

The Grid Leak

September—October
2011

www.hvra.org
(Color GL on web site)



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**MEGA
Auction
September 24
8:30 AM
Bayland Park**

From The President.....

As the blistering hot, dry, dog days of summer continue down here on the Texas Gulf Coast; and most of the State of Texas, we pray for cooler temperatures and most of all; rain! With fall within sight, our annual fall mega auction is now only weeks away, so now is the time to seriously think about buying and selling. We still have quite a few items from the Bob Wood Estate and from a private collection in Lake Jackson. If you are in the market for radios from the 1920's along with vintage speakers from that era, make plans to attend now, you won't regret it! September is also the month for our annual election of officers. I know this requires a few hours of your time each month, but your willingness to serve keeps HVRA alive, so please consider accepting a nomination during the election September 24. I know we always desire to have the main auditorium available for our spring and fall mega auctions, but that has become a "hit and miss affair" with the competition for meeting space. From my perspective, we are simply out-numbered by the senior ethnic group that meets there the same Saturdays as we do, but require the main auditorium to accommodate their sheer numbers. Despite the competition we will persevere and adapt to one of the other meeting halls as we have done in the past if the main auditorium is not be available.

We will have regular Saturday meetings at Bayland August, September, and October; but none in November or December due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays when the center closes. Our monthly programs are fun and the auctions have been surprisingly large with some really great finds that one would expect to see only during a scheduled mega auction. As I have said before, don't shun our monthly meeting auctions – you may well miss that buy of a lifetime!

During the last year or so, people have inquired about the resumption of the HVRA Basic Electronics Classes. The late Bob Wood, myself, and Reid Shipp taught a number of classes over the last decade. If you have any suggestions on specific items you would like to have taught, please let us know so we can plan a future curriculum. Finding a suitable location to hold these classes, other than the Bayland Community Center's library, has been a challenge. However, there is a possible location other than the Bayland Center in southwest Houston that I will be looking into. I would also like to know what kind of time schedule would be preferred and if Saturdays should be targeted as in the past. Sunday afternoons may also be a possibility for some whose work schedules conflict with Saturdays, should this facility become available. In closing I ask that you promote HVRA, pass out our business cards, promote our web site, and invite people to attend our meetings. Remember, if we fail to grow – we die, just like a neglected plant in this Texas drought. Bill W.



Bill Werzner , HVRA President

September Meeting Election & Fall MEGA Auction

Mark your calendar for Saturday morning, September 24 for HVRA's annual fall mega auction. Bayland Community Center's doors will open at 8:00 AM for this big event.

At 9:00 our annual election of officers will precede the short general meeting and auction, so we will be looking for volunteers willing to accept nomination to our board of directors for
Vice-President,
Secretary,
At Large Position 2.
Grid Leak Editor

Our current secretary, Al Kocian, has requested a leave from his long time duties as club secretary and we will need someone to fill his position. As a board member we expect you to attend monthly Board of Directors meetings held the second Tuesday evenings of each month and regular Saturday meetings as well.

For the MEGA auction we will have some really nice vintage radio items from the Bob Wood Estate along with a collection of 1920's era AK's, horn speakers, etc., from a large private collection. There will be tubes, parts, test equipment, and who knows what else. As always, coffee, juice, donuts, cookies, and snacks will be available. See you in September!

Dates to Remember

**HVRA-VRPS Swapmeet
Nov. 5—Grapeland TX**

**HVRA Christmas/New Year Party
Sat., January 7, 2012**

**HVRA 2012 Convention
February 10-11, 2012**

A Little Lifestyle Cleaning

(or why do I still have a storage room filled with old radio stuff?)

By Tom Burslem

Underpaid Grid Leak Reporter

Well, I've had this storage room for over 10 years. Enough radios and amps and consoles to open a used junk store combined with remnants of my last wife's old dishes, towels, pictures etc. So great to go thru those old boxes again...I mean I am truly concerned about any old towels and used pillow cases after 9 years. My color scheme in my bathroom was needing more mauve color...right. So great to think of her again... straight into the trash bin they went. If only my memories with her could be erased so easily...like reformatting a disk drive...I digress once again...

But I just kept adding stuff, one year into the next. Stuff I liked. Stuff I wanted. Stuff I was gonna fix. But I had to do the math; after they sent me another price increase notice I have paid enough to have made a small car note in radio rentals.

Also my unit was broken into about a year ago. The light was still on when I inspected the unit and nothing was stolen. There's gotta be a clue there...not even one thing missing by a semi professional crook...my unit probably scared them to go straight...not much money in beat up ol radios. I wonder how long he or they spent going through all my boxes of chassis, old clothes, tools, tubes, etc. Glad at least my old fisher receivers were left untouched. Perhaps there is a strong, less than subtle, message that most people don't give a rat's ass about old radios...

So I got a bunch of my stuff in my home office now-sorting it out. My Pioneer 4 channel with built in scope bit the dust when I tested it...somehow the front panel was damaged in transit...too many switches involved and now the tuning dial won't turn...too much work for too little money. But I played with my Sansui Integrated Amp circa 1972 and hooked it up to my little Baby Advent speakers. Very clean, very crisp sound. But the indicator light didn't work. Drives me crazy when one little thing doesn't work. So I went a head and found a 47 bulb and cleaned all the pots while I had the cover off. I put the model number on Google and someone more nerdy than me has a web site and claims my unit "had the best sound ever; just like tubes". It validates my good taste. Right? But it is amazing how clean it sounds. A whopping 32 watts per channel. Now I know why I kept it. Right. Like I need validation from the Internet?

And the number and quality of the speakers...the 3 way Wharfdales. The Heathkits, Altec Lansing, the homemade with the 15 inch woofers; but the wood is real and the craftsmanship impeccable. You can't even buy these hardwoods anymore, that I know of. All these newbie yuppies with their plastic subwoofers can stuff it. Give me studio monitor Wharfdales any day of the week...

I pulled out my newest garage sale purchase- a circa 2002 Denon AVR 1802 5.1 surround sound receiver. Thought there might be some intrinsic value to this 45 pound beast. Put it on my workbench for testing...picked up some static and the tuner had stopped working. The amp section was fine. So I removed the cover and sprayed the contacts with an electronic cleaner...some of the solder

joints had rust spots. I don't remember too many older radios getting rusty...must be a cheaper grade of solder. You'd think for the price new (\$650.00) that they might use an additional \$1.00 worth of solder? I reheated a few spots on the pc boards. Put everything back together and it ALL came back to life. I felt like a hero again. But then I got on EBay and discovered this unit was selling for 40 bucks plus shipping. For that price I'll just keep the damn thing...It is weird to see what I guess are new values. I mean could you imagine when we were kids if something that originally cost around \$650 would be worth so little in ten years? In perfect working order? Imagine the McIntosh amps I could've owned when I was 17...Oh well... I brought my monster Wharfdales into my office and set up a couple of speaker switches at eye level. My wife fusses that my office is supposed to "look professional" but sometimes she just has to "deal with me". Imagine that? A stubborn old guy like me?

Old stereos is who I am. It's totally me to switch from my Baby Advents to my "bookshelf (right, with 12" woofers)" Wharfdales. But alas, it's time for a completely subjective amp test. My old 1972 Sansui vs. this Denon 5.1 rated at 80 watts per channel. After 4 hours of subjective listening I'm going with the Sansui. The old tone controls with the step up/down Bass and Treble sounds sharper, cleaner and deeper. I realize my ears can't hear like a 20 year old anymore but so what? I like what I like...was I biased? Of course! But I really thought it would be an exact match...that somehow the "Jazz" setting or "Matrix" setting or "Rock Arena" setting combined with about 60 more watts per channel would sound better. Ha! You try it.

I had to blow the dust off and see if my favorites were still king. Even though the caps had been replaced it had been about 4 years since I've played my babies-the Dynaco Pas 2 pre-amp with the Stereo 70 amp. So I fired them up slowly with my variac. After a brief warm up, the same music was played. My head bows down to my old favorites. Perhaps it's the slight distortion, or just the humidity in the air, or the carpet in the room. Who cares? Why question perfection...it just doesn't get any better than this. I have been to the mountain...

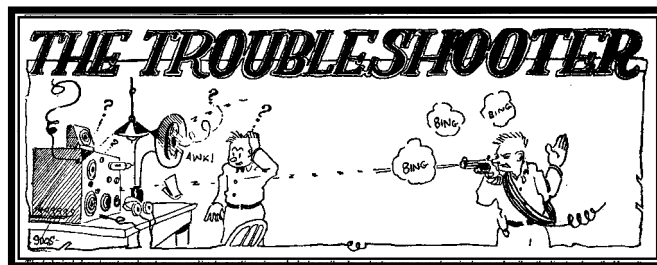
So all my storage stuff 10 X 20 made it home.

No doubt I am a professional hoarder. Fortunately, my wife still saves old wrapping paper so we are a perfect match... I guess we just need a bigger house. Ha!

Anybody need an output transformer for a Dynaco 70? Turns out I've 3 extras. Seems I need one about every 20 years...at least I got my stuff outa my storage bin...

Fixing a Majestic Model 15 Grandfather Clock Radioand Keeping My Sanity

By Bill Werzner



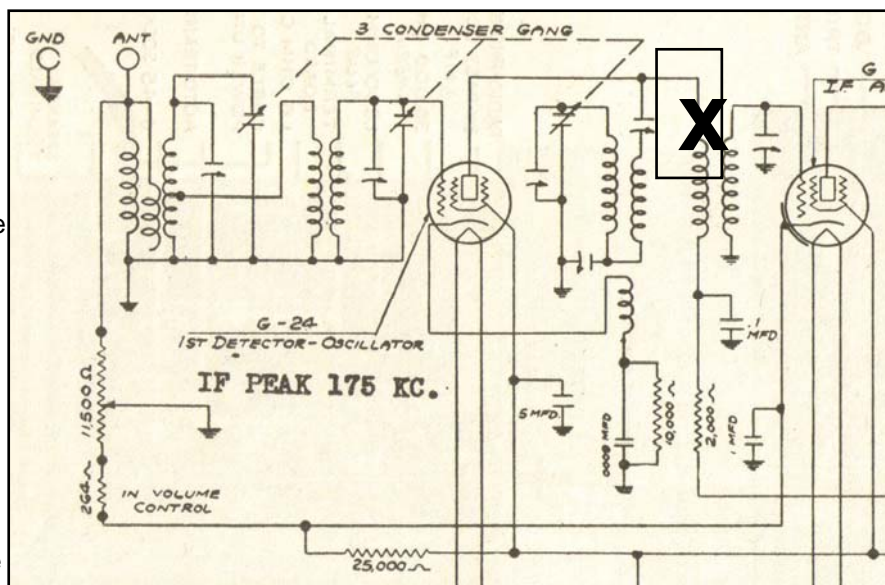
Whenever I hear that old refrain “it’s got trouble in the front end”, my blood runs cold. But when I hear it from long time club member and radio repairman Andy Lee, I want to run away and hide, and when he says “I’ve given up on it, can you give it a try?” I need a couple bolts of Jack Daniels to suppress suicidal thoughts.

In over fifty years of repairing radios, this one gave this old guy a real challenge. The problem was indeed in the front end as no plate voltage was present on the plate of the #24 converter tube. Take a look at the oscillator coil and first i.f. in the diagram (fig.1). They are all together within the same coil metal can. These are, and I kid you not; a coil, within a coil, within a coil. The 175 KHz i.f. coil was mounted in the very center, and was about the diameter of my little finger. My son Konrad checked the internet for information on this particular radio that was an integral part of a beautiful 1931 Grandfather Clock. What he found was bad news from those who had attempted to service one of these monsters. I looked at the bottom of the coil assembly before removing the metal cover. Yes, the knot of wires coming out of it was intimidating just looking at it! I began to hum the theme from the Gary Cooper western movie “High Noon”. “I do not know what fate awaits me, I know I must be brave, and face the radio that hates me, or lie a coward in my grave.”

So as not to depart this earth a coward, with tools in hand I disassembled the coil assembly and removed the open i.f. coil that was mounted with a screw inside the oscillator coil assembly. That coil was tightly wound and coated with some kind of hardened resin that gave it the texture of a Cambrian era fossil (see photo fig. 2). To repair or rewind it was out of the question, but there had to be a way out of this predicament. The closest I had ever come to this kind of problem was about thirty some years ago when I had to duplicate a 177.5 KHz coil from a 1936 Ford truck radio. Our late HVRA member Red Edwards told me to add 100 or so pF to each trimmer capacitor of a common 262 KHz coil from a 1950’s era car radio and give it a try. Red was one of the old time radio experts and an active member in the very early days of our club. Red said, “you will sacrifice some gain as the Q factor will change, but on an old set it won’t be that critical.” Yes, Red was correct and the Ford radio played like new when I finished with it.

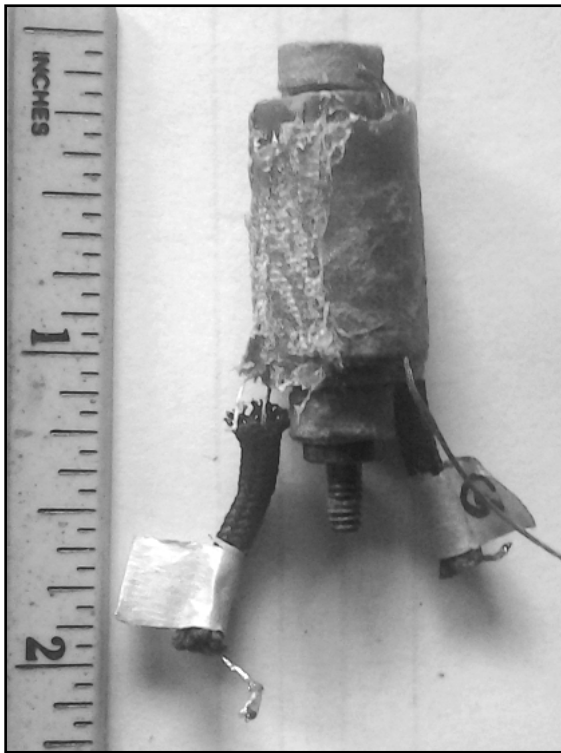
Would Red’s technique work on this Majestic 15? I was about to try it.

Digging around in one of my recyclable resource boxes of radio parts, I found a nice miniature 262 KHz i.f. coil from a 1950’s something auto radio. Taking it apart, I checked the silver mica capacitors for the notorious black plague, of which there was none to be seen. After a few tests on the bench with my signal generator and oscilloscope, I found that by adding 150 pF capacitors I could achieve resonance at 175 KHz by adjusting the powdered iron core slugs (see fig.3). Next came the big test! I wired the new coil in under the chassis by mounting it from a conveniently positioned metal bracket that had held one of the vintage capacitors. I turned the set on – nothing but a slight hum came from the speaker. Had some evil gremlin taken up residence, or had I done something wrong in rewiring the front end? I poured over the set and re-viewed the schematic. A modulated 175 KHz input at the antenna produced a loud 600 Hz output in the speaker. My voltmeter showed a low negative DC voltage on the grid to the cathode of the #24 – yes, the oscillator must be working, but it was “stone cold dead” as far as any station pick up. Hmmm an im-

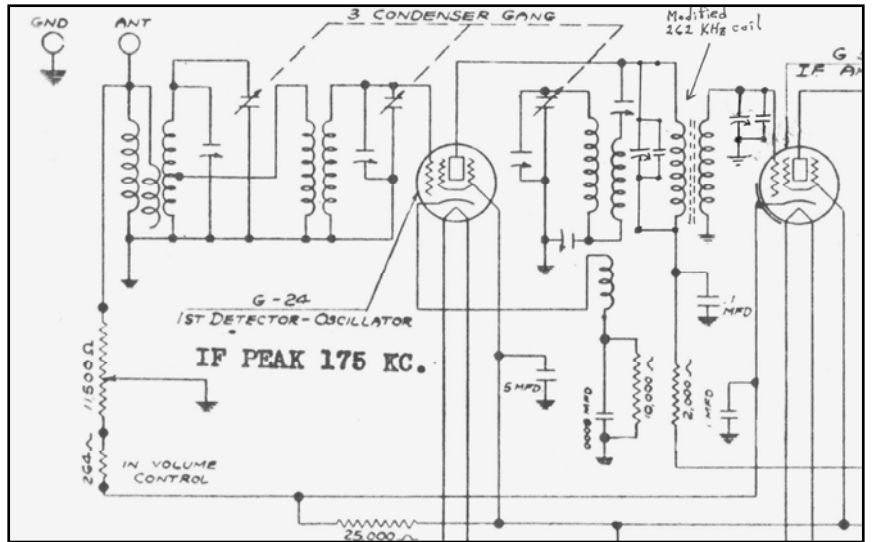


(fig.1)

Grunow model 15 “front end” letter X indicates an open in the i.f. coil’s primary winding. Note the complex antenna coil assembly that is mounted inside another metal can.



(fig.2)
Photo of defective i.f. coil



(fig.3)
"front end" with modified first i.f. coil showing added 150 pF fixed capacitors to both primary and secondary producing resonance at 175 KHz from signal generator.

portant clue! Ouch! I shot myself in the foot! Take a look at my modification in fig. 3, and see if you can spot the mistake I made. Clue – it's in the modified i.f. coil circuit.

When a coil and capacitor are wired in parallel and resonance is achieved, all signals pass through, but the tuned resonant frequency sees high impedance. You see, one coil of that i.f. unit has to act as the mixer where all the incoming frequencies are combined together, the secondary coil is tuned to the differential frequency 175 KHz. This is a part of the first detector. I removed the capaci-

tors from the primary coil, re-assembled it back into the can, turned the radio on and Rush Limbaugh nearly blew me across the room. Return to fig. 1, and picture a fixed mica 150 pF capacitor wired in parallel with the trimmer on the secondary winding – that is the finished product! So, if you're ever confronted with a front end problem like this in a Majestic model 15, now you know what to do. The Red Edwards i.f. coil solution works, so Red, if you're up there looking down on me – many thanks once again; and by the way do you remember that prohibition era flask of "cough medicine" you used to carry when we used to meet in the museum basement many years ago? Ah yes, that cough medicine got me through many auctions back then, but driving home; I doubt I could have passed a breathalyzer. Anyway that was sure good tasting "cough medicine."
Good luck and watch out for stray Coulombs. Bill W.

HVRA Officers

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 Webmaster: Steve Casciola, 18507 Park Harbor Dr., Houston TX 77084; 281-578-2609; casiola@prodigy.net
 Grid Leak Editor — vacant

52 nd Annual Science and Engineering Fair of Houston

HVRA plans to become a Patron Sponsor in the annual Houston Science and Engineering Fair that will be held next spring in the George R. Brown convention Center. As you are all aware, our American students are woefully deficient in math and science. Here is your chance to get involved in a big way, not only promoting science, but HVRA as well. We need to somehow get the younger generation interested in electronics and science in general. Becoming a sponsor in the science fair we will gain exposure to many thousands of people throughout the area as never before. As a volunteer judge in the fair, you have the opportunity to meet and talk to these youngsters from sixth grade through twelfth, and offer them encouragement in these fields of technology. If you can spare one day in your yearly schedule to volunteer for this worthy cause, please contact any HVRA Board of Directors member. The fair needs judges and additional information about the science fair will be made available during our monthly meetings.

Richard Collins' Collection to be Sold in February – 2012

Many of our senior members will remember Richard who served as an HVRA officer and Board of Directors member for quite a few years. Following his death, his family sold Richard's large tube and parts collection during one of our annual convention auctions, but chose to keep his rare phonograph and radio collection along with a number of his vintage records. With the residence in Sugarland, TX for sale, the family decided to offer Richard's phonograph and radio collection to be sold during our convention auction in February 2012. Watch our web site as photographs of his beautiful collection become available in the coming weeks. This collection currently fills a 10 by 20 foot storage unit which will be made available for viewing upon request as time permits. No sales from the storage unit will be permitted prior to the Feb. auction, however sealed bids will be accepted ahead of time that will be applied at the time of the convention auction for competitive bidding. To make an appointment for viewing the Collins collection, contact Bill Werzner, (713) 721 – 2242.



Beautiful
Radiola
Model 67
Radio-Phono

Collin Estate
- will be offered
at the HVRA—
2012 convention
Feb. 10-11, 2012

(one of many)

The Grid Leak— 6

HVRA Meeting Contests

October 22, 2011 Radio Conversion Contest

Hey'— this is a new one! Here is your chance to try out that solid state substitute for the coveted rare and expensive 1L6 converter tube used in many collectable Zenith Transoceanic radios. Or, perhaps you might try a solid state conversion of an audio output stage that requires an expensive power tube. What about converting a tube rectifier section to solid state? Yes, I have done that a few times, but also show and tell us how it worked for you. There are diagrams available for the 1L6 solid state conversion, but that may require a little research on your part. If you are really gung ho, then try for a whole radio – that should really keep you occupied and out of trouble!

Rules: Conversion may not use commercial solid state replacements.

Original radio chassis must be converted to work without tubes.

Demonstrate operation of radio on all bands.

Explain the design

Meeting attendees will vote to determine winner.

2012 HVRA Convention Old Equipment Contest

Featured Manufacturer--Admiral

Awards:

Best of Show*

Peoples Choice*

Best Restoration* (must have support documentation)

New Contestant

New for 2012 —

Radio drawing for contest participants.

**Along with trophy/ribbon a cash prize will be awarded
(in the form of a gift card)*

Contest Categories posted on HVRA web site

Buy, Sell, Trade, & Services Offered

Huge collection of Sams from Vol I on! Also included are seven or eight file cabinets filled with these collectable volumes from a closed out radio TV repair shop. Call or e mail Andy Lee at www.radiomanL@verizon.net

Radio & Phonograph Sales & Repair including vintage auto radios, battery sets, foreign sets, etc. We also sell and service vintage tele phones and telegraph equipment also parts, new & used tubes, transformers, schematics, books, phonograph parts & needles, records, etc. Vintage Sounds – celebrating our 24th year in business. Open Fri., Sat, & Sunday from 10 until 6 PM. Now located in The Market Place Antiques, 10910 Old Katy Road, in Houston (Located just west of The Room Store on the north side of the Katy Freeway). 10% member discount on radio items.

Borden Radio Company website: <http://www.xtalman.com> Antique Radio Schematic Service included in website. Crystal radio kits for sale. (281) 620 - 6692

Sargent Auction Service: www.sargentauction.com | Jim@sargentauction.com Jim Sargent, WA5QBR, Auctioneer | TX license 16135 | 200 Thomas Rd, Granbury TX 76049

Paul Wishnow, Certified Appraisals – for insurance, estates, divorce. “The Antique Man” can be heard Sunday afternoons 1 – 3 PM KNTH Radio 1070. Office at 5615 Richmond Ave., Ste. 145 in Houston. Phone (713) 666-2222 or go to www.theantiqueman.com

EPO Electronic Parts Outlet, New and surplus electronic components, come by and check out this incredible store! 3753 Fondren Road, Houston, TX 77063. Go to www.epohouston.com

Tom Granger Restorations, radio and phono cabinets. (281) 338 – 8277. wwwtomgranger@mac.com

Seen on
American Pickers

HVRA—VRPS Swap Meet

Saturday, Nov. 5, 2011

Location: Cecil & Fran Miles home near Grapeland TX

Come see Cecil's Eclectic Museum—radios, cars, farm equipment, etc.

Food and drinks available

Watch for more details and directions

Www.hvra.org

HVRA Event Schedule:

Location for all events: Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, TX Coffee & snacks available at regular meetings.

Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011 Annual Fall Mega Auction & Election of Officers. Doors open 8:00 AM.

Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2011 Monthly Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM, .

Saturday, Oct. 22, 2011 Monthly meeting 9:30 AM program and auction

November, 5, 2011 Joint HVRA – VRPS Super Swap Meet, Grapeland Texas – Watch web site and “Grid Leak” for time and location hosted by member Cecil Miles.

Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011 Monthly Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM,

NO REGULAR HVRA MONTHLY MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011 Monthly Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM,

NO REGULAR HVRA MONTHLY MEETING IN DECEMBER – Merry Christmas!

Saturday, Jan. 7, 2012 Annual HVRA Christmas and New Year's Party, Monument Inn, La Porte, Texas

Fri. & Sat., Feb. 10-11, 2012 Annual Convention – three auctions and banquet. Greenspoint Marriott Hotel, Houston, Texas

Sargent Action Serv.—Presents

Radio & Phonograph Auction

Sept. 24, 2011

3630 Cavalier
Garland TX

Www.Sargentauction.com
Photographs posted on web site.



VRPS Convention

November 18-20, 2011

Hampton Inn, Mesquite TX

VRPS.org

RADIO TERM ILLUSTRATED



Amplitude

*Suggested by:
M. Kosinski,
Brooklyn, N. Y.*

The Grid Leak

Sept.—Oct., 2011

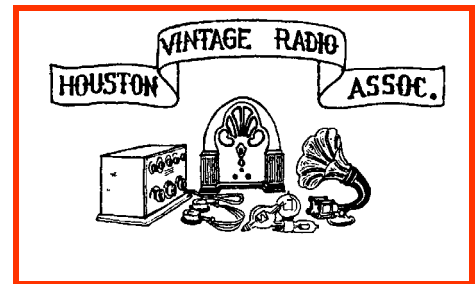
MONTHLY MEETINGS

Saturday, Sept. 24

Saturday, Oct. 22

Bayland Park, Bissonnet & Hilcroft

www.hvra.org



MEGA Auction

Sept 24, 2011

Bayland Park

Notice on renewing your membership!

Please check the expiration date by your name in the address of this newsletter. It should show your membership expiration date.