

*The*

# *Call Letter*

March 2019

Vol 45, #3



See the Proof Book (page 10) for details on quality, copies and price of RCA TV sets.

You don't know what you're missing 'til you  
get new RCA VICTOR **COLOR TV!**

**RCA 1961 New Vista TV ad featuring Dinah Shore**

# 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.

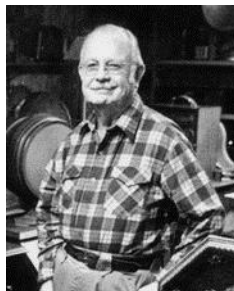
Membership in the Society is open to all who are actively interested in historic preservation. The dues are \$25.00 for domestic membership, due on January 1st of each year (prorated quarterly).

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 9:30 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 2016:

President	Pat Kagi 360 909-7009	<a href="mailto:patkagi@yahoo.com">patkagi@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Franklin Ouchida	<a href="mailto:crazykeychains@gmail.com">crazykeychains@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Ed Tompkins (360) 573-3895	<a href="mailto:edtomp@Q.com">edtomp@Q.com</a>
Recording Sec'y	Liles Garcia (503) 649-9288	<a href="mailto:landn2@frontier.com">landn2@frontier.com</a>
Corresponding Sec'y	Mark Moore (503) 286-5224	<a href="mailto:mark@pdxhistory.com">mark@pdxhistory.com</a>
Board member at large	Mike McCrow (503)730-4639	<a href="mailto:soundmikey14@gmail.com">soundmikey14@gmail.com</a>
Librarian	Damon Vandehey (503) 459-1777	
Call Letter Editor	Don Hanson	<a href="mailto:vanguard4@lycos.com">vanguard4@lycos.com</a>

## On the Cover

### RCA 1961 New Vista TV ad featuring Dinah Shore

Contributed by Dan Howard

---

## March Table of Contents

Announcements.....	1
President's Note by Pat Kagi / VP Note by Franklin Ouchida.....	2
Calendar of Events.....	3
Report & Recommendations for the Archives by Tony Hauser ...	4
Something Old Something Nu by Dan Howard .....	7

---

## Announcements

**The March Meeting** will start at 9:30 AM on Saturday, Mar. 9 at the Abernethy Grange Hall in Oregon City. The Spring Radio Sale will be at the VFW Post #6057, 210 Main St. NE, Aurora, Oregon 97013 on April 20th, which is the 3rd Saturday of the month.

**March Monthly Feature:** either 1) Multi band tube portable size radios or 2) 1950 lunch box size larger portable radio tube or transistor

**Reminder: Please pay dues for 2019!!**

It takes extra effort to keep members active past the deadlines!

Thanks if you have already sent in your payment! - Pat

**Leads and Needs:** I have dozens of radios that I purchased to restore that I will never get to. I need to part with them as I am moving. Basically name your price! Lots of nice table and console projects. I can email pictures. Joe Millward 503-209-8414

**Editor's Note** – Please have April's Call Letter Contributions in by Sunday April 31. Articles & Ads welcome (Tube labels too).

---

Visit our web site at:

[www.nwvrs.com](http://www.nwvrs.com)

Find us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/nwvrs](http://www.facebook.com/nwvrs)

---

## **Note from President Pat Kagi**

Members,

Your safety is of the utmost priority. Last month's meeting was canceled, thanks to the watchful eye of Bruce Bauer. There were several inches of snow at the Grange and just one slip or fall could have devastating consequences. Now for a quick question: How many members were unaware that the meeting was canceled? Please respond as we need to know how to inform you of a cancellation. We need to know if you do not have email, or access to NWVRS Facebook or the NWVRS web site. We can add your cell phone number so that you will receive a text message when the meeting is canceled.

## **Note from Vice President Franklin Terry Ouchida**

Members needed for committees

Positions for members or just willing to help.

We need you! We need your Help. Sign up for a committee.

Radio Sales Coordinator (Swap meets, Auctions, Sales)

Christmas Party Coordinator (Plan, help, setup Christmas party)

Picnic Coordinator (Plan July Picnic, DJ and sales tables)

Makers Fair Coordinator (Free admission and T-shirt)

Prize Coordinator (Door prizes, drawings, features)

Tube Coordinator (Tube Testers & Tube of the Month)

Save the BS' project (Battery Sets,

Lie Stream Coordinator (Web site, YouTube Live streaming)

The purpose of the committees is to provide a growing fan club.

It is your club help make it the best it can be.

Please let me know if you are willing to help out our committees

Franklin Ouchida

FO1963@gmail.com

(971)407-8108

## Calendar of Events

**The NWVRS Spring Radio Sale will be at the VFW Post #6057, 210 Main St. NE, Aurora, Oregon 97013. It will be on April 20th, which is the 3rd Saturday of the month.**

**March 9, 2019. Mike & Key 38th Electronics Show & Fleamarket.** Puyallup fairgrounds exhibition hall, Puyallup, WA. *This is an ARRL sanctioned event.* <http://www.mikeandkey.org/index.php>

**March 23, 2019. MicroHams Digital Conference.** Redmond, WA. <https://www.microhams.com/mhdc/>

**April. Yakima Hamfest.** Yakima, Washington. <http://yakimaamateurradioclub.com/yakima-hamfest/>

**April 13th & 14th, 2019. Communications Academy.** South Seattle Community College, Seattle, WA. <http://comacademy.org/>

**May. Stanwood Camano Amateur Radio Club Flea Market and Hamfest,** Stanwood Middle School, Stanwood, WA. Contact: Fred Laun, [w7pig@arrl.net](mailto:w7pig@arrl.net)

**May 4, 2019. Electronics, Ham Radio and Experimenters Swap Meet,** Kennewick, WA. Contact: Dan Durflinger KD7KJJ, [DANCAR68@AOL.COM](mailto:DANCAR68@AOL.COM) OR [KD7KJJ@ARRL.NET](mailto:KD7KJJ@ARRL.NET)

**May 18. PNW DMR gathering.** Valley Camp, North Bend, WA. <http://trbo.org/pnw/index.html> <https://dmr.groups.io/g/PNW>

**May 18 & 19, 2019. River Radio Campout 2019.** Pateros WA. Sponsored by the Okanogan County Amateur Radio Club. Free "dry" camping along the Methow River at Pateros. Always the weekend prior to Memorial Day  
Weekend. [w7orc1@gmail.com](mailto:w7orc1@gmail.com) . <http://www.w7orc.com/>  
. Contact Mike W7MCM, [skippermike53@gmail.com](mailto:skippermike53@gmail.com) . (509)689-3164.

**May 31-June 2, 2019. SEA-PAC Hamfest and ARRL Northwestern Division Convention.** Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, Oregon. [info@seapac.org](mailto:info@seapac.org) . [www.seapac.org/](http://www.seapac.org/) .

# **Report & Recommendations for the Archives**

## **By Tony Hauser**

### **What is the scope of the archives?**

This is certainly the most important question to consider because of its impact on all subsequent decisions about the archives. Should the archives only include items directly related to NWVRS and its members' history? Should it include information on area and regional radio manufacturing and broadcast history? Should it be open to anything related to radio history on a national or even international scale? As you can imagine, the answer to this question is going to have a profound effect on the physical size of the collection, and that is going to have an impact on where it can be stored and limit the number of Society members willing to house it.

Dick Karman has recently made his recommendations known concerning parts of the collection. I agree with his assessment and would like to find out more information on his ideas. For what it's worth, I will give the Board my recommendation. I believe the entire scope of the archives should be restricted to items related to NWVRS history, it's members and their involvement in NWVRS, their involvement in radio and radio collecting, and, also to items related to Oregon radio (manufacturing, broadcasting, personalities, etc.) history. To me, these items are of specific interest to our members and anything else should fall to other organizations (e.g. a plethora of websites devoted to radio and history, the Oregon Historical Society, etc.). My personal opinion is that this decision rests with the Board. If we try to have a discussion on this question at a meeting with 45 members we're going to end up with 45 different opinions and no consensus.

### **What do we keep and continue to collect?**

Obviously, the answer to the first question will impact the answer to this one. But it will only influence part of the answer to this question. Concerning items that fall within the decided scope of the archives, will we need to keep possession of the physical items, or will electronic copies suffice (e.g. Call Letters)? Will the Board make the decisions on all items, or will they expect the Archivist to make recommendations? Formalizing the duties of the Archivist will also impact the answer to this

question. It sounds like the Board is already working on this idea. In my opinion the Archivist makes the decision on any new items offered for consideration into the collection and makes recommendations to the Board on items to remove from the archives.

### **How will the archives be used?**

Putting this another way, what will Society members be able to do with archive material? Will material be available to non-members? Will the archives be treated like a lending library or will physical items not be permitted to be taken home? Will only electronic versions of items be available to members?

This may be a question for the Archivist, but I think the Board will need to create the rules for member use of archive materials. Obviously, once paper items like the Call Letters and newspaper articles are scanned into an electronic format then they become easily available for use, but other items may never be available in this fashion.

### **Where do we house the archives?**

The obvious answer is with the Archivist, but if the decision is made that results in the physical space needed to house the archives actually increasing, rather than decreasing, then an alternative, or possibly multiple, locations may need to be considered. The space required to currently house our archives is not insignificant (too much in my opinion). If the physical collection is not reduced it's going to impact our choice for potential new archivists willing to house everything. This brings up another important point. In my opinion, any future archivists must be required to house the collections indoors in a temperature-controlled environment away from pets and other potentially damaging elements. As you may recall from my report last year, I received the archives in a disorganized and poor state of condition. It took a year to eliminate pet and other odors from some of the materials due to the conditions they had previously been stored under. It took many, many more hours to reorganize the collection. We should never allow this to happen again. If the archives are reduced in size then they won't be an imposition to another member and they will be more able to keep them protected.

### **How do we make items accessible/usable for research?**

The simple answer to this question is, with the vast majority of the

collection, transferring the items to a digital format makes them easily usable by all. Getting this done is another question altogether.

In conversations with Pat and Dick there are ways to scan printed media, like the Call Letter, to create searchable documents. Members can then do keyword searches for items of interest. Of course, the past 15+ years of Call Letters are already in .pdf format and the Editor has all of these saved. However the task of creating these electronic scans will be extremely time-consuming. The work might be best handled by a committee of volunteers. In the meantime items of specific interest could be brought to meetings for the member to view or lend out to depending on the Board's decision on how the collection can be used by the members.

### **Who should be our next Archivist?**

The search for a new Archivist needs to begin. I have taken care of the archives for two years now and have created an organized collection with, for the first time, a list of archive items. It's now a collection that is ready to hand off to the next caretaker.

The answers to the previous questions will have a direct impact on the available pool of possible new Archivists. Other than the points I've already made about potential candidates, I believe one important additional requirement is that our Archivist should be someone who already has extensive knowledge of the history or our Society and its members. This is vital as they will be responsible for the collection. Do they recognize the names of members no longer with us? Are they familiar with the formation of the club? Do they know the history of our club's past displays, shows, and other forms of public outreach?

As enthusiastic as a newer member might be who is willing to step into the role, can they really be as qualified as someone with 20 or 30 years of involvement with the Society? Personally I think it's vital to find a person with a long history with NWVRS.

In any case I am giving notice to the Board of a deadline of the end of July of this year to have the collection removed from my house. I truly wish I had the time to continue working to bring the archives to where we need it to be, but I simply cannot make this a priority in my life at this time. Perhaps sometime in the future I could do this again.

I welcome your opinions.



# Something Old, Something Nu

## Honoring the Nuvistor's 60<sup>th</sup>

By Dan Howard



Figure 1: Announcing the 1 Millionth Nuvistor

When Transistors made the scene in 1948 that was the end for tubes, right? Not so fast! Although transistors made rapid inroads in the electronics market, firms like RCA continued investing in tube research for many years afterwards.

On March 11, 1959 RCA announced a new concept in vacuum tubes, the thimble-sized Nuvistor. Advances included:

- Tiny size and light weight – about the same size as transistors of the day
- Metal envelopes (instead of glass) provide shielding and make them rugged and heat resistant
- Coaxial elements supported by three wires: two for support, and a third that doubles as a connection pin. This eliminates any mica or glass internal supports. And they are less microphonic than other tubes, as well.
- Small, closely-spaced elements make them ideal for low-power VHF and UHF purposes.
- Nuvistors use less power than other tubes and have very long service lives.

Though transistors continued to displace tubes in the 1960's, the Nuvistor's unique advantages positioned it to satisfy important market niches of the time. Nuvistors found application in products related to the Cold War and the Space Race. In the burgeoning stereo, electronics, and broadcast television markets, Nuvistors were used to replace other tubes in places where capable transistors had not been developed yet.

RCA distributed Nuvistor samples to manufacturers through 1959 and began commercial production of the 7586 triode in February, 1960<sup>1</sup>. Other types followed rapidly. In July 1961, RCA announced that their Harrison NJ plant had already produced its one-millionth Nuvistor (Figure 1).

---

<sup>1</sup> Television Digest 2/15/60 pg. 19.

Nuvistors were used in products such as Ampex tape recorders, HH Scott, McIntosh, Sansui, Pioneer and Fisher stereo components, and high-end microphones. In TV tuners such as the RCA “New Vista,” replacing miniature tubes with Nuvistors reduced the required space by two-thirds and improved reception of weak signals.



See the Dinah Shore Chevy Show in Color—Sunday nights—on your local NBC-TV station.  
You don't know what you're missing 'til you  
get new RCA VICTOR **COLOR TV!**



The powerful New Vista Tuner—heart  
of the set—brings in hard-to-get sta-

Figure 2: RCA 1961 New Vista TV ad featuring Dinah Shore

Tektronix used Nuvistors in oscilloscopes such as the Model 422 circa 1966 (Figure 3). The type 8393 Nuvistor, a medium mu triode, was developed specifically for Tek and had a part # of 154-0461-00. (They used other types as well).



Figure 3: Tektronix Model 422 oscilloscope

Hewlett Packard also used Nuvistors in their test equipment. Figure 4 shows a Nuvistor-equipped HP RMV voltmeter used to measure AC voltage.



Figure 4: HP RMS voltmeter

Parks Electronics Lab in Beaverton designed ham equipment around them. Figure 5 shows two Parks items. The Two Meter Nuvistor Cascade Preamp on the left uses a pair of 6CW4 Nuvistors. The 50-1 Six Meter converter on the right uses a 6CW4 and a 6U4 glass miniature (shield removed). Note how the glass tube towers over the much-smaller Nuvistor. Other electronics manufacturers such as Heathkit, Ameco, Clegg and Lafayette also used them.



Figure 5: Parks Electronics Labs preamp and converter

Although Nuvistor production continued at least into the 1980's, they had been largely replaced by the early 1970's. During their heyday in the 1960's, a few dozen types were manufactured. Figure 6 shows two triodes and tetrode. In the foreground, an equally-tiny chassis-mount socket is displayed. And, in the background, three styles of packaging. Most American types have lugs (one wide, one narrow) on the base that help guide the tube into the socket. Short wire pins provide the connection. Some European versions have long wire leads in place of the pins and were evidently soldered-in and/or wire-wrapped.



Figure 6: Nuvistors sit atop a toy TV

Despite the Nuvistor's ruggedness, authors advise using caution when testing them; some tube testers may apply a plate voltage that is too high.<sup>2</sup> Instead, they recommend replacing suspect tubes with ones known to be good.

To quote a comment from an audiophile, "Yeah, they're not super sexy to look at. No glowing lights, etc." Still, it only seems right to wish the historic and amazing Nuvistor vacuum tube a "Happy 60<sup>th</sup>" this March.

#### Photo Credits:

Figure 1: UPI Photo 8/2/61 (author's collection)

Figure 2: Holiday Magazine March, 1961 (author's collection)

Figure 3: ebay

Figure 4: HP RMS Voltmeter picture courtesy of Blake Dietze

Figure 5 & 6: (author's photos)

---

<sup>2</sup> Radio Age December, 2018 pg. 10.

# *Northwest Vintage Radio Society*

**Presents: A sale & Swap-Meet of:  
Vintage radios, test equipment, tubes  
parts, audio and related gear.**



**Saturday, April 20 2019  
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

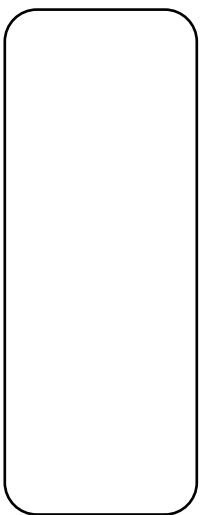
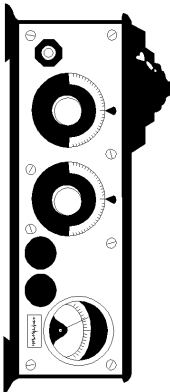
**Canby-Aurora VFW Post 6057  
21510 Main St. NE, Aurora, OR 97013**

\*\*\*\*\*

***To reserve a table or more info call:  
Robbie Robinson - (503) 810-0565***



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



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**