

The
Call Letter
of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society

Vol 22

November 1996

No.11



The Northwest
Vintage Radio Society

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 \$15.00 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 members the Call Letter has continued to be a publication that both informs members of the society's business and that has supported the hobby of collecting, preserving, and restoring vintage radios.

Society meetings are held monthly (except July and August) at the Buena Vista Club House at 16th & Jackson Streets in Oregon City, Oregon. They convene at or about 10 AM for the purpose of displaying radios, conducting Society business, and information exchange. 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 SW Portland.

Society Officers:

President	Greg Bonn	(503) 642-5097
Vice President	Speed Feldschau	(503) 390-3928
Treasurer	Ed Charman	(503) 654-7387
Secretary	Ken Seymour	(503) 642-9115
Board member at large	Ed Pittaway	(503) 645-2883
Call Letter Editor ??		

The Society's address is:
The Northwest Vintage Radio Society
Post Office Box 82379
Portland, Oregon 97282-0379



November 1996

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The CALL LETTER

Editor, Dick Karman, (503) 281-6585

Note: CALL LETTER material
should be sent to the Post Office Box !

Call Letter Deadline
20th of the month
prior to publication.

Thanks to everyone
who helped out this
issue !

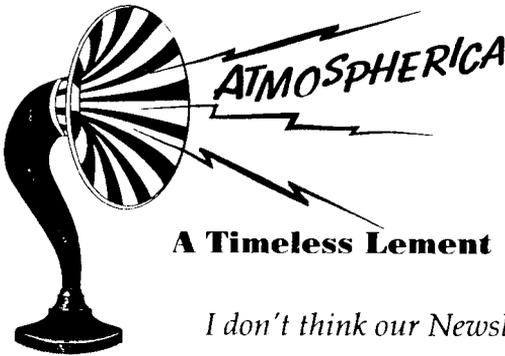
The Call Letter is the official publication of the Northwest Vintage Radio Society. Circulation is limited to the membership and guests of the Society. The Society is not responsible for the material contributed for publication, nor the quality, timeliness or accuracy of the items offered for sale in the SWAP SHOP. By common agreement of the board of directors, the buyer assumes all responsibility for the satisfaction of any transaction.

November Meeting



The November meeting of the NW Vintage Radio Society will be held at the Buena Vista Club house in Buena Vista Park in Oregon City. This rustic location was what the society called home for its first 15 years. Make the trip and enjoy the nostalgia. The club house is on the corner of 16th and Jackson Streets in Oregon City.

To get there go out McLoughlin Blvd. Turn left into the business district just past the I-205 freeway exchange and head up the hill by the post office. Turn left on 16th (or Jackson, which ever one you get to first) and the club house is only a few blocks away.



A Timeless Lament

I don't think our Newsletter will expire.

Not out of the frying pan, into the fire.

Another editor will fill the page,

Now that this one has plans to retire.

Vintage Show Report

By Dan Howard

For the eighth year in a row the NW Vintage Radio Society has done a terrific job of showing vintage radios at the Northwest Car Collectors Show. The show was October 12th and 13th.

In addition to the regular display of car related novelty radios, the 1996 display featured radios that were made by car or car part manufacturers. In addition to names like Crosley (automobiles) and Bendix (brakes), Ray Nelson loaned his Pierce Airo radio to the display. Although the auto was spelled Pierce Aero, car collectors got quite a kick out of this rare piece. We thank *America's Tire Co* who provided to some firestone promotional material to complement my vintage Firestone plastic radio sets. Dick Howard, Brian Toon, and I took turns manning the display through the two day event.

In the past the timing has been perfect to hand out fliers for the October Radio Show and Sale. This year however, with the fall meet scheduled for the first weekend of October, the advertising opportunity was past. We did hand out informational brochures, and encouraged those interested to join the society.

CAUTION:

The Great Golden flyers that we have been distributing promoting the society have the old meeting place listed in them - note the change or put a label over the old address !

Meeting Minutes

By Ken Seymour, KA7OSM

The October 12th, 1996 meeting of the NW Vintage Radio Society was called to order by President Greg Bonn at 10:03 AM with 22 members in attendance. Last months' minutes were approved and Ed Charman followed promptly by reviewing the Treasures report which showed we made a profit at last week's show and sale. It was also approved. Greg then welcomed a guest, Greg Biel KC7PCG, to the meeting.

Old Business

Myron White followed by giving a report on the swap meet which was held the previous weekend. Although there were many participants and attendees, Myron did mention that there were not as quite as many attendees as the May show. He attributed this to the fact that there was not quite as much publicity as last time. As members may recall, our Club was publicized in the Oregonian before the swap meet occurred last May.

Jerry Talbot reported on another possible location to have swaps. He mentioned a location near the Hillsboro airport may be cheaper for members and the Club. Myron to the action to look further into this location and will report at a future meeting.

The meeting discussion then turned towards finding a new meeting location. A motion passed to have the October meeting (this one) be the last one at the present location. Another motion was passed to return to the Oregon City location and meet there for the rest of the year. So, for the November meeting, be sure to go to the Buena Vista Club House at 16th and Jackson in Oregon City. Further directions will be published in this issue of the Call Letter.

New Business

Greg reminded members that the November meeting is the time to nominate Club officers for next year. So, please consider participating or volunteering yourself to be an officer. Benefits include free membership for the year and a front row seat! All positions are open including mine (Secretary). I will be taking a hiatus from note taking due to a vision problem. Greg also volunteered to find a location to have this years Christmas dinner and will report on a location at the next meeting.

Greg then reported that Dick Karman is still looking for someone who has desk top publishing experience or who has an interest in taking over as Editor and publisher of the Call Letter. Dick will not be doing it next year. If no one volunteers, then this publication will certainly cease to exist. Contact any Club officer if you have an interest in this very important job.

David Rutland volunteered to be the focal point to collect new information and material to publish in our Clubs pamphlet titled "Radio Collectors Information Book." This will be our second edition of this publication which contains all sorts of tips, technical information, and leads for parts. Presently, it is 18 pages of excellent material. So, if you have something that you would like to contribute, contact David at (541) 929-4498 (phone) or wren@peak.org (email). A motion was then made and passed to publish 200 copies of the Second Edition when completed.

David also reported that he just published a book titled: "Behind the Front Panel." This text focuses on the design and development of radios previous to 1930. The book is available from David for \$15 which is \$4 off the Antique Radio price. Contact David at the above phone number or email address.

The next meeting will occur the NEW LOCATION. The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 AM.

Back to Our Roots



By Charter Member Peter Young

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 model 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 I introduced myself as Pete Young. My host introduced himself as Bob Bilby, 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. (There's a picture on page 206 of *Vintage Radio*)

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 (that is basically those who bought radios from that fateful ad) 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 Bilbys. 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 to come out to a meeting. Rather than try to explain where the club house was, I picked him up and took him. Although Tom wasn't officially a charter member, he was close to it. Tom is no longer with us, but his contributions to the Society as we know it today live on in his poems in the Call Letter, and in the *Mascot* radio set that is our logo (which Tom Built).

The story of how we got to use the Club House, and how wives were pretty important is for another day. Suffice it to say that the society has a long and honorable heritage. I encourage other long-time members to relate some of their memories and experiences.

The Passing Parade

By Editor Dick Karman

William A. Palmer died last June at 85. Palmer and his sidekick John Mullin, converted and perfected the german-made 'magnetphon' or tape recorder for American use. It was Palmer's machine that Bing Crosby used to transcribe his first **Philco Radio Time**. It was Crosby's backing that allowed Palmer to define high fidelity audio tape for the broadcast market. Palmer and Mullin established the standard that became Ampex. Mr. Palmer passed away, with his contribution to broadcasting one year short of its 50th birthday.

Dorothy Lamour

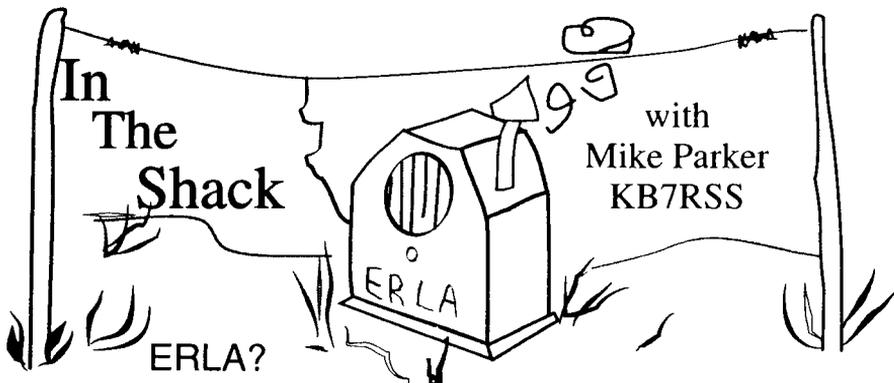
Star of Stage and Screen and **Radio**, Dorothy Lamour died of a heart attack on September 21 at the age of 81.

As is so often the case, radio, where Miss Lamour got her start, is too often omitted from the "show credits." Miss Lamour first appeared in radio in 1935 at the age of 20. In 1937 she became a regular on the **Chase and Sandborn Show** with Bergen and McCarthy. By the forties the public knew her as one of the trio of Hope, Crosby, and Lamour, in any number of *Road Shows*.

During the WW II Miss Lamour was always ready to wear a sarong for a bond drive show, do personal appearances, and even host **Front and Center**, a show sponsored by the US Army.

After the war, Miss Lamour hosted the **Sealtest Variety Theater** during the 48-49 season. It was one of these broadcasts, on St. Patrick's Day, 1949, that is repeated over and over again on Blooper tapes. The engineer had reversed the broadcast line from the Shamrock hotel in Houston, TX with the "talk-back" line to the studio. The public heard the first part of the show playing through the backstage speaker which happened to be able to be heard through the open telephone line, unfortunately the conversations and profanities of the production crew were also quite audible.

Miss Lamour's career will be warmly remembered as part of Radio's golden age. Those of us who remember her and it, have to wave goodbye to another part of the passing parade.



Several People have asked me what E-R-L-A stands for on the "shack radio" pictured at the beginning of my articles. Some were not radio collectors.

The answer is; ELECTRICAL RESEARCH LABORATORIES, an early day Chicago radio manufacturer. The rooftop shaped cathedral is a spoof by me, because of it's house like shape. This model was made by ERLA with either a clock mounted in the speaker grille, (Model 22P), or without the clock, (Model 21P), as shown. Another similar set was the VIKING, made by the OZARKA company, also of Chicago. REMLER, of San Francisco, among others, also used this style.

The story of ERLA is rather typical of many struggling radio companies that started in the early Twenties. Founded in 1921 by George Pearson, who was a previous distributor of automobiles, ERLA started by making knock-down sets or kits, as we now call them. Some incorporated a solderless wiring method allowing any non-skilled person to assemble them. By 1923 they also marketed kits as factory assembled sets and most models featured the Reflex circuit, using some tubes for RF and Audio together. Other models featured a crystal detector, with tubes. Later, the company featured a full line of kits, parts and assembled radios. ERLA played it safe and used only the usual docile TRF circuits in addition to the Reflex scheme, but in 1926 subscribed to the RFL (Radio Frequency Laboratories) circuit, a competitor of

Hazeltine, designer of the Neutrodyne. The RFL was a TRF,(Tuned Radio Frequency) circuit, but refined.

In 1924, ERLA started an assembly line factory in a wedge shaped building at 2500 Cottage Grove Ave, in Chicago, near the lake front. Photographs of this building, inside and out, can be seen in Volume 1 of, RADIO MANUFACTURERS OF THE 1920's, By Alan Douglas. Notable is the huge ERLA RADIO sign on the roof of this building, using the same lightning script lettering in their oval logo.

The quality of their products were very good and incorporated many innovative features, but by mid 1925, the company was struggling in a highly competitive market. About this time, they quit publishing stock reports and combined with the Caswell-Runyan Co. of Huntington, Indiana, a furniture manufacturer who had been previously making their cabinets. This did not do as much to save the company, as anticipated. Another reorganization took place without Caswell-Runyan in 1928 and by this time, the company was hanging on by a thread of RF coil wire, so to speak!

Unbelievably, after another reorganization in 1930, ERLA continued on and business actually picked up somewhat during the beginning years of the Great Depression, until 1934 when they became known as SENTINEL Radio. I lack detail involving this development, but I suspect that ERLA survived until then just because they made an excellent product and featured a line of accessories besides radio sets, such as tubes and phonograph pick-ups, speakers and B units.

I will attempt to outline chronologically the types of radios featured by Electrical Research Laboratories, with the help of McMAHON'S 1921-32 RADIO COLLECTORS GUIDE. I have 2 ERLA battery sets in my collection, a restored 1925 Circloid 5, a 3-dial TRF with circular wound coils and an unrestored 1926 Monodic, a 2-dial with ornate window di-

als and a huge, rectangular name plate in the center, bearing the oval ERLA with lightning bolts radiating outward.

1921-23	Quad Six	Reflex	4tube
1924	One Tube Kit	Detector	1
	Two Tube Kit	Det.-Amp	2
	Three Tube Kit	Det.-2Amp	3
	Duo Reflex Kit	Reflex	4
	Erla 3-dial	TRF	5
1925	Angelus Portable	TRF	5
	Nestor 5 Portable	TRF	5
	Pearson 5 3-dial	TRF	5
	Town & Country 2-dial	TRF	6
	Superflex	Reflex	3
	"	Reflex	4
	"	Reflex	5
	Superflex Portable	Reflex	5
	Console 2-dial	Reflex	5
	Cirkit Superflex Kit	Reflex	3
	"	Reflex	5
	Std 5 Circloid S11 3-dial	TRF	5
	Deluxe 5 Circloid S11 3-dial	TRF	5
	Superflex Cirkit K7 2-dial Kit	Reflex	5
	Circloid Kit 2-dial	TRF	5
1926	Monodic S50 2-dial	RFL	5
	Monodic S50 Deluxe 2-dial	RFL	5
	Monodic S50 Console 2-dial	RFL	5
	Monodic S50 Deluxe Con.2-dial	RFL	5
	Sextet 1-dial	RFL	6
	Deluxe Sextet Console 1-dial	RFL	6
1927	Monodic C12 2-dial	RFL	5
	Monodic C12 1-dial	RFL	6
	Monodic S51 2-dial	RFL	6
	Single Six S52,C52 1-dial	RFL	6
	Monodic S50,C50 Console 2-dial	RFL	5
	S51,C22 Console 1-dial	RFL	6
	S51,C51 Console 1-dial	RFL	6
	Single Six Console S52,C52 1-dial	RFL	6
	Super Seven S61, C60 Table	RFL	7
	Super Seven S61, C61 Con 1-dial	RFL	7
	Super Seven S61, C62 Con 1-dial	RFL	7

1928	75 Table,All sets now 1-dial	RFL	AC 7
	75 Console	RFL	7
	75 Console	RFL	AC 7
	75 Radio-Phonograph Console	RFL	AC 7
	85 Table	RFL	AC 9
	85 Console	RFL	AC 9
192930	Console Screen Grid	SG	AC 8
	31 Console	SG	AC 8
	32 Console	SG	AC 8
	C4F Duo Concerto Radio-Phono	SG	AC 8
	C5F Duo Concerto Console	SG	AC 8
	R2-A2	TRF	8
1930	71 Table	SG	AC 7
	72 Table	SG	AC 7
	73 Console	SG	AC 7
	35 Console	SG	AC 9
	37 Console	SG	AC 8
	38 Console	SG	AC 8
	39 Console	SG	AC 8
	77 Table	SG	7
	271 Mantle	SG	AC 7
'31-33	21P Mantle	SG	AC 4
	22P Mantle with Clock	SG	AC 4
	336 Mantle	SG	DC 4
	41P Mantle	SG	DC 4
	62P Mantle Superheterodyne	SH	DC 5
	61P Mantle	SH	AC 6
	81P Mantle	SH	AC 7
	82P Mantle	SH	AC 7
	30-248 Console	SH	AC 7
	67P Mantle	SH	DC 7
	90P Console	SH	DC 7
	Short Wave Converter		3

Wow!, with that many options, every year, and many not selling very well, I can see why ERLA was in financial trouble! How many ERLA's are there, today??

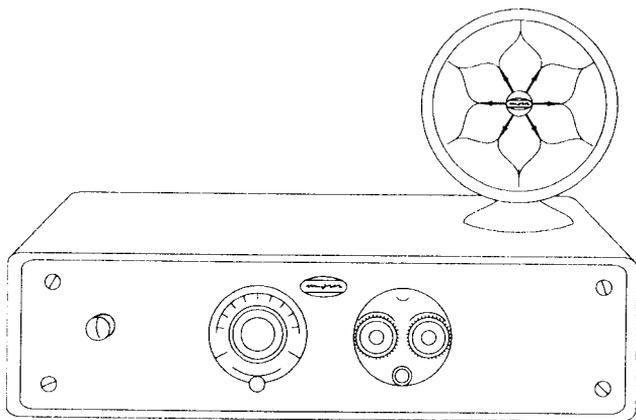
I might add that ERLA sold their chassis for private brand radio manufacture and this may or may not have helped them survive the Depression.

William J. Schnell, a noted Electronic Engineer during the 1920's was hired by ERLA and designed many of the company's early radio circuits. Mr.Schnell wrote radio articles in most of the popular electronic periodicals of the day. In 1930, he returned to ERLA as a full time engineer.

I will research more "funny named" early radios, in the future. See you next time.....IN THE SHACK.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS; "Radio Manufacturers of The 1920's" VOL. 1, Alan Douglas 1988 Vestal Press Ltd., Vestal, NY.

"Radio Collectors Guide, 1921-1932" Morgan E. McMahon 1981 Vintage Radio/Antique Electronic Supply, Tempe,AZ.



Duties of Officers

(from article 5 of the constitution of NVRS)

President: The president shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the membership, and the board of directors (two each year). The President shall set the time and place of the meeting of the board. The president is empowered to appoint members to such committees as are appropriate to enhance the activities of the club.

Vice President: The Vice President shall be responsible for planning and hosting technical or entertainment activities associated with club meetings. He serves as chairman of the Program committee, if such a committee exists, and acts as presiding officers in the absence of the president.

Recording Secretary: The recording secretary shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of every business meeting and meeting of the board of directors, and prepare the minutes for publication in the newsletter. He will also assist the vice president in the arranging for technical activities.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be accountable for all funds received and disbursed by the club, and shall report all monetary transactions and the balance of the treasury at each regular meeting of the club. The treasurer shall work closely with the newsletter editor to assure that all members in good standing receive the newsletter and that their names appear in the annual club roster.

(This is periodically reprinted to remind us of the duties necessary to keep the society going and the men who have volunteered their time to do them)

Swap Shop



Wanted: The NW Vintage Radio Society Video Tapes! If you borrowed some of the tapes please bring them to the next meeting or let Jerry Talbot know. We'd like to have them for other to enjoy also.

FOR SALE: Thousands of tubes, hundreds of radio parts, panels, meters, surplus, etc. R5-D3 electronic surplus, Bob Lee, 6111 SE 82nd Ave, Portland, OR, (503) 774-6560.

FOR SALE: Vintage Ham Radio Equipment, several sets, includes a Drake TR- 3 transceiver. For full list send a SASE. Also for sale a 1939 Philco Console model 39-40 price \$50. Bud Larson, W7LNG, 1325 Ridge Way, Medford, OR 97504. (541) 773-5214.

For Sale or Trade: Movie Dial Console, 1936 Airline Model 62-413, 13 tubes, tuning eye, and Chrome Chassis. Dick Bosch, La-Center, WA (360) 687-4414.

FOR SALE: Audio cassette tapes of the **Cinnamon Bear** radio show. This makes great nostalgic listen as we approach the holidays. All 26 five minute episodes for only \$20. Also other Christmas Radio shows, like Jack Benny, and Suspense, \$4 per tape. Dick Karman, 281-6585 or karmans@teleport.com.

FOR SALE or Trade: Early Atwater Kent Breadboard with Variometers, Radiola R5, Paragon RA-10 with DA2 amp, Packard Cathedral, 1927 Tube tester, Edison Triumph "o" re-producer with Sygnet Horn, Victor with wooden horn, More Radios and Test Equipment Galore. Contact Chuck Seidel, Box 1385, Merlin, OR 97532, (541) 474-2596.

WANTED: A spool of recording wire for Silvertone wire Recorder, Call Pat Kagi (360) 694-6149.

WANTED: WD12 Peanut tubes working or duds OK. (Navy Base - 4 flat contacts like panel lights) Call Bruce Russell collect at home (604) 299-1116, or Work (604) 298-1038 (or packet VE7HII @ VE7ROB.

LEADS:

FOR SALE: Philco Model 70 Grandfather Clock Radio in excellent condition, working clock and all: \$550.00 (negotiable) Call Phyllis Butcher at (503) 556- 2430 in Ranier, OR.

For Sale: General Electric Model L-150 superhet, 115 volts AC or DC (lights up) make offer. Call Don Ellis in White Salmon, WA (509) 493-3137.

TUBES FOR SALE: Pickard Audion, clear glass, 2 external wires from top, one from the bottom, brass base; UV 202 Radiotron, brass base, 4 pin, may be broken; DeForest double Spherical Audion, white ceramic base, red and green color-coded leads; Pickard Golden Audion, Candelabra brass base, only serious offers considered. Eric Page, 797 Waverly Ave, Holtsville, NY 11742-1107.

For Sale: Zenith Royal Transoceanic with Chassis #500MDR70, excellent working condition AC or DC, \$500. Steve Stewart, 2836 Metolius Dr., Eugene, OR 97408. (541) 345-0329.

Collection For Sale: 45 radio Receivers including AK, Brunswick, Kennedy, Grebe, Freed Eisenmann, western electric; 17 table model speakers, 300 tubes in original boxes, 650 tubes, hundreds of old and new old stock parts. Selling as a package, \$20,000, James Zordich, (503) 663-0115, Boring, OR.

WANTED: Vintage amateur radio receivers, AM transmitters, and other related amateur gear (circa: 1936 to 1960). ARRL Handbooks from 1935 to 1954. Ken Seymour (KA7OSM); 9115 S.W. 176th Avenue, Beaverton, OR 97007; 503-306- 7439 days/eve. Email: ken.seymour@attws.com