

*The*  
**Call  
Letter**

May, 2014  
Vol. 40 – No. 5



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**NEXT MEETING: MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> @10AM**

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# 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).

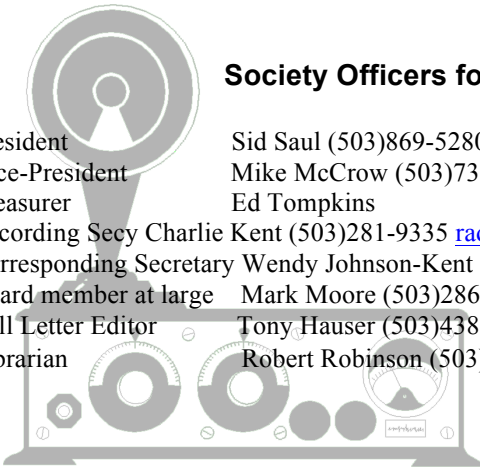
The Call Letter has been a monthly publication since 1974. It was originated with the founder, Bob Bilbie, and our first president, Harley Perkins. Through several editors and with the assistance of numerous society members, the Call Letter has continued to be a publication that informs members of the 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.

## Society Officers for 2014:

President	Sid Saul (503)869-5280	<a href="mailto:saulsidney@gmail.com">saulsidney@gmail.com</a>
Vice-President	Mike McCrow (503)730-4639	<a href="mailto:tranny53@frontier.com">tranny53@frontier.com</a>
Treasurer	Ed Tompkins	<a href="mailto:edtomp@Q.com">edtomp@Q.com</a>
Recording Secy	Charlie Kent (503)281-9335	<a href="mailto:radiogallerykent@qwestoffice.net">radiogallerykent@qwestoffice.net</a>
Corresponding Secretary	Wendy Johnson-Kent (503)281-9335	
Board member at large	Mark Moore (503)286-5224	<a href="mailto:mark@pdxhistory.com">mark@pdxhistory.com</a>
Call Letter Editor	Tony Hauser (503)438-0297	<a href="mailto:abhauser@aol.com">abhauser@aol.com</a>
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# May 2014

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**On the cover:** The brand new Don Iverson perpetual award plaque

**Monthly Feature:** Don Iverson Craftsmanship Award Contest

**Special Presentation:** Charlie Kent on the proposed venue change  
for future NWVRS swap meets

**Visit our web site at [www.nwvrs.com](http://www.nwvrs.com)  
and on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NWVRS](http://www.facebook.com/NWVRS)**

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**Next Call Letter deadline: May 31, 2014**

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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.

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# Sunny 1550 Ad

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**...it's always  
a Sunny Day at...**





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# **BOD April Meeting Minutes**

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By Recording Secretary Charlie Kent

Northwest Vintage Radio Society  
Board Meeting  
April 9, 2014

In attendance: President Sid Saul, Vice President Mike McCrow, Recording Secretary Charlie Kent, Correspondence Secretary Wendy Johnson-Kent, and Member-at-Large Mark Moore.

The Board of the NWVRS was called to order by President Sid Saul at 6:37 pm in the Boardroom of the American Red Cross, 3131 N. Vancouver Avenue, Portland.

## **James Mason Legacy**

It was voted on and unanimously approved to obtain our money from the investors so we can put it into an accessible account. The President and Treasurer will create a written policy of the use of the funds.

## **Video Disclaimer**

At the beginning and end of any DVDs uploaded to our website, there needs to be a video disclaimer. Mark Moore will work up a disclaimer for approval.

## **Website Advancement**

Mark Moore will consult Mark Dinsmore on possibly using Wordpress for our website. It has been suggested by Pat Kagi that other members be familiar with the process. Board members Mark Moore and Charlie Kent have used and are already familiar with Wordpress.

## **NWVRS Facebook Page**

Mark Moore displayed pictures of the club's Facebook page via the internet. Mark will share about our Facebook page during the May meeting if time allows.

### **Proposed North Portland Eagles Venue**

A presentation to the Board was made by Charlie Kent for a swap meet venue location change and it was unanimously passed to make the change. A presentation will be made in the May meeting for a membership vote.

### **James Mason Plaque**

A James Mason Achievement Award plaque awarded annually to the club member who has done the most for the club during the calendar year will be created. This will take the place of the James Mason legacy acknowledgement currently inside the front cover of *The Call Letter*.

It was discussed and unanimously passed by the Board to remove the swap shop advertisements from The Call Letter and upload them to our website. All affected parties have been contacted and agreed to the change.

The meeting adjourned.

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## **Don Iverson Craftsmanship Award**

By Vice-President Mike McCrow

It's not too late to bring in your favorite restoration. Remember, the rules say you can enter any restoration that you did yourself. It doesn't matter when it was done. Tube radio, tube test equipment, tube phonograph, and the like can be entered.

The judging will be the same as last year, a 1-10 scale on electronic, and cosmetic quality. This years judges are: Bruce Baur, Liles Garcia, Brian Toon, Tom Hoskins, and Dick Bixler. The alternate judge will be President Sid Saul.

It will be fun and interesting to view all the restorations. So shine up your favorite and bring it to the meeting. See you Saturday!

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## Looking Back

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By Dick Karman

The NW Vintage Radio Society, now in its 40th year, has enjoyed the attention of many guest speakers over 4 decades. There was an “old timer” by the name of “Tex Sloat.” There were technical speakers from KPTV (channel 12), the original KPOJ, and perhaps even from the original KPOJ. Our first Guest speaker was the Portland radio pioneer Wilbur Jerman. That event is remembered here by Art Redman.

### Our First Guest Speaker

Remembered By Art Redman, charter member

Society founder and newsletter editor Bob Bilbie, announced to the members of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society in the Society's



Third Newsletter "we will have a guest speaker at the March 8, 1975 meeting that we are sure you will want to hear. Mr. Wilbur Jerman, originator and former owner of KWJJ here in Portland has kindly consented to give a short talk on the problems of early day radio broadcasting. He started his station way back in the early 20s. It was a 50 watter. This fine gentleman, who is now 74 years old, is one of the real pioneers of early radio. Don't miss it."

On March 20, 1975, in the fourth newsletter Bilbie wrote, “We wish at this time to express our thanks and gratitude to Mr. Wilbur Jerman, who took time out of a busy schedule, to give a very interesting talk on old time radio broadcasting. We wish him success in his present venture, and after listening to him we're sure he'll make it.”

I cannot remember what Mr. Jerman's present venture was in circa 1975. However, I remember after standard radio broadcasting began in Portland in 1922 he made money by installing rooftop aerials to the renters of apartments. After the renter moved, Wilbur would roll up the lead in wire and wait for the next tenant. He would then make his sales pitch on the wonders of modem radio to the new tenant and if an aerial was sold, Jerman and his coworkers would then lower the lead in wire making it available to the owner of a new radio set.

With business acumen like that, it was easy to see the beginnings a successful business career in radio broadcasting. Wilbur J. Jerman made his second guest appearance before members of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society in the early 1990s when the clubhouse was located in Southwest Portland at 7675 SW Capitol Highway. Mr. Jerman passed away in 2004 at the age of 102 years.

Footnote: KWJJ, named by Wilbur J Jerman, had its roots with Mr. Jerman in 1922 as KQY, and was renamed KWJJ in 1929. The KWJJ call sign remained on the air on AM or FM from 1929 until January 6, 2004 when KWJJ was rebranded “the Wolf”. Only 64 days after “his station left the air” (changed its sign) Mr. Jerman passed away.

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# April Sale Photographs

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By Staff Photographer Chris Butler



A wide variety of radio and related items was available



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# April Sale Photographs

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Another well-attended sale with something for everyone



Our bedazzled auctioneer Charlie Kent starts the bidding

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## NWVRS Calendar of Events

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

The PSARA monthly meeting information comes from The Horn of Plenty.

- May 10** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- May 10** **Stanwood Camano Amateur Radio Club Hamfest**  
Stanwood Middle School, Stanwood, WA.  
<http://www.scarcwa.org/>
- May 18** PSARA monthly meeting 11:30am; Worst Radio Month
- June 1** **CVRS Antique Radio Swap Meet** Burnaby, BC  
[http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event\\_ID=1672](http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1672)
- June 8** PSARA monthly meeting 11:30am; Favorite Radio Month
- June 6-8** **Sea-Pac Hamfest and ARRL Northwestern Division Conference** Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, OR.  
[www.seapac.org](http://www.seapac.org)
- June 14** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- July 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- July 19** **Coos County Radio Club Hamfest and Swapmeet**  
North Bend, OR. <http://www.coosradioclub.org/>
- July 20** PSARA monthly meeting 11:30am; Abraham White Award
- July 26** **16<sup>th</sup> Annual Pacific NW Ham Radio Tailgate Swapmeet** Lewis County Fairgrounds  
<http://www.cvars.org/>
- August 16** **Clark County Ham Fair** [www.w7aia.org](http://www.w7aia.org)



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# NWVRS Proposed New Swap Meet Location

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By Charlie Kent



A location change to the Eagles Lodge on Lombard Street in North Portland is being proposed to the membership for approval. I'll be giving a presentation with photos at the May meeting pointing out advantages of this location, including:

- Centrally located Portland site affords a greater public access drawing much more public.
- A much larger one-level building.
- Large attached parking lot.
- Outside vendor sales – either with pop up tents or from your trunk.
- Expanded opportunity for more sales tables.
- More tables for rent will allow other electronic clubs to attend adding to public attendance and variety.
- Layout will remain approximately the same, just bigger.
- Wall tables and the center row of tables will have electrical power.
- Kitchen with breakfast and lunch menu with greater variety.

As this is an important decision, we would like to have as many in attendance at the May meeting as possible.

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## Abernethy Grange Display

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Society members man our display at the Abernethy Grange open house on April 27<sup>th</sup>.



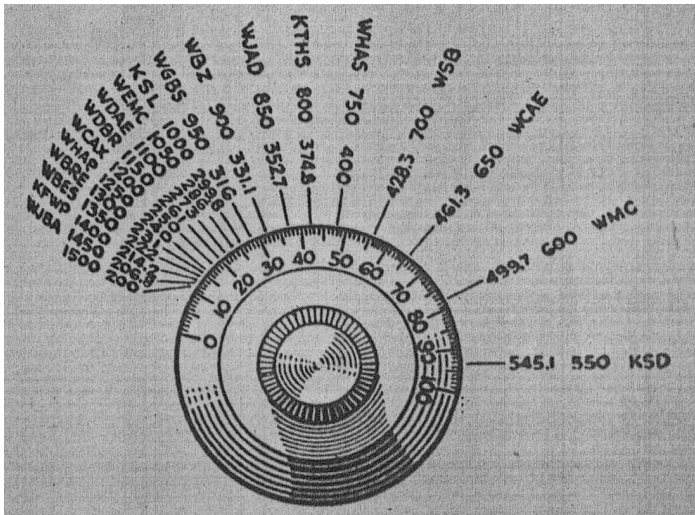
# The Aspiring Radiotrician

By President Sid Saul

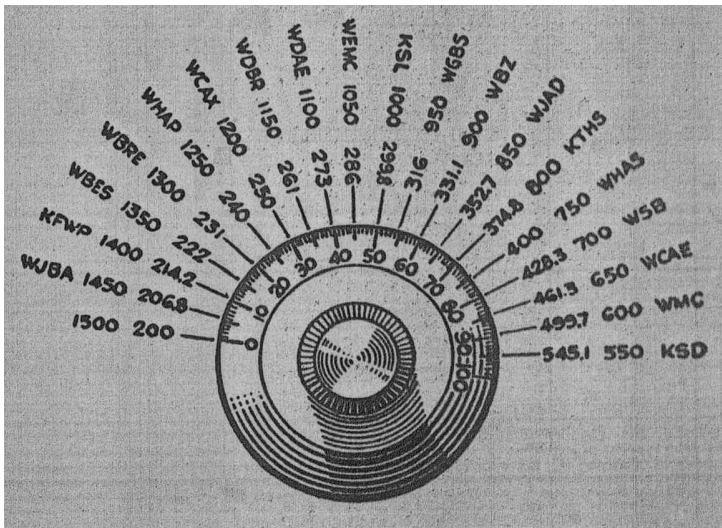
## Straight-line Condensers Or, “Back to the Future”

We are going back now to the mid nineteen twenties, with the number of broadcast stations on medium wave (MW) growing exponentially. Most of the sets of the time are using simple tuning scales, *left to right*, 0-100, with the highest frequency represented at zero. It is a little confusing from our present day radios with assigned frequencies reading higher on the right side of the dial. With more and more stations appearing on the upper-half of the MW band, logging as it was then practiced, or *recording* where stations could later be *tuned-in* became more problematic.

You may have experienced station crowding even in modern sets. Notice the crowded dial found in *popular science* of 1926 (refer to photo).



The center of this dial is already exceeding 40 percent and at 800 kHz. Simple observation reveals that from 42 back to zero, with zero being the ‘high end’ or 1500 kHz, spans 700 kHz. Now look at the right side of the dial from 42 to 100, with 100 representing the lowest frequency, or 550 kHz. This totals just 250 kHz for this half of the dial. This discrepancy gives a pretty good sense of the problem. As today with *some* cheaper variable capacitors, early set owners were having problems separating stations on the high end of the dial. Now if you please, a short look at the remedy.



The straight-line *capacity* variable capacitor is made with the stator or stationery plates *and* the movable rotor plates both semicircular or half-moon shape, and with the tuning shaft *centered* on the capacitor frame. If we could observe the relative rate of *plate movement*, we would observe a much faster frequency change as the plates un-mesh, *higher frequencies*, past the half-way point. A much faster change than on the low end of the dial. If we could equalize this change throughout the entire band, we could solve the problem. Offsetting the shaft to the side of the frame, *and- or* changing the shape of the plates, allows the plates to un-mesh at a slower rate on the high frequency end for greater

station separation, and at a faster rate on the low frequency end. This bringing low end stations closer together. This could also be accomplished mechanically by using gears and cams just behind the front panel.

There were ads appearing everywhere in '26 for better offset capacitors and mechanical solutions. These were also offered as *drop-in* for existing sets. Even with today's technology, you will find part descriptions referring to either straight-line *wavelength*, or straight-line *frequency* variable capacitors. So whenever we see tuning capacitors with other than centered shafts, or with non-semicircular, or 'S' shaped plates, think *back to the future*.— Could this be 1985? "Great Scott", 1.21 gigawatts!

Until next time from your Aspiring Radiotrician...Sid

*Selectivity!*

The Mecca of all Radio Fans

Radio's latest achievement is the Straight Line Frequency Condenser— Developed to separate the crowded stations and space them equally on the dial.

The New U.S. Tool Straight Line Frequency Condensers are the newest contribution to radio science from the laboratories of the world's finest precision instrument makers.

Use them for better radio reception.

*Write for Booklet.*

**U.S. TOOL COMPANY**  
 AMPERE, N. J.

Made under Patent  
 Patent No. 1,614,003  
 Jan. 9, 1923

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## Tuned Into... Bill Meloy

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By Bill Meloy

In the 70's I went to a swap meet in the Masonic Hall in Multnomah Village. Although I didn't buy anything I was hooked on joining the Radio Club. My starter sets included an Airline 32 volt farm radio and a 1950 Catalin RCA.

I've been interested in radio since I was a kid in the second grade in 1925/26. My school in Musselshell, Montana, bought a radio and decided to put on a broadcast for the community. Two towers were built out of 2x6's and placed on the school roof. An antenna wire was strung between them. On the night of the broadcast, with a hushed crowd of probably no more than 30 people, the operator, or MC, appeared on the auditorium stage, sat down to the radio, and began to twist dials. All he was able to do was bring in static and squeals ranging from low to high. After several attempts he got up and, without a word, left the stage. Sometime later a Montana wind blew the tower down. End of the show and tell.

I remember we had a 1926 table model Federal with a Bakelite front and 16 dials. We got lots of stations. I remember KSL Salt Lake City and XER Del Rio, Texas.

In 1929 we relocated to Wilbur, Oregon near Roseburg. About 1935 after I finished High School the Roseburg newspaper decided to have a radio transmitter. It was located in the basement of the Douglas Hotel and the call letters were KRNR (it's still broadcasting). I was lucky enough to make friends with the installer and whenever I could I checked on the progress of the installation. I received the first broadcast on my crystal set. It was a surprise to me to hear music furnished by Delaney's Dance Band with my sister on the piano and brother-in-law on the sax.

I never learned much about radio, but did build two kits. One was a Wild West console with 10 tubes and a 10" speaker. The other was a small plastic Knight table model.

I'm thankful for the NWVRS, good friends, and interesting activities. I hope to be a part as long as time permits.

Bill Meloy



Bill Meloy (right) and Sid Saul enjoying last month's auction



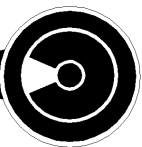
## **CALL TO ATTEND THE MAY MEETING!**

The Board will bring to vote an approval to move all future swap meets and sales to a new location beginning in 2015.

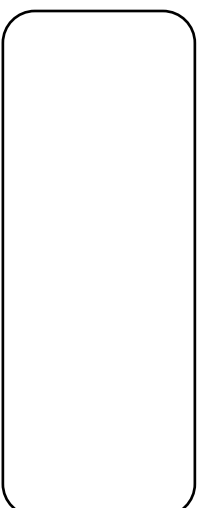
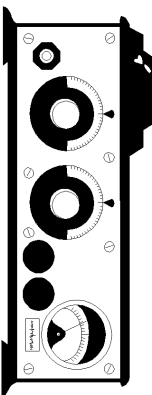
Please see page 10 for information on the new proposed site for our future sales.

**All members are encouraged to attend the May meeting to discuss and vote on the proposed move to the new site!**

Please plan on attending to insure your opinion is heard.



**NW Vintage Radio Society  
P.O. Box 82379  
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379**



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**