

Road Trip to Mike Lavigne's



Jonathan Tinn with Blue Light Audio on the left, his new Wave Kinetics NVS turntable in the middle, and our gracious host, Mike Lavigne.

August 11th Meeting Recap by John Stone

Last month's meeting was a very special event held at Mike Lavigne's house in North Bend. As many of you know, Mike has a state of the art listening room along with a dream system and music collection to match. Featured at this meeting was Mike's new Wave Kinetics NVS turntable with Talea 2 tonearm, some choice new reel to reel tapes courtesy of Dan Schmale and The Tape Project, and improved room acoustics (resulting from recent and extensive experimentation and the addition and subtraction of various room treatments).

Mike is a wonderful DJ, and he

demonstrated his skills and equipment superbly with discs, vinyl, tape, and hi-res music files. Of special interest was a comparison made between 1/4" tape and 1/2" tape. Mike has two Ampex A820 reel to reel decks, one with a 1/4" head and one with a 1/2" head. Using both decks to play the same Nat King Cole track, proved that, at least when it comes to R2R, more is better. The 1/2" tape provided more nuance and PRAT than the 1/4" version. Upon hearing the appreciation of the crowd, Dan Schmale remarked that if we liked the 1/2", we'd REALLY like the 1" first generation masters that he uses to make

The Tape Project products. Guess we'll have to schedule a road trip to Dan's place on Bainbridge Island to experience that.

Really hard to pick favorites as all of Mike's selections were great, but besides the Nat King Cole, my personal favorites were Led Zeppelin's Going to California (45RPM vinyl; life-sized Robert Plant in the room), Pink Floyd's Wish You Were Here (1/4" R2R), and the mesmerizing vinyl, LSO rendition, of Bruch's Scottish Fantasy with David Oistrakh on violin.

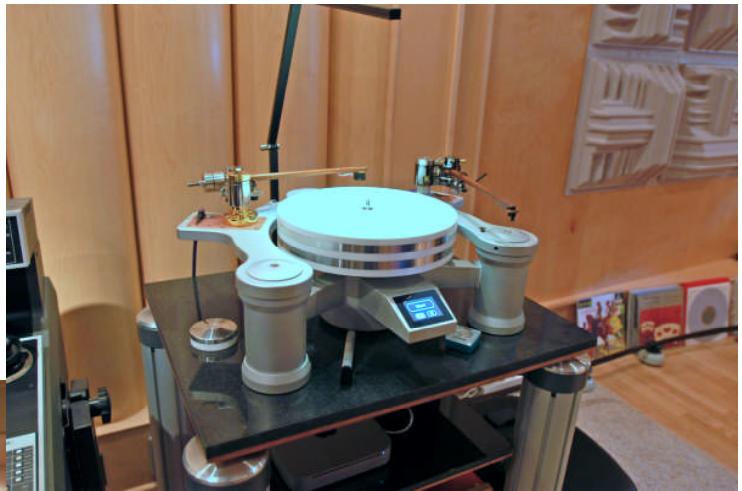
Thanks to Mike and his wife Pam for hosting this event.



Playback Designs Digital, Evolution Acoustics MMThree Loudspeakers, DartZeel preamp and amp and Transparent Opus cables.



Mike's new Wave Kinetics NVS turntable with a Talia I and Talia II tonearms both with Ortofon A90 moving coil cartridges sounded fantastic, even better than his previous Rockport Sirius III, a tough act to follow.



Dan Schmale, aka Doc Bottlehead, showed-off his latest 1/2" tapes. You want the best? This is it.

We had a great turn-out. After a getting club business out of the way, we did some serious listening. Hard work, but these are the sacrifices one does for our hobby.



(Continued from page 1)

Despite the fact that the large crowd at Mike's was eager to get to the music, we did manage to conduct some business. Approved was a proposal to budget \$2000 for a new digital playback system. The details of the search/

evaluation for this new system are being worked and will involve extensive critical listening. Look for additional details in future newsletters. Also approved was a proposal to budget \$1200 to upgrade the club's speakers. Last, but not least, Bruce Brown was elected

as club treasurer, replacing Willie Chang. Although Bruce is no stranger to club activities, he is a welcome addition to club leadership. Thanks also to outgoing treasurer Willie for all of his contributions.

Poor Man's Dedicated Circuit by Joe Pittman

A dedicated power circuit is simply a single outlet connected to a circuit breaker. These are typically used for high current applications such as your dryer or for copy machines in offices for example. Ideally, there is only one outlet, but most installations use duplex outlets, which in reality is a parallel circuit.

Dedicated circuits are highly recommended for high performance audio systems. The systems doesn't necessarily need high continuous current, but most likely will benefit by having access to very high momentary demand because of the transient nature of musical peaks. The more instantaneous current available, the better. That's why dedicated circuits usually sound better than typical multiple outlets per circuit.

It's possible to get close to the performance of a dedicated circuit, with some simple procedures and or modifications to existing power wiring. It should be obvious that if you have something like a refrigerator on the same circuit as you hi-fi, the sound will be degraded, because the hi-fi is "starved" for power. Other devices like microwaves, computers and flat panel TV's can also suck power and pump electrical noise back into the circuit because of their switch mode power supplies. So, if you don't have a dedicated circuit, avoid using other devices on the same circuit as your hi-fi. The next thing is to optimize the multiple outlet circuit itself.

Most of us don't have the option of installing a dedicated circuit due to cost or other considerations. But it is possible to improve the multiple outlet installation by simply cleaning the wire connections at the outlets, which can degrade over time, and converting serial wiring to parallel wiring. You'll have to remove an outlet to tell if you have serial wiring (make sure you turn off the breaker, and verify that the power is off by using a power sensor such as the Fluke VoltAlert before touching any outlet wiring). If there are only two wires connected to the outlet, that is already a parallel connection, simply remove the wires, clean the wire and

connection at the outlet with a contact cleaner such as Techspray (which leaves no residue) and reattach the wires, taking care to maintain the correct polarity. It's always a good idea to check the polarity with a circuit tester anyway once the outlet is powered up (you should have circuit tester to check every outlet, especially in power filters...). If there are four wires connected to the outlet (two white and two black), you have a serial connection or "daisy chain" (see diagram).

Serial connections are only as good as the weakest link in the chain. And resistance adds up. Hence the potential for reduced performance.

[Note: If you have an outlet where the wires cant be removed, i.e.: they push-in only, I'd replace them with a better outlet. And if you are not using a quality outlet, or even a hospital grade outlet, I'd recommend replacing the outlets anyway. You would be amazed how a high quality outlet can improve your system.]

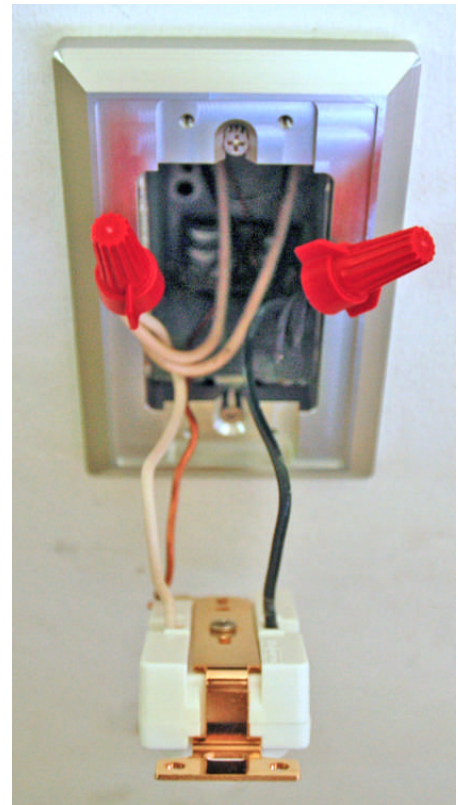
A serial connection can be converted to a parallel connection, simply by adding a "pig-tail". Remove the wire connections and add a small length of wire, about 8 inches or so (I recommend 12AWG which you can get at the local hardware store) and tie the two white wires together with a white pig-tail and appropriate wire nut for three wires, and the black wires together with the black pig-tail. Then connect the new pig-tails to the outlet. Again, clean the wire ends and outlet connections prior to assembly. Re-install the outlet, power-up, test the polarity, and you are done. Happy listening.



Fluke VoltAlert



Circuit Tester



Duplex outlet with pig-tail's installed. Original wiring is 12AWG and pig-tail's are 12AWG. The wires are connected with UL listed wire nuts (red).

Disclaimer/Warning

Always check with your local municipality regarding any modifications to your electrical system to see if any permits and inspections would be required prior to any work.

If you are not comfortable or experienced working with electrical wiring, and if you lack the appropriate tools, then hire an electrician or better yet, a licensed and insured electrical contractor to do the work.

When working with power wiring, there is the risk of injury or death, so I assume no liability for the information provided. And should you make modifications described in this article, you do so at your own risk. If you do electrocute yourself, we would miss you.

So remember, safety first. And measure twice/cut once.

Power Circuit Wiring Options

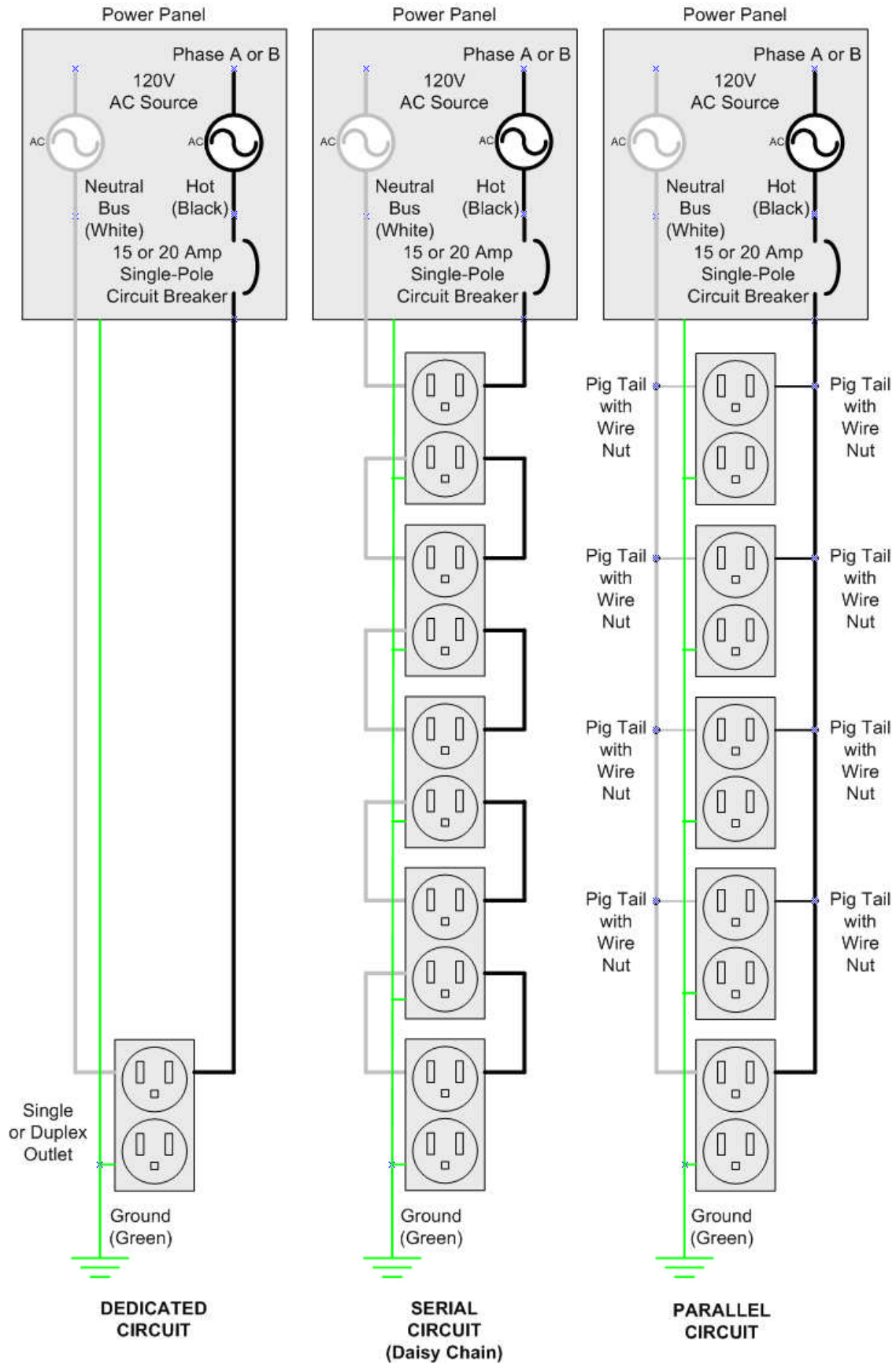


Diagram by Joe Pittman

President's Message by John Stone

Our next meeting will focus on music, specifically, your favorite music. We are asking that all members and guests bring music that brings you enjoyment, has special meaning, or represents something new that you've heard and want to share. We'd like you to bring one or two discs or records, and if you're comfortable with it, say a few words about what you like about the music. This type of event is always fun and simple, and makes it easy to come up with new additions to your music collection. This event is all about shar-

ing the music you like with the rest of us.

As part of our ongoing effort to obtain a new digital playback system, we will be using the new Oppo BDP-95 to play discs at the September meeting. Although we won't be formally reviewing this piece at this meeting, it will provide a musical data point for what can be obtained from a current, affordable, one-box playback solution, and may provide valuable feedback for the digital playback system search committee.

Our October meeting will focus on amplifier topology. We will be pitting time-tested veteran Class A against the ambitious newcomer Class D. Both combatants are young and at the top of their games. For this bout, the Class A, Plinius SA-103, fresh out of a rave review in the April 2011 *Stereophile*, will go toe to toe with the Genesis GR360 Class D amp. The Genesis amp was the recipient of a Blue Moon award from 6Moons e-zine in June 2008. For this contest, you will be the judge.



Oppo BDP-95 Blu-ray Disc Universal Player

News

[Music sales are on the rise](#)

Album sales in the U.S. increased during the first half of the year for the first time since 2004, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Total album sales climbed 1% over the same period last year to 155.5 million, and digital track sales rose 10% to more than 660 million.

[Report: Blu-ray disc sales up, DVD sales drop](#)

The Digital Entertainment Group reports that Blu-ray disc sales increased 10% in the first half of 2011, while total sales for Blu-ray and DVD discs combined were off by 18%, with DVD demand in decline. Industry observers noted that releases in last year's second quarter included "Avatar," which sold more than 12 million discs in that quarter alone, while releases in the first half of 2011 didn't include a comparable blockbuster to drive disc sales.

Coming Attractions

September 8 PNWAS Meeting

Music only. Everybody bring their own music and say a few words about it.

October 13 PNWAS Meeting

Amplifier comparisons.



October 14-16 RMAF 2011

Hi Ho Hi Ho it's off to Denver we go!

November 10 PNWAS Meeting

It's dark outside, time for our annual home theater event. This time it is a road trip to Madrona Digital. They will host the meeting in their new, state of the art theater.

December 15 PNWAS Meeting

Annual Christmas music competition.

January 12 PNWAS Meeting

Comparison of two digital playback units. Our first shoot-out for select-

ing our new system.

February 9 PNWAS Meeting

Comparison of two digital playback units. Our second, and last shoot-out for final selection.

Local Music



In September 2011 the Eastside Jazz Club is moving to the MARRIOTT COURTYARD HOTEL 11010 NE 8TH Street, Bellevue WA 98004, and is also about to release its first Jazz Recording on the newly formed CD Label EASTSIDE JAZZ RECORDINGS

For more information call Cooksie 425 828 9104 or email lionel.kramer@comcast.net

See <http://eastsidejazzclub.com>

Classified Ads

RPG Skyline diffuser approx 2'x2'x7", 20 each available in excellent condition (no damage) and are sold in pairs only. Retail price is \$419 per pair plus \$40 shipping, street prices as low as \$350/pair including shipping. My sell price is \$150 per pair, but you must pick-up at my place. I don't want to ship them. If you are interested in all 20, total price would be \$1200. Contact Joe Pittman, 206-878-3833 or email joe@kosmic.us



Bruce Brown has two amplifier stands available. He used them with his Pass Labs amps and the stands are approximately 19" x 20". Please contact Bruce if you are interested. His email is: pugetsoundstudios@yahoo.com

Visitors Welcome!

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30pm at 4545 Island Crest Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

PNWAS Mission Statement

- ◆ To bring people with a common interest in music reproduced at its best, for their mutual edification and pleasure.
- ◆ To facilitate the exchange and dissemination of accurate data concerning audio equipment and musical recordings.
- ◆ To promote, sponsor, and cultivate the highest quality reproduction of music in the home.
- ◆ To encourage maintenance of high standards in the performance, recording and transmission of music.

PNWAS Objectives

1. Provide a forum for meeting other audio-philes and exchanging information on musical recordings and audio equipment.
2. Demonstrate and compare equipment and recordings.
3. Give members opportunities to become familiar with the techniques of audio manufacturing, testing, repair, recording, broadcasting, etc.
4. Explore related avenues as the member-

ship deems appropriate.

Club Website

www.audiosociety.org

E-mail

info@audiosociety.org

US Mail

Pacific Northwest Audio Society, PO Box 435, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Annual Dues

\$60 due each January. New members pay a prorated \$5 per month for remainder of year.

Elected Officers

President: John Stone

John.W.Stone4@boeing.com

Vice-President: Darin Forkenbrock

forkenbrock@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Bruce Brown

pugetsoundstudios@yahoo.com

Committee Chairs

Editor: Joe Pittman

joe@kosmic.us

Equipment: Terry Olson

CornyGuy@aol.com

Music: Vacant– Volunteers?

Refreshment: Vacant– Volunteers?

Editorial

Editorial submissions are welcome.

Content must be audio-related or of general interest to the club in plain text or Word document format without automation (macros and scripts). We reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length.

Editorial Deadline: two weeks before meeting date.

Publishing any editorial material is contingent upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

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