

*The*

# *Call Letter*

*February, 2014  
Vol. 40 – No. 2*



*Now celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> year in print!*

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**NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 8<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.

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	<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>
Librarian	Robert Robinson (503) 255-3585	<a href="mailto:srrobins@comcast.net">srrobins@comcast.net</a>

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# February 2014

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**On the cover:** Bob Walters multicolored Plaskon GE clock radio from the January meeting display. The first part of Bob’s biography appears on the inside back cover.

**Monthly Features:** Your Best Radio. Tech Talk: Below One Ohm by President Sid Saul.

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 month’s issue will be your last if your 2014 dues are not received by the March meeting!**

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**Next Call Letter deadline: February 26, 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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# Letter to Doug Sattergren's Widow

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By President Sid Saul

Dear Elva, It is with deepest regret on my learning today of Doug's passing. His presence at our clubhouse meetings will be sorely missed by all club members. I will miss talking to Doug each month as was our custom. His untimely departure will be announced at this Saturday's meeting. If there is anything the club can do for you, please don't hesitate to ask.

With deepest sympathy from everyone.  
Sid Saul President NWVRS



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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.

- February 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 15** **Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet** Rickreall, OR at the Polk County Fairgrounds.  
[www.w7sra.com](http://www.w7sra.com)
- February 16** **PSARA** monthly meeting 11:30am; Boat Anchors.
- March 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- March 8** **Mike and Key Swapmeet** Puyallup, WA fairgrounds exhibition hall. <http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>  
<http://www.mikeandkey.org/FLYER2014.pdf>
- March 16** **PSARA** monthly meeting 11:30am; Best Portable Radio. Membership Directory released.
- March 16** **CVRS Antique Radio Swapmeet** Burnaby, BC.  
[http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event\\_ID=1645](http://rac.eton.ca/events/detail.php?event_ID=1645)
- April 12** **NWVRS Spring Swap Meet and Sale** Aurora, OR American Legion Hall.
- April 12** **Yakima Hamfest** Selah Civic Center, 216 S 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Selah, WA.  
<http://yakimaamateurradioclub.com/yakima-hamfest/>
- May 10** NWVRS monthly meeting 10am; tailgate swap 8:30.

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# NWVRS Meeting Minutes

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by Charlie Kent, Recording Secretary

President Sid Saul called the January 11, 2014 meeting of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:00 am noting it was not only the first meeting of 2014, but also the start of the NWVRS's 40<sup>th</sup> year. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

## **Guest**

Steve Schuessler, a guest of Bill Holeman, witnessed the camaraderie of members in action before the meeting, but Steve and Bill were not able to stay for the meeting. It appeared Steve liked what he saw, and we're hoping he'll return and join.

## **Health and Welfare**

Long-time member, Doug Sattergren, died January 7 from complications of heart surgery. A sympathy card had been sent from the membership. Discussion ensued on what the club would like to send to members' families of our passing members. Suggestions included a donation to the member's charity choice (often listed in their obituary), a flower arrangement, and a basket of flowering plants. A vote decided flowers would be sent to Doug Sattergren's widow.

Video interviewing our long-time members to preserve NWVRS' history, and the history of their lives was suggested. In this vein, continuing with member biographies as outlined by Tony Hauser as the back page of *The Call Letter* was also urged for submissions.

Steve Berglund is still suffering from vertigo and dealing with it. The cause hasn't been found yet. Glen Bricker is in an assisted living facility.

## **Kudos**

Blake Dietze was thanked for his donations of a microphone and speaker, as well as a TV/VCR recorder that will be used to play VHS tapes in our library. Applause was given to Blake for his continued generosity to the club.

### **Upcoming Board Meeting**

A meeting of the Board of Directors and committee chairs was announced for the evening of January 14 at the American Red Cross.

### **Tech Talk**

Vice President Mike McCrow announced that due to the closing of his shop to be with us, Ron Jackson of Jamac Speaker Company would be giving his presentation on speaker reconing next. Ron gave an informative and interesting talk, with multiple examples, and we had several questions for him at the end. We appreciated his time and sharing his expertise, and the club followed up with a thank you card. If you missed Ron's presentation, or would like to view it again, it was videotaped and a copy can be checked out from our library.

Sid Saul will be giving the Tech Talk in February titled '**Below One Ohm**'.

### **Don Iverson Award Contest**

Each year a Ham Swap Meet in Puyallup conflicts with our March meeting which takes away a number of our members to attend. One of our judges of the Don Iverson Award will be attending and thus missing our meeting. It was proposed, a motion was made, seconded and a vote approved to change the date of the Don Iverson Award Contest from March to May. Vice President Mike McCrow also noted this will give NWVRS members more time to prepare their restoration for presentation.

As we no longer have the award to present due to the clubhouse break-in of a year ago, our Vice President will be creating a new award where annual winners' names will be listed.

### **Recording Secretary**

Charlie Kent asked for a motion to approve the December 14, 2013 meeting minutes as they appeared in *The Call Letter*. A motion was made to accept, seconded and approved.

### **Leads and Needs**

No leads or needs were announced. If you would like to have something listed in *The Call Letter* minutes, please submit in writing or email Recording Secretary Charlie Kent. (*ed. additions:*



*WANTED: 1938 Grunow 1056 Teledial parts chasis with good tuning buttons. Also, I recently rescued a stash form an old farm house. Items for sale or trade range from key sets, battery set parts, to wood radios. Gordon Ormsby 2298 SE Kiger Island Drive, Corvallis, Oregon 97333.*  
*WANTED: Radio Design Magazine. Dan Howard, [strains@msn.com](mailto:strains@msn.com).*  
*WANTED: A nice clean 5" Heathkit recurrent sweep scope. Sonny the Radiolaguy, (360)834-5741, Radiolaguy@comcast.net)*

### **Merchandise**

Hats, polo shirts and nametags can be purchased through Charlie Kent.

### **Tech Talk Videos**

Charlie Kent created the first three sets of Tech Talk videos which were presented to the club library for check-out. We're working on their viewing at a secure location on our web site. Applause was given in thanks to Dick Karman who has agreed to replicate future copies for the library. The taping of Monthly Feature presentations was added with today's clock radios for the benefit of members to view or revisit from our library.

### **Corresponding Secretary**

Wendy Johnson-Kent has emailed the 13 clubs listed in the back of our Membership Roster asking if they have an interest in reciprocating club information such as articles for club publication They were also asked to change their NWVRS contact, and finally asked if there was something else our clubs could share.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ed Tompkins gave his Treasurer's Report. He asked for volunteers for the annual February audit of 2013's business records whereby Dan Howard and Chris Butler raised their hands as volunteers. Thank you Dan and Chris. Ed was busy throughout the meeting processing 2014 dues.

### **Library**

Robbie Robinson noted items are available for check out for members. The upcoming Board meeting will decide library use on our website. He is working on a system with the library list.

### **Website**

Pat Kagi is working on getting our library list and DVDs up for viewing. It's a work in progress with more to come in future meetings. Any suggestions for changes should be given to Pat. Mark Moore and Mark Dinsmore received applause for their work on the website.

Pat also reported we are continuing to work to find the Japanese family who are the original owners of the donated console. A lead to locate them is being pursued. Pat thanked Dick and Dan Howard in their efforts to find the family.

### **Historian**

Volunteers were sought to work on a committee with Club Historian Mark Moore to inventory all archived club items. Pat Kagi, El Don Hoven and Wendy Johnson-Kent volunteered to do the work.

### ***The Call Letter***

Tony Hauser was given a round of applause for the work he does on the club's behalf as Editor every month. It involves a great deal of time and he is appreciated.

### **Swap Meet**

Brian Toon announced with Swap Meet tables going to club members first, we have 6 tables left, all downstairs for the April event.

### **Monthly Feature**

February's monthly feature will be **Your Best Radio (and tell us why it's your best)**.

Excellent clock radios were on display throughout the meeting, with their description and history relayed by their owners. The first videotaping of the Monthly Feature will have the presentation available for those who missed it or want to relive it again.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 am. There were 53 members in attendance.

*(cont. on page 16)*

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# January Meeting Display

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Photos by photographer Chris Butler



Chris Butler



Dan  
Howard



Liles Garcia

# January Meeting Display



Pat Kagi

Sonny  
Clutter



Dick  
Howard

Hoffman Radio Corp  
Los Angeles  
Model GP-502C  
Circa 1954



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## Looking Back

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By charter member Peter Young

(originally printed in the Nov. 1996 issue of The Call Letter)

The year was 1974 when I casually looked through the radio section of the Oregonian advertisements, and I saw Vintage Radios For Sale, several makes and models. I answered this ad and asked what makes and models he had, expecting AM/FM consoles, etc. To my surprise, he answered, "Atwater Kent, Philco, Majestic, what are you looking for?" I couldn't believe it. Within minutes I was in my car headed for Oregon City.

When I arrived my host introduced himself as Bob Bilbie, and his wife Sandy. He offered me a cup of coffee and seat. After a long chat regarding my interests and old radios, I purchased a couple of sets. I thought the price a little steep, but once I saw them I just had to have them.

I bought a Stromberg Carlson "Treasure Chest" (for lack of a better name), complete with power supply. This beautiful 1926 piece had brass handles on either end, presumably for two people to lift, since it weighed a ton. I said it looked like the most interesting set I could own. Later my wife said it looked like a coffin.

The other set I bought was an Atwater Kent console with an NRA stamp on the chassis. No, not the National Rifle Association, but rather the National Recovery Act. Before I left Bob & Sandy's home there was a lot of talk about the interest in old radios. Bob said if I wanted to stop by again maybe we could form a club, if I was interested.

It was arranged that we reconvene at Bob's house on a given date. The years have erased the names of everyone there, but I remember Harley Perkins, and about five others beside myself and the Bilbies. Harley volunteered to be the first president, I volunteered to be vice president, Sandy became the secretary, and Bob was the treasurer. Bob & Sandy were responsible for getting the Buena Vista Club House at 16th and Jackson streets in Oregon City for our meetings.

The club house in those days was the site for everything. First we had swap meets among ourselves, later we invited the public. This latter step started our first membership boom, and the club began to roll. The only heat in the club house was a wood stove, and since our winter

meetings were mighty cold each of us would bring a log or some fire wood to heat the place. It could get quite comfortable looking out the frosty windows at the Oregon weather outside.

One day I got a call from a fellow named Tom James. He was looking to sell some tubes. I first offered to tell the members, but later in the conversation invited him to come out to a meeting. Rather than try to explain where the club house was, I picked him up and took him.

Tom joined in that first year.

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## **NWVRS BOD Jan. 14, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

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By Recording Secretary Charlie Kent

In attendance: President Sid Saul, Vice President Mike McCrow, Recording Secretary Charlie Kent, Correspondence Secretary Wendy Johnson-Kent, Treasurer Ed Tompkins, Member-at-Large Mark Moore, Librarian Robbie Robinson, Photographer Chris Butler, Website Outreach Pat Kagi with guest Mark Dinsmore

The Board of the NWVRS was called to order by President Sid Saul at 6:30 pm in the Boardroom of the American Red Cross, 3131 N. Vancouver Avenue, Portland.

### **Historian/Archives**

Mark Moore turned the duties of the Historian/Archives over to Wendy Johnson-Kent.

### **Memorial Bouquet**

A European Basket of Plants was sent to Doug Sattergren's widow.

### **Website**

Expansion of our website was discussed at length. Mark Dinsmore projected an excellent presentation he had worked up.

The meeting adjourned.

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# The Aspiring Radiotrician

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By President Sid Saul

## ‘One’ is the Loneliest Number that You’ll Ever do

If you are of my generation growing up in the sixties, this month’s title has already made a powerful connection to the once popular 1968 song ‘One’ by the group Three Dog Night. Have you ever wondered about the ‘number one’ while orbiting the TV dial? Sadly, decades of clunky channel changing has led to a diagnosed condition of the wrist called *Tuning Dial Disease*. What has happened to this missing channel and has enough time elapsed to discuss this with the American public? Our once youthful reasoning at that time would have us believe that the number one did not look good on a round plastic dial or that it was omitted accidentally (regardless of what media had to say at the time).

The first successful electronic TV broadcasts were produced in 1933 from high atop the Empire State building by the RCA *experimental* station W2XBS. Just a year later in June of 1934, the newly created FCC was adopted by an act of congress which went unnoticed by the American people. Two bands, 42-56 and 60-86 MHz were set aside for television without channel allocations. Sometime in



1936 RCA made what they called a *massive* field test to some of their captive employee households. These 100 model RR-359 television receivers were built inside an undisclosed RCA factory building sporting no less than 33 tubes each, including a nine inch unconventionally (vertically) mounted picture tube known by the name Kinescope (cathode ray tube) and only visible to the naked eye with the use

of a mirror. The 359 looked more a throwback of the 1931 Radiola

R-50 broadcast radio using similar cabinetry and *massive* power supply at the bottom of the cabinet. This did not fool many seeing as the R-50 didn't have a kinescope *or* mirror. Many 359's were exported to the pre-war Soviet Union, with the difference being that the knobs were labeled in suspicious and cryptic Cyrillic lettering, placing television technology into the hands of the Russians. Tuning was continuous from 42-80 MHz as was the US version. Only two surviving 359's are in collectors hands today. The television allocation table of Oct 1938 then listed 19 channels. Channel one was given the 44-50 MHz band. In April 1939 RCA began programming coinciding with the 1939 New York World's Fair, broadcasting from W2XBS high atop the aforementioned building. Featured in the broadcasts were President Roosevelt appearing on channel one. Television was about to mysteriously change again. The FCC assigned the new FM radio band to 42-50 MHz in March 1940, just where channel one had resided, reassigning it to the 50-56MHz band. The remainder of the channels were *forced* to shift around the spectrum. But after the smoke cleared and without warning channel one had disappeared. The war-years saw television's growth halted, and by Feb 1945 TV allocations were reduced to just 13 channels. FM was forced to moved up to the 88-106 MHz band, then once again to the present 108 MHz where this small change would go unnoticed. Overnight some half-million FM receivers became obsolete, leaving the American citizenry little choice for high fidelity. In March 1946 Channel one was mysteriously 'resurrected from the dead' and moved back to its 44-50 MHz band. As result limiting its power to just 1000 watts and as a community channel only. June 1948 marked the final chapter of the orphaned channel with the FCC's most recent frequency allocation. Channel one was traded off without incident for land and mobile services and would never be seen again.

So until next time from your Aspiring Radiotrician.  
Now if I could only get that song out of my head!  
Sid



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## Swap Shop

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*FOR SALE:* \*\*\*Still in the process of selling off my collection. Items include Rola mini-console, 1929 Bosch lowboy with Bosch brochure from Hallock&Watson store in Portland, Bendix catalin, A-K 67 battery set with matching F-7 speaker, Philco record-eater, tube and transistor portables, US and foreign table sets, 5 boxes of tubes (complete tube listing on spreadsheet available on request!), wood cathedral speakers, etc. Pics and descriptions emailed on request. Can bring items for interested parties to meetings. Tony Hauser, [abhouser@aol.com](mailto:abhouser@aol.com), 503-438-0297.

*FOR SALE:* \*\*\*I need to finally sell my radio collection. I am using a walker now and have some difficulty getting around and I cannot lift anything of very much weight. I have about 100 radios from the 20's through plastics in the 50's. I have one Catalin in perfect condition, several cathedrals, battery sets, consoles, and chassis of different years including several containing globe tubes. I have a supply of radio knobs including some for Catalin and Zenith radios, some very nice speakers, and other miscellaneous items such as Abbotwares radios and tube checkers. Be sure to call before you come down to see me. Glen Bricker, 1425 Daugherty Ave, Apt. #4, Cottage Grove, OR. 541-942-3717.

*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](http://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! [robertwstevens@frontier.com](mailto:robertwstevens@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>

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.

*(cont. from page 8)*

**Auction**

Charlie Kent was given applause earlier in the meeting for donating mainly clock radios to the club for an auction. Mike McCrow also donated a radio record player for the auction. A couple items were enthusiastically received with \$218 finding its way into the club's Education Fund.



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# Tuned Into: Bob Walters: Part I

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As interviewed by Charlie Kent

As a youngster, I watched my Dad repair radios. We lived in Skykomish Washington. Dad sold Philco radios and had a small part-time repair business operating. Skykomish was a railroad town; it was at one end of the Great Northern electrification of a section that passed through the eight-mile Cascade Tunnel. That overhead trolley wire had a voltage of 13,200 volts at 25 cycles!! Static was a problem as was reception. I learned a lot of new words in my Dad's shop!

During the war, we lived in Portland, Oregon and in his spare time, Dad helped a radio store on Broadway repair radios. We had a Philco 39-116 with the MAGIC BOX. I was told more than once to keep my hands out of the back of that radio. I did sneak the Magic Box into my room and changed stations when my folks were listening to the news... (More new words!). My uncle was in the Army and he let me use his Philco 630. He came back and wanted the Philco returned to him. That was the end of my private radio in the fifth grade.

We moved around a lot. I attended six schools before I graduated high school. About the third move, my Dad found a Fada chassis and made a cabinet for it. This was my radio until I was sent to boarding school. Since it WAS mine, I kept my hands out of it.

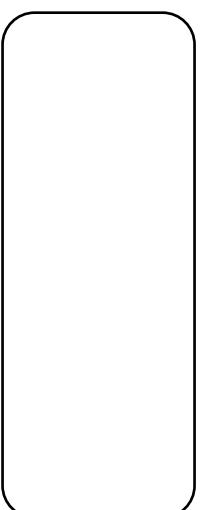
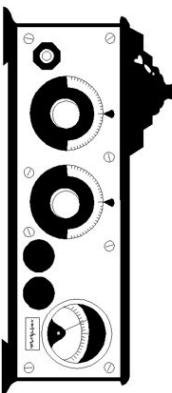
Catholic boarding school – junior and senior years – was the real beginning of my foray into radio. Before then it was model railroading and chemistry – HO gauge, home made gun powder and stuff like that.

Somehow at school, I acquired a Philco chassis and speaker. I mounted the radio in a wooden orange crate. Those crates had two sections. The speaker was mounted on a piece of cardboard nailed to the lower half of the orange crate and the chassis on the top half. It sounded pretty darn good.

I needed an antenna. The school had a lot of war surplus stuff and there were several reels of twisted pair wire. I think it was communication wire. It had both copper and steel strands. The building where we were 'housed' was an L shaped building three stories high. The antenna was installed during the night, since students were not allowed on the roof. At the time, paddles were the main method of discipline!!! I think the antenna was a good four hundred feet long. That Philco picked up KGO San Francisco (Lucky Lager Dance Time) like the station was a mile away. We were in Lacey, Washington.

***END OF PART I.***

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



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