

Swapping curbside 'antiques'

Parsippany hobbyists say radios, old electronic equipment is more than just the neighbor's garbage

BY ANDREW NYNKA

DAILY RECORD

PARSIPPANY — To the inexperienced, the electronics equipment on Steve Goulart's table might look like junk, something he should have thrown out years ago.

There was an old metal detector, an AM short wave radio kit and a large single-frequency receiver among boxes of indescribable electronics equipment.

"None of this stuff here is really classical antique radio stuff," said Goulart, 59, during an annual swap meet and auction held by the New Jersey Antique Radio Club on Saturday.

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It included a bullhorn, an old, gray cash register, a backgammon set, and tons of electronics parts. Next to a waist-high, hand-made radio antennae was an old book published in 1922: "Design of Modern Radio Receiving Sets."

"It's an interesting group of people," Goulart said of the NJARC, which was formed in 1992 and includes some 225 members.

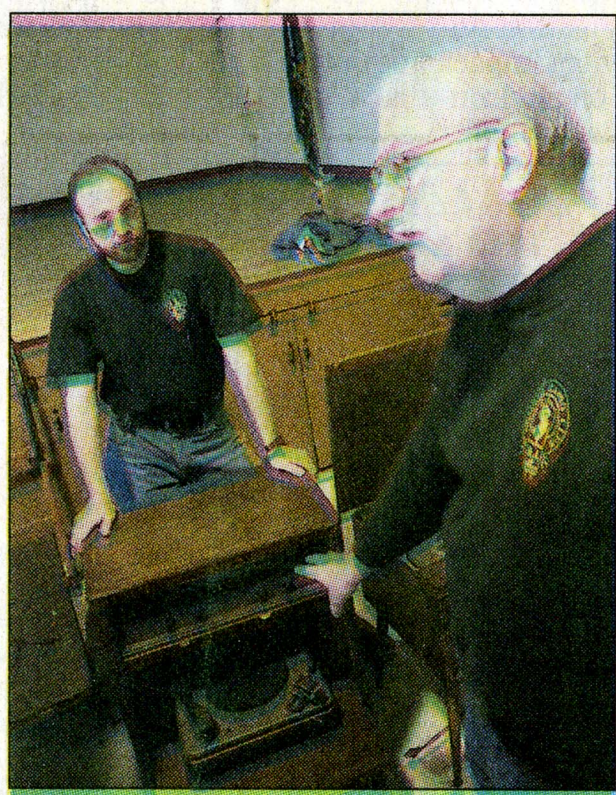
Many of the collectors said they have experience as telephone industry professionals or military radio operators. Organizers of the event said members

collect electronics equipment and other items because they have sentimental value and bring back childhood memories.

"You'll find that a lot of the guys here are involved not just with radios," said Steve Calandra, 48, of New Milford. "I'm not married, so I can do what I want."

Calandra said his passion for collecting old radios was fueled by a long-time interest in cars — and the four- and eight-track tape players inside those cars. His father was a mechanic, specializing in Chevy Corvairs. Calandra now owns nine classic cars, including five Corvairs, and is regarded by other NJARC members as the group's four- and eight-track specialist.

"Each one of us has a love of certain type of radios from when



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Phil Vourtsis, president of the New Jersey Antique Radio Club, shows off the inside of an old record player during an auction.

The group's name might be a bit deceiving. The swap meet at the Police Athletic League building included much more than antique radios.

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we were young," Calandra said.

Calandra said the swap meet is a way for people with an interest in electronics equipment to learn more about their particular interest or to find spare parts for some project. Many of the attendees said they could not bear the thought of throwing away some of their collectibles, which they find at swap meets or sometimes on the street.

"I'm not above picking stuff up off the curb," said Goulart, who, like many of those in attendance, once worked for a telephone company. "To me, it's keeping antique stuff from going to the landfill."

However, some participants were more interested in aesthetics than electronics, Goulart said. "Some just collect and polish,"

he said.

Phil Vourtsis, president of the NJARC, said the auction is a way for members and nonmembers to come together, learn more about their hobby and exchange a wide variety of items.

He said some people get rid of things they once thought they needed.

Ray Chase, 73, who served in the Korean War with the Marines and now serves on the board of trustees of the NJARC, said money earned at the swap meet helps fund the purchase of more old radios.

"It keeps us out of trouble and pays for the hobby," Chase said.

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