

# CQ de WA2LQO

Sixty Nine Years: 1944 -2013

*The official voice of the Grumman Amateur Radio Club*

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***Be sure to read the newsflash from the ARRL on page 4!***

## **How I Became a Ham (continued from May 2013)**

**By Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP**

*Synopsis: When I visited Lou Pascal W2LTQ to learn about Ham Radio, he said he had rented a store on the corner of his block and could use my help to set-up his Radio and TV business there. He told me that he could use me as an assistant and that opportunity gave me great expectations about learning his trade.*

I arrived at 6:00 AM on a Saturday morning. Lou unlocked the store. The wall boards had just been painted and were dry but the smell of fresh paint lingered. We carried stuff from Lou's fifth floor apartment to the store. This took many trips. I was then in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and weighed 99 lbs. I was a skinny kid but I was in good shape and could do a lot of running before I would lose my breath. I had to restrict my loads to less than 30 pounds per trip while Lou carried the heavy oscilloscopes and power supplies. The things that had to be moved included fragile vacuum tubes and CRTs. I could manage to carry one 10 or 12 inch CRT or one box of a few dozen tubes, per trip. I also carried lots of tools, books and manuals that Lou needed. I don't know how many trips I made between the apartment and the store but finally the moving job was finished. Then I began to help Lou make a gigantic work bench that was as long as the width of the store. Lou had all the wood he needed for the project but discovered that he had no crosscut saw. Lou asked if I knew where he could borrow a saw, but I had no large tools at home. I ran 7 blocks to my friend Marvin's house where his father was a duct work contractor and his cellar had all kinds of tools. Marvin lent me a saw with my promise that I would return it as soon as Lou was finished with it. I also borrowed some large clamps that I was sure would be needed and ran back to Lou's store with them. Together we made not only a work bench, with storage drawers, but shelves, to put TV sets on while they are being life tested. Lou provided me with a deli sandwich and a Pepsi at noon time and we continued working until about 6 PM when I ran back to Marvin's house to return the saw and clamps. Finally I returned home in the opposite direction, exhausted but proud of my accomplishments. I planned to return to the store the next day, on Sunday, to continue setting up, painting signs, etc.

My mother greeted me and served supper. She was not in a good mood. "Why are you helping this man? Is he going to pay you for your work?" she asked. I explained that Lou was going to teach me how to be a Radio and TV repairman and that would be worth a lot, but we hadn't discussed any pay yet. My mother was angry. "If he won't pay you, you can't work for him! Besides, you are too young and it is probably against the law to do so anyway." "You can go back to his store but tell him that you can't work without pay for him anymore. His is a profit making business. It is not a fun hobby. It is responsible work. You can't work all weekend anyway. You should be doing your school homework!"

I returned to the store Sunday morning, and contrary to my mother's advice, I began to work for Lou again. This now involved sorting out tubes, resistors, capacitors and other parts in bins where they could be easily found and painting signs and labels. There were already some TV chassis in the state of being repaired. Lou tagged them with the customer's name, address and phone number. Lou had wired the store so that there were plenty of electrical outlets, most of which were protected by their own circuit breakers. He also had his own TV distribution system set up, using a VHF TV antenna on the roof and line amplifiers and splitters. He used coax cable with transformers to match the coax to 300 ohms, which was the impedance of most of the TV

set RF inputs in those days. He showed me how to be an electrician and a cable connector. Around noon time Lou said, "Let's take a break." He led me to a drug store, which had a soda fountain and bought us both ice cream sodas (the kind with whipped cream and a cherry on top.) Lou said that he had given the matter some thought and he couldn't have me work with him permanently. First, he couldn't afford to pay me. Second, there was some danger in working with electrical equipment and lots of danger installing antennas on roofs. Finally, it was against the law for a kid my age to do such work. The tears began to roll down my face as I ate the ice cream that I fished from the soda! This was a great disappointment! Aside from which Lou had used me and broke his promise to make me his apprentice. .

Lou, however, did two things that did forward my career as both a ham and a Radio TV man. He had told Lenny Nachemov, W2DUP, about me and Lenny would pick me up at my apartment and drive me to meetings of The Bronx Radio Club. He also told me that if I was interested in buying radio parts wholesale, he would take me to his wholesaler, where professionals could buy stuff much cheaper than at Lafayette Radio.,

Throughout my life I look back on where I learned basic technologies. Working with W2LTQ was a valuable lesson and connecting with both hams and pros would also be important first steps.

I also learned something about the difference between amateur and commercial work. That difference has haunted hams since the beginning since much of what they do has commercial as well as amateur value. There is a lot of overlap...and to this day the FCC cannot easily solve some of the interrelated technologies that connect the ham world to the outside world of commerce. How much amateur equipment can a ham sell before he is to be classified as a commercial businessman? Can a ham volunteer to work in a hospital for nothing ...or as a ham operator, while being paid as a hospital worker? Should a ham charge another ham for repairing his or her radio or adjusting his or her antenna? Amateur? Commercial? All these gray areas. That is why there are two ARRLs: A volunteer non-profit organization, and a profit-making publishing company. The officers of each are listed separately in every issue of "QST".

(To be continued).

### **PRESIDENT'S NOTE by ED GELLENDER, WB2EAV**

I assume that you are aware that a couple of months ago Northrop Grumman announced that the largest two programs in Bethpage will be moved elsewhere within the next year or so. The E-2D program is to relocate to the Northrop Grumman facility in Melbourne, Florida during the summer of 2014.

Just to list the unanswered questions would take most of this newsletter, and there are no answers; only rumors. People who can find other jobs are bailing out, and every day new difficulties with implementing the move arise. On top of that no one has any clue what the Navy customer might do about the inevitable effects it is having on their program. Chaos is the order of the day.

Let me limit discussion for now to its effect on the club. Summer of 2014 we are supposed to lose access to both our on-site trailer and the Bethpage repeater location. It is time to start thinking about other options. I personally have no expectation to leave the area, but my site access can no longer be taken for granted, subject to either my actions or the company's. It looks to me like the club can remain viable without the company, at least for a while, but the repeater site is another story.

Remember, Field Day is June 22-23 as I described in some detail last month. We will be at Marjorie Post Park in Massapequa, and we will set-up Saturday at 10 AM in the building 200 feet west of the picnic gazebo.

Directions: Seaford Oyster Bay Expwy (NY 135) south to the very last exit for Merrick Road (NY27A), and proceed 3 miles to Unqua Road. Turns left on Unqua for 1000 feet and then go left into the park. Make another left and then a right to get to the large parking lot. We are in the building between the lot and Merrick Road.

*The May GARC General meeting was canceled due to unavailability of members; therefore the minutes of the May Executive Board Meeting are displayed here.*

**GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 5/8/2013  
By Karen, W2ABK**

The meeting was called to order by Ed at 12:10 PM

**PRESENT**

Ed, WB2EAV, Jack, WA2PYK, Ray, W2DKM, Dave, AB2EF, Gordon, KB2UB, Karen W2ABK

**TREASURER'S REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV**

Finances continue to be in good shape.

**REPEATER REPORT – Gordon, KB2UB**

Repeaters are working OK.

**NET REPORT – Karen, W2ABK**

Thursday night net at 8:15 PM on 146.745 MHz had 2 check-ins.

Thursday night net at 8:30 PM on 145.330 MHz had 3 check-ins.

Sunday morning net at 7:30 AM on 7.289 MHz had 2 check-in.

**VE REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV**

No VE Session this month, no applicants applied.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Ed, WB2EAV renewed the club's liability insurance for Field Day.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Field Day will be at Marjory Post Park on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.

**GARC NETS: 40 Meters: 7.289 MHz at 7:30 AM EST Sundays**

Net Controller: Eugene, W4JMX

**2 Meters (repeaters) Thursdays: 146.745 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:15 PM**

**145.330 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:30 PM. Tone for both repeaters: 136.5 Hz.**

GARC Net Controller Karen, W2ABK

**ARES/RACES NETS: Mondays.**

**MEETINGS**

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the third Wednesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM, at the Ellsworth Allen Park in Farmingdale. Driving directions and map can be obtained from <http://www.mapquest.com>. It is suggested that the GARC web site be checked to be certain of meeting location, which may change after this newsletter is distributed. Board meetings are held a week before the General Meeting at the Bethpage Skating Rink.

**WEBSITE**

The GARC web site can be found at <http://www.qsl.net/wa2lqo>. Webmaster is Pat Masterson, KE2LJ. Pictures of GARC activities, archives of newsletters, roster of members, and other information about the GARC may be found there.

## **BREAKING NEWS!**

**June 10, 2013 from ARRL director N2YBB**

*[Internet link of the month and Quiz will return next month]*

Recently, a bill was introduced in the New York State Senate that would amend Section 1225-d of the Vehicle & Traffic Law to exclude certain amateur radio station operators from provisions of law relating to the use of portable electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle. A copy of the bill, S5674-2013, can be found at [www.hudson.arrl.org](http://www.hudson.arrl.org).

Line 18 of this bill must be amended as it limits mobile use of an amateur radio to a declared emergency only. The portion of the line that reads "during a governmentally declared emergency" must be deleted! Ham activists have been in discussion with the sponsor of the bill, Sen. Jack Martins, and also with Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, regarding the bill and the need to correct it so that amateur radio is clearly exempted from any penalty while operating mobile.

Now is the time for constituent pressure. Please email these two legislators to let them know that you are a ham, and that federally licensed amateur radio operators should at all times have a clear exemption from VTL Section 1225d. Let them know that you as a New Yorker you are a constituent. Now is the time for us to stand up and be counted.

Feel free to use or adapt the following example:

*Dear ..... (fill in "Senator Martins" or "Assemblywoman Schimel")*

*I am a constituent and a federally licensed Amateur Radio operator. I, along with thousands of 'hams' throughout New York State, operate my radio from my vehicle. It has come to my attention that you have sponsored a bill to amend New York State VTL Section 1225d that will, amongst other things, exempt amateur radio use during a governmentally declared emergency only (line 18 of S5674-2013).*

*Please amend your bill to exempt amateur radio usage at all times. Clearly we provide communications assistance at all times and not just during a declared emergency. Besides providing communications assistance during a declared emergency, we have provided life supporting assistance as well as public service during non-declared emergencies too often to mention. By limiting us you will lose the valuable service mobile Amateur Radio operators provide all of the time.*

*Most often when an emergency exists no declaration is made. We provide assistance at all times, the exemption should be for the same.*

*Sincerely, (your name here)*

Email Assemblywoman Schimel's legislative aide at: [ridgecolee@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:ridgecolee@assembly.state.ny.us) and Senator Martins at: [martins@nysenate.gov](mailto:martins@nysenate.gov). Please email them today.

Also, please call their offices and let them know how you feel:

Assemblywoman Schimel's office: 1-516-482-6966    Senator Martins office: 1-518-455-3265

**GARC 2013 Officers**

President: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV M/S:X08-14 516-575-0013 edward.gellender@ngc.com  
or wb2eav@yahoo.com

Vice President: Gordon Sammis, KB2UB Retiree 631-666-7463

Secretary: Karen Cafalo, W2ABK 631-754-0974

Treasurer: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV (see above)

WA2LQO Trustee: Ray Schubnel, W2DKM Retiree

2 Yr. Board Member: Jack Cottrell, WA2PYK Retiree 516-249-0979

1 Yr. Board Member: Dave Ledo, AB2EF

1 Yr. Board Member: Jack Hayne, WB2BED

1 Yr. Board Member: George Sullivan, WB2IKT

**Newsletter**

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Editor: W2ILP 631-499-2214 W2ILP.RADIO@gmail.com

Contributing writers: All GARC members (we hope). To submit articles or ham equipment advertisements contact the editor. Articles will only be edited when permission is granted by the author.

**GARC Webmaster**

Pat Masterson, KE2LJ Retiree 813-938-4614 Pat-Masterson@tampabay.rr.com

**GARC VE Exams**

We normally proctor exams for all classes of ham licenses on the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM. The exams are given at Briarcliffe College, 1055 Stewart Avenue, Bethpage, NY in room: Long Beach #5. Ham Exams are: Element 2 – Technician, Element 3 - General, Element 4 – Amateur Extra Class. All applicants must pre-register by contacting Ed Gellender WB2EAV. Time and location of exams are subject to change. If there are no applicants VE sessions will be canceled. The fee for 2013 is \$14 for all exams taken at one sitting. New first time applicants should be aware that their Social Security Number will be required on the application form unless they register with the FCC for an FRN. Applicants for an upgrade should bring their present license and a photocopy of it. All applicants should bring picture ID such as a driver's license. Study material may be bought from the ARRL-VEC or W5YI-VEC <http://www.arrl.org> or <http://www.w5yi.org> All VECs use the same Q & A pools.

**Editorial**

The news that Northrop Grumman will move projects from Bethpage is not surprising. It seems that government projects are political footballs and are always vulnerable to relocation or elimination. There is no sure security in any job whether government or commercial. Any business can fail or move. Bad economic times can result in cutbacks while good times can result in expansions. Everyone wants to save money and relocating may seem to be economically or politically advantageous to those in authority. These decisions are not usually made by working engineers or technicians; they have the least say in their fate. That is because when you need a doctor, teacher or lawyer you must select one from your neighborhood. You don't care where airplanes or electronic systems are being developed, and neither do those who make the big decisions. Doctors, teachers and lawyers compete with the pros in their own neighborhoods. Engineers compete with the world! Some honchos might want to retire to Florida themselves and don't care where you might want to spend your retirement years.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

*Do Not Delay*

**MELBOURNE, FLORIDA**

When I read the Presidents message I understood that next year some engineers at Bethpage would be asked to relocate to Melbourne, and others might be excessed. So let me say something here about relocating to Melbourne. I lived there for almost two years on a temporary assignment for the J-STARS program and in some ways I am sorry that I did not permanently relocate there. I had volunteered for that job when I saw that there was a lull in the EA6-B ECM program at Grumman Calverton. The J-STARS program seemed more interesting and I was given all travel and all living expenses in addition to my regular salary. I rented a garden apartment in a community that surrounds a lake and has a large swimming pool. It was across the street from Wickham Park, where there were cultural events and nature trails. My wife working on Long Island and didn't want to come to Melbourne with me, so I commuted to Long Island on holidays and she came to Melbourne whenever she got off work. I had started to work at Grumman when the Collins-Rockwell Service Center at Lake Success was closed in 1980. At that time I was offered a job at the Collins Service Center in Atlanta, Georgia, which I refused. When my temporary assignment in Melbourne ended, I could be offered a permanent job there, which I might also refuse. I knew that I would have to make a decision because I could not stay in Melbourne with my temporary status and expense account and continue to pay for taxes and maintenance on my Commack home. I was called by my ex-boss at Long Island to return to work on the latest EA-6B configuration; which involved the level 2 diagrams and Principles of Operation that I had produced for an earlier configuration. I am now sorry that I did not sell my home on LI and buy a home in Melbourne. Instead I returned to the Grumman job at Calverton, which was ultimately a bad decision because the EA-6B program eventually halted and most of the people at Calverton were laid off. So let me stop talking about myself and tell you about Melbourne. I have nothing bad to say about Melbourne...but there is no room to continue all the good stuff that I have to report here, so I will continue next month with the report of what life was like in Melbourne for a Ham, for a IEEE member, for a salt water fishing enthusiast, for a guy who likes to eat many types of cuisine and to attend cultural events. In my opinion Melbourne has Commack beat year round in all these areas.

--w2ilp--