

Clay's Corner for October 2021

Providing news and views from a broadcast engineers perspective since September 1986

COVID-19 continues to be the headline maker this past month- Here are some items I selected to share.

Broadcasting etc

On September 7th this was published -

The NAB will require full vaccination of attendees, exhibitors and its own staff at the NAB Show, Radio Show, and the Sales and Management Television Exchange

Then on 15th of September, we all received this -

To Our NAB Show Community: For more than a year we have worked tirelessly to bring our industry together safely in Las Vegas at NAB Show. Unfortunately, the pandemic and surge of the Delta variant has presented unexpected and insurmountable challenges for our global community. As we have always kept the best interest and safety of the industry as our priority, it has become apparent in the face of these challenges that we can no longer effectively host NAB Show or our co-located events, the Radio Show and Sales and Management Television Exchange, in person. NAB Show is the premiere destination for the media and entertainment industry and we will not move forward with a show that delivers anything less than the excellence our community has come to expect and deserves from us. While we are disappointed that we will not be together again in person next month, we look forward to converging in Las Vegas at the 2022 NAB Show, April 23-27, 2022, to reignite our passion for our business and focus on a bright future ahead. Stay tuned for details regarding virtual options for accessing select 2021 NAB Show content

The announcement comes after a number of its largest exhibitors, including Sony, Canon, Panasonic and Ross all announced that they were pulling out of the show, citing concerns over COVID-19. The association said it plans to offer select virtual sessions through its Amplify portal.



For the second time in as many years, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the cancellation of The NAB Show. The National Association of Broadcasters announced that it has pulled the plug on its biggest conference along with co-located events, the Radio Show and Sales and Management Television Exchange, all scheduled to take place next month in Las Vegas.

The announcement from Chris Brown, Executive Vice President and Managing Director of Global Connections and Events at NAB, cited “unexpected and insurmountable challenges for our global community” from the COVID-19 pandemic and surge of the Delta variant.

The NAB, as well as many others have been thrust into to completely new territory with this pandemic. Like a lot of us, we thought that we were past the worst of it and were starting to make plans....Then – Along came Delta – and ‘here we go again’.

The NAB show is not the only event to run head-on into the impact of the Virus – The Audio Engineering Society also cancelled its 2021 event which makes sense as it was to be collocated with the NAB Event.

There were certainly a huge impact of the cancellation in a number of areas. Hitting the ‘Emergency Brake’ this close to an event is tough. A lot of things were in motion, including many that had hotel reservations etc.

One phrase that seems to be appropriate these days – **‘Don’t count on it’**

Cumulus Media, a large radio station operator was one of the first to announce their COVID Policy-

Cumulus adopted the policy in mid-August mandating that all employees be vaccinated against COVID-19 ahead of the company’s previously announced

return to work date of Oct. 11, or what CEO Mary Berner has called the company's "grand reopening." All employees must have received their full dose of one of the available vaccines by Sept. 27 – two weeks prior to the scheduled return date.

This headline perhaps sums up the situation –

Univision Adopts Vaccine Mandate. More Broadcasters Expected To Follow Suit.

And that's exactly what they have been doing – on the 16th, Tegna, operator of KING and KONG TV in Seattle, told their staff that they have until November 12th to get the COVID vaccine as a condition of employment. That seems to be pretty clear to me.

Here are some comments that pretty well sum-up the situation that Broadcasters are facing –

Small radio companies that employ fewer than 100 workers aren't affected by Biden's new policy. And there will almost certainly be legal challenges to what some have condemned as "heavy-handed authoritarianism." However, if having a vaccinated workforce becomes the new 'standard of care' for businesses defending against lawsuits from employees claiming to have caught COVID-19 at work, it does put pressure on all broadcasters, including those with less than 100 employees, to seriously consider their policies as well.

With many workforces deeply divided on the issue of vaccine mandates, the President's announcement provides some legal cover for larger businesses implementing mandates. And the four radio groups that have done so already have permitted exceptions on medical or religious grounds. "The courts have generally upheld such mandates as long as these escape valves are in place,"

The situation remains fluid with new developments on the COVID front almost daily. And while some station owners want to stay clear of the controversial issue and are hoping that most of their employees decide to get vaccinated on their own, that may no longer be an option. It is becoming increasingly difficult for business owners to stay uninvolved, as there will be employees on both sides of the issue—those that don't want to be required to get vaccinated, and those that are appalled that their employer is asking them to come back to the studio without ensuring that everyone they encounter there will be vaccinated,

Staying out of the fray is not possible.

There is one area that Broadcasting is receiving poor reviewsIt's where Radio talk-show hosts are on the air supporting the Anti-Vaccine movements. These people frequently quote sources that are in agreement with their position. Many of these appear to go out on a limb to

attract attention. Unfortunately, there are many that apparently would rather get their medical advice from someone 'On the Radio' than their Doctor thereby giving Radio a bad reputation.

This headline should give those that follow that path some pause -

Conservative radio host who spurned vaccines, mocked AIDS patients dies of covid-19.

Here's how that story read -

Timothy Bella 8 hrs ago

For years, Bob Enyart used his conservative media platform in Denver to mock those who died of AIDS by name or call for women who receive abortions to face the death penalty. Recently, the radio talk-show host — who had [successfully sued the state](#) over mask mandates and capacity limits in Colorado churches last year — joined a chorus of conservative voices who have [bashed the coronavirus vaccine](#) and vowed to stay unvaccinated.

The Story continued –

Enyart is at least the fifth conservative radio talk-show host to have [died of covid-19](#) in the last six weeks after speaking out against vaccinations and masking. The others are Marc Bernier, 65, a longtime host in Florida; [Phil Valentine](#), 61, a popular host in Tennessee; Jimmy DeYoung, 81, a nationally syndicated Christian preacher also based in Tennessee; and Dick Farrel, 65, who had worked for stations in Miami and Palm Beach, Fla., as well as for the conservative Newsmax TV channel.

Perhaps, in time, we will come to learn how people like this have influenced their listeners to make bad decisions that led to their demise? As I have stated in the past, I have to believe that the legal profession will see opportunities here.

Many things have changed

The Broadcast Industry has, since this all started, made a number of changes that will change the way things function, perhaps many of them, permanent?

Many Radio Stations have, traditionally, relied on promotion departments that were engaging listeners with all means of events. The Pandemic changed all that with this kind of activity being shut down.

Just like other industries, working at home has become normalized. I can imagine how some of the managers I've worked with, over the years, handled this one. You know the kind...The ones looking at the time people show up in the morning etc. Many of them were convinced if they could not see you....You were goofing off and not

working. A very high percentage of people who have not been going to the office, want it that way forever.

Another winner in this process has been what has been called Central Casting (or other terms) TV has been doing this for some time with centralized master control operations have handled multiple stations. This has resulted in many stations becoming un-manned during weekdays periods and on weekends.

Radio is doing the same thing, to various degrees. In some cases, a station may only have a 'live and local' morning show with the rest of the day being 'Voice Tracked' or with the talent located In a far-away location.

All of this would not have been possible had it not been for the internet, and compression schemes, that have permitted Audio and Video content to come from afar at a price that stations could afford.

Here's a look at this issue in various categories -

Private Industry

We are witnessing a lot of 'you do it first' taking place....

How the airlines react to this is interesting for a couple of reasons. This business was severely impacted by COVID as people stopped flying. They have had to deal with how to get passengers back by requiring masks. That has not always gone smoothly with some of their customers with some reacting, at times violently, to the idea that they had to wear a mask while on board. The result, the fines for being defiant have been increased.

Then there is how to deal with their employee's ...One by one, the airlines have been 'ramping up' their efforts to get their staff vaccinated with ever increasing pressure. A lot of industries are watching how the airlines approach these issues with, justifiably, great interest. United appears to be one of the leaders recently stating that 97% of their employees were vaccinated and indicated those that refused would be let go.

Amateur Radio

I received this notice on the 15th underscoring that this issue is not just something that involves private industry.

Subject: Spokane HAMFEST

As folks are beginning to hear last evening the Spokane HAMFEST committee made the very hard decision to cancel this years Spokane HAMFEST and state convention. It was a decision

we did not take lightly and one we felt was the best for all concerned. We will be working hard and looking forward to seeing folks at the Spokane HAMFEST on Sept. 24, 2022.

Government Action

Efforts in many areas to try and get this thing slowed down via increasingly restrictive rules, regulations have not been met with the degree of success that many had hoped.

One thing that is clearly frustrating many is the percentage of people that don't want to get vaccinated. These people appear to be standing in the way of us winning this battle. For a while...Incentives were tried (The carrot approach) when those efforts feel short, the next approach (The Stick) became necessary...Hence, we are increasingly hearing the word Mandate.

Government, at all levels, Federal, State and Local are getting involve with this issue in ways that, not long ago, would have been seen as impossible. The question is what are they going to do with our hospitals being filled with un-vaccinated patients to the point that they are forced to turn away people suffering from other issue?

Perhaps one of the most followed stories involves the WSU Football Coach who is, apparently un-vaccinated. It just so happens that he is also the highest paid person on the State Pay-Role making more than the Governor.

Here we are seeing a growing number of restrictions, rules, regulations and – that dreaded word- Mandates. The un-vaccinated view this as government over-reach and dictatorial. This is resulting in individuals, unions etc. suing state and local governments...And, in some cases, States suing the Federal Government. All of these leading to having the courts determine what is to happen.

This process is, of course, being followed closely by the Media with a lot of air-time, and ink, being devoted to this topic presenting facts and not radical opinions.

Sports Venues

One by one, the operators of venues where games are played are announcing their regulations.

All fans age 12 and over planning to attend Kraken games, concerts or events at Climate Pledge Arena will need to show proof they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Fans will also be required to wear a mask.

Exemptions by questionable means

Many of those that don't want to get vaccinated are looking for means to get out of it.

One of the ways is the Religious Exemption. And waiting to fill the bill, for a price, are pastors of some churches.

This headline came from the Washington Post –

This pastor will sign a religious exemption for vaccines if you donate to his church.

The pastor – Jackson Lahmeyer in Tulsa Oklahoma. Here's a portion of the article in the Post –

Lahmeyer said he is not anti-vaccine, but he has already had the virus and believes that people who are infected with it can be treated with medications like ivermectin, which is used to treat parasites in humans and horses. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says ivermectin should not be used to treat or prevent covid-19.

So not only are people getting misleading information from the pulpit but are able to get an exemption for a price.

Then there is the Chiropractor that will write you a 'Medical' ExemptionOnly problem is Chiropractors are NOT medical doctors.

Again, the exemptions are very likely to become legal battlegrounds.

Sarah Pulliam Bailey 12 hrs ago

The Insurance Industry

We are now just starting to hear from the Insurance Industry as they come to terms with the fact that the un-vaccinated are, statistically, more expensive to take care of than a person that chooses

to be vaccinated. This means that the un-vaxxed cost the insurance companies more and may well be paying higher premiums. No different than is the case with other forms of insurance.

The Print Media

The Print Media is also doing its part to inform, and, in some cases, offer opinions that are, what I feel, are spot on. Kudo's to Danny Westneat. In the event you don't read his column, let me share some portions of one of his recent writings –

In Idaho. Hospitals in northern Idaho are so flooded with COVID-19 patients that the state has declared an emergency, called “crisis standards of care.” It means when you show up to the emergency room, you may get treated based preferentially on who is most likely to live.

“If your mother has a heart attack, someone will have to assign her a point score designating how likely she is to survive,” the Idaho Falls Post Register wrote, describing the scheme last winter when it was first being contemplated. “If it isn't high enough, she might not get an ICU bed, and a COVID patient will get it instead.

“We will ask the nurses and doctors who've broken their backs trying to save us to make that Sophie's choice over, and over, and over.”

This past week the 200-bed hospital in Coeur d'Alene had 218 patients — so many it was treating patients in hallways and running out of oxygen to help them breathe, The Associated Press reported.

“What about the people who need emergency care but, because of the exploding COVID crisis here, can't get it?” asked the Coeur d'Alene Press. “Do we just let them die?”

The answer to that is: “Yes.” Letting them die is actually the plan. The GOP governor of Idaho said it was “an unprecedented and unwanted point in the history of our state.” But he made no moves to try anything else, such as requiring vaccinations for anyone (he earlier had banned the governmental use of “vaccine passports” in the state). It's a red state, and so for the most part they're letting the virus rip and run.

Remember years ago when a tea party debate audience cheered the idea of letting someone without insurance die? What's happening in Idaho is even worse because it's so preventable.

Doctors in Idaho have said their COVID-19 patients are almost all unvaccinated. “We don't have any vaccinated patients here,” an ICU doc in Boise told The Associated Press. “Misinformation is hurting people and killing people.”

Idaho ranks last in the percentage of its population having at least one dose of coronavirus vaccine, at only 45%. The U.S. is about 63%; Washington state 69%.

The main hospital in Yakima is seeing a record number of COVID-19 patients, almost all unvaccinated. They're raising the specter of rationing care there, too — something the chief medical officer said has never happened at the hospital.

"I sure hope we don't get there, but that's where we're heading," he warned in The Yakima Herald-Republic on Wednesday.

When I wrote last week about a COVID-19 skeptic and anti-vaxxer who had died of the disease, asking whether society should care, I heard from a slew of readers furious because their own medical care is being delayed or cut off — a diffuse version of the triage going on in Idaho.

"Am I angry? You bet I am," wrote Mike Morrissey, of Snohomish, who says his cardiac surgery has been put off indefinitely due to a flood of COVID-19 patients. "My heart is failing without intervention. I can't walk a block without stopping. But their choice [to not get vaccinated] just negated my urgent need."

Echoed a nurse at a regional hospital: "They're dying of stupidity by choice, but at the same time taking up space in the hospital and displacing stroke, cancer and cardiac patients."

"Do I care what happens to those who won't take a simple step to end this nightmare?" asked reader Jon Kraus, who said his brother-in-law had a surgery to fix a painful back condition put on hold due to COVID-19 levels. "I'm tired of catering to people who don't care about anyone but themselves."

This is why Gov. Jay Inslee and President Joe Biden suddenly feel more comfortable mandating the vaccine for groups of workers and businesses. Yes, the right-wing flank of the GOP will sue, march around in tri-corner hats and scream at their local school boards. But people are *done*. The vaccinated — the majority in most states — have had enough.

Now, as the workplace vax wars rev up, the best point to keep in mind is offered up by reader Michael Andreoni:

"Who I DO feel sorry for are the medical personnel who have to deal with this mess," he wrote.

It's the story of our time, how a pandemic that was visited upon us, through no fault of our own, ended up morphing into such a self-inflicted wound for America. We willingly did it to ourselves.

Then there is Media Bias

I don't mean the type that you may first think of....What I am referring to is the bias toward running bad news in preference to good news. As I learned, long ago, if a newspaper only put good news on their front pages, they wouldn't sell many papers. Face it, we expect the media – In all forms- to bring us the bad news first.

Do we see or hear any stories about the zillions of vehicles that travel our areas freeways...never. But have one wreck (Like the recent one in Auburn with the wrong way driver) and it's wall to wall coverage.

Do we hear about all the passengers that safely arrive at their destination via train? (Nope) but that wreck in Montana was a big story.

And so it goes with just about every event – INCLUDING COVERAGE OF THE PANDEMIC!.

Do we hear about the 'Majority' that have been vaccinated? Nope, just stories about those tht have not.

Face it, we like to hear bad news. In the case of Covid-19, perhaps that's a good thing as it scares many into getting their shots?

And, of course – There is plenty of Mis-information

How about this headline ?

Ivermectin poison control calls triple in Washington, despite multiple warnings against use for COVID treatment

Demand for ivermectin has increased nationwide, despite warnings from multiple health agencies about the dangers of consuming it for non-FDA-approved purposes — which includes using it for COVID-19 treatment and prevention.

Over 88,000 ivermectin prescriptions were reported nationwide in the second week of August, an amount 24-times higher than the pre-pandemic figure, the Washington State Department of Health said in a news release.

Since last year, the Washington Poison Center has received a threefold increase in calls regarding ivermectin, said Dr. Scott Phillips, the medical director for the center. He attributed the rise in calls to misinformation.

Most calls were from people asking about ivermectin safety, though some calls were made from people who were recently hospitalized or were experiencing mild to moderate symptoms of poisoning, he said.

No severe cases resulting in death have been reported. However, it is unclear how many hospitalizations or deaths have occurred across the state in relation to ivermectin use because the Department of Health does not track that data, and local hospitals are not required to report those cases, said DOH spokesperson Frank Ameduri.

Though the drug is typically used for veterinary purposes, it is FDA approved to treat some parasitic worms, external parasites and skin conditions in humans.

And, finally, some of my thoughts

Near the end of the month – The Washington Post ran this headline –

YouTube is banning prominent anti-vaccine activists and blocking all anti-vaccine content.

As my readers know....I have been railing against misinformation for some time. Kudo's to You Tube for their action in removing the megaphone for those that, perhaps, have been spreading misinformation that has resulted in the deaths of many. Perhaps now is the time to ask the question – When are broadcasters going to do the same thing? We need to face the fact that many broadcast stations have been sitting by and letting misinformation and conspiracy theories continue all in the name of free speech. Is it time for broadcasters to stop their contribution to this crisis?

Could it be that those that have been getting their medical advice from You Tube or Radio talk-shows might now be deceased as a result?

It appears that those that are refusing to get vaccinated are the ultimate gamblers willing to put their life on the line. According to Seattle & King County Public health

Those that are un-vaccinated are 49 times more likely to be hospitalized for COVID-19 They are also 32 time more likely to die from a COVID-19 related illness.

Some politicians come out with some gems - ***"The average hospital stay for a case of COVID-19 costs about \$17,064. The vaccine is free,"*** said Jayapal in her Aug. 30 Instagram post. Hat's off to her.

Why is it that those that are opposed of getting vaccinated (a Medical-Procedure) are (apparently) wanting a medical team to save them when they fear for their life?

Why aren't there protesters demonstrating against the Anti-Vaxxers objecting to the fact that they might die from something else due to the hospitals being clogged with the un-vaccinated? Where are the law-suits when a person dies because they could not obtain medical treatment because of this mess?

Has not part of the problem been confusing and often conflicting information? Looking back, would we in the U.S. been better off had this issue been handled on a national basis instead of having different states approach the matter differently? Perhaps with one-organization providing us with information about masking, social distancing, closures, mandates etc. Think of the confusion where state-lines are very close. Want an example? Look at the difference between Washington and Idaho in terms of vaccination rates.

In the event you think this is a U.S. problem....Think again. I was recently talking with a person in a Canadian Province (Not B.C.) who explained they were vaccinated, and their spouse was not. They went on to explain their decision was based on political rather than medical reasons.

Now to end this with some good news !

[Merck says experimental pill cuts worst effects of COVID-19 \(apnews.com\)](https://apnews.com).

Other than COVID related events –

On September 2nd I received the following email from John Price regarding Gary Hart.

'Gary passed away this morning at 5AM. His wife Elaine called. Cause was dementia plus multiple myeloma'



Many of us have stories about Gary....My turn-

Way back in the last century (when I got started in this business) When a radio or TV station wanted to broadcast from somewhere other than their studio...We contacted the Telephone Company to provide them with the facilities to make it happen. Pacific NW Bell, or PNB comes to mind. Back in those days I was working in Tacoma radio and we had a go-to-guy that would, despite the odds and short notice, always make it happen. His name was Jim Renny. Occasionally Jim would mention his counterpart in Seattle...A guy named Gary.

Fast forward to the 80's when I made my move to the 'big city' to the north and built new studios for KBSG. I quickly learned of Gary Hart. Interestingly the first time I heard his name was from one of the gals in Marketing when ordering a broadcast circuit (called Radio Loops) when I asked a technical question, they would quickly respond with 'I'll talk with Gary Hart' and get back to you. These were certainly the good old days when the Telephone company had people who worked in Seattle and whom you could have lunch with – Some names come to mind (with perhaps wrong spelling) Betty Carrie, Wilma Kilde, Frank Coffee and, of course, the guy that took the order from marketing and made it happen, Gary Hart. After you placed the order, the matter was in Gary's capable hands. Often, he would call you to ask a question about where you wanted the 'loop' terminated. Gary understood what you did with their facilities like no one else. He took each of these circuits personally and would, in some cases, be on site when you arrived just to make sure. Gary knew where every piece of telephone wire was in the Seattle area (without having to do some research) All that 'Plant' was his baby. His personal touch and vast recall enabled him to, constantly – Pull the rabbit out of the hat. And make it happen. There are legendary stories of his handywork involving the boat races and many other events.

On the other side of Gary was his love of Amateur Radio. Gary, known to many as W7WWI was one of first ones to put a 2-Meter Repeater on Cougar Mountain.

When Gary retired a few years ago, he left a huge void. The Company, by now, had changed names a few times, was never the same and became something cold and distant. Gone was the personal touch by a person that made the term 'customer service' mean so much to so many. Perhaps he knew that the work he did would be put out to pasture with the advent of cellular systems and it was a good time to 'hang it up'.

Gary retired to the vicinity of Rochester (South of Olympia) where he would continue to have summer picnics to meet his old friends. Thankfully, John Price lived near by and was able to be of significant help as Gary's health declined. A group of us would meet for breakfast prior to going to the Puyallup Flea Market – Often Gary was there with that big smile and warmth that made all that knew him love and respect him. To say the least, Gary touched many hearts and has left a lasting memory with many.

I know that many have left comments about Gary on the SBE Chapters Remailer – Here are a couple I picked up to share with you

FROM JOHN PRICE

My longtime friend Gary Hart passed away this morning at 5AM. The cause was dementia plus multiple myeloma. His wife Elaine called me with the news. Gary had been living at the Hampton Alzheimer's Special Care Center in Tumwater since October of 2020. He was born on April 26, 1940 and was a navy veteran. I first met Gary in early 1979 when I was just starting as CE at KAYO 1150 when it was on 2939 Fourth Avenue South in Seattle. I remember calling him multiple times over the years saying in jest 'we're off the air' and he'd get a big kick out of it. I last talked to Gary in May. Elaine said that he didn't recognize anyone anymore, and she's glad he's in a much better place.

One of the greatest honors I've had was to work with Gary on putting together and then later driving him up to KIRO TV on October 9, 2019 for a presentation we did together for Chapter 16. We called it 'The 4th Network-a conversation with Gary Hart.' This attached picture of Gary was taken in September outside his house on Littlerock Rd. south of Olympia. In prior years Gary and Elaine would have BBQ cookouts at their place. Gary loved to cook burgers and talk with all the guests. Topics ranged from his time with the phone company, collecting and distributing wood for his Church's wood mission and of course ham radio. Gary's call sign in my mind will always be W7WWI.

Rather than have me fill the rest of this post with my memories of Gary, please post yours. Even though he disliked computers, I'm sure Gary will be glad to read what you have to say.

FROM DAVE RATENER

I'm sorry for your loss John. I also knew and liked Gary he was great. Rest in peace Gary.

FROM AUTHUR WILLETTS

I had the pleasure of having Gary install a circuit for me a little over 15 years ago. I knew of him prior, but you never get to know a fellow until you work with them. I was impressed by his good nature and congeniality. A true asset to the Northwest's broadcasting history, as he knew what it took to get a station's signal to travel over POTS.

I did not know he was suffering. I will remember his big smile, high spirits, and friendly attitude.

FROM TIM SCHALL

This hit me like a gut punch. I am so very sorry to hear it.

KING 5 will be flying the new antenna for our ATSC 3 station on our Queen Anne tower sometime tomorrow. I've written the following on the base:

Gary Hart, W 7W W 1/SK

April 26, 1940

September 2, 2021

A friend to Seattle

broadcasters

The same antenna will also be carrying a memorial to my own Father who passed away last February and, like Gary, provided me with encouragement and mentorship early in my career.

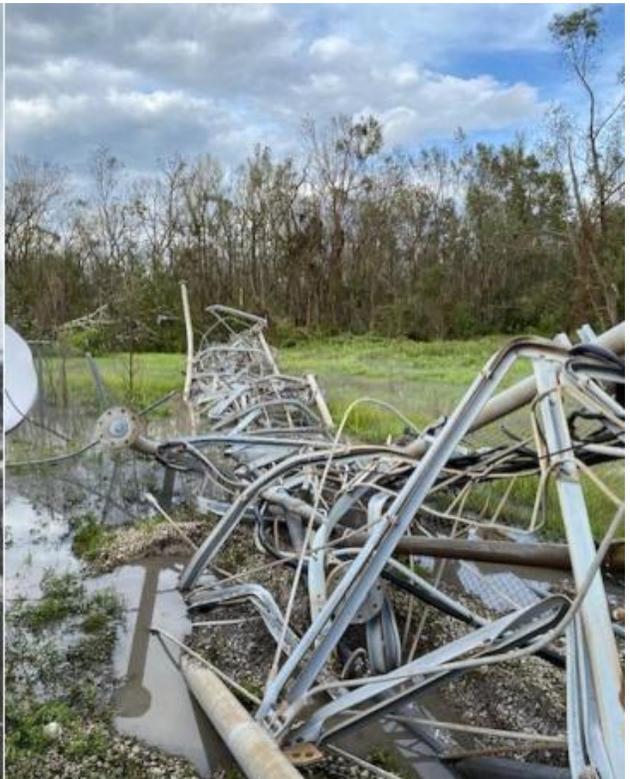
It is our honor to fly a small memorial to Gary on our new antenna.

FROM JON KASPRICK

I seem to recall first meeting Gary around 1978-79 when Green River was setting up lines for sports remotes around the area. Over the years, we'd chat about various technology. I always enjoyed his stories. Eventually, I came to realize how spoiled we had become to have such a supportive and dedicated technician/engineer providing telco support.

Weather-wise we had one of the longest and hottest, and driest summers on record. Hard to believe we only had .13 inches of precip. in 3-months. Unlike those to the south of us in California, we can count on our famous ran to return. And indeed, that's what happened. Around here we know that Fall is a shortened version of 'Rain-Fall'. About the middle of the month, right on cue, wham! It was windy and wet. Near the end of the month, I took the drive out to Enumclaw and was amazed at how wonderfully green things had again become.

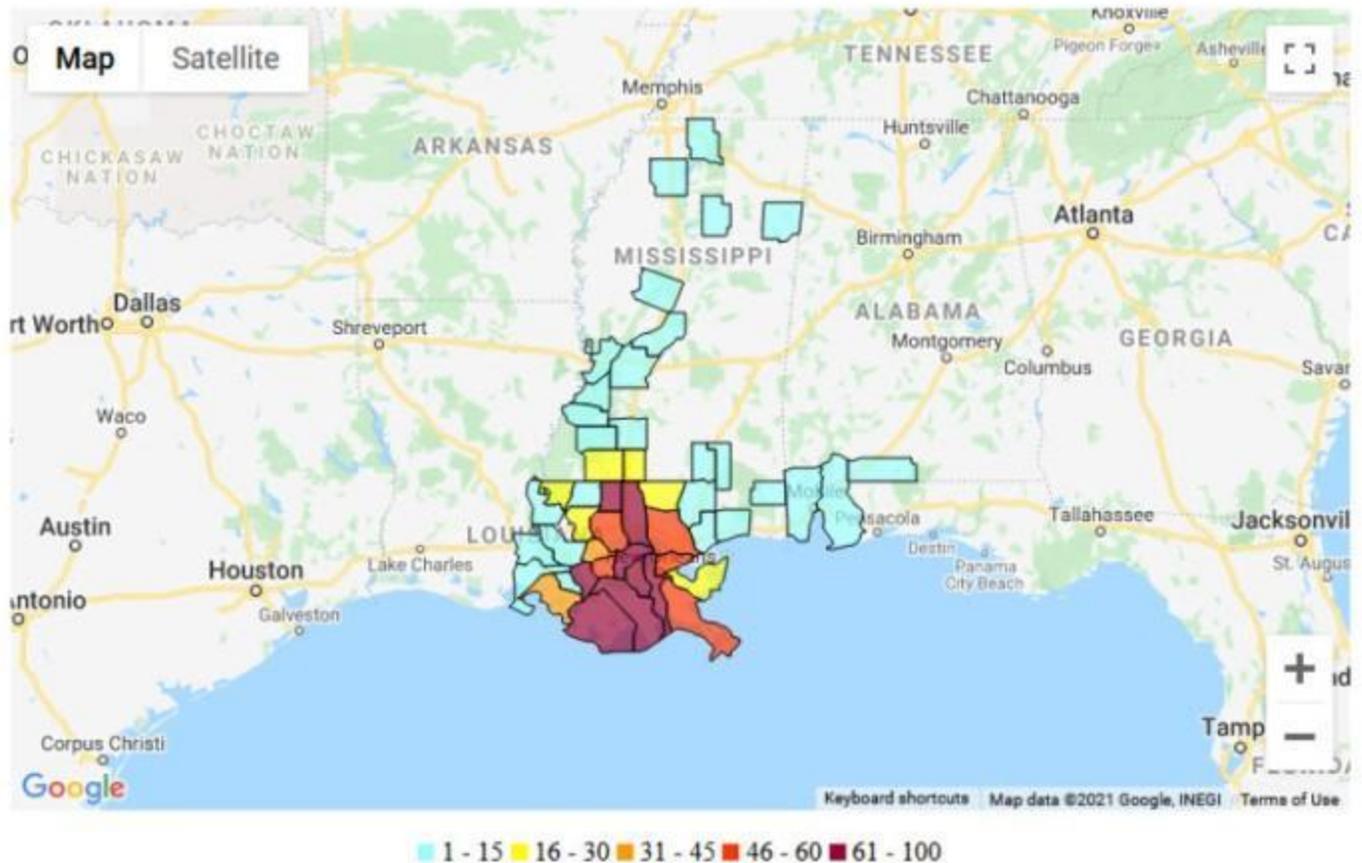
Back to the topic of rain- Hurricane Ida did a real number (again) on New Orleans knocking out power to the city for quite a long time along with forcing a number of broadcast stations off the air. In some cases, it took down some towers as the following clearly shows. If you are a broadcast engineer and venture out to the transmitter site to find out why things are not working properly....This is something that you don't want to see! In this case the storm removed all but about 150ft of the stations tower.



One of the reasons why broadcast stations are so important in times like this is because of the damage done to the Cellular Telephone systems. Here is a map from August 31 that shows the impact.

Percent Cell Sites Out-of-Service By County

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Most cell-sites (Towers) have generators with a relatively small amount of fuel. Then there is the fact that cellphones need to be periodically charged after which they become useless. With power outages running many days...Broadcasters, especially Radio, was the lifeline to information. One more time, WWL-AM came to the rescue as it did during Katrina.

Michael Patton operates a broadcast engineering service in that area and posted some insightful comments about IDA on a national remailer -

The only power to the NOLA area right after the storm was what individuals, businesses, and government facilities were able to generate on site. I'm told that today Entergy, the Deep South's main power utility, got a couple of small power plants in or close to the city online and are able to supply some power to critical infrastructure like hospitals, etc. That is a major sore subject locally, but that's another story. Entergy has crews here from as far away as Indiana (I talked to them); they say they have 20,000 pairs of boots on the ground. Still, I imagine there will be some serious grilling at the Public Service Commission meetings when this is all over.

This storm came up thru the largely (relatively) uninhabited swamps between NOLA and Baton Rouge. As bad as it is, if the path of the eyewall had been 20 miles to either side, the damage would have been truly catastrophic, dwarfing what we are dealing with now. We got lucky. Damn lucky.

New Orleans is almost an island; in addition to being bisected by the largest river in North America, a mile wide and as deep as 300 feet at places (and dredged to be 65+ feet deep in the channel all the way to Baton Rouge, 60+ miles upriver), it is surrounded by water: Lake Pontchartrain on the north, and swamps on all other sides. Well over half of modern New Orleans sits on land reclaimed from the swamps by levees and pumps, and only kept dry by that system. The pumps have their own power generation and distribution system, old and creaky, but running the pumps as I write this (and their engineers worked non-stop to get the crucial but ancient Turbine #6, which had been offline for ages, spinning with only hours to go Sunday - true heroes). All the power used in this major city (about 50th in population, the size of Nashville, Memphis, and Louisville, for comparison) is generated elsewhere and brought in via EHV lines that run from power plants across the lake (30+ miles) or across the river from a nuclear plant that's 20 miles upriver from downtown, plus other smaller coal- and NG-fired plants. Most of you have heard by now of the failure of the EHV tower crossing the river; that is a serious stain on Entergy's stewardship of their system.

WWL has a very impressive array of backups. First, at their main site, a mile on the west side of the levee about 10 miles SW of downtown, they have a 50 KW main and a 10 kW backup TX. That site has not one but two generators, and a fuel tank large enough to run the plant at full power for a month. At that site, in addition to the DA array, consisting of twin 500 ft towers with huge anchors (rebuilt/replaced after Katrina's winds literally dragged the old ones out of position by several feet(!), either of which can be switched to run Non-D, they have a longwire that can handle 10 kW. Then they have an EMP-hardened 10 kW backup site, just completed, that is dplexed in with their sister station WWWL (no, that's not a typo), located just across the river from downtown. This site has its own backup generator and large fuel tank, as it's designed to outlast the end of the world (as we know it) for at least a month, so we all have plenty of time to kiss our xxxx goodbye. Unlike most if not all of the other EMP-hardened backup facilities FEMA has been sprinkling around the landscape (with some help from us and others), WWL cut a deal to be able to use this site if they need it. At the other FEMA backup

facilities, the local station has no access to the hardened backup for commercial purposes, only after the apocalypse.

WWL-TV, not co-owned, is another impressive transmitter facility. Located on the West Bank a few miles upriver from downtown, it is almost a fortress, complete with backup generators, studios, and even living quarters for the staff. The whole thing is elevated, and it can sustain its crew and broadcast facility with zero outside infrastructure for a month, as long as the air remains fit to breathe.

"We finally taught her, that it takes a lot of water, to wash away New Orleans"

The FCC operates a Disaster Reporting System where Broadcasters and Wireless Carriers can report on their status after major storms like Ida. This are now considering making use of the system mandatory as the follow from Bloomberg explains -

As Hurricane Ida in the east, wildfires out west and severe winter weather in Texas have demonstrated, there is no shortage of natural disasters that challenge the nation's communications system. The Federal Communications Commission is poised this month to open a rulemaking that would look at ways to improve the reliability and resiliency of communications networks during emergencies.

While the focus is primarily on the wireless networks and the 9-1-1 infrastructure, the FCC is also examining its Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS). The voluntary system is often activated during a natural disaster to give the FCC and other emergency response teams a status report on where things stand. But the FCC thinks improvements could be made. That includes looking for steps that could be taken to encourage broader voluntary participation during disasters.

In a draft of the proposed rulemaking ([PS Docket Nos. 21-346](#)), the FCC says one of the ideas that it is looking at is making filing DIRS reports mandatory. It is a change that it acknowledges would be significant. "We recognize that a proposed requirement to file in DIRS must be balanced against additional burdens on service providers, particularly as DIRS reports are filed in the midst of disasters and other emergencies," it says. The FCC says it would need to explore whether it has the legal authority to require DIRS filing, what the benefits of doing so would be, and what penalties it could use to enforce any failure to do so.

The proceeding also looks at whether local radio and television stations have a larger role to play in helping communities prepare for natural disasters, such as through the airing of public service announcements. That includes potential requirements that wireless carriers

make better use of local media to help consumers prepare ahead of a disaster, and to keep their customers updated after an incident knocks service offline.

“With wildfires still raging in the American West and Hurricane Ida’s historic devastation from New Orleans to New York, the need for resilient communications infrastructure has never been more apparent,” said Acting FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel. “Today, the rain has stopped, the winds have subsided, and the storm surge has receded. But Mother Nature’s wrath is sure to visit us again. That is why we are fundamentally refreshing our playbook for disaster preparedness and resiliency,” she wrote [in a blog post](#).

Filing reports with DIRS has not been a top priority for radio along the Gulf Coast in the wake of Hurricane Ida. The FCC’s daily reports have only included updates from fewer than 50 stations about whether they were on the air or not.

Interesting story about Delilah, who is heard here locally on 94.1, purchasing the radio station, KDUN, on the Oregon Coast where she got her start. The station is an AM operating on 1030. According to published stories, the physical plant was upgraded in the process. Just good to hear of someone having interest in investing in AM radio these days.

While I’m writing about AM’s....I was driving through Everett on Sept 10th and noted that 1230 was not on the air. Anyone know what’s happening there? This station has long been broadcasting Korean programming. I believe they simulcast on 1450 in Puyallup.

ZoneCasting is hoping to get the FCC to approve their Single-Frequency Network system whereby FM Boosters could broadcast certain items on their own. Geo-Broadcast Solutions have been around a while. Busto’s Media has been using their system with a number of boosters in the Seattle area on 99.3 for their KDDS. Not everyone is in favor of the proposal, including NAB and several state broadcaster associations. Many eyes are watching this one.

Once again, the Hackers are at work, this time with a cyberattack from Russia against Marketron who operates systems used by many broadcasters.

One of the more difficult things for a broadcast engineer to explain is the Coverage Map. The FCC allows you do use certain signal levels in creating these maps, depending on

whether the station is AM, FM or TV. The problem is that many look at these lines (Called Contours) and, from them, develop expectations as to how any given receiver will perform.

For example –

Why can't I receive the station where the map shows there is signal?

Why can I receive the station outside of the area shown?

How far away can you receive the station?

Over the years I've had to explain that there are a number of variables in play here. Not sure that it helps, but the FCC has come out with something that addresses this issue.

They simply state 'RF propagation maps don't stop at the contour line, and the contour line doesn't guarantee reception'

<https://www.fcc.gov/media/radio/general-info-fm-tv-maps-data>

A bit dated.....I found this email from Jack Ondracek back on August 10th while clearing out my Junk Mail folder....None the less – Interesting to those that maintain transmitting equipment and what can happen should someone decide that they wanted to steal some copper....

2 nights ago, an attempt was made to pull the coax, sample lines and control cables out of the entry ports at KDYK, Union Gap. The effort resulted in pulling over the transmitter, control rack and phasor. They were found, leaning against the wall at a 45 degree angle. The transmitter was found in this position, still running.

It was probably a good thing the equipment was that close to the wall. If it had gone completely over, I expect the damage would have been much more severe.

Other than the wiring, the worst of it appears to be to the phasor control panel. As the cables were being yanked out, they tried to extract the panel backwards through the rack. We had new panels stamped by Kintronic, and it looks like that will be the extent of repairs to that component.

The perpetrators tied a tow strap to the cables and pulled them out of the building with a Suburban, destroying the entry ports, some concrete blocks and damaging the door frame.

They pulled 100 feet of the cables out, going toward the towers before being stopped by a satellite dish pole. Were it not for the pole, the next obstacle in their way would have been the guy wires, supporting 2 of the 3 towers.

We're now replacing everything... RF, sample, power and control lines. This time, everything will be buried!



The following signs come to mind –





Appears the 97.7, KOMO-FM-1, Booster in Tukwila for KOMO-FM is no-more with it's license and call letters deleted. I assume this is part of the change in ownership of KOMO Radio to Lotus. That deal closed the last week of the month. Time will tell what the new ownership will mean for these legacy stations.

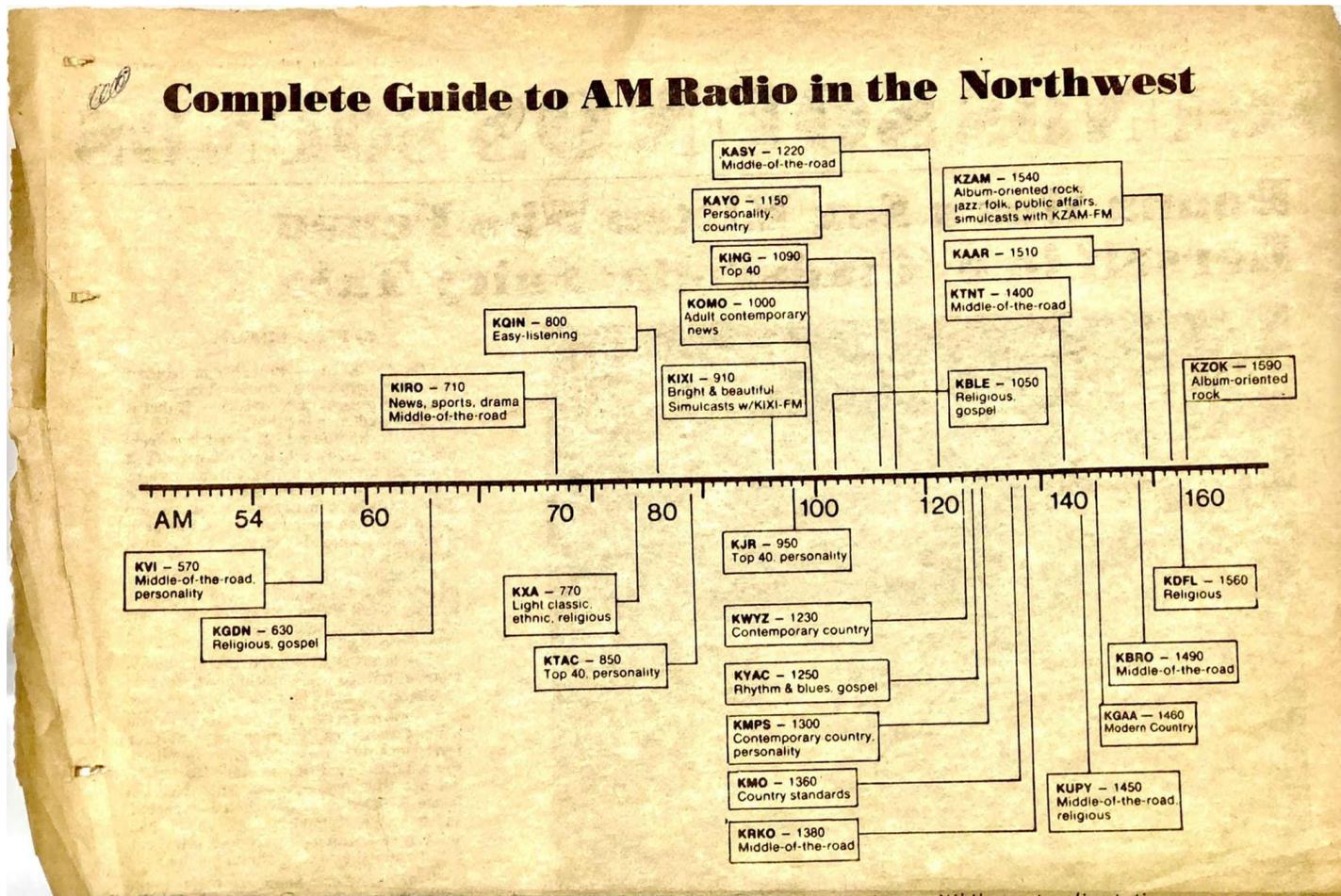
Here's a factoid for yah – The Earth Isn't Exactly Round- It's actually shaped like an **Oblate Spheroid** (Test your kids with that one)

The Country Music Association, CMA, has announced their awards finalists. A Seattle station made the cut -

Radio Station of the Year Finalists include in the category – Major Market

- KNIX Phoenix (iHeartMedia)
- **KNUC Seattle (Hubbard)**
- KYGO Denver (Bonneville)
- WNSH New York (Audacy)
- WXTU Philadelphia (Beasley Media Group)
- WYCD Detroit (Audacy)

While browsing around recently I ran across this item -



Starting with the Call letters that are now gone-

Above the line – **KQIN, KASY, KAYO, KING, KZAM, KTNT, KBLE** and **KZOK**

Below the line – **KXA, KTAC, KYAC, KMPS, KMO, KDFL, KBRO, KGAA** and **KUPY**

Anyone have a guess when this was accurate?

Then there is this listing from a local newspaper for KRSC (Now KING) from 1948.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1948.

KRSC-TV Program Log

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25

1:45 p. m.—Opening Ceremonies.
2:10—Football: West Seattle High vs. Wenatchee, from Memorial Stadium.
5:15—Lucky Pup.
5:30—Devil Horse, Chapter 1.
5:50—Cartoon: Romeo Monk.
6:45—News digest.
6:55—Weather.
7:00—Face the Music.
7:15—Paris Fashions.
7:30—To the Queen's Taste.
8:00—People's Platform.
8:30—Film: Air Power Is Peace Power.
9:00—Television Playhouse: "Street Scene," starring Betty Field.
10:00—Off air.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26

10:00 a. m.—Test Pattern.
1:00 p. m.—Demonstration shows
2:00—Test Pattern.
5:15—Lucky Pup.
5:30—Devil Horse, Chapter 2.
5:50—Cartoon: Jolly Of London.
6:00—Test Pattern.
6:45—News Digest.
6:55—Weather.
7:00—Face the Music.
7:15—Places Please.
7:30—Doorway to Fame.
8:00—Star Theatre.
9:00—Boxing: From Jamaica Arena, New York.
10:00—Off air.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27

10:00 a. m.—Test Pattern.
1:00 p. m.—Demonstration shows
2:00—Test Pattern.
5:15—Lucky Pup.
5:30—Devil Horse, Chapter 3.
5:50—Cartoon: Red Riding Hood
6:00—Test Pattern.
6:45—News Digest.
6:55—Weather.
7:00—Face the Music.
7:15—Musical Miniatures.
7:35—Short Subjects.
7:40—Weekly News Review.
8:00—Western film: Texas Marshal.
9:00—Wrestling: From Jamaica Arena, New York.
10:00—Off air.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28

10:00 a. m.—Test Pattern.
5:15 p. m.—Lucky Pup.
5:30—Devil Horse, Chapter 4.

5:50—Cartoon: Outboard Stunting.
6:00—Test Pattern.
6:45—News Digest.
6:55—Weather.
7:00—Face the Music.
7:15—Places Please.
7:30—Feature Film: Inside the Law.
8:30—This Week's News.
8:40—Short Subject.
9:00—Television Playhouse: "Camille," starring Judith Evelyn.
10:00—Off air.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29

No programs scheduled.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

No programs scheduled.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

10:00 a. m.—Test Pattern.
1:00 p. m.—Demonstration shows
2:00—Test Pattern.
5:15—Lucky Pup.
5:30—Devil Horse, Chapter 5.
5:50—Cartoon, Custard Pies.
6:00—Test Pattern.
6:45—News.
6:55—Weather.
7:00—Face the Music.
7:15—Places Please.
7:30—Winner Take All.
8:00—Stop Me If You've Heard This One.
8:30—Film Shorts.
9:00—Notre Dame vs. University of Washington.
9:20—Feature Film.
10:20—Off air.

ENLARGE
YOUR
TELEVISION
PICTURES

When was the last time you could find TV program listings in the newspaper? When was the last time you could find a listing for a Test Pattern? When was the last time KING-TX signed off, much less at 1030 PM? Note how there were no programs on Monday and Tuesday!

The FCC was not happy with a little LPFM Station(WAWL-LP) in Grand Rapids Michigan that was running underwriting announcements that sound a bit too much like full blown commercials. The Commish asked they contribute some \$17,500 for that one. So how did the FCC learn of this? They were tipped off by a commercial broadcaster in the market.

I recently received an email from WDFW Public Affairs. At first, I thought it was a broadcast stationReading on I discovered it was the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. I did check and could not find WDFW listed as an AM, FM or TV Station. This is in the same category as KCLS which is the King County Library System

Yes I do get mail – Here's one -

Hi Clay,

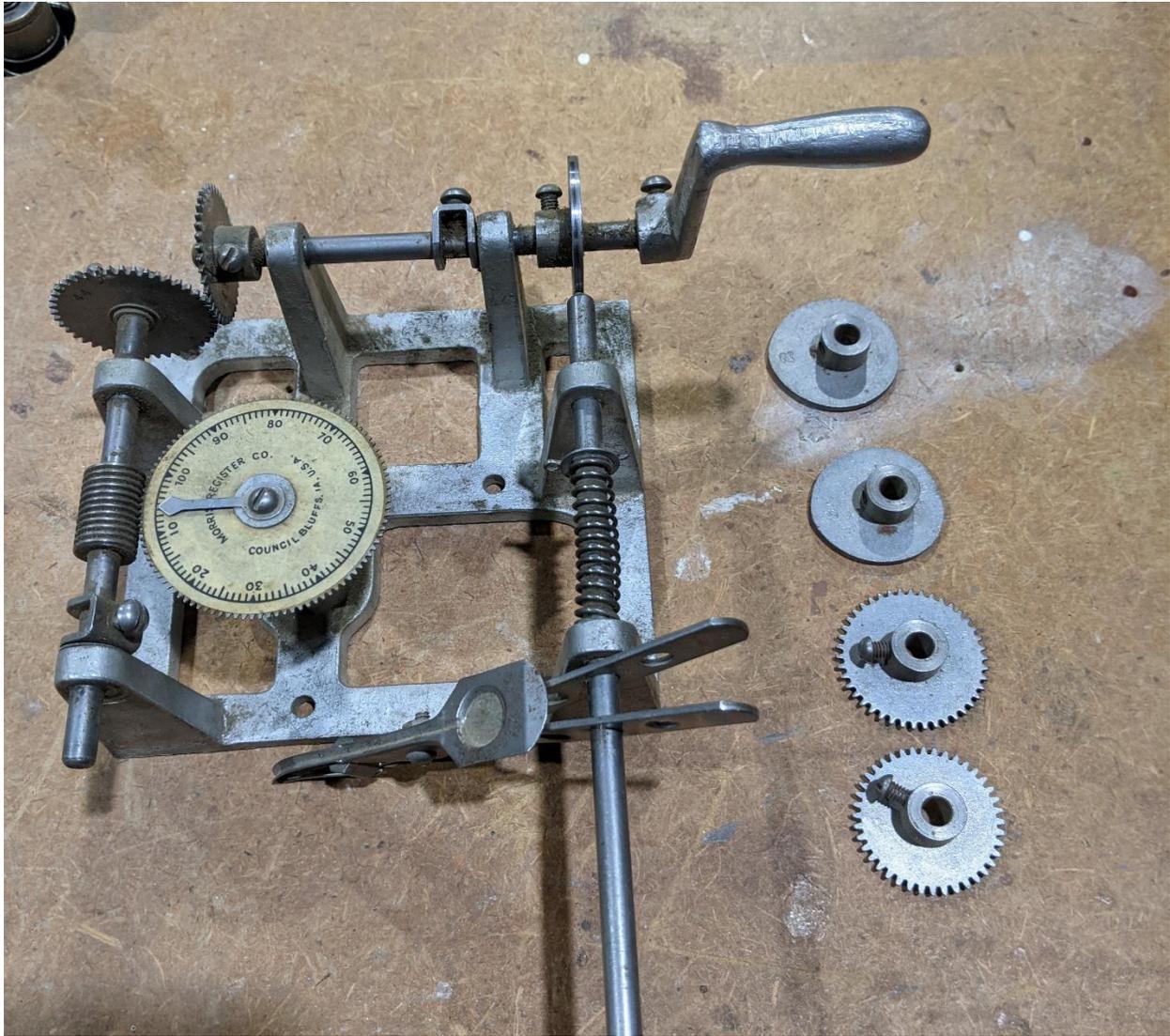
I can't remember if I sent this to you previously. I thought you and your waveguide readers would enjoy this attached pic of one very dedicated tech I met in Las Vegas.

Erik Utter



This month I'm going to do something a bit different – A quiz...

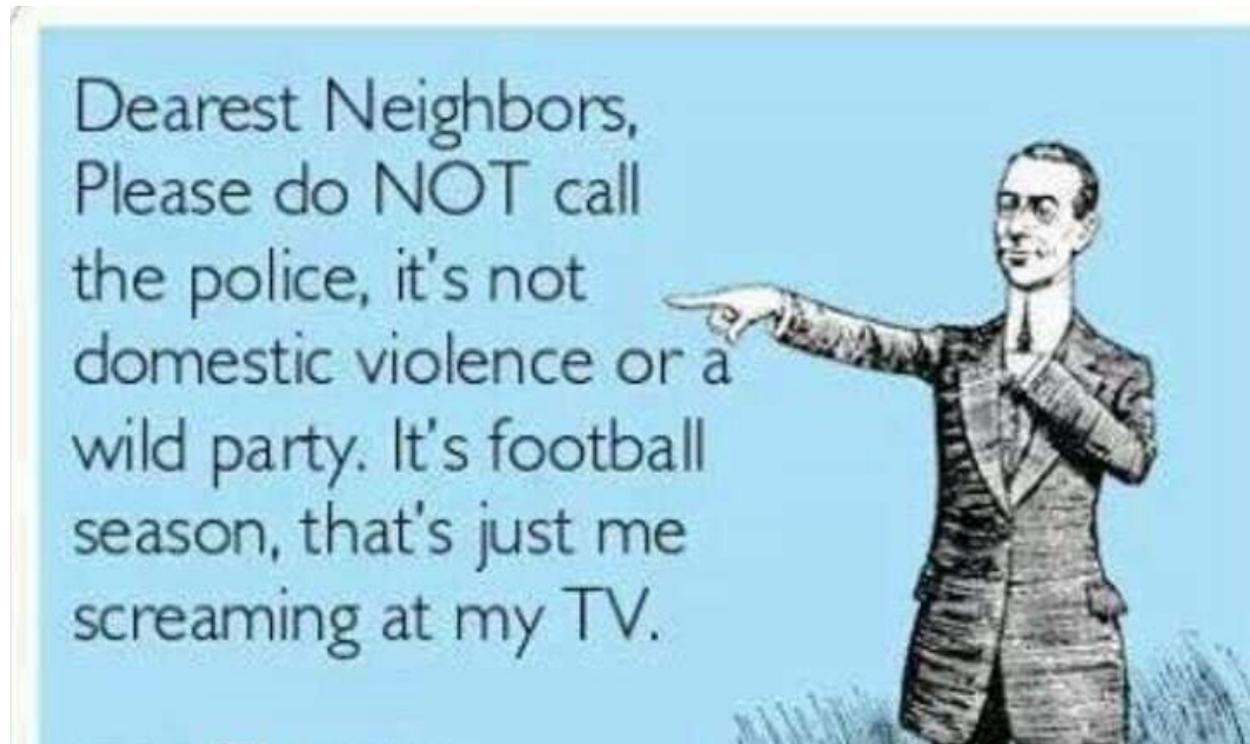
This item was found by a friend – Can you tell me what it is?



While over at KWSU in Pullman recently I got this one of Jim Boothby in front of a legacy RCA transmitter that was once on the air there. Yes, those are vacuum tubes inside !!



And in time for Football season -



If you are un-vaccinated....You know what you should do.

Hope to catch you here next month -

Clay, K7CR, CPBE

A SBE Fellow

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