer Chris Butler has sent in pictures from the Aurora Sale.

That should just about cover it.

Remember, the dial stops here,

Tony.



NWVRS Calendar of Events

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

- February 1 – July 8 Pittock Mansion display. From Stereoscopes to Televisions: The Evolution of Home Entertainment.**
<http://pittockmansion.org/events/from-stereoscopes-to-televisions-the-evolution-of-home-entertainment/>
- May 11** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; **ANNUAL TRASH BASH 8:30.** Tech Talk: History of Catalin and Catalin repair. Display: Catalin Radios.
- May 18-19** **Joe Naemura Sale** 9am-4pm; in the warehouse in the back of the used appliance store, SE Steele Street just east of SE 26th, Portland, OR.
- May 19** **PSARA Auction** Noon; Cedar Valley Grange Hall, 20526 52nd Ave. West, Lynnwood, WA.
<http://www.eskimo.com/~hhagen/psara/>
- May 31 – June 2** **Sea-Pac Hamfest** Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, OR. <http://www.seapac.org/>
- June 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30. Tech Talk: Arvin Radio.
- July 13** **NWVRS Speed Feldschau Memorial Swap Meet** 9am-2:30pm at our regular meeting location. No regular meeting that month.

Tunable Hum or How I Regained My Sanity!

by President Sid Saul

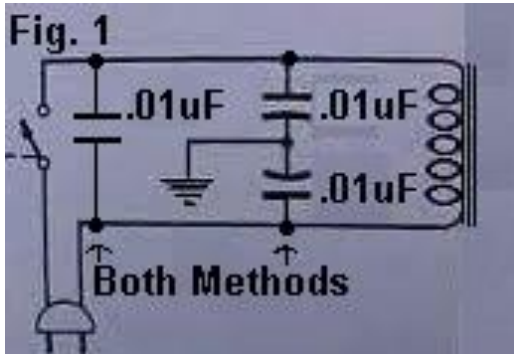


Fig. 1

Call it tunable or modulated, when tuning our dial to a known station, 60 cycle hum comes through the speaker. Tuning to *either* side of this hum, all is quiet again. Sometimes only the stronger stations do this. So what gives?

A wondrous fact; 60 cycles, the frequency of our power lines *cannot* make its way past the radio's tuner without some help. This help comes from the power line itself. The entire radio spectrum (RF), including of course the AM broadcast band travels up the power cord (acting as antenna) to enter through the power supply and remaining circuits. 60 cycle line frequency modulates the RF coming up the cord. We now have all the ingredients. The RF and the 60 cycle now walk-together, passing strait through the radio as hum, or tunable hum in our case. When tuning *between* stations, RF is *tuned* out, preventing the 60 cycle from entering. All is quiet again.

Have you ever noticed that stronger stations produce the loudest hum? AVC actions in response to exceptionally strong stations, force

the controlled tubes to operate in the lower curved region of the tube's characteristic curve. All the better for hum and distortion. Manufacturers sometimes used *wave traps* to weaken reception on these troublesome frequencies. A shorter antenna works similarly. Most often the cure for *tunable hum* is to stop the RF from getting into the radio from the cord in the first place. Capacitors (caps) may do the trick, but which kind?

We use *Line Filter caps*. Type "X" are used across the line, while type "Y" are used from each line to ground. A good web site that helps to explain this is justradios.com. Two methods are used. One is to put a cap *across* the line, the other is to place caps from each side of the power line to ground, as this can be more effective (fig.1). These special *safety caps* are rated at 250 volts AC, and are designed to withstand transient spikes of thousands of volts. They are also designed to fail *open* should they short out. Open is a good thing here!



For example, a .01µF cap has a reactance of about 15 ohms for frequencies in the AM broadcast band, and over 26,000 ohms for 60 cycles. Caps placed across the line will steer RF, low reactance, or AC resistance, back down the neutral line to ground, before entering the radio. It has little effect on 60 cycle *line* frequency due to the high reactance at that frequency. Otherwise the result would be a short, and a blown fuse.

Using a 630 volt DC standard film cap may work fine for our own use, but when giving away or selling radios, safety caps should be

considered. The caps should be placed after the power switch, otherwise they will work continuously even with the radio off, shortening their life.

A water pipe ground to chassis, (excluding ac-dc radios) may help to wick away RF and improve reception. Speaking of safety, an isolation transformer is a must when working on AC-DC sets. This may have saved my life recently when a shock across my chest, resulted to where I was barely able to catch my breath. A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is standard equipment on my bench now.

It may also be a good idea to replace the old *mica* line filter caps that may already be in place as they may have gone bad. Less used remedies include *DC* rated film caps placed across the power supply filters, and from plate to cathode on the rectifier tubes.

Unbalanced full wave rectifiers, such as the type 80, may also be problematic. Check both sides of the tube with a tube tester. Cathode to plate efficiencies may not be equal for both halves of the tube, allowing hum to get through.

Swapping radio frequency tubes for better performers may also make some improvement. You may be surprised just how well your radio sounds after having grounded and corralled all that freeloading RF.

Until next time!



March Radio Madness

by Art Redman

The first department store in the Pacific Northwest to display radios for broadcasting reception was Meier and Frank according to the Oregonian issue of March 10, 1922. A high-powered receiving set amplified by several Magnavox Telemegafone Public Address sets was installed by local radio experts to “entertain the public with concerts and other features coming through the ‘ether’ from radio stations many miles away”.

Aaron M. Frank, the assistant general manager of Meier and Frank stated that “we are installing the radiophone in our store and have arranged with several of the local transmitting stations a daily programme of music and other features to be transmitted to us at certain hours. We have already planned future radio features with which we expect to surprise our friends agreeably.”

Several successful tests were made during the previous week by radio engineers tuning the several radio sets. Music from several powerful radio stations in California was heard clearly and so was Seattle. A large aerial had to be constructed on the roof of the Meier and Frank building to receive the distant stations. Radio stations came from every on the Pacific Coast was heard with such strength that it could be clearly heard all over an entire fifth floor of the store. Later speakers were added at ground level to the streets below.

Distance was important because there were only three radio stations on the air at that time in Portland with a regular schedule; 7XF, 7XG, and KGG all with limited hours. William P. Hawley’s station 7XG, designed by Charlie Austin, broadcasted fifteen to thirty minutes of instrumental and vocal music each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening. The Northwestern Radio Manufacturing Company station 7XF owned by Austin broadcasted bulletins of the Public Health Service every Tuesday and Friday nights at 8:45 on 833 kHz. The Hallock and Watson station 7XI already broadcasting went on air officially as KGG on March 15th offering nightly news from 7:15 to 7:30. All stations

operated on the same frequency of 360 meters so selectivity was not important in 1922 to Portland radio set owners when compared to sensitivity to receive distance stations.

It was not stated by the Oregonian what radio receivers were hooked up in the Meier and Frank show. Most likely the show included several Radiolas because Meier and Frank became official RCA dealers. By October, 1926 the downtown department store also sold Grebe, Atwater Kent, Sonora and Zenith brand radios.

There were over 5000 radio sets in the Portland metropolitan area at the time as reported by the Oregonian on March 19th and 39 radio amateurs who may have provided broadcasting for the M&F radio show. DX was the real reason radio consumers had already bought a radio set and not the fact Portland had three radio stations to listen to during the second week of March, 1922.

During the first year of broadcasting KGW which began broadcasting on March 23rd only broadcasted on an average of only two hours and forty minutes a day and by the end of 1923 KGW was on the air 23 hours a week. KQY owned by the Stubbs Electric Company went on the air on March 31th with ten watts of power, raised to 100 watts in October, completing the 1922 lineup of five Portland radio stations ending this month of “March Radio Madness.”

Main Source: “Store Installs Radio,” The Oregonian, March 10, 1922, page 8.



April Sale and Auction

by Staff Photographer Chris Butler



PSARA Auction

by Richard Quam

This is a "heads up" to let you and NWVRS know about an auction that PSARA will be having at our May 19 meeting. We have been given about 120-130 table model radios from the 40s and 50s to auction off from a collector in Eastern Washington. Some have been restored and some haven't.

Our newsletter will be sent in the next couple of days and there are some photos of part of the collection. Unfortunately, the photos are small but they will give you an idea.

Maybe some of your members would like to come up and participate. Directions to our meeting location were included in the March newsletter (*ed. note: address is included in the Calendar of Events section*)

Joe Naemura Sale

By Dick Howard

Joe Naemura, one of our members whom most of us know from swap meets, if nothing else, has been collecting radio goodies for longer than most of us have been alive. He has now come to the point of "cutting back," shall we say. He is parting with enough stuff to start a store. I'm helping put this together so I need to place an ad in the May Call Letter, if possible.

Just say, "Joe Naemura sale: Thousands (I'm not exaggerating) of tubes; Textronix scopes and modules; Battery sets; lots of National, Hammerlund, TMC, receivers; Transmitters; books; chassis; test gear; mikes and phones; speakers; power supplies, meters, transformers, etc., etc., ETC!

Sale will be held in a warehouse in the back of the used appliance store on S. E. Steele Street just east of S. E. 26th Avenue, Saturday and Sunday, May 18th and 19th, 2013 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM."

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: Many Tubes New and Used – 30-day money back Warranty. For list visit www.antiquetubesupply.webs.com. I can ship OR bring to club meetings. Damon Vandehey, (503) 459-1777.

FOR SALE: Amplitrex professional tube testing at reasonable rates. Curve tracing, plate current matching, noise testing and highly accurate Gm readings. Adds value to high-value tubes!
robertwstephens@frontier.com.

FOR SALE: Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit Radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photos, 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>

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Tuned Into: Dick Karman

Dick Karman took an interest in Hobby Radio in the 1960s. He volunteered his time at a community station while in highschool, and simultaneously started collecting radio shows. In 1974 he moved to Portland and a few years later met Tom James who introduced him to the NW Vintage Radio Society

An estate sale radio; more than one widow's gift of one her husband's radios; a keepsake bought from Jim Mason; an heirloom from mother-in-law's grandmother; portable sets and a Hallicrafters from dad's WW II years; six Zenith trans-Oceanics (from somewhere); a Philco Model 90 from an anonymous donor; a buy from a shrewd antique dealer; a basket-case Norden Hauck Super C-10 from a friend who passed away; and a few home-brew crystal sets are about all the radios he has for a collection. He enjoys the other side of radio and collects memorabilia of radio stations long-since gone. His microphone collection includes more than a dozen vintage mics. His radio show recordings collection numbers in the thousands.

In our society Dick worked on public radio displays in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He sat as President of the society in 1985, '86, '90, & '91. He was the Call Letter editor from 1983 to '87 and '92 to '96.

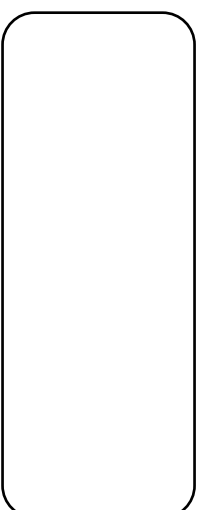
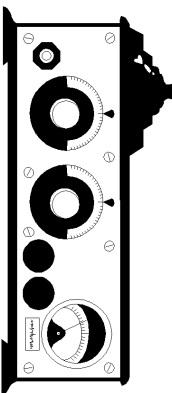
He has been in law enforcement for over 39 years, retired from Portland Police, and now works for Clackamas County Sheriff's Office. He has been a state leader in the Christian Home School movement for 25 years and he and his wife attend SW Bible Church.

Dick does not repair radios, but he loves taking them out to show folks in retirement centers and senior citizen communities. He accompanies the radios with audio clips of radio shows, news, and music from his collection of memorabilia from the golden age of radio. His show is called the Way Radio Was.

Dick always passes on the advice that member Tom James gave him almost 40 years ago, "The group is a friendly group, and will help you get started. Come visit a meeting and see."



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