

# CQ de WA2LQO

Seventy One Years: 1944 -2015

*The official independent voice of the Grumman Amateur Radio Club.*

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## **How Ham Radio Prepared Me for Full Time Employment**

**by Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP**

*Last month I wrote about my first full time employment at Emerson Radio & TV Corp. I will continue here with my job as a production-line TV Troubleshooter and how I upgraded to become an Electronic technician in the commercial test equipment construction department.*

There was an error in last month's article. It said that the Tester used a well-insulated screwdriver to test for high voltage at the high voltage CRT anode clip. This was not the case because a well-insulated screwdriver would not attract sparks to jump from the clip or enable the Tester to get a slight shock in the process. A specific screwdriver was always used. It was manufactured by the Stanley Corp and I guess that it was calibrated better than any high voltage VTVM probe or electrostatic voltmeter could be. More importantly it gave the Tester a "feel" for the test as he moved the screwdriver closer to the clip, stopping when the first sparks were drawn. The Tester was a soft spoken African-American gentleman named Tyler (I can't remember if that was his first or last name) who was also a professional musician, and belonged to the union. He played all the wind instruments, and often was called for Jazz or Swing gigs in both famous and unknown bands. When this interfered with his job at Emerson, he had to temporarily be replaced by another man who didn't have Tyler's "feel" for the job.

While working at my job as a Troubleshooter, I was introduced to a young man in a suit, and told to show him how I troubleshot TV chassis. Emerson had established a TV franchise in Venezuela and was building a TV service center there. The gentleman was sent to the US to learn the business, and we became friends. His English was much better than my Spanish but I used both languages to communicate the names of TV components and circuits which I had learned about from Spanish speaking hams. Most terms were similar in both languages. We took breaks together and he paid for my coffee and cake. He said that his home country used the same TV standards as the U.S. and there were many upper-class folks who wanted to buy TV sets. At that time there was one TV station broadcasting in Caracas, but more were being built. He said that he could not hire me while I was employed by Emerson but he could get me hired if I quit my job and agreed to go to Venezuela. He gave me his business card which I lost. I would have taken any job that offered higher pay, but looking back it probably was just as well I lost the card.

A notice was posted on the bulletin board about a job that paid more than my troubleshooting job. It was for an Electronic Technician to work in the Commercial Test Equipment Construction Department. I applied for the job because I knew I could handle it. I was interviewed by three men: Mr. Harry Clark (who had previously interviewed me), the foreman of the production troubleshooters, and a representative of the union. Mr. Clark asked most of the questions. I told him that I was familiar with all of the vacuum tube types that are found in TV sets. First he asked if I knew anything about the 6BN6 tube. I had read about that new 7 pin miniature tube which is a pentode with gated elements, used as a limiter-discriminator in FM

receivers. He was greatly impressed by that, and then tried to stump me by asking about the 6AK5 tube that was only found in military radar sets. That 7 pin miniature tube is like the more common 6AG5 sharp cutoff pentode used in TV sets, but it has better characteristics. The 6AK5 has golden grids which made it much more expensive than the 6AG5, but war surplus 6AK5s were available for less than new 6AG5s. Hams were using them to modify TV tuners and rebuild receiver RF or IF amplifiers. If you use the 6AK5 in a 12 Volt series string you must consider that its heater must work at 175 ma. while TV pentodes have 300 ma. heaters. The next question was very easy. I was asked about a pilot lamp which has a brown bead. I knew it was type 47, which works at 6.3 Volts @ 150 ma. Needless to say I got the job; No one else had applied.

Before I could transfer to my new job, I had to train my production troubleshooting replacement. I was introduced to King Yee who was born in Hong Kong but grew up in the "Chinatown" district of Manhattan, not far from the Holland tunnel that went to the Emerson plant. While King's immigrant parents worked in restaurants, he had attending an Army signal school and served in Korea during the early part of the "police action". When King's father died it was his job to bring his ashes back to Hong Kong. There is a Chinese custom that requires burying cremated ashes in a specific family location. While he was in Hong Kong, King married a Chinese girl and brought her back to the US. (Chinese-American girls were in short supply). King said that he would like to buy some Heathkit test equipment to repair radios at home like I did. I enjoyed building the kits so much that I offered to do so for him for free, as I had for several other friends. The VTVM didn't work because Heathkit had sent me a rotary switch that had improper wafers. They sent me a replacement rotary switch, but it was impossible to remove all of the precision resistors from the defective one. I gave King my own working Heathkit VTVM since I had just bought myself a used RCA "Voltohmyst" VTVM at a flea market, and never did fix the one with the defective switch. King told me lots about Hong Kong and Korea, which prepared me for what I was eventually to see as a soldier in the Far East. Next month I'll talk about my work in the Commercial Test Equipment Construction Department.

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

Our summer dinner out was a great success. All 18 attendees enjoyed good food, great weather and excellent companionship. We had a private room at the Whale's Tale in Centerport, overlooking a spectacular view of Northport Harbor right outside the window.

Recently there was an item in the news where a former employee of a government agency, still disgruntled about being treated badly 16 years ago, went beserk and shot and killed a security guard there, then himself. When the news announcer mentioned the location it drew my attention - 201 Varick Street in Manhattan. Until about 1970 we took our FCC licensing exams at 641 Washington Street, then for a few years it was 201 Varick Street. I, for one, took my Extra exam there. Icky.

Another weird bit of bad news involved the Grumman airfield. Since it closed in 1994 we have watched more and more of the airport bulldozed and rebuilt. Recently a small plane crashed on the LIRR tracks at South Oyster Bay Road, killing the pilot and injuring his passenger. It saw it as too much of a coincidence to be anything but a pilot searching for a nonexistent runway. Then, when I heard that the air traffic controller had told the pilot that there still is enough runway left to make an emergency landing, I thought "Oh no! Why didn't they ask me?" Thinking about it, there was absolutely nothing I ever could have done, but somehow I still feel partly responsible.

Ed, WB2EAV

**GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 8/19/2015  
By Karen, W2ABK**

The meeting was opened by Ed at 5:00 PM at the Whale's Tale

**TREASURER'S REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV**

Finances continue to be in good shape.

**REPEATER REPORT – Gordon, KB2UB**

146.745 not working.

145.330 is perfect.

**NET REPORT – Karen, W2ABK**

Thursday night net at 8:15 PM on 146.745 MHz had 2 check-ins. Karen could not hear everyone well check-ins could hear each other.

Thursday night net at 8:30 PM on 145.330 MHz had 3 check-ins. Good copy for all !

Sunday morning net at 7:30 AM on 7.289 MHz had 1 check-ins but he couldn't hear Karen..

**VE REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV**

Five applicants applied. Four for Technician Class and one for Extra Class. All passed. Two Technician Class tried to upgrade to General Class but failed.

Three VEs were present: Ed WB2EAV, Ken KC2YRJ and Rick Darnell, KC2RIL

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

Net Controller: Karen, W2ABK

**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.**

**PROGRAM**

We enjoyed our annual "picnic" dinner at the Whales Tale in Northport. Eighteen members were there and a good time was had by all.

**MEETINGS**

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the 3rd 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 at Haypath Park on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 12:00 Noon *Meetings may be cancelled or relocated. Check the GARC website.*

**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. The membership roster has not been updated to delete Silent Keys and to enter new e-mail addresses for remaining members and friends.

## WHAT CAN WE SAY?

When I first became licensed I was taught that I was not supposed to discuss anything on the air that could not be discussed in front of children and not discuss anything that might be offensive to people of any nation, race, economic class, or religion because the whole world might be listening. This is easy when only giving signal reports and asking for QSL cards, but can get somewhat fuzzy when chatting in what were called “rag chewing nets”. Rag chewing nets were like the Facebook chat groups of today but the Facebook groups can be limited to family and friends who have accepted a request to join them. There was no way to prevent an SWL or ham from listening to the rag chewing on ham bands. On the “high end of 10 meter net” operators that I often joined were not immune to telling off-color jokes and stories when not running serious ARES or RACES drills. They also talked about anything they read in the daily newspapers or heard on the AM radio. They expressed their own opinions and mildly debated. I don’t think the term “politically correct” existed in the 1960s, but some of their comments would definitely not be “politically correct” today.

It was Mark Twain who said if you don’t want to offend anyone you can always talk about the weather. He also said that everyone talks about the weather, but nobody can change it. That is not true today! If we talk about recent Climate Change (aka Global Warming) we can get into heated disputes as to what most scientists actually say or what differently motivated politicians want us to believe. This gets me into the subject of what His Holiness, The Pope expects us to do about Climate Change. We can respect The Pope for being the first Pope to come from Argentina, with what most of us believe to be a different viewpoint than that of the European Popes of the past. Now we see that his version of global warming control differs little from that of Al Gore, because he asks everyone to reduce the “carbon emission” that promotes “greenhouse gasses.” I can agree with His Holiness’ views on abortion, but I will strongly but respectfully disagree with Him about not using contraceptives to limit the number of offspring that families can responsibly provide for. If there are no great wars or natural disasters to limit the Earth’s exponentially growing population, it will soon exceed the planet’s ability to support that population. Can’t the Pope realize that simple fact? I was told on the QRZ rag chew net that it is improper to say anything about religion there. On Page 6 of this newsletter there is an article that was sent to me, as it was to all NY, NJ, PA, and DC ham club newspaper editors. It was suggested that it should be posted in this newsletter. I posted it as written with no comment...except for the humble generalizations that you may read here. Enuf Sed.

### PUZZLE

Last month’s question was:-

How can the antenna efficiency of a HF grounded vertical antenna be made comparable to a half-wave dipole antenna?

- A. By installing a good ground radial system
- B. By isolating the coax shield from ground
- C. By shortening the vertical
- D. By lengthening the vertical

Answer: The correct answer is A.

This month’s question is:-

A 12.6-volt, 8-ampere-hour battery is supplying power to a receiver which uses 50 watts and a radar system that uses 300 watts. How long will the battery last?

- A. 100.8 hours
- B. 27.7 hours
- C. 1 hour
- D. 17 minutes or 0.3 hours.

**GARC Officers**

|   |              |                         |
|---|--------------|-------------------------|
| President: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV             | 516-507-8969 | wb2eav@yahoo.com        |
| Vice President: Gordon Sammis, KB2UB        | 631-666-7463 | sammigo@verizon.net     |
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| 1 Yr. Board Member: George Sullivan, WB2IKT |              |                         |

**Newsletter**

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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**

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**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. 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 2015 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 pre-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 ARRL-VEC or W5YI-VEC <http://www.arrl.org> or <http://www.w5Yi.org>. All VECs use the same Q &A pools.

**Editorial**

My old e-mail address and my new e-mail addresses have been eliminated by a specialist from the Geek Squad so that the address [radio.w2ilp@gmail.com](mailto:radio.w2ilp@gmail.com) will now be my primary address and the only address where I can dependably send and receive e-mails and attachments. This is being done for "Security Purposes" because my old information cannot be verified by any logical password investigation known by computer choice dots. In short I could not prove that I am me without a doubt. And Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton thinks that she has troubles because they might be able to prove she is she got paid cash for consulting with foreign nationals. Like all hams, I am a volunteer who gets paid nothing and I can prove that I am authentically good for nothing. Enuf Sed.

During the course of Geek Squad investigation the recent work that I had done to write this September 2015 Newsletter got erased and thus I had to do it all over again. The August template was still available, so it will only take me more time at the keyboard to remember what I wrote.

As suggested I am including e-mail addresses for all GARC Officers listed above. Please contact Ed if your address is incorrect or you don't want it listed.

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215 Birchwood Park Drive  
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FIRST CLASS MAIL  
*Do Not Delay*

### **CELEBRATE THE POPE'S VISIT to the US via AMATEUR RADIO**

Pope Francis visits the US Sept. 22 -27 and amateur radio will be a part of the celebration. The Pope arrives at Joint Base Andrews on Sept. 22, meets with President Obama on Sept. 23 and speaks to a joint session of Congress on Sept. 24. Sept. 25 he attends a meeting of the UN General Assembly in NY and participates in a multi-religious service at the 9/11 Memorial. On Sept. 26 he gives a speech at Independence hall in Philadelphia and concludes his visit with an outdoor mass in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art on Sept. 27.

Throughout the 6 day event, 6 special event amateur radio stations will be on the air: K3P and N4P from DC, K2P from NY/NJ, and W3P, WM3PEN and W3FRC/WMF from Philadelphia. Amateur Radio operations from those areas encompass the entire region visited by Pope Francis in the United States, and will allow those who can't be in the various cities that he is visiting to participate in this event by talking to those who are. In essence this will be a world family meeting of amateur radio operators.

Several unique QSL cards will be available along with a certificate to mark the special and historic event. A website is being established for QSL and certificate information; Early information and links can be found on WM3PEN.qrz.com website. The New York activity is being coordinated by John Melfi of the Great South Bay Radio Club (gsbarc.org).