



Broadcast News

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

By Jim Collings

Well, it's almost September and it's time to start thinking about our fall swap meet at the Midwest City Community Center on October 13th. We'll talk about details at the next meeting which is at Swadley's Barbeque on Saturday, September 8th at 7 PM, preceded by dinner about 6. The topic for this month's meeting is UGLY RADIOS. Like beauty, ugly is in the eye of the beholder, so it will be an interesting topic. It could be a set just ugly by the original design, a very poorly restored set, or a set so dilapidated that it is ugly.

Julie and I went to RADIOFEST, sponsored by ARCI in Willowbrook, Illinois, south of Chicago earlier this month. It was a good meet, as we got to see a lot of radio-collecting friends, especially from the Midwest.

It started off on Thursday night with the auction. They have been improving the format of their auction in recent years, especially with the help of Jim Sargent as the auctioneer and Frank Rasada helping. They were trying to go to an electronic format like the VRPS, but decided they needed to put all the items in the computer before the auction started, rather than as the auction proceeded. There were quite a few items, so the 6:30 PM start was delayed, and the auction did not begin until after 7:30. They have a pricing arrangement which is different from other radio club auctions. I like it! There is a \$5 entry fee for each item entered with no commission to the club, but there is also a 10% buyer's premium charged to make up for it. So it is good for sellers with expensive items as they get more for their items, and it keeps the junk out with a \$25 minimum. Sellers are able to place a minimum which, if not reached, will keep the item from selling. I entered a handful of items (for the first time), and was pleased with the result. One item did not reach my minimum, but the others sold, and one brought quite a bit more than I would have asked for it in the flea market. Most items sold for good prices, but I was able to purchase a few things, including the last item in the auction, which required some disassembly. Complimentary pizza was served near the auction's end. Check out was very slow. Buyers only were allowed to check out first, followed by everyone else. The removal of items from the auction room was supervised, so nothing could be removed until after checkout...even seller's unsold items. It made for a long night. I did not get out until after 12:30. Hopefully there will be some improvements next year.

The Flea market began at 7 AM on Friday morning. It seemed a little smaller than last year, but there was still a wide variety of items for sale. I did not purchase anything of great value, but many lesser items. The very hot weather that was here was reflected with low 90's temperatures there, but with high humidity, so most everyone had closed up shop by 3 PM.

We attended the Saturday night banquet and viewed the contest entries during the cocktail time before. There were quite a few nice items on display, but some were the same items we had seen at the Michigan meet. A separate room displayed items related to the 100th anniversary of the Titanic disaster. It was very impressive. The banquet itself was fine, but too much time was taken thanking all who helped make the meet a success, and worked in serving the organization. Thanking them was great, but it took so much time for each person to go to the front to pick up an award and get a photo taken. Many people were honored several times. After the presentations a musical group performed.

Saturday morning it was the flea market again. A few sellers had gone home during the night and brought some different merchandise, but most was the same old stuff we had seen all day on Friday. I did sell a few more things to new buyers. We left during the donation auction about 11 AM. There were some interesting items donated, but I had the SUV full enough. Overall it was a great meet, and I will look forward to next year.

See you at our meeting with your ugly radios! Bring something pretty for the donation auction.

Report for the OKVRC Meeting 8/11/2012

The dog days of summer have finally (we hope!) ended for now, and we are enjoying temperatures in the eighties and low nineties instead of the 100 to 110 degree temperatures we had for days and weeks on end. It was also gratifying to see that no less than twenty OKVRC members turned out for our monthly meeting and dinner at Swadley's barbeque restaurant in Bethany. Our goal is to have at least twenty five members show up each month so we can fill the whole room. Let's see if we meet that goal next month!

We enjoyed dinner from about 5:30 to 7:00 PM, before Club President Jim Collings called the meeting to order. Jim was out of town last month, so it was good to see him back. There were not a lot of announcements this month so we soon got started on the night's program: Novelty radios!

Novelty radios have been made since the thirties, with most made in the last forty years or so. The newer ones are plentiful and cheap, and are great way to get younger folks interested in the radio collecting hobby. The novelty radios that came out in the thirties and forties were typically small AM only table models with the cabinet stylized to commemorate some real or fictitious celebrity. Examples of these "classic" novelty radios include Mickey Mouse (Emerson, 1933), Charlie McCarthy (Majestic, 1938), Dionne Quintuplets (Stewart Warner, 1939), and Hopalong Cassidy, (Arvin, 1950).

Most novelty radios built since then look like some actual object but instead have a radio inside or mounted in the base. Some, such as those that resemble food products, may be approximately the same size as the item they represent. Other are much smaller (or, in some cases larger) than the real life object they represent. Among the first of these was the Coca-Cola Cooler radio that came out in 1949. The cost and size of vacuum tube electronics kept modest the number of novelty radios made in the forties, fifties and early sixties, but the introduction of transistor circuits (and Asian manufacture) brought about an explosion of novelty radios from the mid-sixties on. Some of these were high end items, but in the seventies, eighties, and nineties, millions of very inexpensive novelty radios became available. Many were designed to provide advertising for the product they resembled, and were sometimes given away or sold cheaply for promotional purposes. Novelty radios are still being made today.

Our members brought in a wide selection of novelty radios for us to enjoy. They ranged from museum quality rarities to bargain yard sale finds. But all of them were fun and interesting! Among the "classic" early novelty radios we got to see were Jim Colling's Charlie McCarthy and Mike Swinney's Hopalong Cassidy radios. Mike also showed us a stunning Abbotware Horse radio from the fifties.

This was once part of the famous Dr. Ralph Muchow collection. Your Club Secretary brought in a “Knight” radio, from Japan, early seventies. A pewter knight in armor stands on a base containing the radio, his sword is removable for use as a letter opener. Club member Roger Knop brought in whole collection of fun little radios that all resembled anything but a radio, such as a Kraft macaroni and cheese box, a Pepsi Cola machine, a hamburger, a Coca-Cola bottle, a juke box, a “Blabber mouse” with lips that move to the sound, and a Red hawks (baseball team) radio. Quite a variety!

We were especially honored to have with us at our meeting a club member who specializes in novelty radios, Meredith Ward. Ms. Ward brought in some really neat items, such as a Space Shuttle radio, a world globe radio, a giant spark plug radio, and a candlestick phone radio. But the item which excited us the most was a Duisenberg model car radio. This beautifully detailed item was still in its original box! So unlike many surviving examples it was completely intact, with no parts missing.

Jim Collings also brought in a couple of novelty items that were radio inspired but not radios themselves, such as a cast iron bank that resembles a late twenties condole radio, complete with legs. We also got to see a resin casting that resembles a thirties table model. This item once held a thermometer, according to Jim.

A company which deserves special mention in the area of novelty radios is the Guild Company of Inglewood, California because ALL their products were novelty! Between the mid-fifties through the late sixties this small company produced radios and radio-phonographs (all in maple colored wood) that closely resemble a wide range of old-fashioned items. These include: a crank operated wall phone, a lantern, a teakettle, a roll-top desk, a treasure chest, a sewing cabinet, a wind-up horn type phonograph and more. Your club secretary brought in a “Spice Chest” radio, an example of the Guild Company’s whimsical products.

Another area of Novelty Radios is replica radios. Cathedral radios were built from 1928 to about 1938, with roughly 90% of them being built between 1930 and 1935, but replica Cathedrals (all solid-state) have been made almost continuously since 1974, when Philco-Ford brought out the first reproductions. In recent years many more vintage radio replicas have been brought out of, including Fada “bullet” radios, as well as tabletop radio-phonos and even some small consoles. Your club secretary brought in a replica radio that resembles one of those little table top juke boxes that once adorned booth tables and countertops at drugstore soda fountains and malt shops across the country. I remember as a kid my older brother taking me to the Thrifty Drug soda fountain for a malt; they had one of those systems. I put in a nickel and heard it play “Hey Jude”, by the Beatles. When we went back there a few months later; the store had been remodeled, and the whole soda fountain area had been ripped out!

We finished up the nights activities with our customary donation auction. A twenties radio cabinet, some interesting books, some 78 RPM records, radio technical manuals, a complete IBM PC, older but complete and in working order, several other computer accessories, a radio chassis from the thirties, with a tuning eye, another chassis from a farm radio, a vintage RF voltmeter in a handsome wood case, and a few other odds and ends all went to new homes. Thanks to all of you who made it, especially those who brought in so many fun novelty radios to share with us. See you next month!



Guild Radio Spice Chest



Abbotware Horse Radio



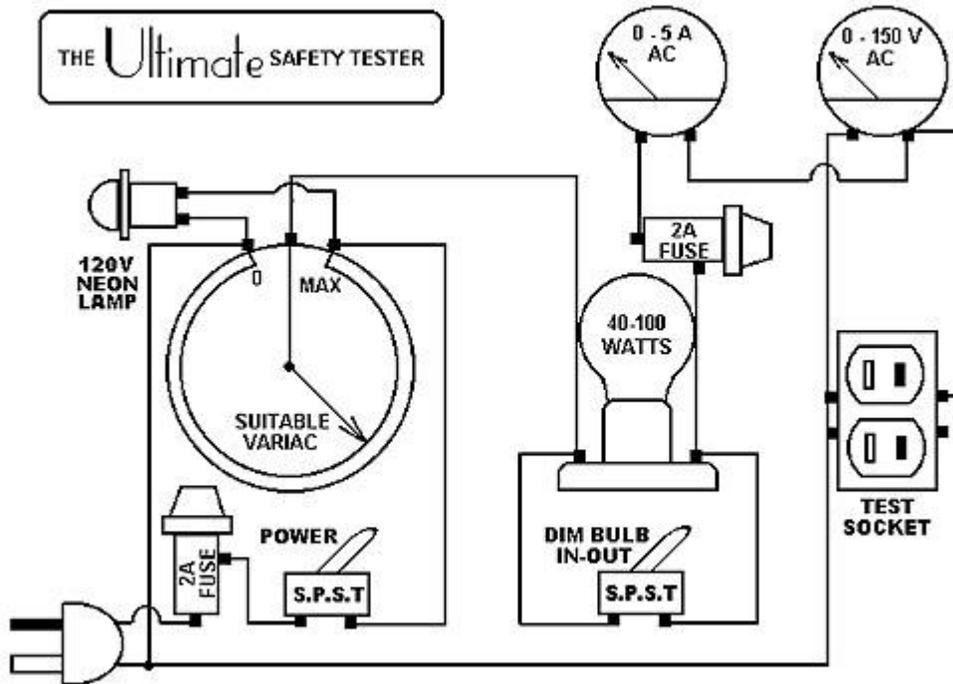
Spark Plug Radio



Bar Radio - Courtesy of Art Hoch



“Little Mike” Microphone



The Oklahoma Vintage Radio Collectors (OKVRC) publishes the Broadcast News monthly for the presentation of historical information and enjoyment of club members and friends. Articles on subjects of interest to radio collectors, news of club activities, and restoration information are always welcome. Articles should be sent to the Broadcast News Editor, c/o OKVRC, PO BOX 50625, Midwest City, OK 73140-5625 or e-mailed RXRADIO@AOL.COM. Unless otherwise noted, articles can be reprinted freely, as long as proper credit and reference is given. Electronic copy of articles can be obtained from the editor of Broadcast News.

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MEMBERSHIP:

OKVRC Membership is \$15.00 per year. You are invited to join us in our celebration of Vintage Radio by sending your check to OKVRC, PO BOX 50625, Midwest City, OK, 73140-5625.

As a service to OKVRC members, the month of your membership expiration date is printed on the mailing label. Below is a sample label:

John Q. Collector
1234 SW 56th Street
Choctaw, OK 73123-1234

Expires 10/11

If your expiration date is highlighted, your membership has expired and you are in jeopardy of being dropped from the Broadcast News distribution list.

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- WANTED:** 10BP4 PICTURE TUBE, IN GOOD WORKING CONDITION. Thanks, Frank Karner, (405) 769-4656, fkarner@cox.net
- WANTED:** 1946 Philco, model 46-420, complete, unrestored (doesn't have to be working, but no cracks or broken areas in the case). John Reynolds @ jhreynolds8787@yahoo.com
- WANTED:** Transmitters, Receivers, Ham gear, Boat Anchors Radio, Test Equipment, Tubes, Parts, you name it. Call Tom Laszynski at (405) 741-1176 or e-mail me at k8jrm@arrl.net.
- WANTED:** Dial bezel and dial pointer for a E. H. Scott Receiver, Model SLR-H or Navy RBO-2. Also, need metal Identification plate for a Navy RBO-2 receiver. Contact Tom Laszynski at either k8jrm@arrl.net or 405.741.1176.
- WANTED:** Briggs & Stratton (BASCO) radio items: Crystal radio, tube sockets, A-B-C power supplies, boxed parts, radio advertising and promotional items. Dale Boyce (414)353-0734 or radioman@wi.rr.com
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- FOR SALE:** Magnet wire sizes 10 ga to 40 ga. Coaxial cables and antenna wire. Mike LaPuzza, Clear Signal Products, Inc. 405-745-9473 email: wire@coaxman.com
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- SERVICE:** *FIELDING ELECTRONICS, INC. We restore old radios both electronically and refinishing.* Radios must be complete, with knobs and dial glass/escutcheons. Fielding Electronics, Inc PO Box 2601, Ardmore, OK 73402, Phone # 580-222-9408
- SERVICE:** Old Radio Restoration and Servicing: Dale McLellan, rxradio@aol.com or 405-330-1802, Edmond, OK

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