My Favorite Radio Memory

"Switching" the Station

ONE AFTERNOON, my dad tweaked the many dials on our massive, multi-tube Stromberg-Carlson radio until the Chicago Cubs baseball game came in loud and clear.

Regrettably, the radio stopped playing the moment Dad settled into his easy chair. He got up, walked to the set and was about to pound on the "magic spot" on the cabinet when the radio came back on by itself.

He returned to his chair, but once more, the radio lost its sound. Again, Dad got up, muttering some invective. Once more, the set turned on as he reached for the knobs.

After two more such occurrences, Dad grew suspicious, especially when he heard the high-pitched tittering of his 10-year-old son—me.

"Davy, get in here!" Dad shouted. My guilt-ridden face led to my confession. With technical advice from my pal, a kid known to his classmates as "Willie the Inventor," I had rigged a pressure-actuated electrical switch to the power cord of the radio and hid the switch beneath Dad's chair cushion. Whenever Dad sat down, his ample weight caused the switch to shut down the radio.

My own offspring, clever as they are, never pulled such a caper on me, thus sparing themselves the well-deserved tail-warming my dad gave his own inventive son.

—David L. Hirsch, Los Angeles, California