

# The *Call Letter*

January, 2011  
Vol. 37 — No. 1



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Celebrating over 35 years in print!

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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 1998. 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 2011:

President	Dick Bixler	(503) 690-2557 <a href="mailto:rf2af@comcast.net">rf2af@comcast.net</a>
Vice-President	Tony Hauser	(503) 397-0074 <a href="mailto:abhauser@aol.com">abhauser@aol.com</a>
Treasurer	Cliff Tuttle	(503) 666-7005 <a href="mailto:kiptuttle@comcast.net">kiptuttle@comcast.net</a>
Recording Secretary	Liles Garcia	(503) 649-9288 <a href="mailto:landn2@frontier.com">landn2@frontier.com</a>
Corresponding Secretary	Mike McCrow	(503) 730-4639 <a href="mailto:tranny53@frontier.com">tranny53@frontier.com</a>
Board member at large	George Kirkwood	(503) 648-4809 <a href="mailto:radiogeo@hevanet.com">radiogeo@hevanet.com</a>
<i>Call Letter</i> Editor	Rick Walton	(503) 656-4104 <a href="mailto:rwalton@easystreet.net">rwalton@easystreet.net</a>
Librarian	John Bucholtz	(360) 693-7135 <a href="mailto:Bucholtz3049@comcast.net">Bucholtz3049@comcast.net</a>



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# January 2011

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**On the cover:** Cover and cover art from the Winter 1930 issue of *Citizen’s Radio Call Book*. The bus is likely full of skiers and other winter sports enthusiasts, and is tricked out with all the latest in radio communication and PA equipment.

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**The next meeting is January 8, 2011.**

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**Monthly Feature: Kit Radios**

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

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**Next Call Letter Deadline: February 3, 2011.**

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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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# From the Editor

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by Call Letter editor, Rick Walton

So we begin another calendar year, gladdened by the prospects of a recovering (if slowly) economy, saddened by the unexpected deaths of two society members, Dennis Killeby and Del Dixon. Despite the economy, and despite the loss of friends, our society continues to prosper and grow.

This issue is another full one. The photo display this month is a collage of scenes from the annual Holiday Party last month. I especially want to call your attention to the ladies who took charge of the kitchen: Jo Beth Tuttle, Naomi Garcia, Lila Clutter, and Belen Saul. Ladies, please accept our thanks for your splendid contribution to the party.

Dave Wise contributed our “Play It Again, Sam!” with three descriptions of restoring transistor radios. In another restoration article, Dan Howard tells of rebuilding a grand piano radio out of a pair of radios from Ed Charman’s collection. The radio appeared under the Christmas tree, a gift for his mother, a pianist.

Mark Moore once again reports on additions to the society archives. Finally, check out “The Back Page” for a New Year’s greeting.

## Always sunny & warm.

*For a refreshing change,  
check it out!*



## Sunny 1550 KKAD

	Herb Alpert - Tony Bennett - Michael Buble - Carpenters
	Nat King Cole - Perry Como - Neil Diamond - Diana Krall
	Barry Manilow - Johnny Mathis - Platters - Carly Simon
	Elvis - Frank Sinatra - Babara Streisand - Andy Williams

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# NWVRS Meeting Minutes

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Liles Garcia, NWVRS Recording Secretary

President Dick Bixler called the December 11, 2010 meeting of the NorthWest Vintage Radio Society to order at 10:00 AM. Members introduced the guests that they brought with them. Members gave all guests a round of applause. Liles Garcia read the minutes of the November meeting; the minutes were approved as printed in the December Call Letter. Cliff Tuttle gave the Treasurer's report, it was approved as provided by Cliff. There were 48 people at our meeting today.

## **Old Business**

By-Law Changes — Cliff explained to the group that we are changing some wording in our Society's By-Laws. The changes were recommended by Oregon's State Attorney General's office so that our Society can remain a tax-exempt corporation. The changes will show that our Society's purpose is to benefit the public and not only our members. Members present voted to add the changes. Thirty six members approved the changes; there were no objecting votes.

## **New Business**

Election Of Officers — Members elected the nominated people to their respective offices. The NWVRS officers for 2011 are as follows:

- President — Dick Bixler
- Vice President — Tony Hauser
- Corresponding Secretary — Mike McCrow
- Recording Secretary — Liles Garcia
- Treasurer — Cliff Tuttle
- Board Member at Large — George Kirkwood

## **Program Topic**

The Program Topic for January will be "Kit Radios".

The meeting was adjourned and everyone present enjoyed a great potluck lunch.

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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/amradio/hf/hf.htm](http://www.n7cfo.com/amradio/hf/hf.htm)

- January 8** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- February 19** Salem Hamfair & Computer/Electronics Swapmeet. Rickreall, Oregon at the Polk County Fairgrounds. <http://www.w7sra.com>.
- March 12** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- March 12** Mike & Key Swap Meet. Puyallup fairgrounds exhibition hall, Puyallup, WA. For information, contact [dmdink@yahoo.com](mailto:dmdink@yahoo.com) or [n7wa@arrl.net](mailto:n7wa@arrl.net). <http://www.mikeandkey.org/flea.htm>.
- April 9** NWVRS monthly meeting 10 am; tailgate swap 8:30.
- April 22-24** Idaho State Convention. Garden City, ID, Voice of Idaho ARC. ARRL sanctioned. Info, Lynn Rasmussen, W7RAZ, (208)550-7710, [w7raz24@gmail.com](mailto:w7raz24@gmail.com). <http://www.idahostateconvention.com/>
- May 14** NWVRS Spring Swap/Sale at Aurora American Legion Hall, Aurora, Oregon.
- May 14** Stanwood Camano Amateur Radio Club Hamfest, Stanwood Middle School, Stanwood, WA. Always the second Saturday in May. Contact Vic, N7KRE (360)387-7705) [nwecop@tgi.net](mailto:nwecop@tgi.net) <http://www.scarcwa.org/>
- June 3-5** Sea-Pac Hamfest. Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, Oregon. ARRL sanctioned. [ai9q@arrl.net](mailto:ai9q@arrl.net) [www.seapac.org/](http://www.seapac.org/)
- June 10, 11, 12** Wenatchee Hamfest 2011. Apple City ARC. Dryden Gun Club. Dryden, WA. Contact Jim, W7JBP at [shultzjims@aol.com](mailto:shultzjims@aol.com) or Judy, at [ka7zna@msn.com](mailto:ka7zna@msn.com) for information. <http://www.qsl.net/w7td/>

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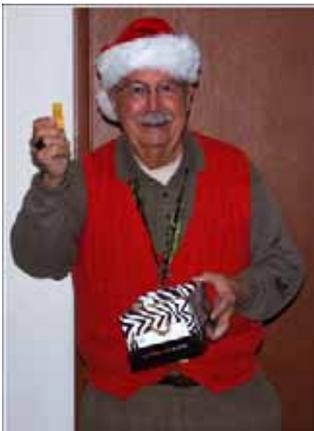
# Photo Display

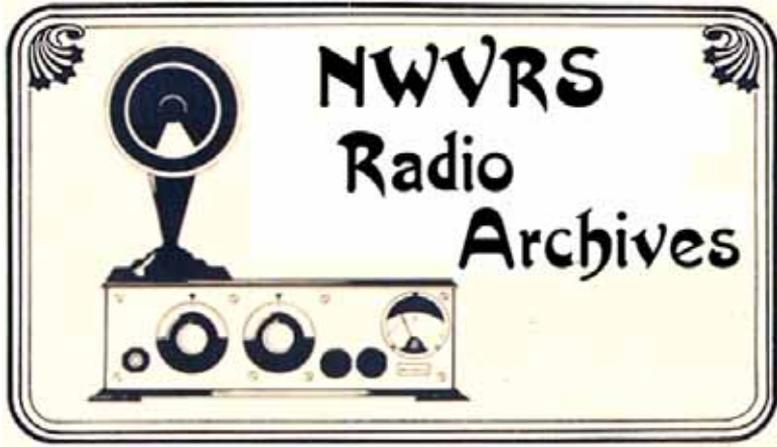
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Photos by Rick Walton

Scenes from our annual Holiday Party.







by Mark Moore, NWVRS Archivist

At our Holiday Meeting, I received several more items for our archives: a metal plaque approximately 8-1/2" wide by 6-1/4" tall with our club logo, a General Electric dealer franchise agreement and accompanying letter from June 28, 1935.

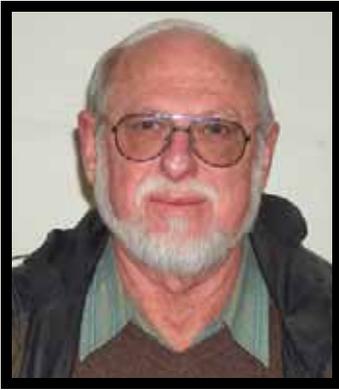
The General Electric Supply Company was located at 205 NW 5th Ave in Portland and the dealer franchise agreement was with Gordon Van Cleave of Silverton Electric Co. The plaque with the NWVRS logo would look good on a portable exhibit of club memorabilia. Thanks to our President Dick Bixler for rescuing these items.



Our report is fairly short this time, so I just want to say how much I enjoyed our Holiday Potluck and Christmas Party. It was really a treat to see some of our spouses and wives as well. Happy New Year and best wishes to all of you in the coming year.

# Del Dixon

by Rick Walton



We are saddened to announce the passing of another society member, Del Dixon, in late November. Del was a longstanding member of the NWVRS. His death came as a complete surprise to his family and to the society.

Although Del’s death occurred prior to the December meeting, word of his passing reached us too late to include in the December *Call Letter*. A memorial service was held for Del on December 13.

# Roster Update

As of December 30, an additional 11 members have paid dues. Last month we included new member Brian Gibson in the update, and this month we add his photo. We also welcome back returning member Ken Seymour.



Gibson, Brian R  
4450 SW 96th Ave #4  
Beaverton, OR 97005  
(503) 469-0113  
Musical Instrument Tube Amplifiers  
[gbgibson@earthlink.net](mailto:gbgibson@earthlink.net)



Seymour, Ken R KA7OSM  
9115 SW 176th Ave.  
Beaverton, OR 97007  
503-724-6110  
Vintage amateur radio equipment, test equipment, technical literature, radios  
30's-50's.  
[ken.seymour@comcast.net](mailto:ken.seymour@comcast.net)

## New e-mail addresses:

Lloyd Harris: [lloydharris@clear.net](mailto:lloydharris@clear.net)

Mike McCrow: [tranny53@frontier.com](mailto:tranny53@frontier.com)

Lloyd has also revised his area of interest to “General.”

# Play it Again, Sam!

by Dave Wise

*Editor's note:  
Here are Dave's  
narratives about  
three transistor  
radio restorations: a  
Sony 2R-21, a Zenith  
Royal 59, and an  
RCA 4RG632.*



## 1. Sony 2R-21.

This is a small 8-transistor pocket radio in the less-common square format. Electrical repairs were straightforward – I simply replaced the electrolytic caps, every one of which was bad. The work was livened up with a tricky mechanical problem. Remember my Channel Master 6515A's frozen tuning capacitor? This one wasn't frozen, but the sticktion was enough to make me want to smash the radio. This was only partly the cap's fault.



Sony went for a specific “look” with regard to the controls, a round clear plastic lens, with fiduciary mark, through which you can see the entire dial. Since the speaker takes up most of the front panel real-estate, the lens has to be small, and they felt that the usual one-half-turn dial was too crowded, so they put in a reduction drive. Normally I'm all in favor of this, but they implemented it about as badly as possible, with a tiny pulley on the

cap string-linked to an even smaller pulley on the thumbwheel – which also bears the scale. The tension necessary to turn such a small pulley puts a truly punishing radial load on the shaft, so the sticktion is not only maximized it's magnified too. Plus backlash. (They didn't do this just to

be perverse, though; the lack of space pretty much made it the only way they could do it once they rejected the standard dial.)

A bit of lithium grease in the shaft bearing area, plus a brass shim, reduced the sticktion to a tolerable level. It will never be my favorite radio to use, but it’s an interesting example of how marketing can drive engineering into a ditch.

## 2. Zenith Royal 59.

This pretty two-tone 8-transistor pocket radio came from the “radio shop time capsule” estate sale held some years ago in downtown Portland. It was sort of a time capsule for me too, as I just now got around to working on it.

On a lark, I powered it up, and to my surprise it worked, even though all three electrolytic caps tested bad. Of course I replaced them anyway, and was rewarded by clean, smooth sound.

The set is also fairly sensitive. Transistor layout is mixer/oscillator/IF/IF/audio/audio/push-pull output. The separate mixer makes it possible to apply AGC to it. (In fact, it doubles as an emitter follower passing AGC along to the first IF.)

Where the Sony 2R-21 uses what I call the “traditional” power amp with an output transformer, the Zenith eliminates the transformer. There are several ways to do this, and the Royal 59 is the most straightforward, simply wiring the speaker with a high-impedance, center-tapped voice coil which goes to the output collectors just as the output transformer primary would have. I call this the “split speaker” approach. The earphone jack must be in the driver stage, and since it carries collector current, a crystal earphone will not work with this model.



## 3. RCA 4RG632.

Another turquoise two-tone set, also from the time capsule. It’s larger, more a portable tabletop set than a coat-pocket. It’s another 8-transistor split-speaker job, with a nice friction-driven tuning drum with button-activated light and an AC Adaptor jack. The AGC is a bit odd – there’s a

separate transistor just to buffer it, but only the first IF amplifier is controlled, since the oscillator is not separate. There's also an "overload diode" in the converter – anybody know what that's about? This is the first transistor set I've encountered that used a multi-section electrolytic cap. Which was bad, as usual. It worked fine as soon as I replaced it.



# 10% DISCOUNT

To all members in good standing of the  
**Northwest Vintage Radio Society**  
for any purchase from



Please show your current  
NWVRS membership card  
to receive discount.

BEAVERTON (503) 644-1025  
7940 SW Nimbus Ave.

SALEM (503) 583-9810  
1545 Commercial St. NE

EUGENE (541) 345-2904  
960 Conger St.

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# Mother's Grand Piano Radio

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by Dan Howard

We weren't able to come to the last couple of club meetings. I was intending to bring an entry to the November "Before and After" display. So, instead, here are a couple of pictures and a little story.

In October, we were wowed by the number of General TV Piano radios that showed up at the NVRS swap. By late afternoon on Friday there were at least three beautiful examples on display already.

My mother used to teach piano and played piano and organ at church for many years. She still has a grand piano in her living room although she doesn't play often any more.

Dad and I were interested in perhaps getting one of the piano radios as a birthday or Christmas gift for her. In the early evening Tom Hoskins carried in the pair of parts radios shown in the before picture. They were originally part of the Ed Charman collection and Tom purchased them with the idea of taking two to make one. We saw potential and purchased the pair from Tom. After checking them over, it was clear that this would be a fun and challenging project.



Although the radios appeared similar, the two cabinets were made of very different materials. So, instead of taking parts from the dark cabinet to fix the light cabinet, I mostly used it as a pattern for manufacturing new replacements. In addition to lots of clean up and reassembly, I made a new leg out of maple and carved a new front with my scroll saw. The dark cabinet furnished the chassis, speaker cloth, dial escutcheon and cover, knobs, and the prop stick. Mother will find her restored piano radio under the Christmas tree next week.



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# Voilà

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## ***...new and recent finds by NVRS members***

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Compiled by Jay Johnston

**Jay Johnston:** Tinymite xtal set. Probably from the 50s; it is made of red plastic, and about the size of a D cell battery. The original speaker (about the size of a silver dollar) is attached.

Kitcraft one tube receiver. Probably another 50s piece; this beast is comprised of a 3x3" plastic base with an IL-4 miniature tube protruding from the back. The manual suggests a 1.5V battery and a 75' (very) long wire antenna.

**Gary Marvin:** 1939 Zenith 12-S-370

1940 Zenith radio/phono model # 10-S-491

1942 Zenith radio/phono Model # 12-H-689

1942 Zenith radio/phono Model # 10-S-690

1937 Zenith console model # 6-B-164

**Dave Wise:** Ballantine 323 True-RMS AC Voltmeter. RS Surplus dumped a bunch of these on eBay all at once. They offered 323's and 323-01's (323 minus the rechargeable battery). I put a \$10 bid on the one 323 that also had the BNC-Banana adaptor, and lo and behold I got it. I



already have a Kei-

thley 179 and an HP 3400A and 339A, so I am not hungry for true-rms meters, but this my only Ballantine instrument, and it uses a different technique than the others.

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# New Caps & Shirts!

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New caps and new shirts are available. Caps are \$10, and shirts are \$22 for M & L sizes, \$24 for XL. Contact Tony Hauser for more information.



*Suggested by J. B. Lolley, Red Bank, N. J.*  
**Ah! Here's your trouble, grid leak**

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## Swap Shop

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*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:* \*Mister Resistor has thousands of resistors plus over a thousand tubes all at LOW LOW prices. If you need either contact John Bucholtz at 360-693-7135 or e-mail at [Bucholtz3049@comcast.net](mailto:Bucholtz3049@comcast.net).

*FOR SALE:* \*\*Hickok 288X signal generator, Hickok 600A tuber tester, Eico 7 1/2" Tube type VTVM, Eico solid state signal tracer, Mallory vibrator tester, Radio Shack 22-215 VOM with half scale, MFJ 2035MV 0-15 VDC 30 amp continuous power supply. THANK Robert Campbell

## Radio Service

These members have indicated they are willing to perform radio repairs:

Roger Brown – (503) 693-6089

Bruce Baur - (503)-708-4537, [brucebaur@comcast.net](mailto:brucebaur@comcast.net)

Blake Dietze – (360) 944-7172, [wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com](mailto:wb6jhj@ix.netcom.com)

Jack Doyle – (503) 305-8097

Pat Hickman – (503) 887-9015 Web: [www.classictubeaudio.com](http://www.classictubeaudio.com)

Email: [phickman@comcast.net](mailto:phickman@comcast.net)

Todd Ommert – (503) 246-4141 Web: [www.burlingame-radio.com](http://www.burlingame-radio.com)

Email: [burltv@msn.com](mailto:burltv@msn.com)

Tony Ranft – (360) 944-8489 or [walterranft@hotmail.com](mailto:walterranft@hotmail.com) – General repairs.

Dave Wise – (503) 648-0897, [david\\_wise@phoenix.com](mailto:david_wise@phoenix.com)

If you are willing to repair radios, give your name, phone and/or e-mail, and any comments to the *Call Letter* editor.

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.

## Leads and Needs

Questions about restoration of vintage radio? Visit Radiolaguy's web site often for this information plus lots of other interesting displays, photos, virtual museum plus lots of other information on vintage radio and television. Oh, yes, there are items for sale as well and NVRS members get a substantial discount on most of these items. Thank You, Sonny the Radiola Guy  
Visit my vintage radio web site: <http://www.radiolaguy.com>

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## The Back Page

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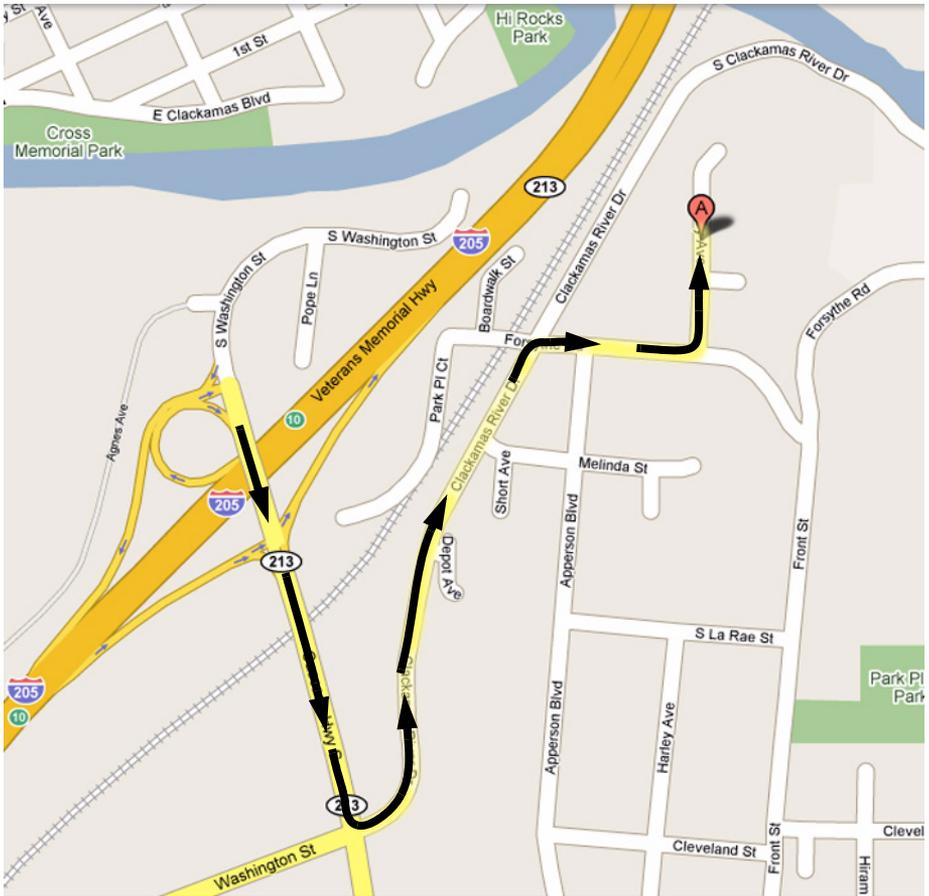
For those not acquainted with “The Back Page,” it is an occasional feature that appears randomly when your editor runs short of material to fill one more page.

This month, we offer seasonal greetings using the graphic that adorned the January 1999 *Call Letter*.



# Meeting Location

Here is a map (thanks to Google Maps) to the Abernethy Grange Hall (the pointer marked “A”), where the Northwest Vintage Society meets the second Saturday of each month. Just follow the arrows on the map.



To get to the Abernethy Grange Hall:

1. Exit I-205 at SR-213 (Exit 10 to Molalla) and head south on 213.
2. At the first intersection (the traffic light), turn left onto Clackamas River Dr.
3. Turn right at Forsythe Rd.
4. Turn left onto Harley Ave. The Grange Hall is on the left about a block and a half.